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SAN FRANCISCO IN RUINS

A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF
EIGHT SCORE PHOTO-VIEWS
OF THE
EARTHQUAKE EFFECTS
FLAMES' HAVOC
RUINS EVERYWHERE
RELIEF CAMPS

THE PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. D. GIVENS, PRESIDIO, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

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PUBLISHED BY LEON C. OSTYEE
1370 SUTTER STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
2. Col. Wm. A. Simpson, military secretary.
11. Capt. Wm. C. Wren, assistant to chief quartermaster.
12. Capt. Lawrence B. Simonds, assistant to chief commissary.
14. First Lieut. Oliver P. M. Hazzard, Second Cavalry, aide-de-camp.
15. Second Lieut. Samuel E. Patterson, Philippine Scouts.

THE FINISH OF THE FIRST EPOCH IN THE HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO

The Queen City of the Pacific Slope, Guardian of the Golden Gateway to the Far East, the Islands of the Southern Seas, the Frozen Northland and the Sunny Ports of our Sister Continent

By A. M. Allison

The historians of modern or ancient times have never recorded such a maelstrom of terrified, horror and panic-stricken human beings as awoke to the realization of the master seismic tremblor, in the City of San Francisco at 5:13 on the morning of April 18th, 1906. The initial quake, being followed by many of less severity, tumbled chimneys, large and small buildings of poor or faulty construction, broke water mains and ruptured electric light and power conductors, causing many conflagrations in a few moments. Then followed a catastrophe unparalleled in modern times, a disaster beside which, for property losses, the Chicago fire, the Johnstown flood, the Galveston tidal wave, the Mont Pelee eruption, Vesuvius' spoutings and the Baltimore fire, fade into infinitesimal disturbances on the records of Father Time.

In three days, which seemed only as so many hours, there faded out of existence noble business blocks, grand and imposing structures, beautiful and superb residences the homes of the Argonauts, the sea kings, mining barons and merchant princes, together with the marts and dwellings of those who toil and delve and go down to the sea in ships, completely desolating and razing by fire three-fourths of this once beautiful metropolis of the whole Pacific Coast on either the northern or southern continents.

Nor was the City of San Francisco alone in its extremity, for many smaller and populous towns within a radius of seventy-five miles were subjected to the peril of the mighty corkscrew quakings, Santa Rosa being entirely shaken down; Salinas, San Jose, Palo Alto, Santa Cruz, Berkeley, Alameda and Oakland all suffering great property losses and some human lives. The beautiful structures of the Leland Stanford, Jr., University, at Palo Alto, all erected and endowed to a sum in excess of $40,000,000 by the late Senator Leland Stanford and his philanthropic wife, were almost completely wrecked, including the Memorial Cathedral, which contained the largest and finest collection of mosaic pictures on the Western Hemisphere.

At no point in the affected area were the earthquake shocks so severe and destructive as in the town district, south of Market and east of Kearny streets, where were the large office buildings, newspaper offices, banks, wholesale stores and warehouses, the occupants of which conducted the business, commerce and financial engagements of not only the major portion of the Pacific Slope, but a large and constantly-growing Oriental trade as well. The opportune hour of the morning was all that saved the lives of the untold thousands who labored there, but had not as yet left their homes in the residence sections of the ill-fated city.

Hardly had the mighty tremblor ceased its gyrations when innumerable fires broke out among the chaotic ruins, having caught from engine furnaces, broken electric wire conduits and spontaneous combustion, fed by the most inflammable of materials and fanned by a stiff breeze from the bay, grew and spread into what shortly became the most stupendous and widespread, as well as awe-inspiring conflagration, which any people of the eighteenth or nineteenth century have ever as yet looked upon or flown from. Had the water mains not have been ruptured, the splendid San Francisco fire department might have been able to cope with these many outbursts of flame at their inception, but deprived of water in the mains, they nobly fought the appalling
flames by pumping water from the bay at as many places as length of hose and
their engines' ability would permit; but their efforts to stay the onrushing,
wide-spreading flames proved as a match's flicker before a whirlwind.

It being quickly seen that the panic-stricken people would soon become a
fleeing, dazed and terror-awed multitude, General Frederick Funston, com-
manding the Department of California, United States Army, with headquarters
at the Presidio, immediately ordered out the cavalry, infantry and artillery
forces under his command, who aided and directed the fleeing populace, gath-
ered up and succored the wounded, established emergency hospitals, and policed
the city. At the same time men-of-war men from the Mare Island Navy
Yard, consisting of the battleship Ohio, the cruiser Chicago, and the torpedo
boat destroyer Paul Jones, together with the ships of the United States Army
Transport Service, and all available steam craft, attacked the flames along the
water front and succeeded in saving much wharfsage and the Ferry building,
which is the principal gateway from the mainland.

