

Serious Fire in Sheffield

Considerable alarm was caused in Sheffield shortly after midnight by the report that Messrs. William Hutton and Sons' Works in West street were on fire. The report proved too true, and but for the promptness displayed by the firemen, policemen and those in the immediate neighbourhood of the works, there would have been one of the largest and most disastrous fires ever known in Sheffield. Messrs. Hutton and Sons are silver and electro-plate manufacturers, and about seven years ago they erected a very large block of buildings which front West street, Orange street, and Holland street. The part facing the latter street is five stories high, and it was here the fire originated. The watchman was ill, and his place is being filled by the timekeeper, Mr. Shaw, who was making his rounds just after midnight when he noticed a strong smell of burning. Several people appear to have made the discovery at the same time, and a glare was seen on the third story. Information was at once conveyed to the Fire Brigade Station, and it was but the work of a few moments for Superintendent Pound to be on the scene with the tender. The beats in the neighbourhood are all "worked" by firemen, and these also rallied to the place, and there was soon a strong force to fight the flames. This proved to be far from an easy matter. The various floors are divided into long shops, and there being no ventilation these were filled with smoke, and it was impossible to drag the hose pipe to the point where the damage lay. A jet was got to work in Holland street but did not prove very effective, and the fire escape was sent for. Mounting on this the men were able to pour a plentiful supply of water on the flames, and they succeeded in confining them to two shops. By about 1.45 everything had been made safe, and it was possible to see what damage had been done. The fire seemed to have originated in the finishing shop, where a quantity of lime is used, and it is the heating of this that is supposed to have been the origin of the outbreak. The benches and tools were damaged and the flames made their way through the roof and belt holes to the floor above, where there was plenty of inflammable material. The story above was also attacked, but it was to no considerable extent. Luckily, the fire was confined to the precise spot, as had it got a firm hold of the range of buildings it would have been almost impossible to extinguish it. Much valuable machinery would have also been destroyed and the damage done enormous. As it is hundreds of pounds will not cover the harm done by the fire and water. The silver used by the men is removed to the strong room each night, so no loss was caused in that quarter. Mr. Herbert Hutton, one of the members of the firm, was telephoned for, and arrived shortly before the outbreak was mastered. HE states that the firm are fully insured in the Northern, the Alliance, and other offices.

The fire which broke out this morning in the finishing department of Messrs. William Hutton and Sons' works in West street was very destructive in its results. Indeed had it not been for the energy of the Fire Brigade headed by Superintendent Pound, the flames would have spread to the pattern room, which is filled with dry wooden patterns, and the whole of the premises would have been destroyed. Too great praise cannot be given to the Brigade for their efforts. The fire is supposed to be due to the spontaneous ignition of a quantity of lime which was placed in the finishing room for purposes connected with the manufacture of Messrs. Hutton and Sons' specialities. The solid silver articles as used had been removed into the strong room before the workmen left the premises and only the blanket goods remained. The benches, ceilings, machine belting, and other articles in the finishing department were destroyed, and the total amount of the damage must be considerable. One of the watchmen employed by the firm was ill, and his place

was taken by the timekeeper, who made his first round between nine and ten o'clock and found everything apparently safe. On making a second parade of the premises at midnight he found the room in flames, and in a short time the Fire Brigade were at work. None of the workmen are thrown out of employment, as temporary accommodation has been provided for the finishers in another part of the building.