# The Homeless Wonder What To Do Next; Seem Stunned

## Victims Describe Tragedy Which Left Many Hundreds Destitute

By BUDDY LONESOME and HERB MANGRUM

Persons made homeless by the spectacular fire stood on nearby street-corners and wondered about their future.

They weren't angry, but instead seemed bewildered by the lightening chain of events that saw them lose everything — home, furniture, food, and clothing.

Most of them hadn't moved from places of vantage since fleeing the 12-alarm fire.

Children hung tightly to their mother's skirts.

The "lucky" had hurriedly-wrapped bundles of clothing piled beside them.

Those who didn't have time to grab up anything, watched with entranced fascination as the hungry flames devoured their homes.

**Like War Refugees**

Etched on the faces of all of them was the dejected resignation seen so often on faces of soul-weary war refugees.

The area was a bedlam with shouting firemen and screaming sirens adding to the uproar caused by collapsing walls.

Despite the noise, the fire refugees talked in whispers.

One mother standing on the Argyle ave. bridge, cooed softly to the baby held in her arms. The tiny tot was the only thing she grabbed when fleeing the flames.

Also standing on the bridge was Mrs. Evelyn Chase, who lived at 613 Sewell st. Windows in her house, located right across the street from the blazing market, cracked from the heat and awakened Mrs. Chase.

"This cracking noise woke me up and as soon as I opened my eyes, the room was lit up like the whole world was on fire. When I ran to the window I could see the market burning, she said.

**Grabbed Baby**

"I screamed to my husband, grabbed up the baby and he got the rest of the children. It was like a nightmare and we lost everything we owned." Escaping from the house with Mrs. Chase and her baby were, Herbert Chase, her husband, Angela, 7, Bobby, 5, James, 4, and Norma Lee, 3.

Living next door to Mrs. Chase on Sewell st. was her brother Robert Brown, 615 Sewell st. Brown was awakened by his brother William Brown, who shouted to him that the market was on fire.

Discounting his own personal belongings, Robert Brown ran next door and helped his sister's family escape.

**Families Lost Everything**

Nathaniel Muse, 611 Sewell st., was awakened by the glass from store windows buckling under the intense heat. He shouted the alarm to his wife, and the two quickly shuttered their three children to the street.

**Lost Everything**

Mrs. Hattie Emerson, 619 Sewell st., said "My husband, William woke me up and said the market was on fire. He ran through the house waking up everybody else while I ran and grabbed my daughter's one year old baby.

"Everything is gone and we don't know what to do," the distraught woman remarked.

Standing on Laurens st. near Fremond ave., was Mrs. Bertell Parker, who lived at 1301 N. Fremont ave., over a tavern located at that corner.

Mrs. Parker fled the flames with her two children, Joan, 19, and Robert, 15, in addition to her mother Mrs. Rose M. Ayers, 52.

Her daughter, Joan, was the first person in the Parker house to discover the fire. "Joan shook me and said, 'Oh, Mama, the market is on fire,' Mrs. Parker recounted. "When I looked out of the window the whole market was blazing away. "I've never seen anything like it.

"We could feel the terrible heat as it came through the windows. We didn't have a chance to save anything and now everything is gone.

**Heart-breaking!**

"Mister, you have no idea how heart-breaking it is to see everything you own just burn up, Mrs. Parker said.

These people stood aloof from the thousands of other spectators attracted to the scene. Nor could they understand the carnival like atmosphere that seemed to prevail among those on-lookers.

One little boy, about 13, who said: "Hot dog, this is even better than seeing the atomic bomb go off," got icy stares from the "ferugees."

One woman plucked his coat sleeve and quietly said: "You mighty think it's funny" Son, but I just hope and pray it never happens to you."

The abashed youngster mumbled, "Yes, Maam," and hurried away.

A 16-month-old baby was buried from a second-floor window and the James Alton family fled from their home at 606 Laurens st.

Mr. Alton jumped first and caught his young daughter who was dropped into his arms by his wife. However, Mrs. Alton suffered leg injuries when she jumped to the street. She did not require hospital treatment.