Aided, ordered and guarded by the United States Army and Marine forces,
assisted by the California National Guard, who were at once called out by the
Governor, George C. Pardee, the excited and frenzied San Franciscans made
their way to squares, parks and the open hills, over two hundred thousand
fleeing to these places of refuge and another hundred thousand making their way
by ferry-boats and other craft across the bay to the cities of Berkeley, Oakland
and Alameda, caring for naught except to get away from the awful havoc and
destruction of the place they once proudly called their City.

In uniting efforts to stay the flames the army, navy, marine corps and police
used artillery fire, gun-cotton, dynamite and rhodite in back-firing, sacrificing
whole blocks of splendid residences and other structures to retard the unquench-
able ever-advancing line of fire, which at times extended unbroken for over
three miles in length. At last, at the dawn of Saturday, April 21st, after three
days and nights of valiant effort, the wind subsided and the flames died down to
rise no more; but not until after they had swept the once proud and majestic
city from the Ferry building to Van Ness avenue, ruining all the residences on
the west side of that broad, stately boulevarde, Twenteth and Guerrero streets
in the Mission, and from the waters of San Francisco bay to the Golden Gate
itself. Not in all this vast section, measuring over sixteen square miles, did one
single habitation escape the shock of the giant tremblor or the all-devouring
flames, with but a few exceptions, viz.: the United States Mint, the United
States Custom House, the United States Postoffice, which was damaged one-
half a million dollars’ worth by made-land sinking away from it, the new un-
finished newspaper building of the Chronicle, and the new building of the
California Casket Company just erected, but not wood-finished. Every other
building, of whatever class, kind or construction, was tumbled, crumbled,
shaken down, or absolutely gutted by the fierce flames in which granite dissolved
to powder and steel beams melted and buckled like a watch’s freed mainspring;
where cobble-stones scaled and chipped off and marble slabs disintegrated and
became as bone-dust to the touch.

No computer or statistician lives who could accurately arrive at the mone-
tary loss, variously estimated at from three hundred and fifty to four hundred
millions of dollars. Nor will the loss of human life ever be known, said
to be from fifteen hundred to two thousand; many more are known to
have perished in the lodging houses and cheaper hotels located in the district
south of Market street, as well as in the poorer districts, of which no returns
will or can ever be made; many identities were lost both in and out of un-
identified graves.

On the cessation of the first quake and the breaking out of the flames all
means of surface transportation was rendered useless, except the automobile,
which did good and swift work in rescuing the wounded and carrying the living
to places of safety, as well as transporting dynamite and other high explosives
to the busy fire-fighters, also rendering invaluable aid in getting food and water
to the refugee camps in the parks, when the relief trains, so generously and
beneficiently forwarded by all the cities of the land, began to arrive laden with
provisions and clothing for the hungry and the destitute. The sister city, Los
Angeles, which by her nearness was enabled to supply physicians, nurses and
medical supplies, as well as foodstuffs, getting the first relief train to the
stricken city on the night of the first day.

Congress appropriated money, private citizens throughout the broad land
gave of their wealth. Army and navy stores and the cargoes of many mer-
chantmen in the harbor were all made available, and thus famine and disease
were prevented and lives which would have flickered and then passed out were
saved, encouraged and strengthened for the monumental task of raising a
grander, greater, safer and more beautiful New San Francisco phoenix-like
from the ashes of the City of the Forty-Niners.

These are the words; the pictures tell the tale much better; pictures the
like of which, it is earnestly hoped, will never be presented by any camera
again while the earth rolls around.
Section of the Union-Street Cable Line, between Steiner and Pierce Streets, Distorted by the Earthquake.
Break in the Asphalt Paving on Van Ness Avenue, near Vallejo Street.
Break and Two-foot Sink in East Street, near Ferry Building.
View of the City of San Francisco on Fire. The Only Photograph Obtained Showing the Entire Scope and Extent of the
Riper, Oakland, Cal. Permission Secured.

