

MOST OF THREE BLOCKS ARE IN ASHES Flames Run Riot From Front Street to T Bridge Sunday Morning

Hadn't a Minute to Spare.

The narrowest escape during the fire was that of our genial friend J. E. Quick, who was living in the rear portion of his store, his bedroom on the Mezzanine floor being in the southeast corner of the building and right beside the Scenic. When he was awakened by the blaze, he lost no time in going out in front and trying to rouse the slumbering town by shouting "fire." Then he bethought himself of his lack of clothing and on his way back turned on a light in the store.

Reaching his room he found the smoke much thicker than when he left and grabbing trousers and shoes dropped to the floor, with a clutching sensation at the throat. He reached the stairs and slid down only to find the light in the store going out. It was then to creep for the door as best he could. When he reached the wall he knew which way to turn to find the doorway and finally got out. His recollection as to what followed is hazy and the next thing he distinctly remembers is finding himself out in the parking in the center of Willard street, almost strangled; but noticing that the flames were darting out from the basement in the open space there between the sidewalk and the floor of the store.

Since that time he has compared experiences with Curtis Price in the Oregon Rooming House above his store who was nearly overhead of Quick's bedroom and experienced the same strangling sensation as if he had been clutched by the throat. No doubt both of them now have some idea how it feels to be gassed in the trenches on the western front.

But remembering that some old auto tires that Hartson probably left there stood next the wall on the Scenic side and below his room, they feel sure it was the sulphurous fumes from the burning rubber that had clutched them. For several days afterward the uncomfortable feeling of being clutched in the throat persisted.

Oregon Power Does Quick Work

Sunday was a busy day for the Oregon Power Co., but by dark that night every dwelling house in town with the exception of six in the fire district had been connected with the line from Marshfield. This was very prompt action and demonstrated the kind of service rendered by the company. R. L. Medley, who has charge of the local system was on the job immediately after the alarm of fire and climbing one of the poles across from the Sentinel office cut the lead wires hot, thus obviating any danger from falling live wires. A little later he had the sections of town in which there appeared to be no danger connected up again so that before daylight the street lights east of the city hall were again burning. Monday the service was resumed in every home.

F. E. McKenna came over on the early special with a dozen linemen and the straightening out of the tangle began almost before the fire danger was past.

A Better and Safer Coquille.

The sentiments expressed at the council meeting last Monday night warrant the Sentinel in saying that when the waste places are built up Coquille will be a better and safer city than it ever has been before. That is always the rule in large cities or small ones—it was so in Chicago, in Boston, in Baltimore, in San Francisco—and here in Coos county in Bandon after the disastrous fire four years ago. Sympathy with the unfortunate losers we all feel; but in resolutely facing the future we cannot fail to realize what must be done to keep our city on the up grade. There will yet be a city of ten thousand people here and we must begin to lay the foundations for the greater Coquille that is to come.

Losses Only One Day.

The Anderson Business College presented a discouraging appearance from the water and plaster that covered everything, but a few hours' work Monday put it in shape so that school was resumed Tuesday.

Fire and gale spelled disaster.

IT TOOK TWO HOURS' HARD FIGHTING TO SAVE WHAT IS LEFT

When the fire bell sounded the alarm at 3 o'clock last Sunday morning, St. Patrick's Day, no one realized that the long delayed big fire which should rival that of 26 years ago was at hand.

Starting in the basement of the Scenic theatre near the furnace, whether from a live coal in the trash accumulated there, from hot pipes or wiring is not positively known, the fire had been smoldering for some hours and when its light awoke Mrs. C. A. Machon only a few steps away it had spread throughout the basement of the theater and was breaking through under the floor of the Ellingsen building adjoining.

Mr. and Mrs. Machon rushed to the scene and tried to put out the blaze around the furnace with a garden hose and by throwing cold ashes to smother it. His first efforts to arouse central were unsuccessful. He yelled and his wife screamed and finally he fired his six-shooter after which he called central again and reported the danger.

Night Officer Jackson heard the shot when near the Farmers and Merchants bank and started on the run up Taylor street. Looking down First from Fuhrman's Pharmacy he saw the smoke and quickly gave three separate alarms which woke the whole town.

By this time the smoke was billowing out on the west side of Ellingsen's building and the danger of those sleeping in the Oregon Rooming House and J. E. Quick, who lived at the rear of his store, was grave. C. C. Price was up and dressing before the alarm sounded and he aroused the roomers, of whom there were about 20. The calls of "This way out" by Wm. Donaldson at the stairs helps many to locate themselves and rush to safety.

In the telephone office adjoining the Scenic Mrs. Paul Ford was awakened by Machon's call and barely had time to collect her belongings.