The Alton family effects including government checks and money being saved to buy a car, were completely wiped out. The family was given shelter by Mrs. Jesse Washington of 1742 Druid Hill ave.

Mr. Alton is employed by a local radio company.

Melted flower pots on a third floor window sill more than a block away from the fire which destroyed the market, gave mute testimony to the fact that folks along the "Avenue" would long remember the night of May 3, 1953.

Huddled together in small groups that maneuvered around in mass when prodded by police and firemen, they sought to impare the fire with those of by-gone years. One woman, Mrs. Bessie Dorsey of 1531 Little Wall st., who remembers the Baltimore fire of 1904, put the incident in that classification.

Hollow eyed from loss of sleep, Mrs. Dorsey said she became aware that "something was going on" when she heard "bottles breaking and the sound of meat flying."

**Woke Up Neighbors**

Tenant in an apartment within a half block of the market, she first aroused her neighbors she said and then ran from her home clad only in her housecoat.

Outside, Mrs. Dorsey stated she changed her mind suddenly and returned to her three room apartment to gather up some clothing. While inside she stated, the heat became unbearable and "I thought of jumping out the window at first but I was lucky, I found my way out.

"I was eight years-old at the time of the Baltimore fire, she stated "and I rember it well, This was the same way."

**Suffered Total Losses**

One of those who suffered a total loss in the early morning fire was Luther Green of 619 Sewell st. A second hand store dealer, Mr. Green resided on the first floor of his shop. In addition to interior damage he also lost his automobile.

His 1939 Chevrolet sedan was parked within 15 feet of the blazing inferno. Mr. Green stated that at first he tried to move his car but falling glass and the heat forced him out.

"I don't know what woke me up" he declared. "I just happened to open my eyes and saw bright lights dancing around the room. It's a mess. Maybe the good Lord woke me up. I lost my bank books too. I hope that I will get my money from the bank" he stated.

**"Most Awful Thing**

According to James Scott of 1635 Little Wall, the fire was the "most awful thing I have ever seen. A roaring noise woke me up" he stated. "I looked out the window and shouted Lord, the whole block is on fire."

"Although I live around the corner from the market" he stated, "my place is a complete wreck. I was only able to take a few things from my third floor room."

On the opposite side of the street, Mrs. Maggie Plater of 1309 N. Fremont st., continued her early morning vigil. Her apartment was not damaged but all families in the block were warned to "get out as soon as possible."

**Wanted To Go Home**

"I have been on this street since 3:30" Mrs. Plater declared, "and I want to go back into my home. There's no damage there she stated "and I do need a pair of shoes."

Franklin T. Mills of 632 Laurens st., stated "I lost everything. My wife and I will have to stay with friends tonight, I guess.

"Besides our clothing and some new furniture;" hesitated, "we lost $21 in bills." Mrs. Matilda Wilson was visiting with us and she lost $76.

**Mental Turmoil by Liquor**

"The heat was awful. We had to cover our heads with coats before we could run outside. I looked up and our whole roof was ablaze. The metal parts were melting and running just like water."

"I didn't have a chance to take anything" Mr. Mills stated. "My wife and the other lady ran outside in their night clothing.

"I do wish that I had some fire insurance.

"I have been living in this neighborhood for two years Mr. Mills stated, "now I have lost everything.

"My wife was so upset that she didn't believe that the house was on fire. Even while running down stairs she kept thinking about the door key that we left behind."

Mrs. Mary Scott of the 1800 block Little Wall st., told reporters, "We didn't lose everything but what little we lost was important to us."

**Saved Kitchen Equipment**

Mrs. Scott declared that she found out that the block was in flames when she heard someone scream "fire!" We then jumped up grabbed the four children and ran outside she said. Mrs. Scott was able to save most of her kitchen equipment.

Seven doors away and almost out of reach of the fire, Mrs. Mae Cotton of 1813 Little Wall st., said she left her house because "I heard everyone else getting up, so I got up too."

Mrs. Lizilie West also of the 1800 block Little Wall st., said she went outside "after I heard all the noise." Mrs. West suffered no losses.