Great conflagration. Fire line over three miles long, extending from North Beach, Golden Gate, to Twenty-first Street, Mission.
Effects of Shock on newly Constructed Temple Beth-Israel, 1817 Geary Street, Western Addition.
Effects of Shock on One-year-old Albert Pike Memorial Temple, A. A. S. R., 1825 Geary Street, Western Addition.
Break and Sink in Capp Street, between Seventeenth and Eighteenth Streets, in the Mission District.
Effects of Shock on Hahnemann Homœopathic Medical College, on California Street, near Maple.
Effects of Shock on Western Side of Memorial Museum, Golden Gate Park, a Structure of the Mid-Winter Exposition.
Effects of Shock: Total Wreck of the Children's Play-House, in Golden Gate Park; a City Building.
Effects of Shock on Dolores Mission, the Oldest Building in the City; Tower of the New Church, which Will Have to be Rebuilt.
Effects of Shock on Two Frame Residences on Howard Street, near Eighteenth, in the Mission.
Effects of Shock on Frame Residence on Shotwell, near Fifteenth Street, in the Mission.
Effects of Shock on the Pierce-Rudolph Storage Warehouse, Eddy Street, near Fillmore.
Effects of Shock: Wreck of the Valencia Hotel, Valencia Street, near Eighteenth, in the Mission; Four-story Frame Structure, Sunk Two Stories below Street Surface; Sixty-four Lives Lost.
at Hotel, Newspaper, and Retail Centers of the City North of Market Street at Noon of the First Day; on the Second Day All the Entirely Flame Swept.
Effects of Shock on New Golden Gate Commandery, K. T., Building, in Course of Construction, Sutter and Steiner Streets.


Effects of Shock: S. F. G. and E. Co.'s Gas-House, near Fort Mason.

Effects of Shock: Collapse of the Stockton Steamer Wharf, Water Front, near Ferry Building.
Effects of Shock: Wrecked Wharf No. 9; U. S. Cruiser Chicago Alongside; the Ship's Pumps Protected Much Wharfage near this Point.

Effects of Shock: Collapse of Wharf No. 7, near Ferry Building.

Effects of Shock: Collapse of the Stockton Steamer Wharf, Water Front, near Ferry Building.
Effects of Shock: Wrecked Wharf No. 9; U.S. Cruiser Chicago Alongside; the Ship's Pumps Protected Much Wharfage near this Point.

Effects of Shock: Collapse of Wharf No. 7, near Ferry Building.
Burning of Financial and Wholesale District, Taken from Portsmouth Square, Showing to the Ferry Building.
Fire Line at City Hall, Raging South of Market Street and on Golden Gate Avenue, First Day.

Fire Line Raging in Mission District, from Twentieth and Guerrero Streets to Potrero Heights, Second Day.
Fire Advancing on Rincon Hill District, South of Market.

Fire Reaching Van Ness Avenue, near Green Street, on Second Day.
From Pacific Heights at Vallejo Street, Fire Line at Van Ness Avenue; Residents Prepared to Flee to Presidio Reservation.

Flames Consuming the Rincon Hill District, First Day.

Night Scene: Rincon Hill, from Mission and Howard Streets to Pacific Mail Dock.
Looking up Kearny Street towards Market, from Broadway; in the Right Foreground Little Italy.

From Telegraph Hill, Overlooking the Wholesale District; in Right Center the Appraisers Building, U. S. Custom House, Unscathed by Either Earthquake or Flames.
On Market, Looking towards the Ferry. Phelan Building on Left, the Call Building and Palace Hotel in Distance; First Day.

Murphy, Grant & Co.'s Building, Corner Bush and Sansome Streets.

View from McAllister Street Looking East Along South Side of Market Street.
At the Junction of Grant Avenue, O'Farrell, and Market Streets; Forenoon of First Day; Destroyed that Night.

At Kearny and Market, Looking into Third Street; Examiner Building on Left and Call Building on Right Side.
Receiving Messages in Portsmouth Square; also Coroner's Temporary Interment Ground of the Unidentified Dead.

Dynamiting Crew of Regulars Destroying Buildings to Retard the Progress of the Flames.
Destruction of Emma Spreekels Building, on First Floor of Which was "Zinkand's."

On Powell Street, at Market, South Side of Latter in Flames.

On Market, James Flood Building on Left, Academy of Sciences at Right.

