

Read the Condensed Ads. on Page 6.

THE EVENING TIMES

Times Want Ads ... Yield ... Good Returns.

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ONE CENT

MONCTON SHOPS AN ASH HEAP

Saturday's Fire Did Damage of About \$1,000,000

ONE LIFE WAS LOST

Abraham Jones, Met His Death in the Ruins of the Fire - Great Loss of Plant and Rolling Stock - Worst Fire in Moncton's History.

Moncton, Feb. 25.—(Special)—The destruction of railway property valued at not less than \$1,000,000 and the loss of one life are the results of a conflagration at the I. C. R. car shops last evening. Practically half of the plant has been wiped out.

It has been established that the dead man is Abraham Jones, a painter in the employ of the shops. In an effort to carry from the burning paint shop certain personal effects he was overcome by smoke and flame. His charred body was discovered this morning, identity being made possible by his silver watch and a few coins found among the ashes.

Emmerson Notified. When the fire was at its height and it was thought the entire works were doomed, J. T. Hawke sent a telegram describing the situation to Hon. H. R. Emmerson, minister of railways and canals. Within a few hours the following reply was read:

"To J. T. Hawke, Moncton:—I cannot find words to express my deep regret, which amounts to sorrow at the very great disaster, which comes so inopportunistically, but we must not despair. The I. C. R. employees and citizens can rest assured that no effort will be spared on my part to have the work resumed with all possible speed, in all interests. The I. C. R. will yet triumph. Temporary shops, immediately necessary, will be followed by more complete and convenient works."

(Signed) "H. R. EMMERSON." A little later a second telegram arrived, reading: "Am arranging to be in Moncton Monday morning. If possible, certainly Monday afternoon. (Signed) "H. R. EMMERSON." 1,000 Men Affected.

The disaster is admitted to be the greatest in the history of the city. More than 1,000 men found employment in the works and what was yesterday one of the most flourishing and extensive industrial centres in the lower provinces, is now scarcely anything else but a few acres of smoking and wreck-strewn ruins.

The fire started about two-thirds way down the length of the paint shop at the extreme north end of the works. The entire structure was destroyed; also valuable cars which were inside the paint shop.

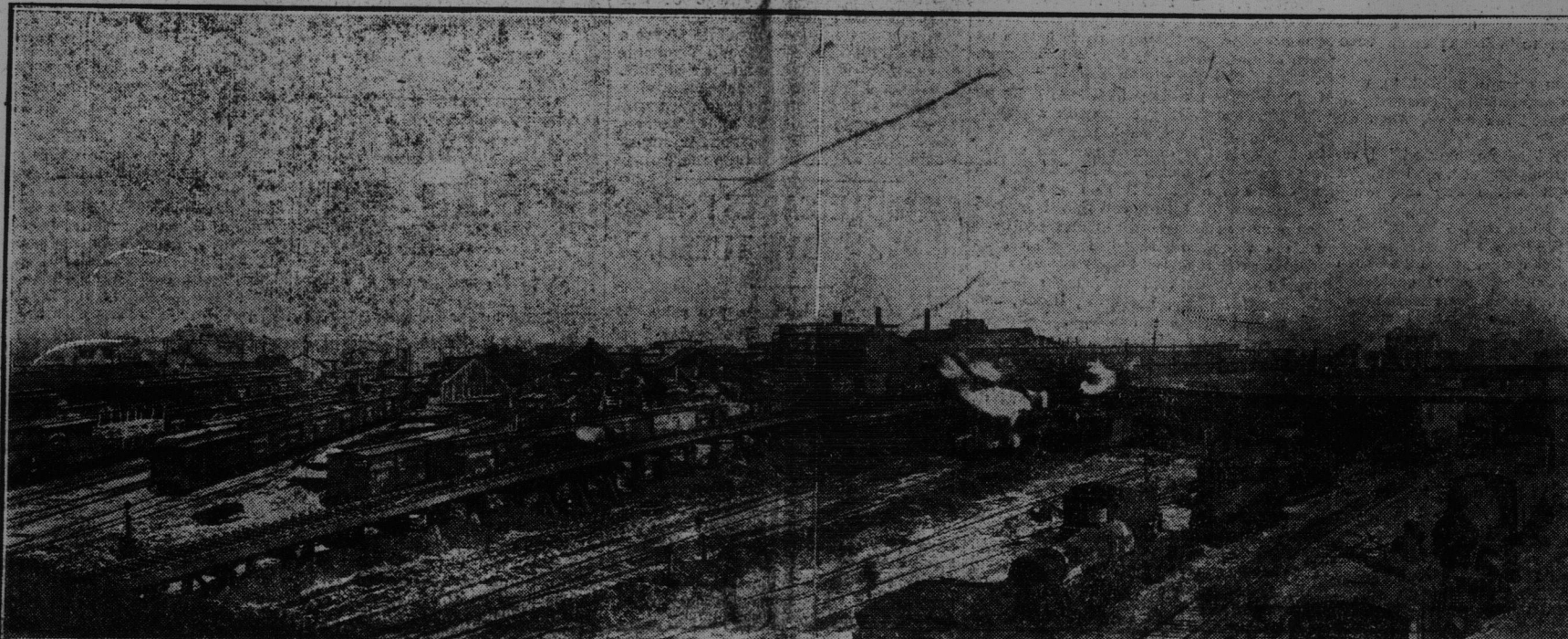
The flames swept to the freight car repair shop, then on to the car or brick shop, which included the electric light stations, engine and boiler rooms which supplied the power for nearly all the works. The fire then swept to the boiler shop, where boilers are made, burnt clear through and on to the east end of the machine shop, where it stopped at the turning shop. The office of the master mechanic, Archibald B. Macphie, was destroyed, and many papers of great value.