**Auxiliary Fireman**

Among the first fire fighters to arrive at the scene were crew members of Engine No. 13. According to Auxiliary Fireman Arthur Hardy, who remembered the 1904 fire, "You could read a newspaper by the flames here a block away."

Max Meyers, owners of the Meyers Shoe Store at 1735 Pennsylvania ave., estimated his losses to be "heavy." The only white apartment tenant in the block, Mr. Meyers, who is treasurer of the Pennsylvania Business-mens Association, was aroused by the shouts of his neighbors.

"After helping my wife outside" Mr. Meyers declared, "I ran back into the store to grab my books. I had just had our upstairs apartment papered and painted and now this."

**300 Pairs Of Shoes Damaged**

Over 300 pairs of shoes in the windows of the store were ruined. In addition a $650 neon sign was put out of commission by the blaze.

William A. Carter, a 22-year-old poultry firm employee, had to flee his home at 632 Laurens st., along with his wife, Hortense, and their two children, Mary, 3, and Joyce, 1.

"I was sleeping. I woke up when the window pane burst, and grabbed my kids and ran out of the house," Mr. Carter said. A brand new 20-inch television set, a new refrigerator, a radio, kitchen equipment and clothes were among the family's losses.

**Automobile Destroyed**

Mr. Carter's 1937 Ford sedan, parked in front of the home was also destroyed by the searing heat and leaping flames.

Except for his missing front window and burned-out entrance a barber shop at 594 W. Laurens st. remained in comparatively fair condition while buildings on each side were left a shell.

**David Newborn of 1413 N. Fremont ave.** said he bought the place for $1,200 nine years ago. "It ought to at least be worth $1,500 or $2,000 now." Mr. Newborn said, "I think the insurance will cover the loss," he added.

Robert Diggs, owner of the Diggs, Motorcycle Co., had no thing but praise for neighbors and cab drivers who pitched in to help him save 14 busses, two station wagons, and a truck from his Fremont st., garage.

According to Mr. Diggs, "a group of drivers from the Fleetway Cab Company came to our aid and drove out our equipment. No one was in the building when the fire started" he said. "but there was plenty of cooperation.

# —Sightseers Give

(Continued From Page 1)

merchants and 18 specialty concessionaires.

Additional stalls were operated on week ends for church and charity purposes.

Estimates on the cost of rebuilding of the market—based on the reconstruction of similar fire losses—ran around $250,000 and might take 18 months, some market dealers thought.

Mayor Thomas D'Alesandro, who, with other city officials, visited the fire scene Monday afternoon, declared:

"I have to wait for the investigation report from the fire department before I can tell what will be done about this.

"I want to commend the fire department and the police department for the efficient job they are doing."

With the Mayor were Thomas Biddle, city solicitor; Edwin Harland, deputy city solicitor; Alan Dell, deputy comptroller and vice president of the city council; and Leon Abrams, councilman of the fourth district.

An estimated 51 families were burned out by the fire, and hundreds more were forced to flee their homes because of heat and smoke.

A temporary Red Cross headquarters, manned by Mrs. Ann Reed and Miss Dovie Stewart, was set up at school 120 at Pennsylvania ave. and Robert st. to provide food, clothing and shelter for the needy.

Jerome McDermott, assistant manager of the Baltimore Red Cross Chapter, said that the temporary station would:

1. Make sure needy families were taken care of for the following 24 hours.

2. Supply immediate food, clothing and shelter facilities for those unable to do so for themselves.

3. Make investigations to establish losses and provide for refurnishing of necessities for those financially able.

Meanwhile, two men arrested by police about 5 a.m. Monday on suspicion of arson were released around noon following an investigation. Police reports listed the cause of the fire as undetermined.

The fire was discovered about 3:20 a.m. Monday.

Oliver Pierce, a restaurant operator at 1632 Pennsylvania ave. said he had just checked his register and marked the time on it when he noticed a flash of light at Sewell st. and Pennsylvania ave.

"She was burning on the corner as I looked out," Mr. Pierce said. "I heard tires screech and ran out and saw a big black car pull up. A soldier and a civilian jumped out and raced to the fire box.

"When I got there I asked them if they pulled the alarm. They said 'yes' and I told them to pull it again.