Burning of the Cosmopolitan Hotel, Night Scene.
Ruins of the Palace Hotel, from in Front of the Chronicle Office, Unfinished Monadnock Building at Right, Market Street.
Another View of the Palace Hotel; Ruins of the Grand Hotel in Foreground; Taken from the Corner of Montgomery Street.
Ruins of the Tower and Market-Street Front of the City Hall; Statue of Liberty and the Argonauts Stand Undisturbed.
View of the City Hall from the Larkin-Street Side, with the Site of the Mechanics' Institute in the Immediate Foreground.
View of the St. Francis Hotel, Corner of Geary and Powell Streets, Shows Ruins of the John Breuner and Garden Furniture
Mutual Bank.  Whittell Building.  (In const
City of Paris.

A View of the Retail and Hotel Districts, from Jones and Bush Streets to the Bay.
and Potrero Heights, and from Market and Sansome to Market and Sixth Streets.
Hall of Justice, Kearny Street and Portsmouth Square, Showing Shattered Tower and Gutted Floors.
Market Street, from Eighth, Looking to the Call Building, Showing the Grant Building, in Which Were Headquarters Division of the Pacific; Ruins of Odd Fellows' Building on Right.
Market Street, East towards the Ferry, Showing the Donohue Building and James Flood Building on North Side, Call Building, the Emporium, and Hale Brothers' Department Store on South Side.
From Geary and Stockton Streets to Market, Showing the City of Paris Department Store and Mutual Bank Buildings on Right; Marchand's Cafe, the Spaulding Building, the Graystone Hotel, and the Old Chronicle Building on Left.
Pine Street, Financial District, Looking West, Merchants' Exchange on Left.
Cable Power-House Ruins, Corner California and Hyde Streets.
Post Street and Powell to Market, Showing on Left Ruins of the Savoy Hotel, Union League Club, Pacific-Union Club, Shrove Building, Bohemian Club, and Union Trust Bank Buildings.
Out Kearny from Corner Union Square Avenue towards Telegraph Hill; Small Portion of New Chronicle Building on Right.
Looking toward Telegraph Hill on Kearny Street before the Fire.
From Corner Market and Post, Looking North on Montgomery, Showing on Right Union Trust Co.’s Building, Central Bank, Ruins of Occidental Hotel, Mills Building, and Stock Exchange; Site of Masonic Temple and Bullock-Jones Building on Left.
Looking North up Stockton Street from Geary, Showing Dana Building and Ruins of Pacific-Union Club, Union Square at Left.
From Market, North on Mason Street to Nob Hill; showing the Tivoli Theater opposite the Poodle Dog, at the Corner of Eddy Street, also Native Sons’ Hall and the Fairmont Hotel in Distance.
This View Shows the Top of Nob Hill, and the Ruins of the Many Elegant Residences There on Mason, Taylor, and
Streets One Way, and on California, Sacramento, Clay, Washington, and Jackson Streets, Running the Other Way.
The Majestic Theater, on Market near Eighth Street.

The Central Theater, on Market Street.
The Claus Spreckels One-Million-Dollar Brownstone Residence on Van Ness Avenue; the Residence on the Left was Dynamited to Stop the Flames.

The Flood Mansion on Nob Hill, at California and Powell Streets; the Brown Sandstone in this Residence was Brought Around the Horn in Sailing Vessels in the Early Fifties.
The Cracker Residence on Nob Hill, Corner of Jones and California Streets; Running-gear of an Auto-Car Caught by the Flames.

The Ruins of the Mark Hopkins' Institute of Art, Corner California and Mason Streets, Which Contained the Finest Collection of Paintings by Renowned Masters on the Coast; the Pictures Were Cut Out of their Frames by Blue-Jackets and Saved.
The Orpheum Theater, on O'Farrell Street, High-class Vaudeville; the San Francisco House of the Orpheum Circuit.
Ruins of Columbia Theater, on Powell Street, the Highest-class Playhouse of the City.
The New Tivoli Opera House, Corner of Mason and Eddy; the Home of the Tivoli Comic Opera Stock Company.
Fischer's Theater, the Alcazar Theater, and Delmonico Restaurant on O'Farrell Street.
The Marie Antoinette Apartment House, on Van Ness Avenue.

The St. Dunstan Hotel, Corner of Sutter Street and Van Ness Avenue
The Princeton Hotel, on Jones Street, between Post and Sutter Streets.

The St. Andre and El Monterey Apartment Houses on Pine Street, near Hyde.
San Francisco Y. M. C. A. Building and Gymnasium, Corner of Mason and Ellis Streets.

The St. Boniface German Catholic Church and Monastery, on Golden Gate Avenue, between Leavenworth and Jones Streets.
Grace Episcopal Church, on California and Stockton Streets.