Buildings Saved. The buildings saved were the tin department, turning shop, erecting and machine shops, round house and blacksmith shop.

To Moncton citizens the blow has been stunning, but Mr. Emmerson's telegram have done much to restore public confidence. They were read at service this morning in the Baptist church.



Ruins of the Big I. C. R. Shops After the Fire Had Done Its Work



Panoramic View of the I. C. R. Shops as They Were Before the Fire

Mr. Pottinger, the general manager, told the Telegraph reporter today that in his opinion the loss would reach about \$1,000,000; certainly not much over it. "I think the works will be rebuilt," he added, "and the four or five hundred men thrown out of employment will not be idle any length of time, in fact we may keep them working right along." At this stage correct lists of the value of what has been destroyed in each shop is hardly available and these can be estimated only. The following are the cars destroyed in the paint shop: Mr. Pottinger's private car No. 75, built at the works here and costing about \$20,000; diner Yamaska, costing \$17,000; sleeper Casapedia, cost \$19,000; first-class cars numbers 102, 100, 113, costing \$10,000 each; two second-class cars numbers 488 and 531, costing \$8,000 each; baggage car No. 478 and 479; colonist car No. 526 and postal No. 604.

The wood working machinery in the car shop consisted of four cross-cut planers, three rip saws, a moulder, high-speed shafting and pulleys, a ten-horse machine, axle lathes, axle wheel press, three boring machines, a planer, a buzz planer, three drills, three wheel lathes, a new elevator, and hand saw. All of this machinery was of the most modern and expensive type. Uplifts was a variety moulder, two planers, a sand paper machine, wood lathe, pattern makers' shop, and carpenter benches.

On top of the electric light station were two blue printing frames used in connection with the draughting office. There were also very valuable drawings ruined by water.

In the boiler shop was a new rivetter with compressed air apparatus, a large pair of plate rollers run by electricity. The most generally accepted theory is that of spontaneous combustion. There was an abundance of waste and when hot oil comes in contact with this material it has been known in the course of a few hours to ignite.

Apparently several men saw the flames at about the same time. James Moody, a locomotive driver, was walking past the paintshop when he saw a flicker of light toward the northern end. He perceived at once that there was an outbreak and hurried to send in an alarm. About the time an old gentleman, named O'Rourke was approaching the locality and seeing a sudden burst of fire licking the upper end of the slope also sent in an alarm.

Fire Spread Very Fast. The swiftness with which the fire spread was appalling. Those who witnessed the beginning of it claim that fifteen minutes after discovering the entire length of the shop was just a torrent of flames.

The buildings were saturated with grease and oil owing to the nature of the work performed in them and this served to increase the rapidity with which the conflagration spread. Just as the alarm was being sent in the government horn in the works was sounded but there was no need of either whistle or bells to acquaint all Moncton with the fact that her very existence was menaced.

From the paint shop huge billows of fire then on and on higher and higher until it looked as if the homes along Lodge street in the rear would catch.

No Wind Blowing. At the commencement there was no wind. This was of vital importance for had there been a gale blowing across Main street, or in fact blowing in any direction, it is highly probable that the most of Moncton would have been leveled.

Two fire departments joined forces. These were the regular Moncton city department numbering about 50 men under the direction of Chief Ackman, and the force of twenty men in charge of Joe Bedford maintained by the I. C. R. The former had two engines, three hose cars, hook and ladder and chemical engine. The I. C. R. had hose reels, ladders and other appliances.

