

LARGE LOSS OF PROPERTY
CAUSED BY FIRE AT BUTLER

BLAZE STARTING IN THE BEAL GENERAL STORE
SWEEPS NORTH AND SOUTH AND DESTROYS
SEVEN BUILDINGS BEFORE CONTROLLED

DAMAGE IS ESTIMATED AT \$50,000

General Store, Hardware Store, Jewelry Store, Meat Market, Restaurant and Barber Shop Licked Up by the Flames. Insurance Small Compared with Loss Sustained.

The village of Butler was this morning visited by a fire which destroyed seven buildings in the business section of the town and resulted in a loss of property estimated at almost \$50,000.

In addition to the loss sustained by owners of the buildings, several valuable stocks of merchandise were almost completely destroyed and the business section made up of the east side of Main street from Elm Street to the brick building occupied by the Phipps Grocery Store is a mass of smoldering ruins.

The fire started at 6:30 o'clock this morning from a furnace in the basement of R. D. Beals's General Store, having been discovered when Miss Edith Holmes, a clerk in the store, detected smoke coming through one of the registers. She sent a boy to the basement to investigate and he quickly reported that there was a fire in the basement. Miss Holmes then gave the alarm but the fire gained headway so rapidly that it was beyond control before the fire-fighting apparatus of the village could be placed in action, despite the commendable work that was done with the facilities at hand.

The building to the north connected with that occupied by the general store, and the fire quickly communicated to these, first being the residence of D. C. Scott and just to the north the barber shop conducted by Mr. Scott.

Then came the property of D. H. Leedy, in which Mr. Leedy conducted a jewelry store, with the dental office of Dr. H. B. Acomb on the second floor. Mr. Leedy secured assistance and was able to get a considerable part of his stock, and some of his store fixtures out of the building before the fire reached that point. A part of the equipment of the dental office was also saved.

Brick Wall Stops Blaze

To the north of the jewelry store there is a vacant lot and north of this the brick building occupied by the Phipps store. It was at this place that the fire was stopped on the north.

To the south of the Beal store there is an alley which the flames leaped, setting fire to the two-story frame building owned by J. D. Gelselman and occupied by his hardware store, the upstairs having been occupied by Mr. Gelselman as a residence.

There was sufficient time for Mr. Gelselman and a number of helpers to get a part of his stock out of the building and also to get out a large part of his household furniture.

Travels Southward

Coming next as a victim of the conflagration was a small one-story frame building occupied by H. C. James' Meat Market, and south of this, at the corner of Elm Street, being the James Pierce building, occupied by Horton's Restaurant in the basement, Fred Lease's Barber Shop on the first floor and the second floor being vacant.

Dynamite Used

At this point in the southward sweep of the blaze, dynamite was used in wrecking the structure in order to keep the flames from crossing Elm Street and eating its way into the next block and in this the fire-fighters were successful. Damage to the building on the southeast corner of Main and Elm Streets having been confined to scorched outer walls. This building is occupied by the John Eastbrook grocery store and much of the stock was taken from the building when it was realized that the structure was endangered.

Winkler Building Also

On Elm Street, east of the Pierce building, the W. E. Winkler building which is just west of the railroad and which was at one time occupied by an implement dealer and later used as a garage, also caught fire and destroyed, as were also a number of sheds and out buildings in the rear of those facing on Main Street.

The rooms above the Beal general store were occupied by Mr. and Mrs. D. Z. Grub. Mr. Grubb being the owner of the building.

Some Insurance Carried

It was impossible this afternoon to ascertain the exact extent of the individual losses sustained by those whose property was destroyed in the fire, but an estimate places the total at about \$50,000, several of the mercantile stocks destroyed having been quite large. Some insurance was carried on buildings and contents but not nearly enough, it is stated, to cover the loss involved.

Heat Breaks Glass

An idea of the intensity of the heat during the progress of the fire is gained from the fact that practically all of the windows were broken from buildings on the opposite side of Main street, glass being broken from the windows of the post office, which is just opposite the Leedy Jewelry Store, and from the windows of the Whitman Clothing Store, the Bone Hardware Store and the Charles George Furniture Store, a large plate glass window having been broken in the last named store.

Calls were sent to neighboring villages for assistance but the progress of the fire was so rapid that the fire was under control and the danger passed for other buildings which had for time been endangered.