

LIKE A GREAT TORCH ACROSS MORNING SKY

Magnificent Office Building Reduced to Ruin in Brief Time
—Firemen Confronted With Surging Furnace
Beyond Their Power to Check.

Sweeping from end to end of the Dominion Savings Building and gutting it completely, fire that seemed to burst with the force of an explosion, did at least \$450,000 damages to the structure and contents early this morning. The interior of London's largest office building was completely destroyed, thousands of valuable records that cannot be replaced were lost, and two score tenants were rendered officeless.

COULD NOT BE CHECKED.

The blaze was almost beyond control of the fire brigade before the first line of hose was laid, and it was only after two hours and a half of strenuous work on the part of the firemen and volunteers that Fire Chief Aitken was able to report the blaze under control. During those two and one-half hours the interior of the building was a veritable furnace, flames breaking out of almost every window and through the roof. The sky was lit up for miles with the lurid reflection of the mammoth blaze, while the heat from the burning interior and from the office furniture became so intense that the firemen declared themselves unable to raise a ladder on the King Street side of the building. Blazing embers were carried for blocks.

DELAY IN GETTING BRIGADE.

Inability to secure a quick response from the fire brigade is held responsible for a large measure of the loss. Police officers, who discovered the fire at 3 o'clock, attempted to send in a telephone alarm from the Parisian Cafe, across the road, but declared they could get no response from the central exchange. The first alarm was given was a verbal one from Patrolman Thomas Noonan, who aroused the firemen by pounding on the central station door. He notified the members of the brigade, and they were on the scene in a few moments. A box alarm was rung in at almost the same time. Meanwhile, the fire had gained great headway.

Unbearable in Street.
Within a few minutes after the first detachments of the fire brigade arrived the entire building was a mass of flames. A west wind fanned the flames and carried large cinders across King and Richmond streets to the tops of adjoining buildings, and making the street so hot that it was uncomfortable for spectators.

Hall Went First.

The dance hall on the top floor was swept by the fire first. The blaze seemed to envelop it, eating up the decorations and bursting through the windows on the market square even while stream after stream of water was played upon it. From there it appeared to work its way down by the elevator shaft and stairway, communicating with the stores and offices on the west. On the first floor the large plate glass window of the division court was the first to fall in. Then the fire worked along to the north end, where it flared through the windows from top to bottom. In the meantime it was active on the south side in the middle of the building, and was so intense that when Fireman Edwaine and Wray mounted an extension ladder in an effort to turn a hose on the fire they were driven back quickly.

At 5 o'clock, with a roar that could be heard for blocks, the cornice and south end of the roof fell in. A moment elapsed while the flames towered through the jagged aperture. Then with a tearing and creaking the centre and north ends of the roof, burned through and dropped to the fourth floor.

With the fall of the roof the fire seemed to gain in intensity. When it fell a tremendous draught from above whirled the blaze into the air. Mountains of flame shot up, curling and twisting. Dense clouds of smoke hid the upper part of the structure from view. For a moment it was thought that the entire east and south walls would fall. Bricks rained in the streets, and the crowd that had assembled scrambled wildly back out of harm's way.

Fight From Lofty Perch.
Meanwhile, on the aerial truck, two deluge streams were being played into the conflagration. Firemen Emmett and Bryan clung to the swaying ladder and directed the streams full into the fire. The revolving truck was manipulated by Firemen Wylie and Weber at the bottom of the extension.

By 5:30 o'clock the fire was declared under control by Fire Chief John Aitken. At that time it was confined to the south and north ends in front, while a nasty blaze in the centre rear was being slowly quenched by tons of water from a deluge. As the daylight changed the sky from

streams were directed into the windows. For a moment it seemed as if the water would gain mastery. It was only for a moment. With avenging fury the fire reached the front of the building again. Soon, as before, it was shooting through the broken window frames. Slowly the fire gained ground. In spite of the lines of hose that were added every few minutes, there seemed no way of checking the conflagration. The roof had long since been consumed, only a few blazing beams separating the furnace-like interior from the spark-lit sky. Towers of dazzling flame leaped into the air, falling with the wind—then rising again and again, seemingly unconquerable.

Attempts at Doorway.

Desperate attempts were made to gain an entrance through the doorway. At times it seemed as if the men might gain an entrance, when streams could have been played into the heart of the fire. But each time, when under cover of innumerable streams, firemen gained the doorway they were driven back to the street.

A careful watch was kept on the walls. Particularly in front, where the blaze was curling out from under the cornice the firemen kept a wary eye. The walls stood the test, however, and although red-hot, that it was nearly impossible to place ladders against them, they did not show signs of falling.

Walls Stood Well.

At one time it was thought that a part of the front upper cornice was showing

signs of weakness and was giving way. Police and firemen watched it closely, but the brick remained firm. The red glow that shot into the sky illuminated the business section for blocks around. A crowd gathered as if by magic and the police had considerable difficulty in keeping them back. When it was feared that part of the wall might go, no one was permitted to pass in front of the building, even across the street. Sergeants Lucas and Monahan, who were the first to arrive on the scene, together with a detachment of reserves from police headquarters, held the crowd in check. Every precaution was taken by the police in avoiding accident.

RUMORS OF DEATH

Reports That Young Clubmen Perished Found To Be Untrue.

Rumors were afloat during the Dominion Savings building fire that a couple of young men were asleep in one of the club rooms when the fire broke out, and that a man was asleep in the cellar, but an investigation by the police failed to reveal any deaths. Members of the clubs having quarters in the burned building, never sleep in the rooms, but the police this morning located the last man out of each of the club and learned that no person slept in the room last night.

HOW IT LOOKED BEFORE FIRE SWEEPED IT FROM SIDE TO SIDE



Photo by Hines.

Picture of the Dominion Savings Building taken only a few weeks ago.

WESTERN FAIR LOSES HEAVILY

10,000 Advertising Maps and
8,000 Circular Letters Are
Consumed.

PRIZE LIST IS SAFE

Fortunately Placed in Printer's
Hands Day Before Fire
Occurred.

The Western Fair, on the third floor of the building, suffered a heavy loss to the literature, which Secretary A. M. Hunt and his staff had prepared for mailing, and the records. Included in the literature were 10,000 tubes containing maps of Western Ontario, which were to have been mailed in a day or two.

There were also 8,000 circular letters lost in the fire, which would have been sent out as soon as possible. "I do not know just what our loss will be," said Mr. Hunt to the Advertiser, "but we will open temporary offices in the old city hall building."

Mailing Lists Valuable.
"There is a possibility that our mailing lists were destroyed. If this proves true, the loss will be very serious, but I believe that they were in the vaults in which case they will be all right. Of course, we will lose more or less literature that was on the tables in our offices. Our office furniture was worth considerable and we have some insurance."

Prize List is Saved.
"We have been hit by fire twice within a year," said the secretary. "It will handicap us to some extent but we will not be set back by it. A most fortunate circumstance was that the copy for our prize lists was placed in the hands of the printer only yesterday. Had this been lost it would have been a very serious matter."

OLD BUILDING WAS BURNED IN 1900

Quickly Rebuilt as One of the
Finest Office Structures in
the Province.

This is the second time that fire has swept the big office building. On February 23, 1900, fire started in what was then the old Grand Opera House and completely gutted the building. It was quickly rebuilt, and the burned structures was one of the finest office buildings in the province. On the top floor was located one of the largest banquet halls in the city, and it was used very extensively by lodges, and also for most of the largest dances.

J. A. Nelles & Son

General Insurance Brokers

and

Insurance Engineers

INSURANCE

IN

ALL ITS BRANCHES

Fire Insurance
Rates Revised

380 Richmond St.

Phone 343

LIKE AN EXPLOSION

Advertiser Employees Saw Building
Break Into Flames.

Fred Chambers in company with two other employees of The Advertiser news rooms was walking south on Richmond street near King street a few minutes after three o'clock this morning when he heard what he thought was an explosion in the vicinity of the Dominion Savings building, looking back over his shoulder he saw the entire building enveloped in flames. "There just seemed to be a kind of muffled explosion and in less time than it takes to tell it the whole building seemed to be one seething mass of flames," said Mr. Chambers.

CHECK FOR \$200.

Fire Chief John Aitken received a letter at noon today from Edward Shea, who has a store in the Dominion Savings Building, congratulating the chief and his men for their efficient work during the fire, and a check for \$200, to be turned over to the firemen's benefit fund.

D. Campbell & Sons

Established 30 Years

INSURANCE

BLAMES AN EXPLOSION

Fire Chief Declares That Was Reason

For Fire's Start.
Fire Chief John Aitken, in speaking of the headway the fire had gained before the arrival of the brigade, said that the department responded promptly after they had received the alarm, but when it arrived on the scene the building was a mass of flames.