As the people came running and falling downstairs from the rooming house the hose carts were arriving and the lines were laid for operating at the rear to prevent the flames from spreading to Front street. There was no hope of saving the group of three buildings where the fire started. Many of the refugees from the Ore-

gon had entered the Wickham House where it was only a few minutes until the wind had whipped the flames across the street and set this building, Geo. Leach's building and the Masonic Hall to burning.

When the fire broke out it was as calm as a summer's morn, but in a short time a gale from the south was lashing the fire and threatening the destruction of everything east and north.

M. H. Hersey's empty three-story store building caught from the whirling embers and intense heat and it was back of this that one of the most magnificent stands of the firemen was made. Towering above everything around, burning slowly and with terrific heat and only a short distance from the Baxter hotel the fire was confined to this building and even the small frame shacks across the alleys were saved. One peculiar and fortunate incident was that the tall front wall of the building fell in instead of out.

From this maelstrom the flames were shooting clear across First street and laying greedy fingers on the First National Bank brick building. The plate glass on Lyons' grocery and the Ladies Bazaar broke and fell out and the fire caught on the wooden cornice at the top of the building and notwithstanding the Bank's hose was being played on this point it ate its way through the wall and under the floor of the roof. A hole was chopped through and the deluge from the bank's standpipe and hose saved this fine building from the destruction that was imminent.

Downstairs Wm. Lyons was shooting from behind a counter with an inch and a half hose at the fire which continually blew across from the Hersey building. His face and neck were blistered and it was with a devout feeling of thankfulness that he saw the front finally fall in. "I thought it never would," was his expression.

Nothing was saved in Geo. Leach's place, the Wickham house nor the Masonic Hall. The former two were full of people and by the time it was certain that all occupants of rooms were out it was too late to save anything. Besides there was more interest evidenced in removing merchants' property down on Front street and no one offered to help Mrs. Wick-

ham save the case on case of canned goods which she had had on hand when she closed her dining room.

While this was happening on First street the rear end of the Collier building occupied by the Coquille Hardware Co., and the Martin buildings were afire from the intense heat even with the wind blowing from them. The rear end of Collier's building was burned off and the Martin buildings completely gutted. It was in the east Martin building upstairs that the flames broke through on Front street, and that was the only place.

Up on the roof of Knowlton's drug store and at the rear of it was made another of those determined stands in the blistering heat which probably saved both sides of Front street for a block or more.

Unable to get past the brave workers there, the fire monster gave up the ghost and Front street was saved although Machon lost a large stock of candy, tobacco, cigars, confectionery, etc., and the hardware stock in the rear of the store was badly damaged and some of it ruined.

In the drug store the water was ankle deep and it took sugar holes to permit an escape through the water-tight floor.

In the hardware store the removal of a \$15 counter was the cause of breaking a \$100 plate glass window.

The stocks from every building between Willard street and the Baxter were moved out on the north side of Front street. On the south side there were several who moved out their belongings until lower Front resembled nothing so much as the market streets of San Francisco.

When the Ellingsen buildings were burning the flying embers were starting fires on roofs nearby and near across the gulch on Spurgeon Hill. Most of these were put out but when the Masonic Hall caught nothing could save the old Wetmore hospital across the street. Almost at the same time the Lorenz house occupied by F. B. Phillips caught and from there the house in which Geo. Pike lived.

These three went almost as quickly as did the Masonic Hall and it was due to this speed that it was possible to save the Lyons' apartment house just west of the Wetmore building. This was afire inside and out at vari-

ous times but a bucket brigade was successful in saving it.

From these burning houses the wind drove the fire to the Tuttle residence occupied by L. M. Gregory and made certain the destruction of the two Seeley houses occupied by Ray Dean and J. D. Graham. Gregory and Graham saved a considerable portion of their goods. Dean got but little out.

It took fast work by Bert Gould, Geo. McAdams and F. U. Moon to save Mrs. Kronenburg's house in which B. H. Burns lived as well as the other one in which Mrs. Ida Owen and Mrs. Kronenburg reside. The fire proof paint covering these two buildings did much to resist the fire although the corner house was on fire at times. Mrs. Kronenburg was removed to the Coquille Hospital and appeared to suffer no ill effect from the excitement and night air.

Gould, McAdams and Moon likewise did heroic work at the Title Abstract office which was on fire while the Wickham house was burning. Had the flames got a foothold here in all probability the Farmer's Store, M. O. Hawkins' house across the street, the Sentinel and many residences would have been lost.

The water pressure for the three lines of hose was good until the end of the battle which lasted from 3 until 6 o'clock. At the beginning there were four lines but one length of hose was burned and the nozzle jammed so that the last half of the fighting was done with three lines.

