

# Testimony Of Firemen Heard

(Continued from page 3)

Q—In what section of the building were those old fashioned types of fuse blocks used?  
 A—There were all over, but they were mostly all taken out.  
 Q—But there were some there?  
 A—They were taken out by Palm-br and Watson.  
 Q—It does not make any difference who by. And the type of fuse block used ordinarily, except perhaps in a case of the intakes and for power, would be the screw type fuse, the socket type fuse?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—Let us go to the western wing of the building where the fire originated. Can you tell me definitely how many sets of fuses were in that wing? I mean by sets, two fuses to set, one to each wire.  
 A—There were five.  
 Q—Five sets?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—Where were they located?  
 A—In the basement.  
 Q—All in the basement?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—Did you have a supply of extra fuses?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—How many outlets were there in the western wing? Perhaps you cannot answer that?  
 A—No, sir.  
 Q—Speaking about the outlets, how many were there?  
 A—I cannot give that to you just now, I had an account of every light in the building.  
 Q—Can you figure it out by fuses?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—Down in the basement, how many lights were there?  
 A—Nine.  
 Q—Nine lights in the basement of the western wing?  
 A—That is in the dining room over where the fuses were.  
 Q—Nine in the dining room, how many in the rest of the basement?  
 A—There were three from that to the rest of the building.  
 Q—That is in the passage-way?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—What about the section of the building west of the dining room, the basement?  
 A—Going right through to the basement?  
 Q—Going over towards the infirmary to the basement?  
 A—That is the dining room.  
 Q—Where were the cells in the basement located?  
 A—Very near the centre of the building.  
 Q—Were there extra lights there?  
 A—Yes, sir, there was a light there.  
 Q—That would be one more?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—Would there be any more lights in that section?  
 A—Yes, there was one as you go out the door in the hall.  
 Q—Now, Mr. McKenzie, those lights would be all from those sets of fuses?  
 A—Yes, sir, direct from the board.  
 Q—Those five sets of fuses controlled, or safeguarded, the western wing only?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—There were fourteen lights in the basement?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—Would there be more than that on the first floor?  
 A—Of the ward?  
 Q—Of Ward 1 and 2?  
 A—Just three lights on each ward.  
 Q—And then there are some passage-ways and dormitory. There would be more than six lights on each floor?  
 A—There would be six lights, counting the attendant's room on the ward.  
 Q—That would give us eighteen lights on three floors?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—And then we had an attic above that?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—How many lights would there be there?  
 A—Just the two.  
 Q—That would be in the attic dormitory?  
 A—One in the dormitory and one in the main attic.  
 Q—Well, you mean to say in the room occupied by Sark and McVarrish and one in the attic dormitory?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—That attic dormitory was partitioned off from the rest of the unfinished attic? There were some rooms in that unfinished attic?  
 A—You mean the attic where the patients were sleeping?  
 Q—I mean there was an attic dormitory, there was a room occupied by McQueen and one occupied by McVarrish and Sark, and then there was an attic dormitory outside of that?  
 A—Yes.

Q—In that unfinished attic there were two or three rooms?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Did they have lights?  
 A—One in each.  
 Q—(Mr. Stewart) McQueen was in this room.  
 Q—(Mr. Beer) This is in the other part.  
 Q—(Mr. Beer) There were at least thirty-eight lights for five sets of fuses?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—Did you know the capacity of the fuses?  
 A—Yes, thirty amperes.  
 Q—Thirty amperes?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—That is a very heavy fuse?  
 A—Yes, sir, a very heavy fuse.  
 Q—How long have they been there?  
 A—Ever since I went there.  
 Q—They were using them when you went there and you just continued using them?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—Mr. Beer.  
 Q—Were all the fuses of those five sets thirty ampere fuses?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—Did you have spare fuses?  
 A—Yes, we always had spare fuses.  
 Q—Have you ever known these thirty ampere fuses to blow out? We are speaking of the one wing?  
 A—The male wing.  
 Q—Have you ever replaced any?  
 A—We have changed them, but not for being blown out.  
 Q—Why did you change them?  
 A—We would be changing them around for dampness. They would get corrugated up.  
 Q—The dining room is damp?  
 A—There would always be a certain amount of dampness, scrubbing with warm water.  
 Q—And brass and copper is highly subject to corrosion?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—But you never tried lighter fuses in there?  
 A—No.  
 Q—Did you have any lighter fuses?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—What were they for?  
 A—When they were putting in the new work in the other part of the building we used only fifteen.  
 Q—How long have they been at the work?  
 A—The female side was all completed.  
 Q—It was completed? It was just the last year you had lighter fuses?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Let us take the cottage, you live in the cottage?  
 A—Yes, not now.  
 Q—You did live in it?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—It was electrically lighted?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—What capacity fuses did you have there?  
 A—Twenty-five.  
 Q—That is very heavy fuse?  
 A—There was more than one line, there was the convalescent on the same line.  
 Q—There would be quite a number of lights on that line?  
 A—Yes, quite a few.  
 Q—You are quite familiar with the wiring throughout the whole western wing?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Was it all concealed wiring?  
 A—No, sir, not all.  
 Q—Was most of it?  
 A—Most of it.  
 Q—How was it up in the attic?  
 A—The wires in the attic were all concealed but coming from McQueen's room across to the sewerage that was there. That was used years ago for an attendant's room.  
 Q—What kind of wiring was that?  
 A—Common black wire.  
 Q—Tubing? It ran into McQueen's room?  
 A—It came up through McQueen's room.  
 Q—Was it exposed in McQueen's room?  
 A—No, there was a beading over it. That is the way all wiring was, a wooden beading.  
 Q—Was there any break in that?  
 A—Yes, there was a fuse box not at present time. It was taken out.  
 Q—When?  
 A—Four years ago.  
 Q—Who took that out—an electrician?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Were there any loose ends of wire or any of that metal left?  
 A—No, it was all connected up and closed over.  
 Q—By beading?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—So that in reality there was no exposed wire in McQueen's room?  
 A—No, not in McQueen's room.  
 Q—This beading you spoke of, of what was it constructed?  
 A—Wood.