"In less than 15 minutes the fire was halfway up the market. Almost before the first engines got there the roof of a pawn shop across the street was on fire. The street was so hot, the water made steam all up and down here."

"We hollered and some men ran around knocking on doors to warn the people to get out."

Firemen arriving on the scene fought the blaze from the streets and from the rooftops. Families living in first, second and third floor dwellings on Laurens, Sewell and Little Walsh sts. and Pennsylvania and Fremont aves. fled from their homes.

Although some persons leaped and were tossed from windows, miraculously, only three suffered slight injuries.

"It looked like an explosion of the sun," one eye-witness said of the blaze.

"You could read a newspaper two blocks away," another said.

# Fire 'Victim' Found Alive After Search

A four-hour search beneath tons of rubble for a "trapped" man, by firemen fighting Lafayette market blaze, ended with the "victim" found alive in an Argyle ave. house.

Henry A. Lewis, 58, lived behind his shoe repair shop at 622 Laurens st. The shop was one of scores of businesses that were destroyed by the fire.

As firemen were demolishing walls of the gutted buildings as a saftey measure, Miss Verline Lewis, 16, 1300 block N. Fulton ave., informed them that her father was missing and she believed him trapped beneath the building.

Fire officials immediately halted the demolition and began a search for the missing man. Firemen, working in relays of five each, laboriously searched beneath the tons of brick for the man's body.

News of the trapped man spread through spectators around the scene like wildfire, and hundreds congregated behind fire lines to watch the gruesome search.

**Woman Breaks News**

After the firemen had worked almost three hours, Mrs. Cora DeShields, 1204 Argyle ave., walked up to a policeman and reported that the "trapped" man was at her house — and very much alive.

A police car rushed to the Argyle ave. house and Mr. Lewis was taken to the scene of the fire. He told authorities that he had been sick and hadn't been at home since early Sunday.

Mr. Lewis said he heard about the disastrous fire from a news broadcast. His arthritic condition kept him from going to the scene, the man said.

SMOKE VICTIM GETS FIRST AID—Three-year-old Dennis Logan, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jasper Logan of 1638 Madison ave. is being given first aid by firemen after being overcome by smoke in a third-floor bedroom Saturday night. The youngster is in fair condition. — V. F. Taylor Photo.

# —Destrudion

(Continued From Page 1)

ful of the warning that any or all might collapse, found more silent evidence of the suddenness with which the blaze had struck.

**Jumbled Mass**

Here was a room that had been left a jumbled mass, two charred mattresses telling the story of twin beds from which the occupants had fled. The gilt frame of a wall portrait jutted through a pile of soggy trash, its one-time occupant no longer precious to the evicted residents of the place.

Over here was an upended table, its rubber tips melted and still warm. Nearby lay an open Bible, propped up by a stack of numbers dream books. Standing alone of all the articles in the room was a night-jar in upright position, half full of the water which had been poured into the place by firefighting apparatus.

**High Chair Overturned**

Further down the street, a baby's high-chair lay upturned in the street near the curb, washed, as it were, by more of the water that had been used to douse the flames. Inside here, was a tiny crib, its bright paint showing through the smudge, telling the story of a recent purchase by proud parents.

Smashed bedsprings, dismeboweled mattresses up turned chairs and a table radio, one tube still lighted, adored the floor along with coloring crayons — the unmistakeable property of the home's infant prince, or princess.

Outside once again, and on another street, a fishbowl decorated the window of a small eating place. Its three occupants floated lifeless on the surface of the water, botled alive by the intense heat which, authorities said, must have reached 3,000 degrees centigrade at one time during the conflagration.

**Autos Abandoned**

Automobiles parked at the curb and abandoned by their owners in their hasty departure from the scene, were blistered and shorn of tires by the inferno. Mongrel dogs which had employed their animal instinct to escape, were back roaming the streets seeking trouble or play, as is their wont.

Two untagged creatures got their share of the former when they elected to meddle with a large grey cat lazing in the scorched doorway of a Sewell Street house. A humped back, a hiss and a flashing paw sent them scurrying for safety.

