

100 INJURED AS FLAMES SWEEP WINECOFF HOTEL

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ATLANTA—(AP)—A mysterious pre-dawn fire which started in the upper floors today turned the fifteen-story Wincoff Hotel in downtown Atlanta into a roaring inferno killing at least 120 persons and injuring another 100.

Several hours after the fire was brought under control at 7 A. M., firemen said they believed all bodies had been removed from the 194-room building located on Atlanta's famed Peachtree Street in the heart of the theater district.

There were indications the death toll among the 285 guests might mount with a complete check of the emergency mortuaries established in various parts of the city. Already the toll was the worst in a hotel disaster in the nation's history.

Many of the guests leaped to their deaths from the flaming structure. Others were burned fatally or suffocated. A check of the building showed many rooms untouched by the flames, but others were charred. Firemen expressed belief many lives would have been saved had guests remained in these untouched rooms. The walls and floors of the building stood, but much of the woodwork and doors was charred. Some partitions were destroyed. The building had recently been painted on the inside, and firemen expressed belief this might have aided the rapid spread of the flames.

Most of the guests were trapped above the third floor where the fire was believed to have started about 3:15 A. M. The brick and concrete building was constructed in 1913. It had no outside fire escapes. It was classed as fire resistant.

W. H. Rogers, a fireman, told of finding 16 bodies on one upper floor. The rooms in which they were found were undamaged by the flames, and all apparently had died of suffocation.

In one room were the bodies of five young girls, in another a woman and three children.

With the flames under control, firemen kept up a steady procession bringing the dead and injured from the building.

MANY LEAF TO DEATH

Police Chief M. A. Hornsby said at least 25 to 30 persons were killed by leaping from windows.

Police Captain J. J. Carroll said he reached the hotel shortly after 7:15 and upon entering the building found all elevators stalled.

With his partner, N. W. Smith, he said he fought his way by the stairs, but found a woman on the seventh floor, kicking out doors and arousing guests. On the seventh floor they found a Negro maid badly burned. Smith saw anything like her covered our heads with blankets and turned on the fans.

Nelson Thatch, chief room clerk, who lives on the sixth floor, told of pleading futilely with a woman on the fifth floor not to jump. However, he said later, she threw herself from the ledge apparently to her death in a dark alley below.

HAND BADLY BURNED

Thatch related that he saw "many others" jump also into the recessed between the buildings. He suffered a badly burned hand.

Comer L. Rowan, the night clerk

Wailing People Hurtle To Death

By CHICK BOSCH

ATLANTA—(AP)—I saw four women leap to their deaths from the burning Wincoff Hotel in chill pre-dawn darkness today. I reached the scene of the inferno on famous Peachtree Street in less than 45 minutes after the fire was discovered. Several other women leaped to their deaths, and others to mortal injuries. Flames were shooting from the fourth, fifth and sixth floors and through the smoke and blazes dozens of guests could be seen clinging to the ledges or leaning from windows.

Ropes made of sheets and other bed covers hung down the sides of the building. These fragile life lines to safety were buffeted by the winds and streams of water.

I crossed to the hotel entrance, barely reaching the doorway when a woman's body hurtled through the marquee and landed on the street at my feet. One body could be seen draped grotesquely over the ledge of a balcony which the marquee covers.

I started up the stairs, but at the second floor heard that several of the trapped were jumping from the rear of the hotel into an alley. I ran to the rear of the hotel, but tripped over something and fell sprawling. I turned to see several bodies lying on the walls. An elderly man sobbed hysterically at the side of a woman he was trying futilely to lift.

It was too dark to get much of a picture of the scene there so I returned to the front of the building again. Several other guests, most of them women, came hurtling down into the courtyard.

Of the fifteen or twenty that I saw jump, none walked away. They hit the nets with such force that the firemen couldn't hold them in most cases, managing only to check their leap.

City Detective E. B. Brooks told me of seeing one woman descend a sheet-roped three floors to an extension ladder hoisted by firemen. As we stood talking, we watched a woman back over the edge of a fourth floor window and start down a rope of twisted bed clothing.

Between floors she lost her footing against the water drenched building and her body started away and slowly turning in the light of flames lapping at her feet. We watched as she turned loose and hurtled down, flat against the walls, screaming.