Q—It would be a beam with two grooves in it, which would go across the wall and then a light piece of moulding over the top?  
 A—Yes, it would fit over the wires.  
 Q—How was that moulding secured?  
 A—Nailed with small brass nails.  
 Q—So that it could be easily torn off?  
 A—It could be taken off. It would not be hard to take off.  
 Q—You could take it off with your hands?  
 A—No, not easy. The brass was put in thick.  
 Q—If you were a little bit desperate you could take it off?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—And that came up from the floor below?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—And went up the side of the wall in McQueen's room? To the ceiling?  
 A—No, that is as far as it come.  
 Q—It stopped there?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—You said it ran to the toilet?  
 A—It did not come up any further. It branched across to the toilet.  
 Q—Isn't the toilet across the attic floor?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—The wires came up on the inside of the south wall of McQueen's room?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Did they go right up to the ceiling of McQueen's room?  
 A—Yes, right up.  
 Q—And then crossed on the ceiling?  
 A—No, they were on the inside.  
 Q—They were not exposed?  
 A—No, just in a line coming to the toilet.  
 Q—This line was on the ceiling?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—It had beading over it?  
 A—No.  
 Q—It was open wiring across the ceiling of the attic dormitory?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—And then into the toilet?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Was there a light in the toilet?  
 A—No.  
 Q—By doing that they would go almost directly over the dumb waiter shaft?  
 A—Right alongside.  
 Q—But not over it? Say this was the shaft that came along here. Here is the McVarrish room, we will draw a line, there is the dumb waiter?  
 A—The wires run right across here.  
 Q—Right across the top of the shaft?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—You had a light in the centre of the attic dormitory?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—How was it fed?  
 A—Off this line.  
 Q—Was there another line running straight down the building to it?  
 A—It came back to the McVarrish-Sark room to the centre of the attic dormitory.  
 Q—There was at one time, we understand, a dumb waiter used in order to hoist food up to feed the patients?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—And we understand that the use of this dumb waiter had been discontinued and other means of transporting the food was used? That is correct?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—It was supposed to be secured on each floor?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—So that no person could gain entry to it?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Was this secured at each floor?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Are you sure?  
 A—They were supposed to be nailed.  
 Q—Are you sure they were secured to each floor?  
 A—I am not positive.  
 Q—Did you ever look at the opening of the elevator shaft?  
 A—Not particularly.  
 Q—As a practical man you would realize, no doubt, that any shaft through a building acts as a flue in case of a fire?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—And as engineer in charge of the mechanical and constructional details you would know it would be your duty to look after those things, wouldn't you?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—I know there is possibly a thousand and one things to look after, but at the same time I am sorry you can't give me that information. Let us go back to the blind attic. You say the elevator shaft penetrated into the blind attic?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—To what height above the beams from the ceiling of the attic dormitory would the dumb waiter shaft rise?  
 A—Just to the level of the beams.  
 Q—What was the construction of the dumb waiter shaft?  
 A—It was closed over and it was just the wheel where the elevator

