

WALL STREET A BATTLEFIELD—FALLING GLASS CAUSES MOST DEATHS

BLINDING BURST OF FIRE LEAPS TO FIFTH STORY

Eye Witness Sees Men and Women Run With Hair and Clothes Ablaze.

STEEL RAILS TWISTED

Rain of Falling Glass From Big Buildings Ankle Deep in Streets.

BROKERS GIVE FIRST AID

Officials Told of Three Men Who Ran to Truck and Hastily Drove Away.

Everybody who had the doubtful privilege of actually witnessing the explosion in the middle of the world's financial market place and who lived to tell the story is agreed that first there was a burst of flame, a blinding of the eye and a terrifying of the beholder. It arose, of course, between the Morgan building and United States Assay Office. It not only rose until it was as high as fifth story windows, but spread from side to side until it filled the streets and seared the awnings of those windows in its climb. Then it split into two great flames, which drifted off in opposite directions up and down Wall street to west and east and continued to rise until it dissolved in the upper air.

Those in the immediate vicinity of the Morgan building saw this fire and heard the crash simultaneously. To those further away, up in high buildings or in Wall street nearer Broadway, the interval between the flash and the sound was perceptible. But their brains had scarcely sensed what their eyes told them when the biggest noise that Wall street ever heard beat against their ear drums, and with it came a concussion, a sweep of atmosphere vibrating in torment that knocked hundreds of persons down.

Most of the fallen instantly arose and, not knowing what had occurred or what was best to do, did the most natural thing—skeddaddled in whatever direction seemed to be away from the immediate spot of the catastrophe. They ran madly down Broad street, up Nassau and toward the limits of Wall in both directions, or else they turned into buildings and sought safety within walls.

Buildings Swiftly Emptied.

This was a curious thing to do, for at the same instant the densens of these buildings were engaged in a panicky scramble to get out into the street. Men and women in buildings, felt, after the first explosion had jarred their habitation and turned the world into a tempest of falling glass, that there might be another and with it the buildings would fall. Hence the rush for the outside, with corridors, staircases and elevators filled with variously shrieking human beings.

At the eye witness, a comparatively safe distance in the street, had seen the swiftness fire ascend, and heard and felt the explosion, he noticed in the next fraction of the same second that Wall street was full of smoke. Some say it was yellow smoke, some blue. As in the case of every disaster, no two spectators agree exactly on all the details. Anyway, the smoke had a sharp odor of chemical irritant, but not suffocating, because of the freedom it had to expand. The smoke lifted and blew away, and then all that was to be seen at the spot where the explosion had been was a low automobile lying on its side in Wall Street directly in front of the Morgan building, burning brightly. Behind it, nearer the intersection of Broad and Wall streets, was a smaller touring car, upright and serene.

Most Fatalities From Glass.

It was falling glass and not the explosion itself that killed most of those who were in the line of fire. From the office building escaped, where great chunks of glass were mingled with men's hair and clothing, and with records of stock transactions in equally disarranged brokers' offices and banks, most of the glass was blown inward. This was the case in J. P. Morgan & Co.'s marble building, where great windows that cost a fortune were driven in fragments all over the interior of the banking house, and where steel screening which had been stretched protectively across each window space next the glass was twisted and broken and pieces of it even blown against the opposite wall of the interior.

As to what was happening out in the street directly after the explosion, one gets a glimpse from the story of Patrick Fanning, gray haired watchman of the Fifth building at 26 Wall street, next door to the new United States Assay Office. He was standing in the vestibule of his building when a door fell on him. It stunned him, but he crawled out from under. His private opinion was that a safe had fallen through several floors and hit him. He scrambled out into the street. He saw, men, women and boys rushing to and fro, shouting hysterically, most of them running down Wall street toward the East River. A sight directly in front of him on the sidewalk diagonally across from Morgan's riveted his attention. Two girls were running with their clothes and hair all ablaze. Fanning himself was dazed, but not too dazed to pick up a book that some refugee had brought. He went to the girls, and running after them tried vainly to beat out the blaze with his

U. S. Sub-Treasury, Morgan Building and New York Stock Exchange After Excitement Subsides



United States soldiers guarding the Sub-Treasury after the explosion.

hands and with the book. The girls stopped. They fell to the sidewalk. One, less burned than the other, threw herself on her friend's body and tried thus to stifle the flames. Fanning, responding to the impulse of the moment, stepped forward. He doesn't know whether he saved her or his foolish book.

