

SUPERIOR

SOLON BLOCK FIRE

Morris Edelstien, a Grocer, is on Trial For Arson.

WITNESSES ARE FORGETFUL

Prosecution Tries to Show a Motive For the Crime.

The case of Morris Edelstien, charged with setting fire to building of Thos. Solon, occupied the municipal court yesterday. The state did not make its case as strong as it had anticipated, being unable to show that Edelstien had been near the building shortly before the fire. Rumors in the vicinity had it that Mrs. Siegel had seen Edelstien go away shortly before the flames burst out. When she was placed on the stand yesterday, she denied this and said that she had not seen Edelstien at all that evening.

A young man named Karon was said to have been in the store shortly before the fire broke out and that he had asked Edelstien to go with him to a dance that night. If this was true he seems to have forgotten not only the details but also the story itself. He had been to a dance that night, but the only ones that he had asked to attend, were some of a feminine gender, or "a couple of gals," as he put it.

John Solon was the first witness called by the state. He gave a very full history of the fire and also gave the details of how the store was fixed up inside. He knew very well where the stove and lamp were situated, and when he had seen the fire, it was not coming from a direction of either.

A Swede, Gus Anquist, testified that he had seen Edelstien standing behind the store after the fire had started.

William Youngquist, Mr. Edelstien's chief clerk, testified that in his opinion the value of the stock in the store was from \$1,200 to \$1,500. This was put in evidence to show a motive for setting the building on fire. The insurance on the stock amounts to about \$4,000. The policies showing this were placed in evidence. Mr. Youngquist also testified that Edelstien had said once, when he was putting in a stove, and when Mr. Solon had remarked that he would have to be extremely careful, "even if there was a fire the loss would only be about 25 cents on the dollar."

The value of the goods as estimated by Henry Evans, an insurance man here, was \$1,100. He had gone over the books in conjunction with another man.

C. G. Perault testified that he noticed the flames spread very rapidly. John Connor testified that there was a smell of oil burning in the air at the time of the fire.

Thomas Solon testified that he had called on Edelstien in December and asked him what insurance he had on his stock, and he had replied \$1,000.

The court will decide today whether it will bind the prisoner over to the circuit court or not.