St. Francis Roman Catholic Church, on Vallejo Street, corner Montgomery Avenue.
Ruins of the Chinese Baptist Church on Clay Street, between Stockton and Powell Streets.

Center of Chinatown, looking up Dupont Street from Clay, towards California Street.
Ruins of the Chinese Joss House on Waverly Place, Chinatown.

Looking up Grant Avenue from Geary Street; the Three Columns in Center are the Ruins of the Bohemian Club, corner Post Street.
View of Kearny Street from Jackson, Showing the New Western Hotel, Commercial Hotel, and Hall of Justice.
Panorama View, Looking South from Nob Hill at the Corner of Jones and California Streets; Showing to the Bay and Pot.
...the Immediate Foreground was the Site of Many Hundreds of Good Family Hotels for Which the City Was Noted.
South of Market, Taken from the Corner of Seventh and Folsom Streets, Showing the U. S. Postoffice, Left Center, and Nob Hill, Right Distance.

The Million-Dollar Church and College of St. Ignatius, at the Corner of Hayes Street and Van Ness Avenue.
At the Corner of Dupont and Clay Streets, in Chinatown, Showing the Crumpled Tower of the Hall of Justice in Left Center.

View Over Chinatown to Telegraph Hill and the Water Front, from the Corner of California and Powell Streets.
All that is Left of Telegraph Hill District, from Broadway and Kearny.

The Famous Pacific Street and Barbary Coast, the Bowery of San Francisco, Well Known to the Seamen of all Nations.
Ruins of the Large and Beautiful Temple Emanuel, on Sutter Street, Near Powell Street, Effects of the Earthquake and Flames.
Looking West on Jackson from Montgomery Street, up Nob Hill.

Looking from Union Square at Base of Dewey Monument, down Post Street at Stockton, Showing Ruins of Union League and Pacific-Union Clubs, and Shreve Office Building.
On California Street near Van Ness Avenue; the Running-gears of the California-Street Cable Cars, Which Were Burned Where They Stood.
On Market Street at Ninth, One Week After the Fire; Refugees En Route to the Ferry; Men of the Board of Public Works Repairing the Water Mains.
The Bread Line, on Van Ness Avenue at St. Mary’s Cathedral, Drawing Their Daily Rations from the Army and Red Cross Relief Stations. As the Wholesale Stores Were Destroyed, the Stocks of the Retail Stores Were Seized by the Authorities for a General and Equitable Distribution to All.
Refugee Food and Coffee Station in Union Square, Dewey Monument and Office Building Corner of Powell and Geary Streets.
Temporary Refugee Camp near Fort Mason.

Establishing Refugee Camp on Lombard Street, near Fort Mason.
Archbishop Montgomery Holding the Only Religious Services in the City of San Francisco, on the Presidio Reservation, on Sunday, April 22, 1906.
Refugees Quartered in Army Dog-tents, on the Common, near Fort Mason.

Refugees Quartered in Army Wall Tents on the Presidio Reservation.
Refugee Camp on Gas-House Flats, at Lombard Street, near Fort Mason.

Los Angeles Relief Committee's Food Station in Golden Gate Park; First Hot Meals in Three Days for Rich and Poor Refugees Alike.
Panorama View from Sutter and Jones Streets; the Center of the Family Hotel and Boarding Houses
[Image of a destroyed cityscape with text: "South District; Showing Wreck and Ruin of Many Fine Apartment Houses and Hotel Buildings."
Another View of the Big Refugee Camp on the Presidio Reservation; Circus Tent Being Used as the Emergency Medical Supply Depot.

Refugees Occupying Vacant Lots at the Corner of Lombard and Van Ness Avenue; Fort Mason in the Center Distance.
Two Substantial Refugee Camps, One on the Fort Mason Reservation, the Other on Gas-House Flats, at Lombard Street.

View Showing the Cantonment on the Presidio Reservation, Cavalry and Artillery Barracks, and the Corral for the Pack trains Used by the Army to Transport the Relief Committee's Supplies to Different Camps.
United States Torpedo Boat Destroyer Paul Jones, Which Rendered Excellent Service Protecting Shipping and Wharfage.
Refugee Camp in Golden Gate Park, One Week Old; U. S. Army Tents.

Same Refugee Camp in Golden Gate Park, Two Weeks Old; Board Barracks Taking the Place of the Tents.
The Largest Refugee Camp, on the Presidio Reservation; United States Army General Hospital Showing.
Refugee Camp on Bush Street, near the St. Dominic Church.
Refugee Camp No. 6, at Harbor View.

The United States Battleship Ohio, Which Furnished Many Marines for Patrol Duty, and Whose Engines Pumped Much Water for the Fire Department, During Woods and Shingle.
"Searching for the Missing," One of Many Sad Scenes During Those Awful Days. The Dead from the Earthquake Wrecks Were Hastily Buried in the Parks, Squares and Vacant Lots, Some in Known, but Many More in Unidentified Graves. Those Who Perished in the Flames Were Lost, Never to be Found, and Their Number Will Never be Known.
Ferry Building, San Francisco.
Looking up Kearny Street from Third and Market Streets. Telegraph Hill in the Distance.
Port Mason, San Francisco.
Cliff House, San Francisco, (Burned Recently).
Seal Rocks, San Francisco.
Looking down Market Street Before the Fire.
Alcatraz Island, San Francisco Bay.
Chinatown before the Fire.
Looking down Market Street before the Fire.
Pacific Street, known as "Barbary Coast," Before the Fire.
SAN FRANCISCO'S HONOR ROLL

BRILLIANT AND SELF-SACRIFICING WORK OF THE COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED WHO STOOD
BY THEIR BELOVED CITY IN THE HOUR OF HER DARKEST PERIL

MAYOR SCHMITZ AND HIS CO-WORKERS, GENERAL FUNSTON AND THE BOYS IN BLUE, THE
SALVATION OF A STRICKEN CITY

After the Earth jumped back on its track at 5:13:47 on the morning of Wednesday, April 18th, 1906, the citizens of San Francisco came down on their feet in fighting mood, and the success of that fight has aroused the wonder and admiration of the entire world. Being true sons of their fathers they showed the thoroughbred strain in time of stress and peril just as did those fathers before them. There was no denying the fact that many thought it the end of time, listened for the trumpet of Gabriel to echo through the crash of worlds, and looked toward the heavens to see the angel with the flaming sword, but they stood to meet it like men, backed as they were against the wall. When walls ceased falling and they had rubbed the dust from their eyes, they found that they still lived; it was then that they shut their jaws and began to fight. They have been fighting ever since and will continue to fight until San Francisco shall have been restored even beyond the dreams of those fathers.

The first effective work began with Mayor Eugene E. Schmitz and the members of the Police Commission, who had quickly assembled at the Hall of Justice. It was a time when no man could stop to think twice; immediate action must be taken; action that must be absolutely correct on the first thought. The first official action was to send out police to close each and every saloon.

Everywhere the streets were filled with the debris of fallen walls and cobwebbed with a tangle of dangling wires, among which half a million of people stood numb and dazed or groped their way blindly, not knowing where to go nor what to do. In a dozen widely scattered localities smoke devils were dancing from roof to roof and people gave way mechanically for the clanging apparatus rushing wildly to the fires.

In collapsed buildings there were many dead, but "let the dead care for the dead," there were those yet living pinned under fallen walls and beams. There were hundreds and hundreds of injured to be succored. There were hundreds of millions of dollars in shattered banks, the savings of the people, to be guarded against the time when some men go mad and seize on the possessions of a neighbor as one crazed brute snaps at another. That was the situation, in brief, that confronted the Mayor, the Police Commission and the six hundred policemen of San Francisco, a handful to cope with disaster by earthquake, fire, and the elements of chaos that a city of half a million breeds.

The Mayor and the Police Commission had barely entered into conference when this message came to them from Brigadier General Frederick Funston: "Do you need help?" Did they? "Yes, send all the troops you can," was the reply dispatched with all the haste of a city's need. Then the conference went on. It was brief. The situation demanded the co-operation of the entire city.

