

CIVIC FUNERAL IN CHRISTCHURCH

Burial of 41 Victims of Fire

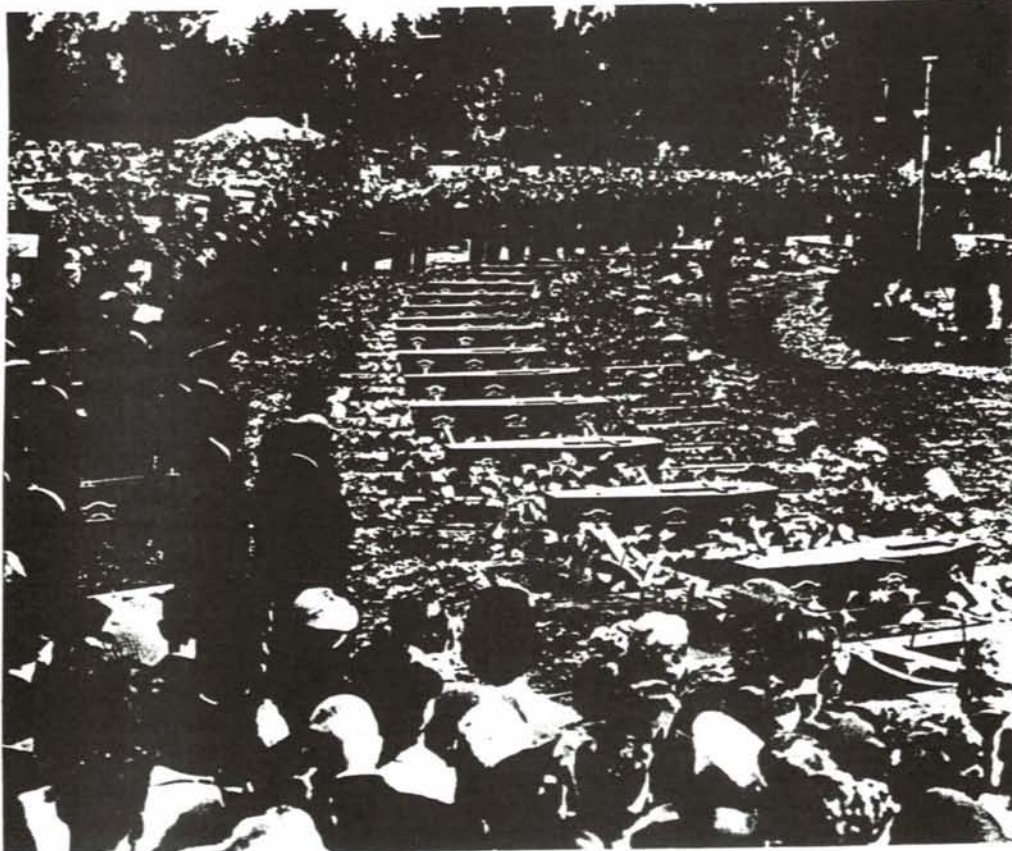
SERVICES AT CATHEDRAL AND GRAVESIDE

Christchurch yesterday afternoon mourned the 41 victims of the fire which destroyed the acre-block of J. Ballantyne and Company, Ltd., last Tuesday. While 1000 filled the Cathedral in the heart of the city, many hundreds outside joined in the civic service, and all along the three-mile route of the funeral procession to the Ruru Lawn Cemetery thousands stood. People in homes all over New Zealand listened to the radio broadcast.

It was probably the greatest crowd ever assembled in Christchurch, the only comparable numbers gathering on a very different occasion: celebration of victory in the Second World War. Yesterday a great hush descended on the city. The people's mood expressed not only grief but also respect for the dead and sympathy with the bereaved.

It was a city's tribute to those who had been their fellows and had worked for a firm whose traditions were almost as old as the community which mourned.

The Press, Nov 24, 1947. p.6.



King, M. *After the war.* Wilson and Horton, 1988. p.33.

SAFETY ROPES

Sir.—In replying to the letter written by John L. Checkley in "The Press" this morning, I would like to say that his idea of ropes as a safety measure may be all right in theory. I was a nurse in training at the Nelson Hospital when our nurses' home was destroyed by fire on the morning of October 31, 1938. Each nurse had a fire escape in her bedroom, stapled to the floor, which only had to be thrown out of her window. However, this was not practical as the fire commenced in the basement, and the upper storey windows, being directly above the ground floor windows, did not permit of one ladder being used. Many were injured jumping for their lives. I wonder why some of the spectators at Tuesday's fire did not have the presence of mind to obtain mattresses or strong sheets from the store opposite?—Yours, etc.,

CAROL RALPH-SMITH.
November 21, 1947.

The Press, Nov 24, 1947. p.2.

BALLANTYNE'S BUILDINGS

DEMOLITION WORK CONTINUED

GOODS SALVAGED FROM BASEMENTS

Demolition work at Ballantyne's building was continued yesterday according to the plan prepared by the contractor and engineers. Large blocks of masonry from the top part of the building fronting Colombo street were loaded on to lorries by the Army's big mobile crane.

Men worked all day salvaging goods from basements, and some of the articles recovered appeared to be only slightly damaged by fire and water. Rolls of carpets, rugs, and linoleum were amongst the salvaged goods, and there was a quantity of battered metalware toys. Electrical equipment and workroom machinery were also recovered.

A meeting of the staff of Ballantyne's was held yesterday morning, but the business discussed was not disclosed. A director of the firm (Mr R. H. Ballantyne) said yesterday that there was nothing further to report. When asked about the insurance on the buildings and stock he said: "It is being discussed by the committee."

Clerical and stores staff were busy yesterday in the temporary office premises set up in the undamaged packing department's building in Lichfield street.

Electricians worked on the automatic traffic lights on the corner of Colombo and Cashel streets, but late yesterday afternoon the lights were not functioning, and a traffic inspector was directing the traffic.

The plate-glass window in Beath and Company's shop which was broken when demolition work started was replaced yesterday afternoon.

The Press, Nov 26, 1947. p.6.