

### INQUIRY INTO CAUSE OF CONFLAGRATION PROMISES SENSATION

Early Developments Indicate That Lives of the Victims Might Have Been Saved.

### BUILDING WAS FIRE TRAP

Marshal Stevens Declares Law Covering Escapes, Lights and Other Safety Devices Was Ignored.

Peculiar circumstances in connection with the fire in the New Ross hotel, 189 1/2 Third street, in which three men lost their lives early yesterday morning, are to be the subject of a thorough investigation by Fire Marshal Jay W. Stevens and Deputy District Attorney Robinson. They refuse to detail at present what they consider peculiar circumstances, however.

Every person who was in the house when it burned and who could be found yesterday was brought before Fire Marshal Stevens, Captains Grace and Roberts of the "arson squad" and Deputy District Attorney Robinson, and closely questioned.

Mrs. Morris, the landlady, was questioned in the afternoon but no information as to how the fire started could be secured from her. She declared she had no idea as to what caused the fire. The investigation will be continued, even today, in an effort to determine the real cause of the fire.

**Building Veritable Fire Trap.** Fire Marshal Stevens went through the building again yesterday afternoon and declared that the structure was a fire trap. He reiterated his statements that failure of the owners of the structure to comply with the law concerning the installation of fire escape light at the hall ends leading to the fire escapes, and half-glass doors to the rooms leading to the hall, contributed to the death of the three men. The owners had been warned several times of the law violations.

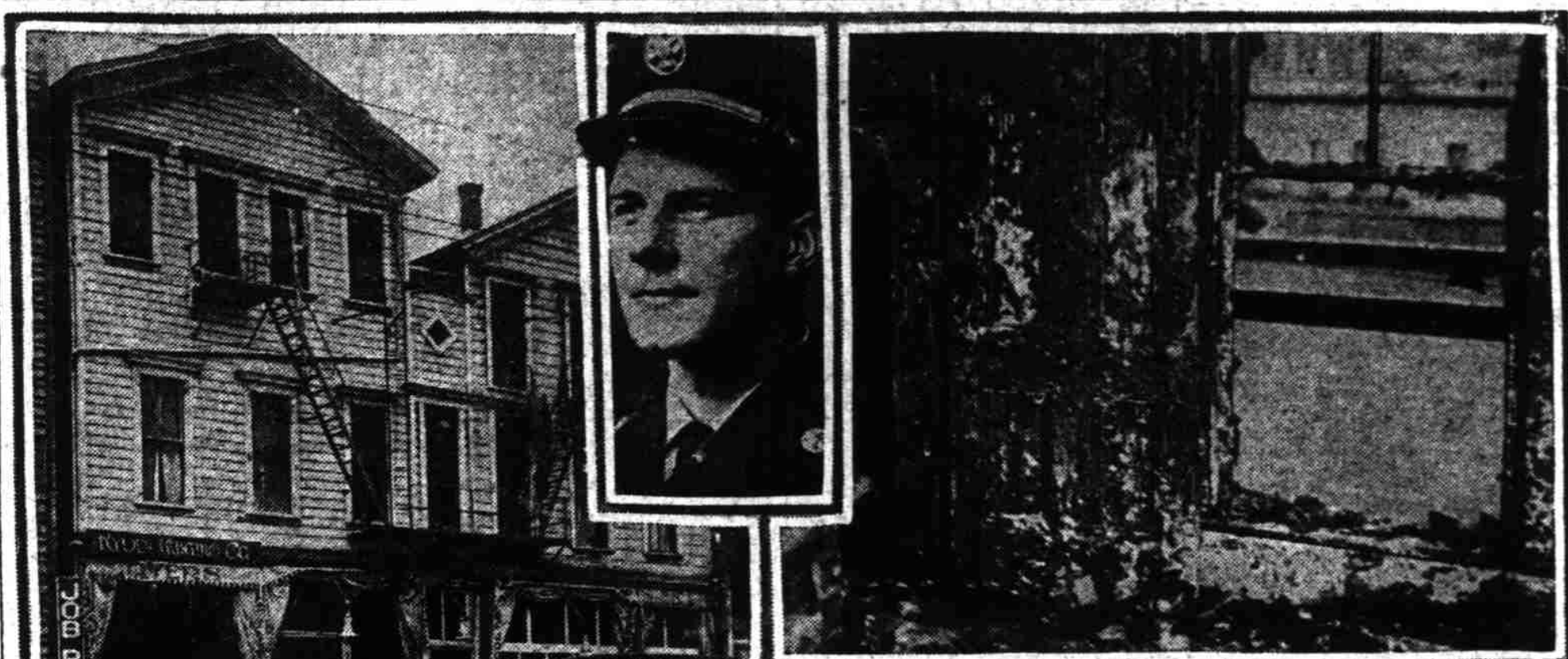
Stevens found that not a single room had an entrance directly to the main hall on the second floor. The building was two former dwellings joined together in the middle and each had separate halls with a single opening from each hall to the main hall, which had stairs leading to the street. Entrance to some of the rooms could be had only by going through other rooms.

