— Blade Photo by Dave Cron

WALL EXPLODES IN FLAME AS WRECKING BALL PUNCHES HOLE THROUGH TO FIRE
Firemen manning aerial hose, right, spray water into opening made earlier with crane

Crane Helps Fight Fire At Ex-Dairy

Wrecker Provides Access Through Wall

A crane with a wrecking ball was used to knock holes in the brick walls of the former Page Dairy Co. building at Morris and Williams streets Wednesday so that firemen could get at a stubborn fire smoldering in the refrigeration insulation on the third floor.

Two firemen were injured fighting the blaze. Lt. Louis Jurski, 55, was treated Mercy Hospital for neck burns, and Michael Fosnaugh, 32, was treated for a foot injury at the same hospital.

Use of the city-owned crane to gain access is believed to be the first such use on a burning building, City Manager J. Michael Porter said Wednesday. Cranes have been used to knock down hazardous walls immediately after a fire, he said.

Acting Fire Chief William Redman said the fire was in a former cold-storage area on the east side of the building.

Chief Redman said firemen were unable to reach the source of the blaze in cork insulation until late in the afternoon when the crane was brought in from the city's streets, bridges, and harbor division.

One pumper crew remained at the scene early today searching for hidden fires, but the smoky blaze had been reduced sufficiently to allow crews to begin leaving the scene about 7 p.m., some nine hours after it was reported.

In all, 19 pumpers were used to fight the blaze, including 10 at one time. In addition, 8 ladder companies as well as support units, such as the air wagon, hose wagons, and foam units were used, firemen said.

Ownership of the building has not been determined. Henry Page, an official of Page Dairy Co. which went out of business in Toledo in April, 1975, said that ownership of the structure has been clouded several years by litigation over a mortgage. The building has been vacant several years.

The arson squad is to investigate the cause of the fire. No damage estimate was made.