We would like to mention a complete list of all who labored so untrudgingly and grimly right up where the heat waves blistered their faces but have been unable to secure all the names. They deserve enrollment in Coquille's Hall of Fame.

About 3:30 when things looked dark for the whole business section a call was sent to Marshfield for their fire engine and assistance. The alarm over there brought out the firemen who quickly got their equipment loaded on cars for the run over here. A little before they were ready to start word from Mayor Johnson here reached them that the fire was under control so the fire engine was left behind but a special train carrying over 100 people made a record-breaking trip from the Bay over.

Sit Tight on Fire Limits.

At the council meeting last Monday night Councilman Lorenz presented the request of Mrs. Hartman, of Bandon, to learn what restrictions the city would put on moving picture shows as she contemplated leasing Heazlet Hall, on which she had an option, for that purpose.

This resulted in a general expression of opinion in regard to the enforcement of the present fire ordinance, under which repairs cannot be made on any wooden building within the fire limits to more than 40 per cent of its value.

Councilman Mansell said he was familiar with conditions at the Scenic as he frequently transferred baggage of and from the basement there. The pipe from the furnace that heated the building ran 14 feet to the back of the building and all the way was only 5 inches below the floor joists and those joists were charred. He thought it a dangerous proposition to have a theater in a wooden building. The Grand burned three years ago and now the Scenic. It was a shame to let anyone set up a picture show in a wooden building. He hoped the council would sit tight and not allow any wooden buildings to be erected.

City Treasurer Sanford asked to be heard and wanted to protest absolutely against a theater in the Heazlet Hall or in any other building of that sort. He protested as a property owner in the burned district.

Mr. Miller said we should have it understood that there can be no moving picture shows except in a fire-proof building.

As building Inspector Mr. Kern had given notice that the Scenic would have until Saturday night to improve conditions. He believed the fire was caused by defective wiring, the wire touching the joists; and said there was lots of poor wiring in town.

New Office in Laird Building.

The Coos & Curry Telephone Co. lost everything in the building, including the only extra switchboard they owned, except the office records, which Mrs. Ford gathered up before she was driven out, and the cash on hand.

By six o'clock the line to Marshfield was in operation by a connection at P. E. Drane's store and a little later communication was opened with Bandon from Ben Curry's house.

Sunday a temporary switchboard was manufactured which has been set up in the southwest corner of the upper floor of the Laird building, where toll service to all outside points has been resumed. The company has taken a lease on these quarters which will permanently house the exchange.

The company has a large switchboard at Powers which is being replaced with a smaller one, and the former will be brought here in a day or two and as quickly as possible local service will be resumed, probably next week.

Adjusters at Work Today.

A. B. Everets and A. G. Lloyd, insurance adjusters from Portland, came in yesterday morning and after looking over all partial losses on which adjustment is necessary, went back to the Bay in the afternoon. They came again this morning and are figuring with those who suffered loss, but up to the time of going to press their final decisions have not been made known.

Business Normal Again.

All the business houses here that were muzzed up during the fire Sunday morning are now doing business again as usual, Quick and Machon in new quarters, but the rest at the old stand. Henry Lorenz waited until the insurance adjuster had inspected his stock yesterday before opening his doors but the rest were all running before that.

Serves Lunch to Fire Fighters.

Mrs. W. C. Chase, Mrs. A. N. Gould, Mrs. Jas. Richmond, Misses Inez Burch, Pauline and Genevieve Chase earned the hearty thanks of the fire fighters by serving hot coffee in the early morning hours which put new life into the men.

LOSSES \$90,000--INSURANCE \$22,000

The following is a close approximation to the losses sustained by individuals, in almost every instance based on what the property was worth and not what it would cost to replace it at the present abnormal prices:

- J. A. Collier, building occupied by Coquille Hardware Co., \$1,000. No insurance.
- Arthur Ellingsen, buildings occupied by J. E. Quick and Scenic theater, furnishings of Oregon Rooming House and stock of Coquille Hardware Co., \$11,000. Insurance, \$3,000 on buildings, \$800 on rooming house, \$2,000 on hardware stock in Milwaukee Mechanics, National Ben Franklin and U. S. Fire Co.; and \$2,000 on hardware stock in Imperial Ins. Co.
- C. A. Machon, confectionery and news stand, \$2100. No insurance.
- F. W. Woodruff, barber shop and confectionery, from breakage and loss, \$330. No insurance.
- The Rosa S. Olson and C. W. Martin buildings occupied by C. A. Machon and Geo. Goodrum's auto warehouse, loss estimated at \$5,000; no insurance.
- R. S. Knowlton, drug store, loss on stock \$1500 and on building, \$500. He had \$2500 insurance in the Milwaukee Mechanics and Prussian National.
- Geo. Robinson, general store, \$3500 insurance on stock and \$500 on building in Milwaukee Mechanics and National Ben Franklin. No damage from fire and awaits adjuster's settlement of loss from moving goods from the building. May be \$2,000.
- Henry Lorenz, dry goods and clothing, \$4,000 insurance on stock in Milwaukee Mechanics, National Ben Franklin and Prussian National. En-