### Location of Escapes Unknown.

Stevens also pointed out the narrowness of fire escape on the front of the building to the spot where the bodies of Taylor Washburn and Ernest F. Marquardt or Marquette, were found near the head of the stairs. It is believed that both men could have gotten out to the fire escape had they known its location. The law requires that red lights marked "fire escape" be placed at the end of the halls leading to the fire escapes, but Stevens says that such lights were absent in the building. Stevens declares that the men could have seen a warning light, had there been one in the hall, and then could have stepped only a few feet and their lives would have been saved.

Stevens declares violations of the law of this nature exist in a number of the building houses of the city. He says that in a number of

### DISREGARD OF FIRE LAWS CONTRIBUTES TO THREE DEATHS



### Peace and Plenty Club Loves Work

The Boys Have Been Assigned a Boom Where They Shine Shoes and Take Orders for Bird Homes.

Members of the Peace and Plenty club of Kenton have gone into business. They have discovered it is more fun to work than to play.

This club which was organized by Mrs. H. M. Bransford some months ago for the purpose of keeping its members out of mischief and directing into proper channels their surplus energy, has grown in interest and usefulness until now a number of the boys, having saved their nickels and dimes that in former days were not only spent as fast as they came but were not always well spent, have been saving with a view to going into business.

### Second Bundle Day By Parent-Teachers

January 29 will be the second bundle day of the winter which the Portland Parent-Teacher Council is sponsoring. All clothing collected on the first bundle day has long since been given out to the sick and needy children and it is necessary to make this second call on the people of Portland.

### Many Violations Are Noted.

"Within the last 60 days, our office had 40 men detailed to find these violations," said Stevens last night. "The men went into buildings early in the morning before daybreak and found many cases where the landlords or managers had turned off the fire escape lights leaving only one or two lights burning in the halls. In all cases notice was served on them that further violations would not be tolerated."

"In case of this fire, I. A. Ackerman, one of the owners, was notified in writing that the law was being violated in regard to the installation of fire escape lights and half-glass doors leading to the halls and later upon Mr. Ackerman's death, Mark Schlusel, the agent, was notified.

"We had the matter up with Mr. Schlusel not later than Friday morning and he informed us that he could take no action until he got word from the Ackerman heirs."

### TAXPAYERS' LEAGUE IS URGING WATER POWER DEVELOPMENT

The Taxpayers' league went on record Saturday as urging in the strongest terms that the legislature adopt the memorial calling upon congress to take prompt and efficient action for the development of the waterpower of the nation and especially of the west.

It is the belief of the taxpayers' league, composed of many of Portland's influential business men and property owners, that action by the Oregon legislature in adopting and forwarding the memorial will be responsibly heeded by congress.

The memorial asks congress to act during its present session by the adoption of legislation providing an preliminary to waterpower development.

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### BODIES OF VICTIMS OF YESTERDAY'S FIRE ARE ALL IDENTIFIED

Inquest Will Be Held Tuesday to Attempt to Fix Responsibility for Deaths.

### CAUSE OF FIRE UNKNOWN

Landlady States She Is Unable to Give Any Explanation—Funerals Are Being Arranged.