With almost superhuman zeal the men sought to prevent the ignition of the shops stretching away from the paint shop but their ablest efforts were quite futile. One grave difficulty was an inferior water service. Many conflicting stories have been related in connection with this matter as to the cause of the weak flow, but it is a fact that for the first hour no so the firemen were seriously handicapped. In fact, hose connection could be made with the outside hose the fire had eaten through thus rendering them quite useless. It is also reported that there was difficulty in getting water from the I. C. R. hydrants in the yard. The supply of water came from two sources, the city and northern reservoir.

Crowds Rush to the Scene. Within twenty minutes after the alarm became general literally everybody in Moncton was hurrying toward the works and the most noticeable was given the firemen. It was quite useless to attempt the saving of the paint shop's valuable contents. The structure was just a stupor

cession of crimson billows crested with smoke clouds. People fully a quarter of a mile distant heard its roaring and in places, 45 miles away, the reflection was plainly discernible. Some of the earliest work done was in endeavoring to run out of the fire zone as many cars as possible and the efforts to save the "Alexandria," the private car of Earl Grey, the governor-general, were successful. The car is one of the most luxuriously appointed in the dominion. It stood between the end of the brick car shop and a car laden with coal. Such a position made the work of saving it doubly difficult, especially when at such a time no locomotives were available. But a party of firemen, citizens and store employees took hold and by main strength managed to get it to safety in a far end of the yard.

Besides the cars in the paint shop which have been already mentioned, was an upholstering department containing seats, chairs, cushions and a hurling apartment. There was no shafting, but there was installed an expensive heating plant. All of this was totally destroyed.

Firemen Did Good Work. The direction taken by the fire after being seen first was directly east, after which, fanned by a wind of its own creating it veered to the south and fastened on the freight car repair shop. The building crumpled and disappeared in the waves of fire. Then the flames sort of yet further south swept upon the car shop in which was the boiler room, and where power for the most of the works was contained. The firemen were fighting from all sides and, considering the several disadvantages under which they labored, exceptionally creditable work was performed.

The fire was severe enough to have tested the efficiency of a moon trapper department. From all of the most advantageous points streams were kept paying, but notwithstanding the most persistent and gallant efforts it seemed, in an hour and a half after the outbreak, that the entire works would be swept.

To come at all into close quarters with the fire required courage of a high order. The heat was intense and there were many blistered hands and faces. But every inch of the conflagration's progress was stubbornly contested and at last it was possible to hope with some assurance that the flames would be checked at the turning shop and checked they were.

Close to the boiler shop stood the stores department, and though the fire burnt all around here, it was saved. The wall between this eastern end of the works and the car shop arrested the further advance of the fire.

Machine Shop Lost Heavy. One of the most expensively equipped shops was the machine shop. Half of this was destroyed and the damage here was particularly heavy.

The office of the master mechanic, A. B. McPhie, was situated in the eastern end of the boiler shop, and the entire establishment is now in ruins. Valuable papers were destroyed. In the main engine room of the boiler shop the main driving engine and a small electric light plant for the shop, also a compressed air plant were very badly affected. In the pit over the boiler shop an especially heavy loss was sustained in the total destruction of patterns. The space between the paint shop and freight car repair shop was about twenty feet, and along this a track ran. Between the latter building and the car shop the space was about five feet.

The railway station house all but burnt. A string of box cars became ignited and about the only course left

open was to make a dash past the depot and in the more roomy space beyond try to extinguish the flames. But the blazing train had barely commenced to go past ere the caves outside the windows of the despatcher's and Western Union offices were seen to catch, and to prevent, if possible the interior of the rooms from becoming afire the windows were shut down. All hands about the station then organized into a bucket brigade, and the train having backed away again the station house was saved.

