

Coudersport in Ashes

The Entire Business Portion of the Town Destroyed.

The Post Office, the Bank, the Enterprise Office, all the Dry Goods and Grocery Stores Destroyed.

On Tuesday afternoon about three p. m. the cry of fire startled the people of Coudersport Carrying with it terror to every heart, as the fate of Rew City, Rixford, and Milton swept like a flash of lightning across the brain. The fire started in a small building on Second Street between the store of P. A. Stebbins, Jr., and the furniture store of C. Reissman. Our reporter was one of the first to reach the fire, and it was apparent at a glance that its course not be stayed until the frame row which lined Main street from Second to Third should go. Efforts to save the contents of the buildings were made and very many goods were removed to the Court House square and other places. The wind blew gently from the southwest, and it was feared that the residence of Mrs. Mann, north of Third street on West side of Main must burn, but suddenly the wind veered and blew from the northwest, and by a gallant fight the house of Mrs. Mann and the dwelling of C. Reissmann, on the northwest corner of the square, bounded by Second and Third and Main and West streets were saved and thanks to the heroic efforts of a few men who stood on

The building north of the Court House square got pretty warm at times and once it looked as though the Baker House must burn, but it stands, the only hotel in the place. Many of the goods taken out of the stores and piled in the streets and on the square caught fire and burned, and to their disgrace be it written, some people seemed bent upon plunder, quietly picking up any article which might possibly be of use to them and making off with it.

ORIGIN OF THE FIRE

It is easy enough to tell pretty near where the fire started but how it started no one knows. The idea of spontaneous combustion is advanced by some, others think the ashes from a cigar or pipe might have been the start. However it is useless to speculate. The fire came and the business portion of Coudersport is gone.

POLICE

The town council held a special meeting last evening and appointed a number of special policemen to keep watch and ward over the exposed goods.

INSURANCES

This section of the May 20th Journal contains a partial list of losses and insurances. (Not so hung up on privacy in those days!)

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The After the Fire page contains a link to the May 27, 1880 issue which contains the complete list.

At this early hour we can not write so fully as we could wish. Incidents and accidents worthy of mention are numerous enough, but lack of space forbids their recital.

Charles Kernan a clerk for E. N. Stebbins, had a stroke very similar to sunstroke, and was in critical condition last evening.

The Post Office is located in the office of A. B. Mann for the present.

Thirty-eight buildings were burned. Loss probably \$200.000; insurance, \$75.000, at a very rough estimate.

All the mail matter was saved, but the fellow that saved it left the mail keys and patrons had to wait until Postmaster Thompson sent to Roulet for a key.

Cyrenus Jones, the artist, lost \$50 in goods; no insurance.

Telegraph office will be in the law office of F. W. Knox and Son at present.

Wednesday Morning

All the safes except the large bank safe were put into the streets.

The courthouse was saved by the most strenuous exertions, of a few men.

A strong breeze from the south came up Wednesday morning and fanned the embers into a blaze, and

and Third and Main and West streets were saved and thanks to the heroic efforts of a few men who stood on the dome of the steeple and the roof of the building, and in spite of scorching smoke and flame, saved it from destruction.

the flying sparks endangered the building on the north side of Third street, and a large number of men worked for two more hours to extinguish the fire on the ruins of Tuesday.

Very many goods were stolen.