The bodies of the three men who lost their lives in the fire that partially destroyed the New Ross hotel, 189 1/2 Third street, early yesterday morning had all been positively identified and tentatively claimed by relatives and tentatively claimed by relatives last night at the public morgue, and plans are under way for funerals while Deputy Coroner Smith makes arrangements for an inquest, to be held Tuesday evening at the courthouse.

The remains of Taylor Washburn, the Eugene rancher, will be taken to Oregon City today, and following services at 1 o'clock in the afternoon, will be interred in Mountain View cemetery. Relatives of Ernest F. Marquardt called at the public morgue last night, but did not announce funeral plans. Marquardt leaves a sister in the city.

### Locate Logan's Relatives.

Relatives of Thomas Logan, the third man, wired from Davenport, Ia., stating that he had considerable property in California, and asked that he be buried here with funds from that estate. A brother was located at Davenport.

The coroner's office learned last night that Washburn's home was in Eugene, and that he and his wife were on the way to Keazo, Wis. Mrs. Washburn was greatly surprised to learn that her husband was still in the

city when news of the death was received, stating that she supposed he had gone on to Keazo. The Washburns stopped at the Bushmark hotel, where they were registered as being from Eugene.

In an attempt to fix the liability for the fire, the coroner last night announced that an inquest would be held Tuesday, and the date is set that far ahead in order that the fire marshal may complete his investigation and have his evidence ready to submit.

The fire in the New Ross house started shortly before 6 o'clock in the morning, and swept through the tinder-dry frame structure with frightful speed.

**Fire of Unknown Origin.** Two women and six men were in the hotel asleep and the cause of the deaths is ascribed by the fire marshal to the fact that the hall had no lights in them indicating the presence of the fire escapes.

The fire was of unknown origin. It started on the second floor and swept in fan-shaped formation upwards and towards the front of the old structure.

Mrs. Ida Morris, manager of the hotel, and Helen Flint, a young domestic, escaped from the house in their night clothing. They sat on a narrow ledge just below the second story windows until rescued by the firemen.

Frank Talbert, a motorman on the North and South Portland line, was badly cut on the hand and leg as a result of breaking his way through a rear window when the fire drove Charles Ehlers, his roommate, and himself from their quarters. Talbert is in the Good Samaritan hospital.

Washburn slept in a front room on the second floor, and one of his windows opened on the fire escape. Instead of going out that way, he ran into the hall when awakened and ran west through the hall towards the stairs, instead of turning east and stepping on the fire escape in the hall.

**Police Discover Fire.** Marquardt ran from his room on the third floor, supposedly for the purpose of rescuing Mrs. Morris, for his body, as well as that of Washburn, was found outside her door.

Logan, a logger who had rented his room at 10 o'clock Friday night, when aroused by the fire, ran about the third floor, in confusion, apparently, for his body was found lying in the door of a closet, his head reposing a few inches from a window-sill through which he might have dropped 10 feet in safety to a flat

tin roof below. The fire was discovered by Patrolman E. J. Helms, who with Police Sergeant Bunn and a squad of half a dozen other officers, assisted in the rescue of the survivors.

The total loss was estimated at about \$3000, of which a portion was covered by insurance. The building was owned by the L. A. Ackerman estate. Several business places underneath the rooming house were slightly damaged by water.

**Fire Recalls Old Murder.** The New Ross rooming house was not the scene of the Brown trunk murder, Portland's first trunk mystery, as was stated by members of the fire bureau yesterday.

That murder happened at 187 Third street, north of the Ross house, according to Mrs. Celia Lewis of the Eaton hotel, one of the owners of the burned building.

The Brown murder took place in 1882. The body was buried under the house but not deep enough but what the odor of decay soon permeated the house. It was dug up and started for the river in a hack. The team became frightened, dumped it out on the streets and it was with difficulty gotten to the site of the Washburn mill after daylight. Longshoremen working near saw it dumped in the river and brought about the discovery of the murder.