It seems to him now that he was successful. Anyway, he says, the two girls crawled away out of his sight, and next he says he saw a man who was "afire from head to foot." The man was crying out dreadfully, and the watchman picked off his own coat and tried to beat down the fire with it. He doesn't know whether he did or not. At that moment his head got to hurting so badly that he felt himself fainting, and went back into his own building and was down. When he awoke, he says, he was lying on the floor of his building, and either died or was revived there. The flame, of course, came immediately from the explosion. Half an hour after the event six bodies had been laid on the sidewalk flanking the offices of J. P. Morgan & Co. in Wall Street, and four on the sidewalk in front of the Assay Office across the street. These victims, not only had been grievously wounded by the upthrust or by falling glass but most of them were badly burned.

There were other stories of persons who ran burning through the street. A clerk in one of Henry Clay's offices in the Mills Building, which half surrounds the Morgan Building, with entrances on both Broad and Wall streets, says that he was in the Morgan Building when the explosion occurred. He says that he was in the Morgan Building when the explosion occurred. He says that he was in the Morgan Building when the explosion occurred.

Many Victims Badly Burned.

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Stock Tickers Worked On.

Of the countless items of news or rumors that were handed back and forth, none was more general or more appreciated than that of the stock tickers in the Morgan Building, right inside the window, having resisted shock and shrapnel. They continued to tape the transactions of the exchanges until the end. And not a single telephone in Morgan's was out of kilter either, although a lot of trouble in getting Central was reported elsewhere.

A good many of the seriously injured were workmen engaged in tearing down the old Wilkes Building at the southeast corner of Broad and Wall streets, where the new annex of the Stock Exchange is to go up. Many of these were of foreign birth.

One of the men nearest the explosion and able to tell about it afterward was Oscar Thompson, a salesman of 312 West 116th street. He was walking in Wall street past the Morgan building, and the heroic statue of George Washington in front of the building is absolutely normal. But on the northern face of the Morgan building and on the southern face of the United States Assay Office are the marks of bombardment—like those of soldiers to the scars made by shrapnel. There is a deep gash in the Assay Office, right at the left of the front door.

Prostrate Persons Cover Street.

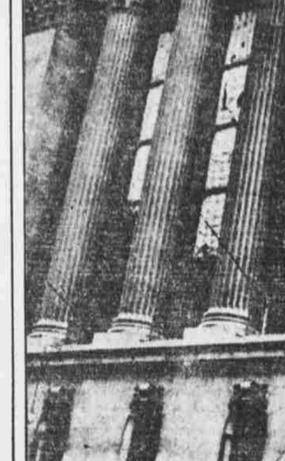
Walter Marvin, a former reporter for The Evening Star, who is with Hemphill, Noyes & Co., told about this incident as follows:

Looked Like a Battlefield.

Thompson says he was blown against the Morgan building and was stunned, and when he got his senses again the streets were filled with people groaning and crying. It seemed to him at the time that there had been a great battle in the streets, with many casualties. On the pavement a few forms lay motionless. In the background others were rising. Everywhere was a babel of excited voices all mixed with the incessant cascading of glass.

Thompson noted duly that whereas a horse lay dead in the street, a horse's

View of Wall Street, Morgan Building, on left, which was badly damaged. Trinity Church is shown in the background.



Showing how bomb's missiles shattered New York Stock Exchange's windows.

lines and were herded to and fro by the police in front of Morgan's. Most of them were reporters or had other official cards entitling them to pass police lines.

Fragments of cast iron window weights flew every way when the dynamite, or T. N. T., or whatever the stuff was, went off. One of them came whistling into a lawyer's office on the eighth floor at 7 Wall street, just missing the lawyer's head. Another was found on the roof of the Equitable Building. Another penetrated to the fifth floor of the Equitable Trust Building, 37 Wall street, next door to Morgan's. It smashed a window casing in the office of Hemphill, Noyes & Co., penetrated the window and curtain and then a desk at which sat one of his band. He was walking along Broad street near the Morgan offices. The envelope was in his right hand. The force of the explosion merely carried the envelope from between his fingers as neatly as you please. Mr. Levine was not hurt. He and a lot of other men gave first aid to the wounded before the ambulances came. "The place was like a battlefield," was Mr. Levine's judgment.

Boy Saw "Powder Wagon."

Showing how stories differ, there is that of a boy named Ray, employed by White, Wells & Co., brokers, in the Bankers' Trust Building. He was just entering that building when the smash occurred. He said to a broker near the powder wagon. "The broker raced in front of the Assay Office right near the curb. It had a couple of red flags and the sign marked 'danger.' The horse was standing there kind of sleepy-like. I don't know for sure whether there was any driver on the wagon or not. I think there wasn't."

On the other hand there is John W. Munch of 314 Main street, Astoria, president of the New York Chimney Repair Company. Munch gave his narrative early in the afternoon, and it repeated it at headquarters, where he

Another car at first suspected of having to do with the mystery was later acquitted.