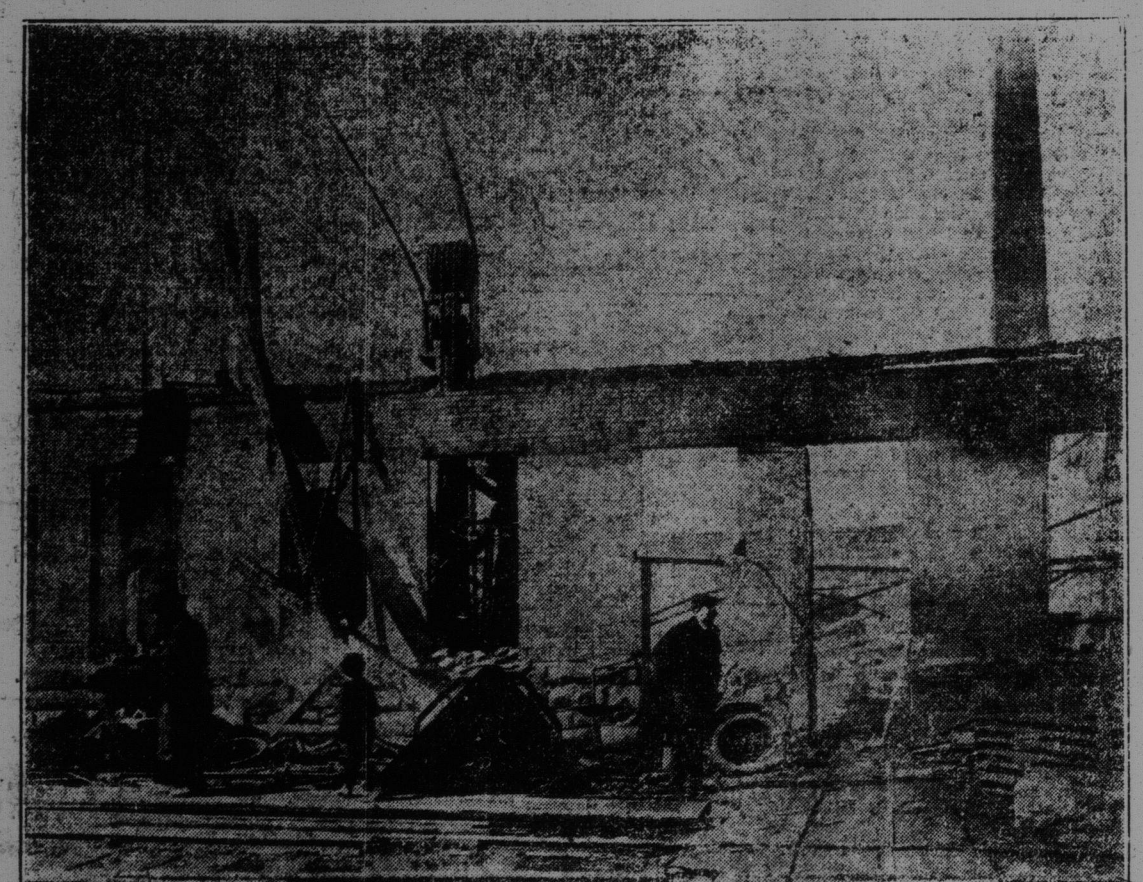
By midnight there was every reason to believe that the worst of the fire was over, and by 1 o'clock it was under control. An hour and a half later the Halifax express from St. John arrived. At the city they had been told that the I. C. R. car shops at Moncton were destroyed. At Sussex they learned that the fire was not yet under control, and the same intelligence was imparted at Sableville. Passengers crowded the car platforms and leaned from windows in order to perceive the first sign of the disaster as the train thundered up and when still miles distant from Moncton everybody had reason to believe that there was no exaggeration about what they had been told. Ahead the sky was glowing and as the express drew nearer it was seen that the ground that had been occupied by the car shops was now a crackling stretch of blazing timbers, wreckage and coal. Parts of the brick walls, charred posts, warped and twisted girders and beams stood up gauntly against the smoky glow. Long lines of coal trains, the coal in flames, stretched away through the shifting volume of smoke. The majority of those who had witnessed the destruction had returned to their homes. The firemen were busy, and their appearance showed that they had just passed through the fight of their lives. Eyebrows and moustaches were singed. They had fought a good fight and had won.

Abraham Jones' Death. The tragic details of Abraham Jones' death can only be surmised. That he perished, however, is a certainty. He was fifty-five years of age and leaves a wife and three daughters. He boarded with William Stevens on the opposite side of the street. Mr. Stevens, interviewed by a Telegraph representative, says that Mr. Jones, who had been for thirty years an employe of the shops, was at his home on Saturday night and had supper. Once in the evening he took out his pocket book and appeared to be examining the contents. He was in the house when the government horn blew and, realizing at once that it meant a fire in the works, started up, exclaiming that he must hurry out and ascertain if his shop (meaning the paint shop) was on fire.

"I saw him run out," said Mr. Stevens, "and a little later I followed. I didn't see him in the crowd and as the night wore along and he didn't appear, I began to fear for his safety."

Mr. Stevens and his son were up for the most of the night and after breakfast they revisited the ruins. They were passing along over the ripped and smoldering floor of the paint shop when Mr. Stevens saw something lying in the ashes not far from where had been one of the paint shop doors. It was a battered silver watch. He examined again and saw a charred skull and about a peck of bones, a handful of coins all run together and

(Continued on page 8.)



A Section of the Ruins



Where Some of the \$1,000,000 Loss Was Sustained.

THOUSAND EMPLOYEES LOSE WORK

Railway Men Will Suffer From the Fire

EMPLOYMENT GONE

But Works Will be Rebuilt at Once—Hon. H. R. Emmerson on His Way to the Scene—Firemen Made Gallant Fight Against Great Odds—Story of the Fire.