Though cowed by this act of God and deserted by her owners, neither her feline courage or dignity was a casualty of the fire.

A three-story building, laid bare by the collapse of its front walls, showed the remains of a television set, numerous pieces of furniture with only the woodwork standing, an electric clock, its hands stopped at 3:40, a porcelain table with facing chairs and a quart jar in the middle, its liquid contents half consumed.

Inside still another house, this one completely demolished in the front but partially intact in rear, an untouched kitchen was well stocked. Its electric refrigerator contained fried chicken, obviously left over from Sunday's dinner, an uncooked pork roast, lamb chops, probably meant for later in the week, milk for baby's formula, and the usual staples for the family larder.

**Calamity Reactions**

Typical of the human reaction to the calamity was the story told by Luther Green, a 56-year-old resident of 619 Sewell st.

"I was completely wiped out," he told the AFRO. "Every penny I had been able to save was fire they had ever witnessed.

**Red Cross Aid**

Johnny-on-the-spot to help the new homeless was the Red Cross which set up relief stations at School No. 120 and the Pine Street Police Salion. The first thing they did was hand out money so that the poeple could buy food.

And for those who also were without clothes, they sent them to nearby stores to price articles and assured them the Red Cross would pay for them. As for living quarters, the majority sought temporary residences with frends or relatives or both.

Mrs. Dennis stated that she had no place to go and that in the interim, her children were scattered around with various friends.

**Use Ladder**

Because they did not have a rear exit or fire escape at their second floor place, young Jerry found a ladder and placed it down into the yard so that his mother and the other children could come down.

When they reached the yard, it was necessary to walk along a fence and then break through a part of it for an exit.

"We have a little insurance, but not nearly enough to help us in this loss," Mrs. Bertell Parker remarked as she surveyed the apartment she had occupied at 1301 N. Fremont ave., for over 18 years.

**Furniture New**

She and her family escaped injury in the blaze because her son, Robert, had awoken, saw that the market was ablaze and aroused the family which included Mrs. Parker, Jean, 19, a sister, and Mrs. Rosie Ayers, his grandmother.

Most of their furniture was new and as Mrs. Parker put it, "too darn good to be burned up." However, she was able to salvage some clothes. But the whole situation left the family heart broken and disgusted.

**Staying With Aunt**

Currently they are staying with an aunt, Mrs. Jessie Rowen, at 1452 N. Carey st. Mrs. Parker has another son, David Parker, who is in the Army and stationed at Fort Breckenridge, Ky.

Not all of the tragedy was directed at those living in the area. Those who worked there also suffered.

Walter Thompson, 61, of 1141 N. Gilmor st., came strolling down to the Silver Dollar Cafe at 1301 N. Fremont ave., early Monday morning only to find that he was out of a job. He served as janitor and bartender at the place.

**Followed Fire Engine**

The cafe was gutted. Looking woefully at his ex-business establishment was Julius Halpran, of 3323 Burleigh ave., the owner, who said that he followed a fire engine from downtown to the blazing market.

When he arrived only the market was on fire, he stated, and he certainly did not think that the buildings on Laurens or Sewell Streets would be touched.

But the winds hurled sparks and soon the side of Laurens st. where the cafe is located, was leveled. He has insurance, he explained, but not nearly enough to cover this kind of loss.

**At Loss Of What To Do**

"We just didn't know where to go or what to do," was the lament of many of the victims.

Mrs. Ella Johnson who has lived at 1303 N. Fremont ave., for the past three years, explained that when she heard the fire engines and then saw the fire, she awakened her husband, Thomas, and they dashed out of the house and walked up the block and just sat in a car watching.

Over at 1210 Argyle ave., Mrs. Nellie Hart looked out of her door, saw the fire, and immediately realized that her friends, the Johnsons, lived near the fire. She set out to look for them and found them sitting in a car safe.

**Family Members Nearby**

Mrs. Edith Williams, a sister of Mrs. Johnson, live just above her sister on the third floor. She said her family also left the building in scant night attire.

Among those arriving home to find their homes in ruins was Mrs. Louis Burse of 1635 Little Walsh st., who was in Pikesville at the time.