"Her body hit the marquee with a sickening thud," Brooks muttered. "I knew she couldn't clear that."

Fire Worse Than War, General Says

Tells About Being Trapped

ATLANTA—(AP)—Maj. Gen. P. W. Baade of Washington, D. C., spent ten months on active duty with the famed 35th Division, but said today that the Wincoff Hotel fire here was "worse than anything ever there."

"At least you felt you had a chance in dodging bullets, but you're just helpless when you're trapped in a hotel room with roaring flames all around you," he said.

Gen. Baade held his hotel night telephone operator and wife of the night room clerk, said she had just getting out to her fourth floor room when the alarm was sounded. She said it was approximately 3:45 A. M. when she crawled on the floor and completed his nightly check, but estimated there were some 285 guests in the 194-room hotel. Firemen took her to safety with a ladder.

Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Baade were taken from their sixth floor room by firemen who ran a ladder up to their window.

The erect, gray-haired soldier and his wife said that they were awakened about 3:30 A. M. by people screaming and shouting. He cracked the door to the hall slightly, but knew they had no chance of getting out that way as the corridor was full of smoke, flame and unbearable heat.

He closed and braced the door, he said, and he and his wife helped to the window to wait for help.

One of the most dramatic escapes from the raging flames, that of Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Bault, of 1709 W. Peachtree St., N. W., who drew the eyes of hundreds of spectators on famed Peachtree Street, was made from one room to another.

Bault, 45, said that he and his wife, Corine, 34, were awakened by the flames creeping into their room. They were awakened by the flames creeping into their room. They were awakened by the flames creeping into their room. They were awakened by the flames creeping into their room.

Mrs. W. Y. Johnson, of Euflavia, Ga., on the ninth floor said she was awakened by screaming and the heavy smell of smoke. She choked on the smoke, and when she tried to get to the fire alarm office, but got no answer, so she went to the door. When she opened the door she saw flames and water from the bathroom.

See ESCAPE on page 6-A

Casualty List Dead And Injured In Atlanta Fire

The Dead The Injured

- ATLANTA—(AP)—A partial list of the identified dead in the Wincoff Hotel fire, follows:
- Lt. Cmdr. E. A. Condit, Norfolk, Va.
- W. F. Wincoff, builder of the hotel, Atlanta.
- Mr. and Mrs. Will D. Dickerson, Jonesboro, Ga., and their two children, Bill, 7, and Mary Melinda, 4.
- J. R. Moody, Arlington, Ga.
- Joseph Goodson and four-year-old boy of Clay City, Ill.
- Willie Buck, New York Ridge, Tenn.
- Robert Clay Williams, Pensacola, Fla.
- Edgar L. Pettijohn, Mountain Brook, Ala.
- Brook W. Sorrells, Asheville, N. C.
- Walter L. Baker, 75 Vermont Ave., West Asheville, N. C.
- A. J. Burns, New York City.
- M. Theo Constanity, Atlanta.
- R. W. (Bully) Cox, no address.
- Paul H. Tynes, Columbus, Ga.
- W. L. Rochelle, Marietta, Ga.
- J. E. Cherry, no address.
- Edna M. Lister, Marietta, Ga.
- Mrs. Madge Lipschitz, Savannah, Ga.
- Mr. and Mrs. Peter S. Knox Sr., Thomas, Ga.
- Bill Bryson, Asheville, N. C.
- Christina A. Henderson, address unknown.
- E. O. Thomas, Asheville, N. C.
- Eric Hayworth Elliott, Oklahoma City, Okla.
- Mastey Dekle, Tampa, Fla.
- Edna Buck, New York City.
- Maxine Willis, Bainbridge, Ga.
- W. M. Clarence, no address.
- S. B. Sheriff, Atlanta.
- James Lewis McDonald, no address.
- Capt. Dewitt Lane Morrison, no address.
- Philip D. Davis, no address.
- C. O. Sisk, Asheville, N. C.
- Low Broome, (girl), no address.
- Mrs. Sarah M. Aldridge, no address. (Oil equipment dealer).
- Charles Keith, no address.
- Mrs. G. B. Jackson, no address.
- Carl E. Rasmussen, Des Moines, Iowa (attached to Veterans Hospital, Birmingham, Ala.).
- Dr. Billie Crawford Cox, Petre Hospital, Murphy, N. C.
- Charles Keith, Rome, Ga.
- Mrs. Sarah Miller, Gordon, Ga.
- George William Walden, Rome, Ga.