A Citizens Committee of Safety was hurriedly decided upon, and the Mayor compiled the following "Committee of One Hundred" of the prominent citizens of the city in all walks of life: Mayor Eugene E. Schmitz, chairman; Rufus P. Jennings, secretary; Frank B. Anderson, Hugo K. Asher, W. J. Bartnett, Maurice Block, Hugh M. Burke, Albert E. Castle, Arthur H. Castle, Paul Cowles, H. T. Creswell, Henry J. Crocker, R. A. Crothers, P. C. Currier, Jeremiah Deneen, E. J. De Pue, M. H. De Young, George L. Dillman, A. B. C. Dohrmann, J. J. Dwyer, Charles S. Fee, John W.
Ferris, Tirey L. Ford, Thomas Garrett, Mark L. Gerstle, Wellington Gregg, Jr., R. B. Hale, William Greer Harrison, J. Downey Harvey, I. W. Helf- 
man, Jr., Francis J. Heny, William F. Herrin, Dr. Marcus Herzstein, 
Howard Holmes, J. R. Howell, Judge John Hunt, D. V. Kelly, Homer S. 
King, George A. Knight, Franklin K. Lane, Herbert E. Law, W. H. 
Leahy, J. J. Lerman, C. H. Maddox, Frank Maestretti, Thomas Magee, 
W. A. Magee, John S. Mahoney, John Martin, Garret McEnery, John 
McLaren, John McNaught, S. B. McNear, William M. Metson, Arch-
bishop Montgomery, E. F. Moran, Irving F. Moulton, Thornwall Mullally, 
S. G. Murphy, Bishop Nichols, Father O’Ryan, James D. Phelan, Albert 
Pissis, Willia Polk, Allan Pollok, E. B. Pond, H. B. Ramseell, James Reid, 
J. B. Reinstein, David Rich, Dent H. Robert, J. B. Rogers, John W. 
Rogers, Andrea Sharboro, Henry T. Scott, W. P. Scott, Frank Shee, S. M. 
Shortridge, Claus Spreckels, Rudolph Spreckels, I. Steinbart, Gustav Sutro, 
W. W. Thurston, Clem Tobin, George Tourny, Fred Ward, Charles S. 
Wheeler, Thomas P. Woodward, and John P. Young.

These names with addresses from the City Directory, were at once placed 
in the hands of a detail of policemen, a few names to each member of the 
squad, with instructions to have the Committee at the Hall of Justice by 3 
o’clock in the afternoon.

This work had barely commenced when the rhythmic tramp, tramp, 
tramp, of many feet was heard on the street, as column after column of the 
blue-shirted lads swung by, each carrying a short Krag rifle with a belt of ball 
cartridges. Their officers reported to the Chief of Police, who assigned each 
a district to patrol and detailed a policeman to guide each command to its post.
No one not on Market Street or in the downtown district at that time can 
appreciate the feeling of relief that came over all as those silent, quiet, business-
like boys swung by with the steadiness and precision of a machine, passing 
under tottering walls and entering the danger zone with dynamite and gun-
cotton to raze buildings from the path of the fire.

The deeds of heroism and the courage displayed by regulars, militiamen, 
police, firemen, and civilian volunteers on the 18th and 19th will never be 
told; they can not be. They were occurring constantly, a dozen in a block, 
throughout the city, and there was no time for names or details. Firemen, 
regulars, police, and civilian volunteers worked in the heat and smoke and 
oxious gases until they were overcome and fell in their tracks. They were 
dragged back and others stepped into the breach, to be dragged back in turn 
when they fell. Firemen fought with the determination of despair and cried 
like children when the failure of water deprived them of their weapon.

Before the hour set for the meeting of the Citizens’ Committee the entire 
city was threatened with destruction. The sky was obscured with a pall of 
smoke through which swung the sun like a blood-red ball; great sheets of 
flame wrenched and swirled through the smoke, and underneath all 300,000 
men, women and children fled for their lives, tottering under their most valu-
able possessions, while 100,000 more were preparing for flight. That was 
the situation when the above named citizens met at the Hall of Justice at the 
call of the Mayor at three o’clock on the afternoon of the 18th.

They assembled first in the office of the Chief of Police, but another shock 
threatened to bring the tower down on their heads and drove them to the office 
of the central station, in the basement, and it was not long before they were 
driven from there to Portsmouth Square. There in the open air surrounded 
by thousands of frightened Chinese and residents of the district, was the seat of 
 municipal government during the late afternoon and early evening. Then a 
dynamited building cast its debris of bricks, mortar and broken glass over the 
square, and government and advisory committee hastily adjourned to the Fair-
mount Hotel on Knob Hill. Headquarters had been established there but a 
short time when it was driven back by the advancing wall of fire and an ad-
journment was taken until Thursday morning at 9 o’clock, to meet at the 
north end police station, 1712 Washington street.

When the Mayor, Police Commission and Citizens’ Committee of One Hun-
dred met Thursday morning, the following sub-committees were appointed and 
immediately commenced work:

Resumption of Civil Government, not including Judiciary—Garret McNer-
ney, chairman.