"Fire make me very nervous and upset, so I am glad I was not here during the worst part," Mrs. Burse declared as she surveyed her two water-soaked rooms for which she paid $9 weekly, and had the use of the kitchen.

**To Move To Country**

She added that she will now move to Pikesville to live because, "I am a country girl at heart."

In the same building were Miss Mildred Dorsey, James Price and James Scott. Next door were Mrs. Bessie Dorsey, mother of Mildred Dorsey and another family. Mrs. Dorsey ran out into the night in her petticoat after seeing to it that everyone at 1635 and 1633 Little Walsh st., had been aroused. Both buildings were red hot from the market fire, the tenants explained.

Miss Dorsey's cousin, Mrs. Hortense Carter, who lived at 632 Laurens lost her home just as the Dorseys were fleeing from their.

**All New Furniture**

Mrs. Carter and her husband, William Andrew, and two small children had only lived there three months and all of their furniture was new.

"We lost everything," Mrs. Carter moaned as she said that her husband heard the flames crack the window glass and alarmed his wife. She grabbed one of their children, little Joyce, 1, and he grabbed the other, a three-year-old, and they ran out clad only in coats.

After standing around for hours just looking, they took the children to the home of a cousin on Fremont. Mr. Carter worked at the Hendler Poultry Co.

**Stark Tragedy**

"The situation just spells stark tragedy for us," Mrs. Carter sobbed as she sat in the Red Cross relief station at School 120.

Also heart broken was Mrs. Florence Smith, who lived at 626 Laurens st. with her six children, her mother Mrs. Queen Strand, and Ella Cooper. Her daughter, Frances, 17, sounded the alarm for the family and after everyone had reached safety by jumping from roof to roof and then jumping down into the yard, she ran back into the building to bring the dog out safely.

**Don't Even Have Shoes**

"My children don't even have shoes left," Mrs. Smith stated. She was given money by the Red Cross to buy food. The family will stay at 1124 Stocken st., with Mrs. Elizabeth Adams. Her children are Clarence, 18, Edith, 16, Barbara, 13, Jessie, 14, Sylvia, 11, and Frances, 17.

Through the next door apartment, out onto a roof, doubling back to another roof and then a jump to the ground from the second floor was the sorty of Mrs. Catherine Beale's family.

As they landed safely, Barbara Beale, a 16-year-old Douglass High pupil, explained that pieces from the market were flying through the air, electric shots were shooting about and houses near them were shaking.

The Beales lived at 609 Sewell st. on the second and third floors and as Barbara put it, "Our house was the only one left in the block with anything in it it that amounted to much."

**Dinkie Is Saved**

Barbara also was proud of getting the dog, "Dinkie" out.

Not so fortunate was her uncle, William Emerson, of 619 Sewell whose family of eight was left with nothing to eat or any belongings. Only things saved in this household, for some shoes he had purchased for his six children on Saturday night.

Mr. Emerson was awakened by window panes cracking from the heat. Members of his family are his wife, Hattie; two sons, William and Alexander; two daughters, Shirley M. and Irene, a grandson, Victor, and a brother-in-law, Linwood Brown.

Mrs. Beale who works in a Chinese laundry, took her family to her mother's home at 1428 Madison ave.

**Thought It Was Day**

"I thought it was daylight," Samuel Brown of 614 Laurens st. declared.

But when it dawned on him that it was fire, he grabbed some clothes, dashed through a rear window, jumped from the second floor to the ground. It then was necessary to climb a fence to reach safety.

With him was his son, James Edward, 18, who is home on furlough before being shipped overseas to Korea. James has been stationed in North Carolina and still has two more weeks leave.

**Only Canton Was Worst**

"The recent Canton fire was the worst, I have ever seen, but this was the most destructive for me," Mrs. Myrtle Page of 625 Sewell st., said as she and her husband, Glen Page loaded their remaining belongings into a truck and moved off for a new home at 662 Pitcher st.

The Pages have two sons serving in Korea, Glenn Jr., and Raymond. A third son, Leonard, lives at 1938 Franklin st. Among the things salvaged by Mrs. Page was a bag full of pennies.

