

BIG BLAZE IN CAMDEN ENTAILED NEARLY HALF A MILLION LOSS



RUINS OF THE BIG RUG MILL BLAZE IN CAMDEN

Spontaneous combustion is thought to be responsible for the fire which destroyed the plant of the Fries-Breslin Rug Manufacturing Company, at Ferry avenue, below Atlantic avenue, Camden, early yesterday morning. The loss is estimated at over \$400,000, with about \$350,000 insurance. Five hundred employes are thrown out of work.

When the fire had been practically extinguished, leaving nothing but the bare walls standing, one of the latter fell with a crash and injured these firemen:

Josiah Sage, Engine Company No. 1, dislocated hip, cut knee, body bruises; taken to Cooper Hospital.

William Hill, Hook and Ladder Company No. 1, cut about the head.

Harry Haines, Chemical Engine No. 2, injured about the legs and back.

Harry Basert, of 408 Webster street, discovered the building ablaze shortly after 2 o'clock. He ran to No. 3 engine house, at Broadway and Emerald street. A general alarm was at once sent in, and the entire department was at the scene in a short time. The fire had gained considerable headway, however, and Chief Elfreth directed his men to save adjoining property.

The three firemen injured were attempting to pull down one of the walls at the direction of Chief Elfreth, when, without warning, it toppled over on the men. That they were not killed outright is miraculous.

John M. Carroll, president of the company, estimated the loss at over \$400,000. The destroyed building was 52½ feet long, 50 feet wide, four stories high and "L" shaped, with a frontage on Ferry avenue of 400 feet. The mill had been running on short time, but Mr. Carroll said a full force of 560 employes were to have been put on whole time beginning with to-morrow.

There were about \$175,000 worth of manufactured rugs in the structure. On the fourth floor there were 200 hand looms of expensive make, while on the other floors, Mr. Carroll said, there was machinery which cannot be duplicated. He was unable to give his plans for the future as to whether the plant will be rebuilt or not.