Resumption of the Judiciary—Charles W. Slack, chairman.

Resumption of Transportation—Thornwall Mullally, chairman.

Automobile Committee—R. B. Hale, chairman; Gavin McNab, I. W. 
Raphael, George Smith, Robert Park, Michael Casey, J. R. Howell and Mr. 
Harris.

Transportation of Refugees—Thomas Magee, chairman; George A. 
Hensley.

Restoration of Water—Frank B. Anderson, chairman; George L. Dillman, 
secretary; A. S. Porter, A. H. Payson, H. Schussler, and Mr. Lane.


Housing the Homeless—W. J. Bartlett, chairman; M. J. Cerf, secretary; R. M. Countryman, John H. Speck, J. Dalzell Brown, and Charles S. Fee.

Restoration of Fires in Dwellings—Jeremiah Deneen, chairman; J. J. Mahony and George F. Duffey.


Roofing the Homeless (Sub-committee of Housing the Homeless)—Fairfax H. Wheelan, chairman; Miss Katherine Felton, O. K. Cushing, and F. J. Symmes.

Press Agent—I. Choyynski, chairman.

Drugs and Medical Supplies—Dr. Harris, chairman; Father O’Ryan, Judge Hunt, J. J. Lermen, W. H. Metson, Dr. McGill, Dr. Garceau, and Max Mamlock.

Relief of Sick and Wounded—Miss Katherine Felton, chairman; Mrs. John F. Merrill, Fairfax H. Wheelan, O. K. Cushing, and Dr. James W. Ward, sanitation.

Relief of Chinese—Rev. Dr. Filben, chairman.

Permanent Location of Chinatown—Abraham Ruef, chairman; James D. Phelan, Jeremiah Deneen, Dr. James W. Ward, and Dr. Filben.

Restoration and Resumption of Retail Trade—Geo W. Wittman, chairman; H. D. Loveland.

Citizens’ Police Committee—H. U. Brandenstein, chairman.

Auxiliary Fire Committee—A. W. Wilson, chairman.

Restoration of Abattoirs—Henry Miller, chairman.

History and Statistics—John S. Drum, chairman; E. F. Moran, secretary; Richard C. Harrison, and Clement Bennett.

Organization of the Wholesalers—William Babcock, chairman.

Marital law having been declared, one of the first orders of the Citizens’ Committee was embodied in the first proclamation of the Mayor: “Troops and police are authorized to kill on sight any person or persons caught looting.” After that there were occasional reports in the burned districts; they may have been exploding automobile tires—no one stopped to inquire. Anyway, there was no further looting.

The sub-committees had barely time to organize when the fire swept over the hills and they were again driven out. The Mayor issued an order that all records saved and the municipal government be removed to the Police Station at Haight and Stanyan Streets, far out by Golden Gate Park, for a last stand. At the same time he ordered an adjournment of all committees to Franklin Hall, at the corner of Bush and Fillmore Streets, thus establishing headquarters as near the fire line as practicable. If burned out there his orders were for all to rally at the Park Police Station.

That was at noon on Thursday; within thirty hours the Committee had been organized by men who left their property to destruction and within the same length of time the committee had been burned out four times and located the fifth headquarters. The city had been policed by regular, militiamen and volunteers, and the most disastrous fire in history was under control.

The care of the injured, the feeding of the hungry and the housing of the homeless were the first consideration of the Committees, and for the first day or two all else was subordinated to these works of mercy.

It will require a large book to tell the details of the work of these committees, each being aided by hundreds of volunteers. Each member of a committee being vested with police powers, and automobiles, carriages and wagons of all kinds were impressed wherever found; their loads were dumped on the sidewalks and filled with the injured or medical and food supplies, the vehicles hurled on to destinations named by the committee men.

The rapidity with which the Committee effected an organization and relieved the suffering and hunger of nearly 300,000 people is noteworthy. Changing headquarters five times and organizing and planning as the members fled along the streets was no easy task, but it was accomplished and for nearly a week these committees arranged and cared for the homeless multitude.

The rapidity with which organization was effected and order enforced, is what amazes the knowing world today. It was done by citizens of San Francisco, backing up their executive with their lives and their fortunes, and back of them stood their friends in the breadth and length of these whole United States. As did the fathers of fifty years ago, so did the sons of today.
1. Lieut.-Col. George H. Turney, deputy surgeon-general, commanding.
2. Capt. James M. Kennedy, assistant surgeon.

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