Standing desolately looking at his place was Wesley Gaines, operator of the Unique Barber Shop on Fremont. Although the shop was not destroyed by fire, it was water-soaked and left without gas or electricity.

"Someone called me about four o'clock in the morning and told me to come and get my things out as the whole place was burning down. However, when I arrived at the scene, no one was allowed that close to the flames," he stated.

Mrs. Gaines has had the shop for about a year. He lives at 1637 Lafayette ave.

# —Up In Smoke

(Continued From Page 1)

THE BALTIMORE AFRO-AMERICAN
Published Every Tuesday and Saturday
THE AFRO-AMERICAN COMPANY
628 N. Eutaw St.
Baltimore 1, Md.
Mulberry 4016

A Champion of Civic Welfare and the Square Deal

CARL MURPHY, President
D. ARMISTEAD MURPHY, Vice-President
ELIZABETH HILL CHRISTIAN, Secretary
MAX E. DYSON, Asst. Secretary

The AFRO assumes no responsibility for the return of unsolicited articles. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by self-addressed, properly stamped envelope. No pictures will be returned after publication.

National Representative
ASSOCIATED PUBLISHERS, INC.
51 W. 40th, NYC 18

BALTIMORE AFRO-AMERICAN
Washington Bureau 901 Rhode Island Ave., N.W. Phone NO 1-4608
Philadelphia AFRO-AMERICAN
437 S. Broad St. Phone PE 5-4697
Richmond AFRO-AMERICAN
1108 N. 2nd St. Phone MA 2-9312
New Jersey AFRO-AMERICAN
172 W. Kinney St. Phone MA 3-3079
Newark 2, N. J.

AFRO Subscription Rates

| | Tues. | Fri. |
|---|---|---|
| THREE YEARS | $13.00 | $13.00 |
| TWO YEARS | $ 9.00 | $ 9.00 |
| ONE YEAR | $ 6.00 | $ 6.00 |
| SIX MONTHS | $ 3.50 | $ 3.50 |

Foreign Rates

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 YEAR | $ 9.00 |
| 6 MONTHS | $ 5.50 |

# Stallkeepers Take Losses On The Chin

## Estimates Listed Range From $300 Up To $20,000

Lafayette market stallkeepers shook their heads and admitted they were taking their fire losses on the chin Monday. Some had insurance and some didn't. Hardly any had enough.

Among the heaviest losers was Charles H. Covington Jr. of 1338 N. Monroe. Owner of two stalls and two poultry stores at 614 - 616 Laurens st., he declared:

"I imagine my loss about $20,000. I had some insurance, but of course you never have enough."

Mr. Covington said his store property ran his losses up, but that he intended to rebuild as soon as building inspectors gave an okay.

**Lucky Insurance**

Miss Frances B. Morris of 1124 Whatcoat st. operated lunch counters in Stalls 233 and 235.

"I had fire insurance worth $1,500," she said.

She was one of the lucky ones.

It was different with Arthur Wheeler of 838 N. Fulton ave. and Thomas Page of 1514 W. Lanvale st., who operated produce Stalls 222 and 224.

"We just lost everything," Mr. Wheeler said, and Mr. Page revealed that they had no insurance. They declined to estimate the cash value of destroyed property.

Another market produce man, Samuel Brown of 614 Pennsylvania ave., couldn't estimate his loss right away. Operator of Stalls 240 to 242, Mr. Taylor has been at the market for 30 years.

**Come See Your Stuff Burn**

A wise - cracking friend was the first to break the fire news to Waverly Hall of 1719 N. Fulton a.ve., a fruit and vegetable dealer.

Mr. Hall was aroused from his bed by the telephone caller who said:

"Waverly, come on over and see your stuff burn up."

Said Mr. Hall later:

"I thought he was kidding."

He estimated his loss at over $1,000, revealing that he had no insurance, although he had been in the market four years. Mr. Hall blamed the series of fires at other city markets for the "no insurance" attitude of local companies.

An oldtimer at the market was Rudolphus Hall of Glen Burnie. A fruit and vegetable dealer for 25 years ago, he ran stall 261 and 263.

"It's hard to say how much I lost. I guess about $300," he said.

