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I.C.R. ELEVATOR BURNED LAST NIGHT; WAS IT WORK OF ENEMY OF THE EMPIRE?
 Continued from page 1.

While there is no direct evidence to show that the fire was the work of enemies of the Empire, yet many conditions existed last night which would certainly tend to lead the mind in that direction.

It was learned that the elevator was guarded, the guards having been but recently placed. Also, the big structure was loaded with grain for the first time since the close of the last winter port season and yesterday was the first day the elevator had been in operation. The grain in the elevator totalled in the vicinity of 70,000 bushels and of this about 7,000 bushels, on a fair summer shipload, had been placed on the Furness liner Rappahannock. In fact the elevator was supposed to have been working just before the time of the fire.

At no time could the big structure have been fired when the results would have been more serious supposing the blaze to be of incendiary origin. The grain had been but recently placed in the elevator and the shipment to the Rappahannock was the first to be taken from it. Consequently if any person desired to set the elevator on fire at a time when the damage resulting would have been heaviest last night was the psychological moment for the deed.

Guards Saw Nothing.
 As far as can be learned the watchman or special guards set about the building noticed no suspicious circumstance. They were first to be regularly but save for those who had business in that locality, saw no one. Suddenly, shortly after Policeman Sullivan pulled the alarm, flames were seen to issue from the bottom and top of the structure, and in a few minutes the entire length and height of the big building was wrapped in a mantle of seething roaring fire.

Like a blazing monitor of portentous warning the column of flame and smoke shot skyward illuminating the city for miles. Houses silhouetted sharply against the night showed with every window a reflecting glow and the throngs in the streets were almost dazed at the sight. It was the most spectacular and one of the most disastrous fires St. John has had for a quarter of a century.

One point that the conflagration of last night serves to bring strikingly in question is the efficacy of the protection of the building. The Standard learns that men were stationed to watch the elevator, especially to prevent fire. These guards were supposed to be in their places, and yet the very thing occurred which they were engaged to combat. The first alarm came from a police officer more than 100 yards away from the structure. His attention was attracted by the ripping of the metal shingles and the roar of the flames. When he could hear it at that distance, the question people will ask today is, where were the guards?

Buildings Damaged.
 In southwark street, which runs from the south side of Paradise row to Lombard street, several dwellings sustained damage by heat and water. Many of the buildings in Lombard street were also damaged considerably, the heat in that quarter being intense. In some stables there were several horses and cattle that were taken to safety after much difficulty and great commotion.

Practically all the buildings extending from Bond's alley to the residence of I. C. R. Policeman John Collins, 104 Paradise row, were damaged by heat and water. The efforts of the firemen to keep these buildings from catching alight necessitated the pouring on of great volumes of water, and from this cause alone the damage will be heavy, but it is of course, at this juncture impossible to form any estimate.

The following are some of the persons occupying or owning buildings: John McMahon, W. A. Stelper, P. J. Hardiman, Rev. H. A. Collins, W. A. Clark, James Semple, Charles Besman, W. H. Semple, Harry Gibson, S. Semple, Hyman Davis, A. D. Duncan, R. Crawford trustees of the Abner Mission, Mrs. S. Heans, T. P. Fleming, Mrs. A. Goldrick, John Melanson, W. J. Dorey, Colin Taylor, E. G. Cannins, Patrick Brown, E. A. Priors, J. J. Magee, M. E. Harley and John Collins.

Damage to several houses on the north side of Paradise Row was also caused by water, but it is probable the amount will not be large. The damage to the Mission church is thought, not great.

The building on Mill street occupied by the Harrison feed store caught fire several times but the firemen drenched the roof, and during the height of the blaze a continual stream of water

playing. Other buildings along Mill street were protected in the same manner.

W. A. Spears, the operator at the Union Station, said he first heard the fire alarm ringing and when he looked out of the depot telegraph room window smoke was coming from the top windows and inside of five minutes the whole structure was a mass of flames.

Much Alarm Felt
 In the thickly populated part of Paradise row, Southwark street, Lombard street and Bond's alley the residents were not unnaturally greatly alarmed, but no serious accidents are reported, although a few cases were noticed where women had fainted. The spectacle of leaping flames and myriads of sparks so close at hand led many to think of their belongings, and scores of people were to be seen taking away to places nearby such of their household goods as could be conveniently removed. There was a vast concourse of people at the last named points but no disorder was observable and the firemen appeared to be able to get on with their work without that interference which often occurs when a crowd is assembled.

Arrested For Robbery
 While the fire was in progress James McBrine, special constable, arrested Edward McHugh, who will have to answer a charge of robbing a spectator at the fire.

A few minutes after two o'clock the upper part of the elevator collapsed and fell through the main body of the building with a great crash, and an upshooting of flames and sparks as if a volcano had suddenly burst into eruption. At the same time great stretches of the sheet iron sheathing of the building slithered away, disclosing the skeleton of the building wrapped in flames. About half past two o'clock the eastern end of the building collapsed, and the main part of the interior also crashed down, leaving a vast heap of blazing timbers.

Com. Wigmore was early at the scene of the fire, and made a tour about the elevator seeing how the water system was working. In spite of the fact that every plug in the vicinity was in use, there was a good supply of water, even hose attached direct to the plugs giving a good stream.

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