was.  
 Q—The wheel was there?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—Was there any tackle?  
 A—No.  
 Q—Through McQueen's room.  
 Q—Up into the attic?  
 A—No.  
 Q—Up in the blind attic, where did they come up?  
 A—On the outside dormitory, toward the other end.  
 Q—On the outside dormitory. Show me where the wiring came up?  
 A—The line came up through here.  
 Q—It came up in the unfinished attic part?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Mr. Stewart.  
 Q—Did it follow the main north wall of the building?  
 A—The south wall.  
 Q—Mr. Beer.  
 Q—Did the unfinished part of the attic could you see wires going up? Looking at the wall could you see the wires going up?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—How were they protected, in the unfinished attic going up the blind attic?  
 A—They weren't protected.  
 Q—They weren't covered with beading?  
 A—No.  
 Q—What were they, just tube?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—To what were they fastened?  
 A—To the wall.  
 Q—Was it a brick wall?  
 A—No, wood.  
 Q—You went up to the blind attic and you went over to where the wires came up through the attic ceiling? From there where did they go?  
 A—From where they came up?  
 Q—You are up in the blind attic and tracing the wiring, how did they go?  
 A—They went over the centre of the dormitory.  
 Q—What happened there?  
 A—They branched from there into this room.  
 Q—They branched diagonally to the Sark-McVarrish room?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—By doing that they would go almost directly over the dumb waiter shaft?  
 A—Right alongside.  
 Q—But not over it? Say this was the shaft that came along here. Here is the McVarrish room, we will draw a line, there is the dumb waiter?  
 A—The wires run right across here.  
 Q—Right across the top of the shaft?  
 A—Yes.  
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 A—Yes.  
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 A—Yes.  
 Q—And we understand that the use of this dumb waiter had been discontinued and other means of transporting the food was used? That is correct?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—It was supposed to be secured on each floor?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—So that no person could gain entry to it?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Was this secured at each floor?  
 A—Yes.  
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 A—Just to the level of the beams.  
 Q—What was the construction of the dumb waiter shaft?  
 A—It was closed over and it was just the wheel where the elevator

the beam right where the light was coming down through.  
 Q. I see, there was just a hole in the ceiling?  
 A. Yes, sir, I guess years ago there used to be a fixture.  
 Q. What did you do about that?  
 A. About the wiring?  
 Q. You say the wire was coming down through a hole, what did you do about it?  
 A. There was nothing to be done about it.  
 Q. Well, why did you go up?  
 A. I think the last time I was up there I went to put a light in, a bulb, and the cord was hanging down. I went up and pulled the cord through.  
 Q. The light was high, you could not reach it?  
 A. Yes, sir.  
 Q. How tall are you?  
 A. Six feet.  
 Q. Then you could easily reach 8 1/2 feet?  
 A. Pretty close to it.  
 Q. On a chair you could go considerably more than that?  
 A. Yes.  
 Q. How high was the ceiling in this attic? I would say it was a pretty low ceiling, isn't it?  
 A. No, sir, fairly high. I would judge about the same height as this ceiling here.  
 Q. How long was the piece of drop cord from the ceiling?  
 A. It was hanging down five feet, probably a little more.  
 Q. And if there was a drop cord hanging down five feet from the ceiling and you took a chair and stood on it you could easily reach it?  
 A. Of course the cord might not have been just five feet.  
 Q. Was there any other reason why you went up there?  
 A. No, sir.  
 Q. Were you having any trouble with the lights?  
 A. No, sir.  
 Q. These lights in the attic dormitory in the McVarrish-Sark room, how were they controlled?  
 A. Just turned off.  
 Q. A switch?  
 A. No, sir, a button on the light.  
 Q. How did they turn out the light in the attic dormitory?  
 A. There was a switch outside the door.  
 Q. You just stated you could not reach the light in the attic dormitory?  
 A. No, sir.  
 Q. Was it necessary for them to be reached?  
 A. No, sir, that is the reason they were so high.  
 Q. What about the Sark-McVarrish room, could the light be reached there?  
 A. No, sir, not without getting up on a bed or something.  
 Q. There was no open wiring in the Sark-McVarrish room?  
 A. No, sir.  
 Q. (Mr. Stewart) Were all the lights in the attic controlled by one switch?  
 A. Yes, sir.  
 Q. (Mr. Beer) That would be the attic dormitory?  
 A. Yes, sir.  
 Q. There was a light in this attic as well?  
 A. Yes, sir.  
 Q. It was controlled separately?  
 A. Yes, sir.  
 Q. There was a door there between the attic dormitory and the main attic?  
 A. Yes, sir.  
 Q. Was that door kept locked all the time?  
 A. Yes, sir.  
 Q. As a technical man, Mr. McKenzie, you would have considered from all angles what might have caused this fire, since the fire, you have thought it over, you would like to feel you were not responsible in any way?  
 A. No, sir.  
 Q. You would like to feel that?  
 A. Yes, sir.  
 Q. You would like to know that you did your duty?  
 A. Yes, sir.  
 Q. Then on the other hand, as is nearly always the case, it comes to you that perhaps there were two or three little details left undone, there generally is, you know. We are all human?  
 A. Yes, sir.  
 Q. The main object in this investigation is to find out the cause of the fire and neither Mr. Stewart nor myself had a familiar knowledge of the building like an employee out there and especially a man in the position like you are, therefore we have to rely on the information given us in order to get at some conclusion, and would seem a waste of time for us to sit here day after day questioning the employees without getting anywhere. I am not saying we are not getting anywhere at all, but we want the whole truth about the matter. As far as responsibility is concerned, that is another matter; but if there is any information that you have regardless of the fact that you are under oath, you can always say in giving an oath, that you think so and so, without it being necessary that it is your sworn statement. I would like you to tell anything you know that would be of any assistance, perhaps you can do that now.  
 A. The rosette was on the side of