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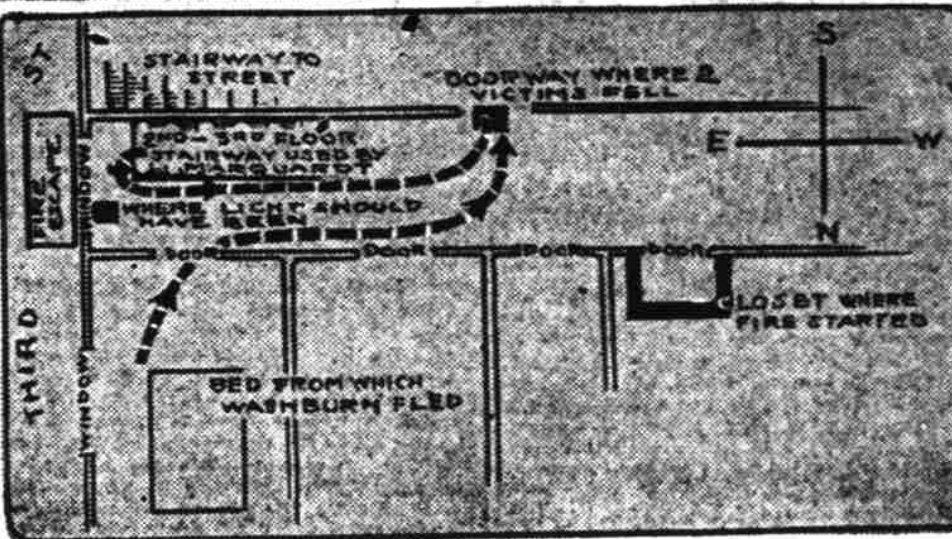
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Above, left to right—New Ross hotel at 189 1/2 Third street, in which three men lost their lives in a fire early Saturday morning; Fire Marshal Jay W. Stevens, whose office had several times notified the owners and agent of the property that the regulations relative to the proper location of fire escape lights, etc., were not being observed; corner of room on third floor in which Thomas Logan met his death by running into a closet when a drop of a few feet from the window to an adjoining roof would have led to safety. Below—Diagram shows where Ernest Marquardt and Taylor Washburn lost their lives when a light immediately adjoining the fire escape might have pointed the way to safety.

### Fourth and Last Week of Our Annual January

# Pre-Inventory SALE.

Timely Sale of 200 Pairs of Sample Blankets Both Wool and Cotton at 65c Up to \$7.95 a Pair



An Actual Saving of One-Fourth to One-Third On Every Pair

Grey, Tan, White and Plaid Blankets in Wool and Cotton and in All Sizes and Weights—Some Slightly Soiled on the Outside Fold—Others More or Less Mussed From Handling—All Are Extraordinary Values at the Prices Quoted for This Sale—Profit by an Early Selection.

Come to This Sale and Pay One-Fourth to One-Half Less Than Regular Prices on All Remnants, Odds and Ends and Short Lengths In the Domestic Section

You Have Choice From Gingham, Percales, Cotton Suitings, Lawns, Flannelettes, Silk-Mixed Fabrics, Tea Cloths, Lunch Cloths, Tray Cloths, Huck Towels, Damask Towels, Bureau Scarfs, Dollies, Napkins, etc., etc. Those who are wise will purchase for both present and future use. Not again for many a day will you meet with such a splendid opportunity for profitable buying of such goods.

Pre-Inventory Price Reductions on Embroideries Embroideries to 25c at 10c Yard Fine Baby Sets and Edges—Swiss and Cambric Skirtings—Wide Gallons and Bands—Beading Edges—Ribbon Gallons and Beadings.

Embroideries to \$1.50 at 77c Yard Beautiful 27 inch, high-grade Organdie and Batiste Flouncings in patterns suitable for party and graduation dresses. All Sort of Laces to 75c at 25c Yard Included are 18 and 24 inch Shadow Flouncings—Gold and Silver Edges on Silk Nets—Venise and Net Top Edges—25 and 30 inch Plain and Spotted Nets.

Fur Trimmings to Close at Half Price Our entire stock of Fur Trimmings to close at half price—Included are all popular widths and styles—Coney, Opposum, Beaver, Nutria, Mole, Hudson Seal Imitation Ermine, etc.