WEATHER

Fair and slightly warmer today, tonight, and Sunday; partly cloudy and continued fair on Monday.

Temperatures at 1:30 today: 53 High and low last 24 hours: 53-38

Sunset today: 5:11 Sunrise tomorrow: 7:18

See THE INJURED on page 6-A

No Word From James R. Little Fate Of Charlottean Registered At Wincoff Hotel Is Unknown

James R. Little, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Little of 3135 Marlboro Road, was reported to be the only Charlottean registered at the Wincoff Hotel in Atlanta. His fate was unknown today with a loss of 114 lives, but his parents had no definite word about him at mid-afternoon today.

The young man, on business in Atlanta for the Firestone Rubber Co., was last seen by a friend about 1:30 A. M. this morning. The young man said that Little had left him about 11:30 P. M. on Monday morning, the refusing his invitation to spend the night in his home after explaining that he had business to attend to.

No trace has been found of Mr. Little or his automobile, but it is known that he was registered at the Wincoff Hotel.

His brother, George B. Little Jr., manager of a Firestone store in Atlanta and in on the scene, assisting in the search for James. He has talked with his parents, but has had no further information to give them.

The father said today, when contacted here, that he and Mrs. Little had hopes that he would be found soon. "Every one is looking for him," he explained. "He must be in one of the hospitals."

"He is just out of the Navy, and this is a shame that he had to go through all that to come back to this."

Young Little was a lieutenant, stationed aboard a destroyer, and he served for two years in the Pacific theater. He entered the service immediately after he was graduated from Georgia Tech, having received his commission along with his diploma. Young Little attended the University of North Carolina before he entered Tech.

After his discharge from the service, he went in training for a position with the Firestone Rubber Co. It is for this reason that he was in Atlanta.

Lewis Orders Men Back To Work At Once

Miners Ordered To Work Until Next March 31

WASHINGTON—(AP)—The soft coal strike was called off today.

In a letter to members of the United Mine Workers John L. Lewis said he was ordering the miners back to work at least until March 31 so that the Supreme Court could be free from "public pressure superinduced by the hysteria and frenzy of an economic crisis."

The miners' boss told reporters at a suddenly-called news conference at UMW headquarters that "in addition, public necessity requires the qualitative production of coal during such period."

Lewis ordered the miners back to work immediately.

The announcement came as the Supreme Court was considering the Government's plea for an immediate review of Lewis' and the miners' contempt case, involving \$3,510,000 in fines levied by Federal District Court.

And in the White House, President Truman was devoting most of the day to working on his nationwide broadcast for 9:30 P. M. tomorrow, in which he promised to discuss the coal crisis.

Lewis and the union were found guilty of contempt of court last Tuesday for not heading off the crippling strike now in its 17th day. The union was fined \$3,500,000 and Lewis himself \$10,000.

Lewis' announcement climaxed an epic series of legal strokes and counter-strokes that whirled almost unprecedented speed into the Supreme Court.

Lewis said the union stood willing to negotiate a working agreement with the Government or with the private coal operators along whatever line the court may decide in its decisions in the present litigation.

Lewis terminated the strike in a letter to all mine workers which he read to reporters. He remarked beforehand that the decision to end the strike had been his own.

He said the same terms and conditions that prevailed on Nov. 20, the date that he ended his contract with the Government, will again prevail.

Lewis, apparently in a pleasant mood, read the letter slowly to reporters.

Before he started he said he would read it himself so that the newsmen might be assured "that his mine own, made on this day, and in good faith."

"Questions as to motive," Lewis remarked, "will be pure speculation."

"Some philosopher has said anyhow that the pursuit of motives is the most elusive in the world."

The Government obtained permission only yesterday to bypass the Court's Appeals in getting a final ruling in the contempt case.

Lewis' letter said that the Supreme Court's powers are derived from the Constitution and the court is "the protector of American liberties and the rights and the privileges of individual citizens."

"It may be presumed that the verdict of the court, when rendered, will affect the life of every citizen," he intoned.

The issues before the court, he added, are "fateful for our republic."

Lewis and his lawyers had credit