**Stallkeepers Meet**

The 75 members of the Lafayette Market association were joined by the 250-member Pennsylvania Ave. Businessmen's association in readying for planning for the long, rough road back.

They felt sure they would get a new market from the city fathers; and a 25-man committee, appointed by stallkeepers, to work with officials, decided Monday to appoint and retain legal counsel to represent the market association.

The committee, headed by Nathan Hendler, includes:

Howard Lutz, Robert Council, Sulinea Caplan, Bob Wasker, Charles Conta, Abe Schector, Gordon Meine, A. Calvin Washke, Joseph Meine, Jacob Miller, Jack Miller, Dan Heimker, Waverly Hall, Phillip Pedone, Arthur Wheeler, Theodore Cumboto, Sam Valencia, Leo Lamantia, Tom Page, Henry Rosenthal, Fil Reichert, Edward Tyler, Charles Brennon and F. Gaziano.

FIREMEN ON ROOF of four-story Capitol Drug Co. building shown evacuating residents who lived above store located at 1800 Pennsylvania. More than 1,000 persons flocked to watch blaze.

AT HEIGHT OF BLAZE—Photo made at 4 a.m. Monday shows firemen battling 12-alarm blaze which leveled Lafayette Market and surrounding two-block area: Staff Photographer I. Henry Phillips who made this photo was on the scene minutes after first alarm was sounded. The 75 stall owners in the market met Monday, hope to clean up debris in time to have temporary stalls ready Saturday.

BEFORE COLLAPSE — Photo made by Paul Henderson at 8 a.m., Monday, minutes before the building at right completely collapsed.

HOT POTATOES — Pounds of potatoes, many of them unscorched, were found in shop at right building, 636 Laurens st., when flames cleared. Barber shop at left was operated by David Mewborn, 643 Laurens st.

AFRO STAFF PHOTOS FRANK AND HENRY PHILLIPS AND OTHO MACKAY

ALL THAT'S LEFT — Mrs. Bertell Parker and son, Robert, who reside on second floor at 1301 N. Fremont ave., shown with bag of clothes, all they were able to save. They lost new refrigerator, TV set and sofa. Staff Photo by Otho Mackay.

WALLS COME TUMBLING DOWN—Walls of buildings at Laurens and Little Walsh sts. are demolished by firemen to prevent injury to persons who pass and to protect buildings in rear not affected by blaze which made 51 families in the area homeless, and did damage in excess of 2 million dollars.

# Challenged Baltimore Fire

After viewing the ruins in a two-block area surrounding Lafayette Market, a Baltimore septuagenarian declared: "It reminds you of the Baltimore fire."

Eli Johnson, 79, lives in the Methodist Home for the Aged, 800 block N. Carrollton ave.

When he heard about the fire from a newscast, shortly after 9 a.m., Mr. Johnson went to the area to see the damage. When he saw the desolate area, Mr. Johnson said: "Why it's worse than I thought. Every home around here almost as far as you can see is burned out. It really reminds me of the old Baltimore Fire in 1904.

"When that fire started, I was living in the 900 block Eutaw st. I never have forgotten that night because the fire engines woke me up and I went right down there.

**"Everybody Was Scared"**

"The fire began in ol' Johnny Hurt's building, down near German st. (Redwood), and spread like wildfire. Everybody in town was so scared they started packing up everything they had.

"I was working at Johnny Schaffle's meat packing plant on Louisiana ave. (Lexington) when the Big fire started. They tore his place down and I went to G. Lamb's meat packing plant on South st.

"When we walked home from work at night, through the downtown section, we could still see red coals in the cellars of the burned out buildings.

"It was pretty bad and a lot of people thought Baltimore would never be the same again. The same way Baltimore was rebuilt, Lafayette Market and these buildings can be rebuilt," Mr. Johnson concluded.



"WE'RE BANKRUPT!" — Edward J. Coates, shown here outside of what was left of his Sanitary Fish Market at 625 Sewell st., agreed with his partner, Oliver Robinson. Only show case is left standing.



# The Big Fire

## AFRO Photographers View Tragic Lafayette Market Area Blaze