# FIRE SWEEPS NEWARK DRY GOODS DISTRICT

Started in Snyder's Department Store and Spread in All Directions.

## SEVERAL LIVES MAY BE LOST

Firemen Buried Under Ruins of a Wall and Two Probably Fatally Injured -Civilian Terribly Burned-Loss Over \$1,000,000.

NEWARK, N. J., Feb. 27.-More than a score of buildings were destroyed to-night by a fire which swept through the dry goods district and did damage which it is estimated will be considerably in excess of \$1,000,000. No bodies have been found, but several persons are unaccounted for, and it is not known whether they escaped or were burned to death. A civilian rescued under thrilling circumstances is not expected to Four firemen survive his terrible burns. were caught under a falling wall and two of them are reported to be fatally injured. Many other firemen were more or less seriously burned or hurt by falling glass or by slipping up on the ice-coated streets. Those believed to be fatally injured are: SCHAEKELTON, OSCAR C., Superinten-

Company No. 4. BESSINGER, -, fireman, Engine Company No. 6.

dent of Snyder's department store.

HARRISON, WALTER, Captain of Engine

The fire started shortly after 6 o'clock inthe rear of W. V. Snyder's big four-story department store, which stood on the corner of Broad and Cedar Streets. On Broad Street it had a frontage of 75 feet, and extended back along Cedar Street 200 feet. At five minutes past 6 the several hundredemployes of the store had filed cut, leaving five or six sweepers behind. Just how many persons remained after that is not known. It is thought some of the engine room force and similar employes besides the sweepers may have been in the place. Some one passing along Broad Street saw

Within a minute, and before the alarm could be rung in from a box close by, the flames swept forward to the front, and the whole lower floor was a furnace. Before the first fire apparatus reached the scene the fire had mounted to the second and third stories. A TERRIBLE SPECTACLE. Meanwhile an enormous crowd had gath-

flames in the rear portion of the store.

ered, and were watching with intense excitement a man on the second floor, who was running from window to window in a frenzy of fear. As the first hook and ladder truck dashed up a ladder was raised and thrown against a window so as to break it. Before the firemen could ascend the man swung himself through the broken window and onto the ladder, but, quick as he was, the flames were quicker. As he reached the ladder a rush of flame came through the window, enveloping him. It receded a moment, and the man's clothing was seen to be ablaze. A fireman ran up the ladder on the under side and grabbed him to prevent him falling. Then others went up on the upper side

the shricking victim, whose flesh peeled off with the material. The firemen's hands were also badly burned, but they lowered the man down the ladder, and he was hurried off to St. Michael's Hospital in a police patrol wagon. He proved to be Oscar O. Schaekleton, sixty years of age, Superintendent of the store. He was making his usual round of inspection when caught by the fire. Watson Snyder, cashler of the firm, had just closed the safe, after putting in it the money turned in by the department cashiers, when he saw the fire. He started to investigate, but the flames advanced so rapidly he had to run. He succeeded in

and began tearing the burning clothing from

from an electric wire.

A second and then a general alarm was turned in, and all of the fifty odd pieces of fire apparatus in the city were rolling to the fire. All were urgently needed. Ten minutes after the flames were discovered they had leaped across Cedar Street and started in a southerly and westerly direction, and had also swept northward along Broad Street. On the east side of Broad Street is Military Park. Had there been buildings there they also would have been destroyed, for the flames swept far into the

getting out. He thinks the fire started

park, shriveling the limbs of the trees and burning the grass. The tar between the paving stones on Broad Street melted out and the street railroad tracks became so hot they could not be touched for a half block in advance of the fire as it spread up and down the street. DESTRUCTION ON BROAD STREET.

#### in laces and similar goods on the first floor, and offices of many kinds on the upper floors. This building was totally destroyed

Northward the fire entered the four-story building adjoining the Snyder Building. This was occupied by J. M. Mantz, dealer

with everything it contained. Next to it was the restaurant and confectionery store of T. B. Allen, one of the fashionable caterers of the city. Above his store were more offices of many kinds. This building was also burned. Adjoining it was the trunk store of C. B.

the store and all the upper floors, but left the front part almost untouched by the flames, although blackened by smoke. From Peddie's place the fire entered the big department store of David Strauss. The firemen made a desperate stand at this point to prevent the fire from getting into

Hartegen's jewelry store which was next in

Peddie. Here the fire gutted the rear of

the block, and is the place where the silver holder that figured in the Molineux case was purchased. They succeeded in saving the greater part of Strauss's store and in keeping the flames from the jeweler's prem-At the same time that the fire spread from Snyder's into Mantz's the flames leaped Cedar Street, on the south, and began to travel southward with fury as great as they attained on the north.

W. T. Rae, jeweler, occupied the store on the corner opposite Snyder's. Out of this nothing was saved. The most of the jewelry was locked in the safes and vaults. The store and the offices above it were quickly swept out by the flames, and a little after 7 o'clock this building had not a brick standing above a few feet over the sidewalk.

