

DAILY CAPITAL JOURNAL

FIREBUG TOUCHES MATCH TO BRICK MILL

Loss Will Exceed Hundred Thousand Dollars---Several Clues to the Identity of the Guilty Person

The Willamette Valley Flouring Mills, located in North Salem, were destroyed by fire about 8 o'clock last evening, and are a total loss. The fire was of incendiary origin, and was started at a number of places almost simultaneously.

When discovered the flames were very small, and were on the ground floor of the big brick mill. The fire department made a fine run and arrived at the burning buildings shortly after the flames had been turned in, but the firemen were helpless on account of the lack of water. The ditch was dry, and it took almost half an hour before a stream could be obtained.

The brick mill was doomed from the start, and could not have been saved. The flax fibre soon became a molten mass of flames, and the huge timbers distributed their share to the flames. The wood and iron mill building north of the brick structure was soon in flames, and was entirely consumed. For a time the fire threatened the residences on Front street, but they were saved.

While the fire was of incendiary origin the motive is hard to explain. The property is owned by T. B. Wilcox, of Portland, and was occupied by Eugene Jones as a store house for his flax fibre. The loss is especially severe on Mr. Jones, as he was about to erect a linen

mill, and he will be compelled to wait until the new crop is prepared before starting his enterprise.

The city will thus be deprived of a splendid industry for several months, and the promoter will be seriously handicapped by the financial loss.

The alarm was turned in by W. H. Dancy, who was at an adjoining residence. His attention was called to the fire by a man yelling at the top of his voice, but he did not know the man.

Messrs Fuller and Douglas of the grocery store, started to the fire just when the alarm started, and as they were going through Marion square they met a man coming from the direction of the mill. They inquired of him where the fire was, and he replied that it was only a small blaze, and did not amount to much. Whether this incident has anything to do with the fire or not is hard to determine.

The mills were built in 1881 and 1882 by the Scotch Investment Company, of which Mr. Reid, of Portland, was the president. Reid was a well-known railroad promoter and financier, and about the same time built the West Side narrow gauge railroad south from Portland. The plant cost the Scotch company \$218,000, and with the ditch rights they expended upward of a quarter of a million of dollars. The foreign company operated the mills for about

four years, but the supply of wheat in the Willamette valley shortened, and the mill became an elephant on their hands. The capacity of the mill was 1000 barrels a day, and it had the reputation of being equipped with the finest machinery manufactured at that time. After several years of litigation the mill fell into the hands of the Salem Flouring Mills Company, who operated it for seven months, but it proved unprofitable, and they closed it down. Since that time the mills were used for a warehouse, or remained vacant, until 1892, when the flax company rented them.

The company of which Mr. Bosse is the resident manager, is known as the Pacific Coast Flax Company, and was organized with headquarters at Green Bay, Wisconsin, in 1892. They have operated under difficulties, but were just in condition to commence the manufacture of linen.

Evidences of Incendiarism.

There are many indications that it was clearly an act of incendiarism. The hour, on Sunday evening, when everybody was at church or at home, and the fire started in the brick building, and in a remote corner of it leaves no doubt about that. If the fire had started in the wooden building the brick might have been saved, although it is doubtful, as there was flax on the

outside and between the two, a stack nearly as large as a house. The incendiary had his instructions, and made a sure job of it, as the first arrivals say that the brick mill was burning at several places. What the motive could have been must be left to speculation. The destruction of so valuable a property in this deliberate manner is a crime that the authorities should leave no effort untried to find the perpetrator and award a just punishment.

Was a Grand Sight.

Seen from the southern limits of the city the fire was an awe-inspiring sight. The tall buildings, the large quantities of flax stored in them, and the clear night, with almost no wind, made the columns of flames and smoke reach half a mile into the sky. After the fire had burned awhile the wind was started blowing gently from the north, and the heat made a great streamer of white clouds form and float off to the south. The flames lighted up these masses of condensed vapor into a rosy red from below. When the walls fell at different times showers of sparks fell over the whole city. But the heavy rain of Sunday morning protected the roofs and buildings so that no further fires started. Through the vapor and smoke occasionally a flock of wild geese could be heard honking away across the sky.

Suspicious Character Seen.

Motorman J. G. Martzoff saw a suspicious character on his run to the fair grounds just before the fire. A negro, aged about 35, medium size and stout built, weighing about 160 pounds, was walking toward the fair grounds, and he passed him about the Minzenmeier place. Before he started back the noon arrived, and asked when the first train would leave for the south. He told him, but said he would have to walk down to the city to catch that train. Just then the first whistle blew. He thought from the negro's actions that he was a bad 'up man, but is satisfied now that he has something to do with the fire. He called the attention of several people to seeing him, and said he was tempted to arrest him, but, of course, had no authority.

Will Hadley, who resides with the family of George Swart, says that about 15 minutes before the alarm was sounded that he noticed a person striking matches at the southwest corner of the brick building, but supposed that it was some of the Japs who were in charge of the property.

When the alarm sounded Miss Ada Swart was in the parlor of their residence, and, rushing to the door, noticed flames burst from the southwest corner of the mill. At that time Mr. Hadley was in the house.