Pre-Inventory Sale of Women's and Misses' Shoes at \$1.69 Pair Regular Values to \$3.00 Broken lines, including all sizes from 3 to 5 1/2, and only desirable styles and reliable qualities. Most all come with low heels, patent vamp and mat kid top.

The Greatest of All Corset Sales Choice From Such Well-Known Makes As R. & C. Henderson and Merito—Broken Lines and Discontinued Numbers, Regularly Sold to \$2.00 Pair, at 95c In the assortment will be found a model to suit every figure and all sizes. Lines Selling Regularly to \$3.00 in Above Makes, Have \$1.45 Been Reduced for This Sale to the Special Price of, Pair \$1.45 This season's popular styles, with medium or low bust and the fashionable topless models. Many are shown in front-lace styles. The materials are batistes, brocades, light and heavy coutils, both in white and in pink. SATISFACTION GUARANTEED. Remember the Advantages of First Choice

Store Opens at 8:30 A. M. Saturdays at 9 A. M. Robert's Bros. THIRD & MORRISON The Most in Value—The Best in Quality Stores Closes at 5:30 P. M. Saturdays at 6 P. M.



rect proportion; especially in these days, when there is temptation to sacrifice the elements of style and quality for profit. —This store is seeking to enhance Quality; to lead in Style, and to be just in Price. —Here are plentiful stocks of America's best clothes—I believe there is none better—fairly priced. I rely upon your good judgment to add its weight to my own.

MEN are interested in interesting apparel—first, in Quality; second, in Style; third, in Price. —It's a most happy combination when these three essentials are present in their cor-

—I neither expect nor desire to sell all the clothes sold in Portland. I do desire, however, to see them sold by the merchants who sell men's apparel only; that means more homes in Portland—a more even distribution of business and a greater, more prosperous city in which to live. Ben Selling Morrison at Fourth

### ARMY WOULD ENROLL WOMEN AVIATORS

Washington, Jan. 20.—(I. N. S.)—A plan which can be depended upon to interest many women on the Pacific coast is one providing for the enrollment of women aviators in the army aviation reserve corps. The plan is fathered by Lawrence Sperry, young aviator of New York. He has interested Major General Leonard Wood in the plan and as a result Mrs. Waldo Pierce, an aviator, has been granted permission to fly at Governors Island.

The military purpose of the woman's reserve corps would be the watching for enemy aircraft in time of war, carrying information and doing a score of useful things only slightly less hazardous than actual air fighting which would be left to the men. Rear Admiral Peary and other prominent military and scientific men have endorsed the plan, stating that the recent exploit of Miss Ruth Law has demonstrated the ability of women to handle aircraft.

### RECEIPTS OF GOLD IN U. S. SHOW INCREASE

Washington, Jan. 20.—(I. N. S.)—The mints and assay offices of the United States received during 1916 gold amounting to \$508,982,262, according to the treasury department. This represents a substantial increase over receipts of 1915, due principally to heavy importations of foreign bullion and coin.

### Called a "Knocker," Sues for \$10,000

Sunbury, Pa., Jan. 20.—(I. N. S.)—Alleging he was called "the biggest knocker" in the township, Jacob E. Leisenring, a resident of Ralpho township, and a former county commissioner, has brought suit against Thomas Clark, a neighbor, in which he seeks to recover \$10,000 for the insult. Clark also called him a beat, Leisenring says.

### RADIO SERVICE TO BE WIDELY EXTENDED

Washington, Jan. 20.—(I. N. S.)—During 1917 the United States government will extend its system of wireless stations so that to possession or section of the country will be isolated, according to the radio service of the navy department. From the great central wireless station at Radio, Va., a suburb of Washington, it will be possible to communicate almost instantaneously with all possessions of the United States, the experts of the radio service predict.

Already there is an extensive chain of wireless stations along both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. There are large stations in Alaska, Hawaii and the Philippine Islands. These are to be improved and extended so that in time of war, telephone and telegraph and cable connection should be interrupted, the government still could keep in touch with all possessions through the medium of the wireless.

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