- tire loss due to removal from threatened building, possibly \$1500 to \$2,000.
- J. E. Quick, second hand store, \$2,000 loss. \$1,000 insurance in National Ben Franklin.
- C. C. Price, furnishings of apartments in Oregon rooming house, \$600. No insurance.
- Coos & Curry Telephone Co., \$5,000 loss and no insurance.
- L. H. Hazard, building occupied by telephone company, \$900 loss and \$600 insurance in Mercantile Insurance Co. of America.
- M. H. Hersey, vacant three story building, \$5,000 loss; no insurance.
- First National Bank, \$2,500 damage, covered by \$10,000 insurance in Liverpool, London & Globe.
- Ladies Bazaar, \$300 damage to stock; \$1,000 insurance in Netherlands Life and Fire Ins. Co.
- W. H. Lyons, \$425 damage to grocery store, \$1,000 insurance in Springfield Fire & Marine Ins. Co. and \$1,500 in Fire Association of Philadelphia.
- Geo. Leach, total loss of rooming house and furnishings, estimated at \$7,000; no insurance.
- Mrs. G. R. Wickham, lodging house and contents, total loss estimated at \$7,500; no insurance.
- Mr. and Mrs. Nels Omundson, property stored in Wickham House, loss \$250; no insurance.
- Masonic Hall and furnishings, total loss, \$8,000; with \$1,500 insurance in Liverpool, London and Globe.
- Oregon Power Co., poles, wire, transmitters and equipment \$2,000 loss.
- Mrs. Bukholder, \$300 damage from

- stock of goods being wet. No insurance.
- Old hospital building and house occupied by Geo. Pike, both owned by Mrs. D. Wetmore. \$5,000 loss. No insurance.
- Geo. Pike, home furnishings not saved, \$250. No insurance.
- Perry Neil, household furniture and furnishings, \$450.
- Nonda Anderson, furniture, etc., \$500 loss.
- W. W. Curmley and J. P. Murray, household goods, estimated at \$1,000. Both families were in Bandon and saved nothing.
- The last four mentioned lived in the Wetmore property and had no insurance.
- Henry Lorenz, house occupied by F. B. Phillips, \$2,000; no insurance.
- F. B. Phillips, household goods; \$2,000. Insurance \$1,000 in Netherlands Fire and Life Ins. Co.
- Mrs. Effie Tuttle, of Suisun City, Calif., house occupied by L. M. Gregory, \$1500 with \$1000 insurance in National Ben Franklin.
- O. J. Seeley, two houses near South end of T bridge, \$4,000 loss and \$1,800 insurance in McMinnville Oregon Fire Relief. J. M. Thomas, of North Bend, hold a \$2,000 mortgage on these two houses and will receive the insurance payment.
- Ray Dean, part of household goods destroyed; \$450 loss, no insurance.
- L. M. Gregory, half of goods destroyed; \$250 loss, no insurance.
- Scenic theater, loss of \$1500, partially covered by \$500 insurance in the New Hamshire Ins. Co.
- J. D. Graham, portion of household goods, about \$300 loss; no insurance.

- Besides these losses there were small amounts lost from moving of goods and pilfering by Miller Bros., Coos Cafe, W. B. Camblin barber shop, Hark Dunham, F. C. Pursley, W. J. Febrache and others.
- Only One-Fourth Covered.**
- Eighty-eight thousand loss, only one-fourth covered by \$22,000 insurance is about the way it stands. The insurance ought to have been more but it will help lots as it is. We have more faith in the future rather than less because of this second baptism of fire. Adversity often brings out the best there is in cities as well as individuals and nations.
- This war, for instance, is making the United States a dry nation at a rate that would never have been possible with uninterrupted peace. Let us all have more faith in the future and work harder to make our grandest visions come true.
- Money and Bonds Burned.**
- Henry Hortaman, who is employed at Oerding's factory lost about \$65 in currency and \$40 worth of baby bonds which he left in his room in the Oregon Rooming House. And he was one of the last to escape, falling most of the way downstairs.
- Jennie and Irma Price were mourning the loss of \$20 worth of baby bonds until their father reminded them that the purpose had been served—the government had the money—when they became quite reconciled.
- Over twenty-five year between fires.