Fred Moyer was one of the first to see the flames, and raised an outcry in the neighborhood. The flames at that time were very small, and were confined to the southwest corner of the brick mill.

C. T. Stanton, a barber, who is employed in Ryan's barber shop, was at his residence just north of the bridge across Mill creek from the fire when the alarm was turned in. He ran over to the mill, and his attention was called, by a stranger, to two boards which were placed against the window at the southwest corner of the building. This was the only place that the building was afire at that time according to Stanton's observation. One of the boards was broken in the center, and the break was said to have been recent.

C. E. Toole, who also lives north of Mill creek, was coming home from town had stopped about 400 yards south of the mill at an apple tree, and, being hungry, he climbed up the tree, and started home when he met a man of medium height, who was walking toward Marion square at a very fast pace, he did not pay much attention to him, at the time, but noticed that he was a young man. Mr. Toole, when he came opposite the mill saw the fire, and running back to the residence of W. H. Dancy turned in the alarm. He

(Continued on Fourth Page.)



Ladies' Ready-to-Wear

New fall and winter styles in street and walking suits for women are arriving daily—beautiful creation, showing the latest approved ideas are among the newest arrivals. The entire stock has been most carefully selected and shows an individuality that is sure to appeal to all well groomed women. Then too, there are a number of the newest.

- BUTCHER COATS
 - TOURIST COATS
 - HAVELOCK COATS
 - RAIN COATS
- which have just been received. Come here for authoritative styles.

Umbrellas

Perhaps you haven't thought much about them the past week. All the more reason why you'll have to soon. Therefore be warned and armed in time.

Belts

New novelties in ladies' belts, such as the crushed velvets, with pretty gilt buckles, tailored belts, etc., etc.

PROTECTION SALE
23c to \$2.25

Dress Goods

We've chosen wisely for you, and you can depend upon it that every yard of goods we have in stock is critically correct. Notably among the things are a full line of CRAVENETTES which are sponged and shrunk ready for use. We show them in a wide range of wanted colors.

New Silks

We are showing a splendid variety of the newest changeable silks in the newest effects, for waists and petticoats. Among the most wanted colors will be found the different effects in bronze, green, blues and reds.

First floor.



"MÉRODE" (Hand Finished) UNDERWEAR

New Underwear

FOR FALL AND WINTER
The immense purchases we make in underwear secures us concessions in prices that we give you the benefit of by offering you the very best garments to be had at a less cost than you would expect to pay for similar qualities. Your best interests should tell you to lay in your fall and winter supplies now.

Collars

An entire new line of those pretty and effective embroideries.

TURNOVERS in all colors.

23c to 46c
Also a full line of the genuine Keiser collars and cuffs,
46c to 90c

NEW NECKWEAR NOW READY



Expansion - - Protection

So Many People

Are prone to consider a store's advertising as a detailed announcement of everything that the store has planned as "special" for the different days. If you consider our advertising that way you are making a great mistake. Not one-tenth of the happenings for any special day is ever printed in our store talks, no matter how much space it may occupy—couldn't possibly be.

Suitings

A fine large assortment of melton suitings, 55 to 58 inches wide, for skirts, coats and suits; real \$1.00 value.

EXPANSION SALE
73c

Ornaments

A fine assortment of the new ANCHOR, STARS and EAGLES, for the rustic brown suits.

Wednesday Only

WEDNESDAY SPECIAL NO. 198.
For this day's selling we offer the following lines of well known value.

Toilet Soaps

Witch Hazel, Mission Olive, California Poppy, Bay Rum, Benzoin, Number Line.

2 cakes for 5c
Wednesday Only

Go. Meyers & Sons
SALEM'S GREATEST STORE
THE WHITE CORNER



New Suit Cases

Another large line of suit cases received yesterday, which added to our already large stock gives us the largest and most complete line ever shown in the city. Full stock sale leather suit cases in all grades. Sole leather case, linen lined, shirt fold, full riveted.

EXPANSION SALE
\$4.60
Other grades ranging in price up to \$25.00



New Hats

A hat salesman here doesn't have to tell you that THAT style is becoming unless it truly is. We instruct everyone to exercise every care and attention in seeing that each customer is "batted" becomingly, if it takes a hundred try-ons. We can please you as to color, style and price.

EXPANSION SALE
90c to \$3.00

Gloves

The season's best offerings in silk lined Mochas, in browns, blacks, grays and modes.

EXPANSION SALE
\$1.15 to \$1.38
Full line of golf gloves, all colors,
EXPANSION SALE
23c



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Dressy Coats

Your taste in overcoats may be a little quieter than can be satisfied with many of the long, loose styles that are so popular. We have clothes for men of every taste and size and pocketbook. The illustration gives you an idea of one of the new styles for men. Come in and see the full line.

EXPANSION SALE PRICES PREVAIL.

Ladies' Sweaters

Ladies' all-wool cardinal and cream sweaters in all sizes just received. Extra values.

\$2.50

New numbers in HAND-MADE goods up to

\$7.50

NEW SWEATERS NOW READY