

# 564 PERSONS LOSE THEIR LIVES IN BURNING OF CHICAGO THEATER

## FIRE STARTS ON STAGE AND BURNS FROM PIT TO DOME

### With a Whirlwind of Flame Enveloping Floor and Galleries. Holiday Crowd of Pleasure Seekers Fight Way to Exits—Awful Scenes of Horror as Scores Leap to Street or Fall from Escapes—Exits Closed and Doomed Victims Penned in Blazing Prison.

We must go back to the convulsions of nature for a more dreadful story of swift death than occurred at the Iroquois Theater at Chicago in the matinee hour of Dec. 30. The statistics show 560 humans dead, and scores injured. There have been greater horrors by flood, by volcanoes, by the uprising of nature's forces, but if there was ever a more appalling chapter traced to man's hand history falls to tell it save in the records of battle alone. Of fire horrors, as they are commonly known, certainly nothing like it ever occurred in this country or any other.

There an ornate million-dollar theater, assured, of course, as thoroughly fireproof. Within were 2,300 women and children, and a few men—a typical, merry, holiday matinee audience. One thousand were in the galleries. There were many entrances offering the usual number of exits, all, of course, sufficient to depopulate the building in case of fire. We have all seen that often enough on the programs. There were five men in uniforms in the aisles, provided by the city government. It was a pretty, happy scene. There was a darkened

black masses of smoke, many were literally too paralyzed for movement, so that at the end and after it was all over, there was the strange, gruesome picture of a score or more dead leaning silently over the rails as if still gazing at the play.

But down at the doorway it was a wave backward of humans beings fighting for the blessing of life. What heroism was shown of man for woman or of woman for child—a will never be known, for the tragedy was but of minutes.

There was the sweep, the crush, the weak falling and the strong mounting, the inevitable desperate instinct which accompanies the grim law of self-preservation; then the horror of flaming death behind and crushing death before; then the still outreaching flames, and, finally, a mass of piled-up humanity, a few of the living above and the dead far below.

The details of the awful happenings inside have never been exceeded in the awfulness of sudden death in agony in all the history of modern times.

From the balcony and galleries, where there was no more safety from the flame heat ascending than on the

Clayton, Vinton; Cohn, Mrs. Jacob; Corcoran, —; Cooper, C. L.; Con- tell, Thomas; Cooper, Helen; Coultz, R. H.; Curran, May; Crook, E. S.; Caldwell, A. R.

D. Dawson, Mrs.; Diffendorf, Leandora, Lincoln, Ill.; Delee, Miss N.; Dodd, Mrs. J. F., of Delaware, O.; Donaldson, H.; Donaldson, Miss A.; Delee, Miss Viola; Dyreafurth, Ruth; Dyre- furth, Helen; Dawson, Grace.

E. Eberstein, Frank B.; Eisenstead, Herman; Eldridge, Mort; Espen, Emil; Espen, Miss Rosa; Elkahn, Rose.

F. Fitzgibbons, Anna; Fitzgibbons, John J.; Fox, George Sydney; Flannagan, Thomas J.; Frady, Leon; Falke, Miss Ada; Foley, H.; Foltz, Helen; Folkenstein, Miss Gertrude R.; Foltz, Miss Alice; Foltz, Mrs. C. O.; Fox, Hoyt; Fox, Mrs. Emile Hoyt, Winnetka; Foltz, Helen; Frackelborn, Mrs. Edith; Frackelborn, Ella; Frady, Mrs. E. C.

G. Gartz, Mary Dorothea; Gartz, Barbara; Gerow, Mabel; Geary, Miss

L. Lake, Mrs. Lena; Lake, Mrs. A.; Lang, Irene; Lang, Hortense; Lange, Miss Agnes; Linden, Ellen; Leatin, Fred W.

M. Maloney, Mrs. James D.; Martin, Harold; Martin, J.; Martin, W.; Maloney, Alice, Ottawa, Ill.; Martin, Robert; McCaughan, Helen; McClellan, Joseph; McClellan, James; McClurg, Roy; McKenna, Bernard; McKenna, Bernard; Muir, Annie, Peoria, Ill.; McMillan, Mabel; Meade, Lillian; Merriell, Mrs.; Merriam, Mildred; Moses, Espie; Muir, F. A.; Morehouse, H. P.; Moore, H. P.; Mendel, Mrs. A. M.; Middleton, Catherine; McKee, —; Morton, Edmund W.

N. Newby, —; Norton, Edith; Norton, Edward W.; Nuir, —.

O. O'Donnell, Mrs. Patrick P.; Ollinger, Mrs. Beasie; Olson, Mrs. Oscar; Owen, William Murray; Oxman, Miss Florence.

P. Page, Harold; Page, Charles T.; Patton, Lillian; Peterson, Fornetta; Poults, R. H.; Phacker, Walter; Pott-



Death Trap at Main Balcony Exit.

stage, there were a dozen stinging maidens and a popular comedian singing a popular air, entitled "In the Pale Moonlight."

Now what happened? A fuse or two blew from the calcium light that made the pale moon. The spark struck the ginger-bread scenery; the scenery blazed to the stage.

An Urn of Fire in Five Minutes.

And then! Well, then in five minutes this costly playhouse became a red urn of fire and a great, heart-breaking cry, such a cry as splits the stone of a Caesar's heart, arose in that building.

It was the cry of the man or woman, clinging to a storm-swept raft, who sees the others go down before him.

