

BRAVE MEN RESCUE MOTHER AND HER CHILDREN

**Mrs. M. Leveira and Children
Dragged From Death in a
Mysterious Blaze.**

INCENDIARY IS SUSPECTED

**Three Houses Guttled in Early
Morning Fire at Castro and
Twenty-Ninth Streets.**

A mother and her two children were rescued from almost certain death at 2:45 o'clock yesterday morning in a suspected incendiary fire at Twenty-ninth and Castro streets by Sergeant Robert A. Coulter, Policeman William T. Moran and Battalion Chief Charles R. Murray. The fire started in a vacant house at 590 Twenty-ninth street, corner of Castro street, completely destroying it, spread to a house under the course of construction owned by Policeman August Miller of the Mission Station at 586 Twenty-ninth street, and then set fire to the Leveira home, at 584 Twenty-ninth street.

In the front part of the house Martin Leveira, an electrician, was sleeping, while in the back portion of their home peacefully slept his wife and two children, Benita, aged 8, and Robert, 7 years of age.

Leveira, awakened by dense smoke which was pouring out from the residence on the corner, rushed to the sidewalk in his night clothes and bare feet, and ran to the corner of Twenty-ninth and Noe streets and turned in the first alarm. On his return to his home the firemen were already setting about to couple their hoses so as to reach the summit of the house.

Leveira ran frantically up the stairs of his house, which was a mass of flames, with the intention of rescuing his wife and two children. Battalion Chief Murray, Sergeant Coulter and Policeman Moran stopped the frantic parent, and ascertaining where the other members of the family were sleeping, rushed into the house. The hallways were filled with blinding smoke and the shingles on the roof were commencing to fall into the interior of the house.

Fighting their way to the rear of the structure, falling over obstacles in their hurry, and nearly overcome by the dense smoke, the three men reached the bedside of the mother and her children. The bed was just taking fire and the three occupants were unconscious from smoke.

DARING RESCUE EFFECTED.

Dragging Mrs. Leveira from the blazing bed, Murray made for the doorway. At the same time Moran and Coulter took the boy and girl from their precarious positions and followed Murray to safety. By this time the neighborhood was aroused, as it looked as if the entire block was doomed.

Occupants of nearby houses were dragging their effects to the streets and half-clad men and women rushed frantically about the scene of the conflagration. At the sight of the three daring men, bringing with them the unconscious forms of the woman and children, the crowd burst into cheers. The Mission Emergency ambulance was summoned and the members of the Leveira family were resuscitated at the hospital.

In the meantime the members of the Fire Department bent their efforts to saving the structures in the immediate vicinity. Houses across the street from the blazing structures were scorched and flying sparks started several roofs ablaze. After a three-quarters of an hour battle with the flames the fire was brought under control and further damage to property spared.

The damage is estimated at \$10,000, partially covered by insurance. The building at 590 Twenty-ninth street, owned by A. Hoffman, was insured for the sum of \$2500 and has been unoccupied for the past nine months. Policeman Miller's house, under course of construction, was not insured and is a total loss. The damage to the Leveira home was almost total and but \$1000 insurance was carried on the structure.

INVESTIGATION BY POLICE.

Detectives Timothy Bailey and Maurice Behan went to the scene shortly afterward and found no traces of arson. The police are inclined to believe that the fire, however, was of incendiary origin.

A stranger was seen loitering about the corner at 10 o'clock Friday night and Leveira claims this man set the houses on fire. "Some three weeks ago," said Leveira yesterday. "I saw a man enter the vacant house on the corner and shortly afterward, accompanied by Policeman Charles White, we searched the premises, but found no traces of the man. One week ago I found some kindling wood and brush in the basement of the house, and the fire this morning has a suspicious aspect."

Fire Marshal Towe is making an official investigation into the origin of the blaze.