

Construction

Walls.—In basement, concrete; above that level, brick with stone facades to street frontages. Interior strapped and lined with matchlining covered with Beaver board on the ground floor, matchlining covered with Pinex on the first floor, and matchlining covered with Celotex on the second floor.

Columns.—Cast iron.

Floors.—Wood on timber joists carried on timber beams.

Roof.—Timber-framed, covered with corrugated iron, and incorporating a large lantern light approximately 45 ft. long and a penthouse over the lift-well.

Partitions :—

Ground Floor: Brick and timber framed, covered with wood panelling and Beaver board.

First Floor: A few partitions brick, but mainly timber-framed and covered with plaster board, matchlining, and plywood.

Second Floor: The accounts and credit rooms separated from remainder of block by a substantial brick wall. Remainder of partitions timber-framed and covered with Celotex. Brick partitions were strapped and lined with matchlining covered with Celotex.

Ceilings :—

Basement: No ceiling.

Ground Floor: Matchlining.

First Floor: Matchlining covered with Pinex.

Second Floor: Celotex only.

Stairs :—

Basement to Ground Floor: Timber not enclosed.

Ground to First Floor: Timber not enclosed.

First to Second Floor: Timber, enclosed on second floor with partitions timber-framed and covered with Celotex.

Second to Third Floor (Lavatory): Timber, enclosed by timber partition covered with Celotex at head of stair.

Fire-escapes.—Access from second floor and third floor (a lavatory only) on to steel and cast-iron fire-escape previously mentioned; no access to fire-escape from first floor.

Lifts.—Ground to second floor, situated in angle of two brick walls. Other walls timber-framed and covered with Beaver board, Pinex, and Celotex, on the different floors :—

		Shaft.	Doors.
Basement ..	..	..	Timber covered with wire mesh.
Ground to first	..	Enclosed with timber; framing covered with Beaver board	Wood with wire-mesh panels.
First to second	..	Pinex and Beaver board	Wood with wire-mesh panels.
Second floor	..	Celotex and Beaver board	Wood with wire-mesh panels.

Hoisting-machinery in basement. Cage, panelled in oak ply, metal roof, and telescopic gate.

BLOCK 4 (ALSO KNOWN AS PRATT'S BUILDING)

A building with a frontage of 66 ft. to Cashel Street and extending as far south as the south side of Block 1. At approximately half this distance the width of this block was reduced to approximately 38 ft. For a distance of approximately 33 ft. back from Cashel Street the building was three stories in height, and beyond that distance, two stories in height. There was a basement at the rear of this block housing the main switchboard and pneumatic-tube equipment, and used for the storage of dress materials.

Openings

This block was accessible from Blocks 1, 2, and 3 through the following openings in the brick walls :—

Basement.—A doorway to the basement of Block 2 fitted with a steel door, which was apparently open at the time of the fire.