Or any conclusions you might have come to in regard to it?  
 A. The whole trouble was that when the fire was noticed first it had such headway that it was pretty hard to judge just how it started.  
 Q—Can you give us your opinion of how the fire started?  
 A—It is pretty hard for anybody to judge how the fire started.  
 Q—When did you first see the fire?  
 A—About ten minutes at eight.  
 Q—You gave the alarm?  
 A—Henry Jenkins.  
 Q—Did you look out there? You were in the fire room?  
 A—Yes, I was sitting on the engine. I went right direct to the attic.  
 Q—Had the fire broken through the roof then?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—You saw that?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—How?  
 A—We went right out a side door to get to the side of the building.  
 Q—(Mr. Stewart) You went in the north west corner of the wing?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—What did you find when you went to the attic?  
 A—It was full of smoke and fire and the patients were coming down.  
 Q—Had those who were sleeping in the attic come out?  
 A—Some were coming down the stairs. Most of them were down.  
 Q—Who was in the attic?  
 A—Charles Jenkins and Morson Sherran and Henry Jenkins.  
 Q—And were they able to get about from one part of the attic to another?  
 A—At that time, no sir.  
 Q—What about McQueen's room then?  
 A—That is what they were trying to get into to save him. The whole attic was afire and blazing.  
 Q—You blew the whistle?  
 A—Mr. Jenkins blew the whistle. As soon as he told me about the fire I told him to blow the whistle and I ran to the attic.  
 Q—Were they using any water then?  
 A—They were using the hose.  
 Q—How was it working?  
 A—The water was very good but there was no pressure.  
 Q—Were you down on the lower floors?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—How about the pressure there?  
 A—It was better on the lower floors.  
 Q—They have fire drill there some times?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—You were there?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—What about the hose on those occasions?  
 A—Fairly good shape. If there were any leaks or anything wrong we repaired them.  
 Q—What about the pressure?  
 A—Fairly good pressure.  
 Q—Would they turn on all the hose at once?  
 A—Most of them would be on as you would go through the wards. They would have the hose turned out the window.  
 Q—But you could not tell anything about the pressure that way?  
 A—No, sir.  
 Q—On the first floor they would have quite a pressure and it would get less the farther up you would go?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—Was the pressure any different at the fire drills than it was the night of the fire?  
 A—No, sir.  
 Q—Did you realize that your water supply wasn't sufficient on account of the low pressure?  
 A—Yes, sir.  
 Q—That was generally known there among the employees?  
 A—Yes, sir, I always was scared and dreaded fire especially before we got the new big pump.  
 Q—Apparently the pump did not increase the pressure?  
 A—We always had a full supply in the tank.  
 Q—But you did not have pressure and consequently the supply was no good? Isn't that right?  
 A—Yes.  
 Q—When did the city firemen reach the scene of the fire?  
 A—I would judge around 9 o'clock, probably a few minutes before.  
 Q—What progress had the fire made on the roof when they reached there?  
 A—Most all the main side of the roof was on fire.  
 Q—But it did not go in?  
 A—Not to the main part of the building. The roof had not fallen in but the end that started first most of it was in.  
 Q—Did the firemen couple up with your water?  
 A—No, sir.  
 Q—Did they try to?  
 A—No. There was no connection for the city hose.  
 Q—Isn't there a place for connecting hose at the foot of the tank?  
 A—That is for draining it out

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