A solid party wall separated the jewelry store from P. J. Garrigan's drug store, which was the next south. This did not stop the flames, as they leaped around it, and this building soon went down. Cairn's photograph store and the galleries above it went next, and then the fire at-

tacked the rear end of the wing of the Bee Hive dry goods store, owned by L. S. Plaut & Co. Here the firemen concentrated and fought hard to keep the fire from entering the main building, which was separated from the rear portion and extension by a party wall with iron doors. The doors became red hot, and the task looked hopeless, but, although the wing was gutted, the firemen managed to prevent the flames from getting to the main building, thus checking their progress further to the south.

The firemen then made quick work of it at that end, as the fire had been so intense that it burned everything to ashes, and hence there was little left for it to feed upon in the burned area south of Cedar

Street. THE SCENE ON CEDAR STREET.

While the flames were thus eating the I heart out of the most important business

westward along Cedar Street on both sides. On the south side of this street the fire burned from No. 2, at the rear of Rae's store, to No. 24. These were all small stores in buildings three and four stories high, the upper floors being largely used as dwellings. In this row was Bierman's pawn shop.

block on Broad Street the fire was spreading

Bierman had in his place several thousand dollars' worth of valuable property, besides an immense amount of the crdinary things found in a pawn shop. On the north side of the street, back of Snyder's, the fire attacked a row of eleven

brownstone and brick buildings, having mostly stores on the ground floor, and offices on the upper floors. All the police in the city were on duty at the fire, except those absolutely needed on post. The posts were doubled in length tonight to enable as many men as possible to be at the fire.

A hundred thousand persons gathered and made the task of the police a difficult one. The crowd had to be forced back again and again as the advance of the flames caused the firemen to shift position back, which they were compelled to do again and again, owing to the great heat. Several times the men handling hose had to abandon it and fice from the flames which threatened to envelop them. Beyond the radius of the heat the men were coated with ice.

### Despite the danger and the rain of sparks

WOMEN FAINT, MEN FIGHT.

that fell upon them, the crowd insisted on pushing forward and getting as near the scene as the police would allow. Finally orders were given to extend the fire lines beyond two blocks on either side, and the crowd was pushed back and lines were stretched across the street. Women fainted in the fearful crush. Blows were exchanged and clothing was torn from backs in the crush. The streets for blocks were flooded and

ice covered as the water flowed from the fire outside the heated zone, but the crowd, defying the cold, stood for hours watching the conflagration, which was under control at 10:39. Shortly after 11 o'clock a wall at the rear of Snyder's, on Cedar Street, which had remained standing when the building to which it belonged had been destroyed collapsed. Firemen Bessinger and Thomas Brown of Engine No. 6 and Capt. Walter

Harrison and Fireman Elmer Gardner of No. 4 were caught beneath it. Immediately their comrades set to work getting them out of the ruins. Water was poured upon the heap to prevent the men being Lurned as well as crushed: Capt. Harrison and Fireman Brown were taken out unconscious, and it is believed they are fatally injured. They were taken to St. Michael's Hospital. Gardner and Bessinger were badly cut and bruised, but do not seem to have sustained serious in-They were taken to Police Headquarters, where their injuries were attended to by the police surgeon, who directed them to return to their quarters or their homes, Despite this, they returned to the fire, and

would not leave until a policeman informed the Chief of the Fire Department of the

doctor's orders. Then they were ordered

THE PRINCIPAL LOSSES.

obtained to-night.

The principal losses are:

by the Chief to go home.

W. V. Snyder & Co., Broad Street......\$500,000 J. M. Mantz, Broad Street, laces...... 15,000 I. Bornstein, Broad Street, shoes...... 15,000 L. S. Plaut & Co., Bee Hive, Broad Street 15,000 Bierman, pawn broker, Cedar Street.... 10,000 David Street day grand Street.... 5,000 David Strauss, dry goods, Broad Street... P. J. Garrigan, drugs, Broad Street.... W. T. Rae, jewelry, diamonds, Broad 5,000 5,000 Street
T. B. Allen, restaurant, Broad Street... 5,000 3,000 C. B. Peddie, trunks, Broad Street..... 2,500 Buildings, various owners...... 250,000

losses in property belonging to occupants of the offices. Several other firemen were hurt by falling glass or by slipping upon the ice. The amounts of insurance could not be

Besides these there are scores of smaller

T. B. Peddie & Co. recently made an assignment, and asked for a receiver, but carried a very large stock. Snyder & Co. will rebuild as soon as it is possible to arrange to do so. While the

fire was still burning their representative was looking for temporary quarters, and their heads of departments were listing goods needed to start in with. One of the firm said they would try and open within a week or ten days. Several firemen were slightly hurt by falling glass, or by falling on the ice which coated everything once the fire began to die down. After the fire was under control the trac-

tion company set men at work stringing

new frolley wires on Broad Street.