"We received the alarm from two boxes and from Officer Tom Noonan, who ran to the front door of the hall."

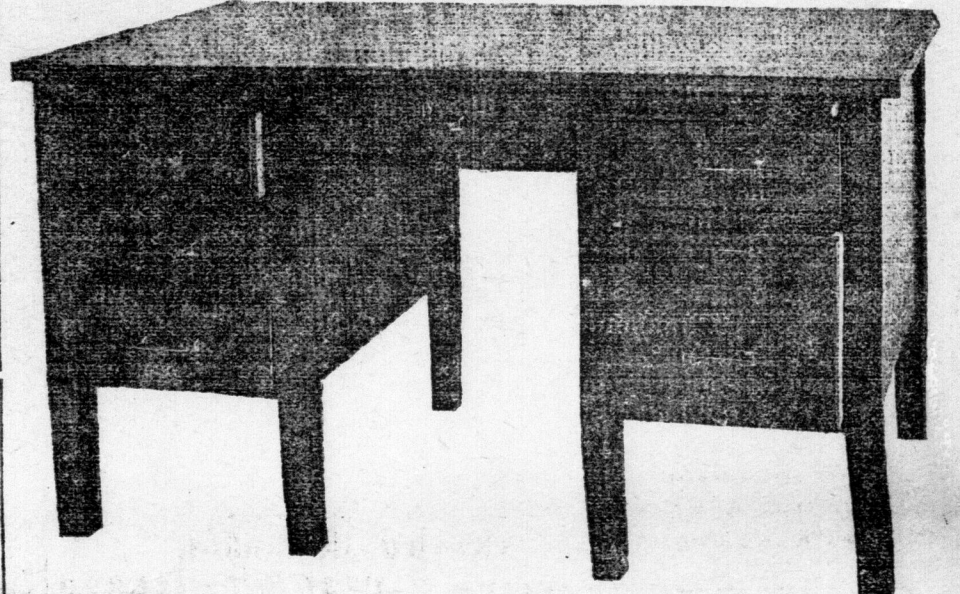
Something in the building must have exploded near the elevator shaft that gave the fire such a hold," said the chief.

APPEAL DISMISSED

[Canadian Press.]

Toronto, April 21.—The appellate division has dismissed the appeal of the Employers' Liability Assurance Corporation from a decision by Chancellor Boyd, awarding Edgar Reuther, of the Dominion Dressing Company, of London, Ont., \$2,000 on a fidelity guarantee policy on Martin Mumme, the representative of the company in Hamburg, Germany.

Office Furniture Desks, Tables, Chairs



Large Stock on Hand and Carload on Way.
Every Office Requirement Promptly Attended To.

The A. A. Langford Company, Limited

COMPLETE OFFICE OUTFITTERS

TEMPORARY OFFICE

In Old City Hall Relief Office
(Now Royal Bank Building)

P. M. Millman & Co.

Limited.

Insurance Agency

A. McPherson Insurance Agency.
E. J. MacRobert Insurance Agency.
F. L. Evans Insurance Agency.

Phones 745 and 1600

Owing to fire in the Dominion Savings Building, we are now located (temporarily) in the office formerly occupied as a Relief Office in Old City Hall immediately at rear of the north side of the Arcade.

P. M. Millman & Co.

Limited.

GENERAL INSURANCE AGENTS AND BROKERS.

The Spring Diet

Calls for a change from the
requirements of colder weather.

The system is apt to be more or less clogged as a result of hearty eating for resisting cold. And so Nature has provided in the field grains wholesome nourishment to meet changing weather conditions, and rebuild played-out nerves.

Grape-Nuts

FOOD

—made of wheat and barley—serves a double purpose—

It not only furnishes true nourishment for body building, including the mineral phosphates especially required by nerves and brain, but, being partially predigested, it relieves the digestive organs that are overworked and clogged by a heavy diet.

Every spring new thousands take on Grape-Nuts as a part of their regular breakfast.

"There's a Reason"

—sold by Grocers everywhere.

Canadian Postum Cereal Co., Ltd., Windsor, Ont.

NOTICE!

On account of damage to our premises, The Dominion Savings Building, we will occupy temporary offices in the Bank of Toronto Chambers until further notice.

The Dominion Savings and Investment Society