The scene was something that no human pen can tell. A circle of flame swept from the stage around the balcony and galleries, driven into a whirlwind by six great automatic ventilators and the open doors.

It moved faster than the calcium of the pale moonlight and as force as a blazing meteor.

There was a wild, mad, raging, trampling rush for life. It is not easy to fancy what one would do in such a scene, but all seemingly acted together. Men and women fought like untamed hounds for the first exit; little children were crushed in the arms of their mothers; clothes and jewels were torn from the others, torpedoes and purses were tossed on the floor.

Battle for Life in Subdivisions.

This was the first scene. On the main floor the panic was quite as bad as in the galleries, but escape was easier. It was on the balcony that the battle for life was fiercest, and here, indeed, it was only a shadow of the struggle that raged in the galleries. The galleries were within

floor below, people hurried themselves downward in their terror. All, or nearly all, of those in the rear met a fearful death. Firemen, the fire practically extinguished, found they were but pouring water on heaps of human beings.

LIST OF THE DEAD.

A. Adameck, Mrs. John; Austrian, Walter D.

B. Barker, Miss Ethel; Barnhiesel, Charles H.; Bartlett, Mrs. C. D.; Bartlett, III.; Beurtel, William C.; Beyersloth, Helen; Bisminger, Walter B.; Birdsley, Mrs. H. G.; Bodice, N. W.; Brewster, Miss Julia; Brinckley, Mrs. Emma; Buehmann, Margaret; Bickford, C. M.; Boase, Beane; Buschwah, Louise; Beyers, —; Butler, Mrs. Rosa; Butler, Rose; Hymfurth, Ruth.

C. Cahn, Miss Lucy; Clark, E. D.;

Pauline; Gerry, Miss Wilma; Gould, Mrs. B. E.; Gohsan, J.; Guderhaugh, Sophie.

H. Hall, Emperly; Harbrough, Mary E.; Haviland, Miss Lee; Haviland, Lee; Harbaugh, Mrs.; Hickman, Mrs. Charles; Holland, John; Howard, Mrs. Mary E.; Hart, E. D.; Hennings, —; Henry, Mrs. G. A.; Higginson, Miss Jeanette; Holmes, Mrs.; Higginson, Roger; Holst, Allen; Holst, Gertrude; Hooper, W. W.; Kenosha, Wis.; Howard, Miss Helen; Holland, Leigh; Horton, Edith; Ontonagon, Mich.; Howard, Ray E.; Hudson, Harry; Hehn, Otto.

J. Jones, Ethel; Johnson, J. C.

K. Kaufman, Alice; Kelly, Otto; Kieley, Harvey; Kennedy, Agnes; Winnetka; Kennedy, Frances; Winnetka; Kochens, J. A.; Koll, Charles H.; Kissner, Louis and wife; Ketchum, Mrs.; Krausz, Mrs. Sarah, Racine, Wis.

litzer, Jack, Lafayette, Ind.

R. Ratley, William; Ratley, J.; Reiter, Mrs. G.; Regensberg, Hazel; Regensberg, Miss Helen; Remington, Thomas; Ross, Ellen; Robertson, Minnie; Reed, W. M.; Richardson, Rev. H. L.; Roberts, Theodore; Rogers, Rose K.; Rathey, William; Robinson, Minnie; Ross, —, 18 years old, daughter of Dr. Ross.

S. Saville, Warren E.; Sayore, Carrie J.; Spring, Mrs. W. A.; Stangler, Mrs. J. H.; Sayre, Miss Carrie A.; String, Mrs. Winthrop; Spindler, Burdette; Studley, Rev. George H.; Sutton, Harry D.; Sawyer, —; Sedill, Warner, 12 years old, Kankakee, Ill.; Smithbarry, Wilma; Smith, Mrs. —, Des Plaines, Ill.; Smith, Miss Murine, Des Plaines, Ill.; Sheppard, Lola, 12 years old; Scott Burr; Shabbard, Myrtle; Shabbard, Lulu; Sherr, —; Sprang, W. N.; Stern, Mrs.; Sutton, Harry P.; Squier, Olive; Saville, Arthur; Spring, Winthrop; Schmidt, Rosa.

T. Taylor, Ruth; Torney, Edna; Turner, Mrs. Susan; Turbush, C. W.; Thatcher, W.

V. Valley, Bernice; Valley, Mrs. J. T.; Vansegen, Edward T.; Valley, Miss Berlice; Van Ingen, John; Vien, Herman.

W. Wells, Donald; Wolf, Mrs. Leo, Hammond, Ind.; Waldman, S.; Woltmann, Otto; Williams, H.; Winslow, C. A.; Three River Falls, Minn.; Wells, Donald; Winslow, Paul; Wolf, Harriet; Washkopf, Emma.

Z. Zander, Walter E.

Undetermined Dead Five Names.

In addition to the foregoing names



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The battle of Fort Stephenson, though not in itself a great battle, was the first really brilliant effort of the War of 1812. The youth of the hero, the disparity of numbers on the opposing sides, and the decisive triumph leading directly to Perry's Victory on Lake Erie and the Battle of the Thames, aroused a burst of enthusiasm throughout the country, similar to that which followed Dewey's achievement a few years ago.

The brevet rank of Lieutenant-colonel was at once conferred upon Croghan; and later, by joint resolution of Congress, a gold medal suitably inscribed.—From "George Croghan, Hero!" in "Four Track News" for January.

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