

LOCAL HISTORY

1891 cigar factory fire spread downtown

Each week, the Onondaga Historical Association looks back at important events:

125 years ago:

At 6 a.m. on the morning of March 14, 1891, a fire was discovered at the Hier and Leighton cigar factory at West Fayette and Franklin streets. Strong winds spread the burning embers east along Fayette and Washington Streets, igniting many buildings along the way, over to



The aftermath of the Montgomery Flats fire, in a photograph taken from City Hall. (OHA photo)

Montgomery Street. There the fire tore through the Montgomery Flats, a six-story residential structure with shops on the ground floor. Fortunately, the tenants were able to evacuate in time and no lives were lost. Utica and Oswego fire companies and two New York Central firefighting locomotives were called in to help extinguish the blaze. More than a dozen buildings were damaged by the fire. The area where the Montgomery Flats was located became the site for the Yates Hotel and is now the parking lot next to Key Bank.

— Daniel Connors for the OHA