"I had an appointment shortly after 12 o'clock in the Postal Telegraph and Cable Company's building at 20 Broad street, he said. "I drove my car up to the curb facing east, just outside of the Morgan building and about twenty feet east of Broad street. As I stopped I noticed a wagon across Broad street. It was the kind of a wagon with a rack used by paper dealers, and was drawn by one horse. It was painted a yellowish color. I walked away toward Broad street, and when I got about forty feet was knocked unconscious. When I came to my senses men and women were running over me. I picked myself up and joined them and ran to Broadway. When I discovered that I had been kicked hundreds of times by these panicstricken people, I am a mass of bruises all over."

Munch's car, a small sedan, was identified by him when he finally got through the police lines the middle of the afternoon. It was badly searched, but usable.

New Jersey Car "Acquitted."

Another car at first suspected of having to do with the mystery was later acquitted. This was a large black touring car with a New Jersey license, No. 21,246. Because of one or two witnesses who swore that the vivid flash at the moment of the explosion came from an automobile "near Morgan & Co." and because this black touring car lay on its side in Wall street near Morgan & Co.'s after the explosion, the primary investigators did their best to put two and two together. The automobile, however, did not yield to their theory. It was a badly burned and blistered thing, and its fenders were twisted, but the sides of the body were intact, and no most significant, was the floor. Nearly any explosive in combustion tries to tear through whatever confines it. Dynamite notoriously goes downward. Any explosion in the amount that caused yesterday's wreckage must surely would have torn the automobile into shivers if it had been contained in the automobile.

Walls Appeared Bombarded.

The beautiful glass dome of the Morgan building was but a steel skeleton. The great windows of the Stock Exchange down Broad street were mere empty sockets. Behind them enormous rents in silken curtains added to the effect of a bombardment. Whatever way one looked from in front of the Sub-Treasury, hardly a window was to be seen intact. The loss in mere glass as well as the expense of replacement seemed beyond computation. And everywhere in the street lay pieces of glass as thick as confetti along the curb when Joffre came to town.

Street cleaners were starting to push it into heaps, but making little headway. Lingered fragments of glass kept tinkling down from the heights, endangering the life of every pedestrian, so that the police strode along shouting "Keep in the middle of the street!" There was time to count the windows of the Assay Office. There were nineteen of them, and in not one a speck of glass remained. All of Uncle Sam's gold repository there was exposed to all the winds that blow. All these windows were protected by a steel grillwork over the street floor was bent in at the bottom and wrenched out at the top so that the caries appeared to be hurled forward into Wall street. Some of the bars, although almost an inch square, had been cut cleanly in half by flying steel.

The whole front of D. E. Ducloux's men's furnishings store at 34-36 Wall

View of Wall Street, Morgan Building, on left, which was badly damaged. Trinity Church is shown in the background.

was glad to sink into a chair and rest his much bruised body. He also noted that the steel fence between the Sub-Treasury and the Assay Office was bent in. "As if some giant had put his knees against the bars," Thompson stumbled over to the Morgan steps and sat down to try to think what had happened and what he had been about, when so suddenly interrupted. He recalled eventually that he had had an appointment in Broadway. As his fur consciousness returned the automobiles manned by brokers began dashing through the streets and picking up the wounded. Thompson's experience is typical of many. He has no idea what vehicles were in Wall street before the explosion. He only knows he saw a dead horse and an automobile on fire after the explosion.

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Hanover Square Bomb Scare Proves Unfounded

RETURNING an hour after the explosion in his automobile, which he had left in Hanover square, Henry Babb of 1632 Hatfield avenue, Richmond Hill, found a black box under the seat. It was a foot square and encircled by wires.

Babb thought he had a bomb. He got two detectives. They took it to the Old Slip station and gently deposited it in a pall of water. Then came an inspector from the Bureau of Combustibles. He opened the box with the precaution essential to his trade.

It was an electric storage battery, nothing more. A workman on a new building, leaving for luncheon, had looked around for a safe place for the battery and found it under the seat of Babb's automobile. Babb is a clerk in the National City Bank.

No Hole Left in Street.

Then the reporter busied himself by trying to locate the exact spot of the explosion by the hole in the pavement. He expected to find there. All big explosions are supposed to make holes. This time there wasn't any. In front of the Assay Office, about a foot from the curb, something had gouged out a lot of asphalt. This looked hopeful until a man came out of the Assay Office and said that the hole had been made a few days ago by men who were starting to repair the street. The theory that the explosion had not amounted to much was settled by an army officer. He told of a big TNT bomb landing beside a chateau in France. It blew the chateau to pieces, but made no impression whatever upon the earth directly beneath it.

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