Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire -- "NOT A CHANCE FOR THE GIRLS" Yakima Herald, March 1911

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NOT A CHANCE FOR THE GIRLS

Such Appears to Be the Evidence of Conditions Surrounding the New York Fire

DOORS SWUNG INWARD AND ESCAPES BLOCKED

Greater Number of the Employes Were Unable to Speak English Yet There Were No Yiddish or Italian Directions

The Yakima Herald, March 29, 1911

First a lace of smoke
decorated the air of the workroom,
the far wall unfolded
into fire. The elevator shaft
spun out flames like a bobbin,
the last car sank.
I leaped for the cable,
my only chance. Woven steel
burned my hands as I wound
to the bottom.

I opened my eyes. I was Iying
in the street. Water and blood
washed the cobbles, the sky
rained ash. A pair of shoes
lay beside me, in them
two blistered feet.
I saw the weave in the fabric
of a girl's good coat,
the wilted nosegay pinned to her collar.
Not flowers, what I breathed then,
awake among the dead.

Mary Fell

Details of mural by Ernest Fiene, *History of the Needlecraft Industry*

For background about the fire, see:

Art ? Memory ? Place -
Commemorating the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire