

THE KLONDIKE NUGGET.

VOL. 1, No. 34

DAWSON, Y. T., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1898.

PRICE 25 CENTS

DAWSON ON FIRE.

Forty Buildings Burned to the Ground.

A HALF-MILLION DOLLAR BLAZE SUBDUED WITHOUT A REGULAR FIRE DEPARTMENT.

Citizens, Policemen and Soldiers Fight To Save Dawson.

Deeds of Individual Daring—Accidents to Fire-fighters—Unready Fire Apparatus Hastily Drafted into Service—Competent Firemen Appear as if by Magic—Fire Stopped by Tearing Down Buildings.

At 6:05 Friday morning the police bugle sounded the emergency fire call in Dawson and in 5 minutes half dressed mounted police and soldiers of the artillery and infantry were on the double quick to where black smoke and roaring flames were bursting from the upper windows of the Green Tree saloon and hotel. The air was cold and frosty and the inhabitants of the closely built Front street were yet for the greater part wrapped in slumber when in the rear upper rooms of the Green Tree the flames were first perceived breaking from the windows in roaring force. The wind was blowing lightly down the river and as police, military and citizens thronged to the scene of the conflagration it was at once recognized that only the organized efforts of all could save the city of Dawson from total destruction. The postoffice was in the next building south. Letters were hurriedly bundled into sacks and writing hands bore them away. An effort was made to remove the newly built boxes and pigeon holes and some of the sections were removed before the fire was seen to have taken the building. In 10 minutes from the time it took fire it was falling to pieces and so fierce was the fire in 20 minutes everything was on the ground.

The handsome Worden hotel was next to the north and the light wind involved that building so quickly that the occupants barely had time to escape with one load of valuables. Then the fire spread three ways up the street, down the street and from cabin to cabin on Paradise alley towards Second avenue. Distracted people were scampering in every direction with gigantic loads of household valuables and teams commenced hurriedly to arrive, and were quickly drafted into service. Gigantic efforts were now made to organize bucket brigades but for a long time people were slow to rise up their buckets to the public cause. Ex-Mayor J. M. Davidson, of Nansimo, and Timber Agent Williamson made it their special duty to get pails, and the protestations of second hand dealers availed them nothing. Soon three lines of men were passing water from the river, but nevertheless the wind carried an immense volume of fierce flame across Front street, and in an instant the shell buildings on the water front were also in flames. The Empire Bakery of the Sloppy Bros., and one-half occupied by Jeweler Gorham, the New England saloon, the Vancouver hotel, with 10 cabins in the rear were soon on fire, together with 16 of the water front buildings. The extent of the fire created a strong inward draft from every direction and men found they could work closer and closer as the flames became more terrific. The conviction seized everyone at once that the balance of Dawson could be saved only by tearing down and blowing up buildings all round the fire and the work of demolishing cabins, caches and buildings was begun in terrible earnest. At least 2000 men engaged in the work. Ropes were attached to the corners of log cabins and then with a long pull and a strong pull it would be torn log from log. Empty caches were turned over and crushed like egg shells. Frame buildings were hewed and chopped into kindling wood. What little water could be secured in the rear of the fire area was used in spraying quantities to dampen blankets, sheets and whatever cloth could be hastily drafted into service to hang over the eaves of buildings and out of upper windows. Some of the best work was done with a tin cup and an occasional fall of water. Scorched buildings thickly surrounded the burned district and every one was saved by the persistent and fearless efforts of

the citizens, police and military. Men staid in buildings and on roofs until their clothes scorched their skin in their determined fight against further encroachment of the flames. The unpaid-for fire apparatus lying on the street in front of the N. A. T. & T. Co.'s store was early drafted into service and hooks and ladders were quickly in evidence. The chemical engines were quickly charged and a stream turned on the cabins just taking fire. It was readily seen that we have with us a large number of ex-fire ladders, for with H. P. Matohett in the lead the first chemical was brought up the street a-flying. Meanwhile axes and bars were used to strip the boxing of the Ahrens steam fire engine. Charles Bush, for twelve years a fireman and assistant chief in Victoria, volunteered his services and proceeded hastily to put that valuable machine in order for quick service. He was ably assisted in the work by J. Sears, T. J. Lane, Lon Griffin and William Kerr, all old firemen. Paint and tallow were hastily scraped from the bearings and in two hours the engine was down on the edge of the river on Second street with hose stretched to the scene of the fire. However, the boys with axes, ropes, pails and hooks had confined the fire before water could be put in the boiler and steam raised, but the stream from the fire engine was greeted with a cheer for then and not till then was the town known to be safe. Along the edge and then further on to the burning building went that saying stream, leaving black cold ashes behind; and a mighty sigh of relief went up on all sides. As they collapsed, the two-story building made a fierce heat, but one after another they fell, determined men with scorching clothes disappearing every inch of ground. Some forty buildings were burning at one time and nothing remains to show for the extensive structures but a few blackened logs saved by the fire engine. The losses will be difficult to estimate. Only men who themselves have engaged in building and in merchandising in Dawson realize the money value of the lost property. The Worden was a total loss. Stock, fixtures, furniture, and even the wardrobes of the guests went up in flames. Mr. Chas. Worden estimates his loss on building at not less than \$40,000.00. Pattison & McGrath's New England Saloon was a total loss, although some of the stock was saved. 44,000.00. The postoffice building, owned by Alex. McDonald, total loss, 10,000.00. Green Tree saloon and hotel; a trifle of stock saved, balance a total loss, 35,000.00. Empire bakery building, fully occupied; with some of contents saved but the balance a total loss, 40,000.00. McPherson & Johnson's stock and building, total loss, 20,000.00. Vancouver hotel; total loss, 25,000.00. John Sargent's new saloon, 3,000.00. New York store and Ladies' bazaar; goods partly saved, balance and building total loss, 21,000.00. Case & Gilsey's new building, 8,000.00. Nelson Proton, Jack Horn's place, Nellie Lewis' and several small places; total loss, 43,000.00. On the other side of the street the buildings were smaller and more flimsy, but there were sixteen buildings burned, some of them with their entire contents. Hubbard boot and shoe store lost with building, 6,000.00. E. A. Suter, a jeweler, lost everything he had. I. Flatow, a tailor, occupied the building with Suter, and both were away. Loss total, 15,000.00. John McDonald, tailor, loss, 4,000.00. Geo. Bennett, tailor, loss, 5,000.00. Foley, butcher, loss, 5,000.00. Seattle lunch counter; loss entire, 9,000.00. Restaurants, small stores, etc., to a total number of sixteen buildings on this side, 20,000.00.

The twelve cabins burned in the rear of the main street were largely occupied by the dwellers and were simply furnished and fitted up with all the expensive luxuries of the country. Much of the hangings, etc., were destroyed by the hurried tearing up, and much was afterwards trampled in the streets. The cabins were easily worth \$1,500 apiece. Besides the buildings burned were a number irretrievably ruined by scorching, chipping or tearing down. It will cost to again make them habitable at least \$100,000. The damage to goods having shown from buildings in anticipation of the approaching flames can only be estimated. If the figures of each individual who had sustained a loss were to be taken the total would take a figure to express. Discounting the loss of press, 50 percent, gives their loss at \$300,000.

The total of foregoing is \$508,000 as the loss suffered from the Friday fire. Had the fire apparatus been in readiness for use the destruction would have been confined to the Green Tree hotel, where it originated and the loss would have been only a few thousand. It only required \$20,000 more to put the department in good working order. Of course there is no insurance in Dawson and the loss falls entirely upon the individuals.

Accidents. The men who fought the fire to a successful finish were constantly running into danger and the wonder is that there were not more fatalities from the many falling buildings as well as accidents. The most serious accident happened to Private Stephens, of the infantry, who fell from the roof of the destroyed scoundrel's drug store when he lost his footing and fell to the ground below and from there to the ground. He was carried to the barracks hospital. His injuries were found to be severe contusions and sprains but the doctors think there is every opportunity to recover. He suffered most severely at first and went from one convulsion into another. G. O. Ellis doesn't remember being hurt, but is laid up with severe contusions, a shattered shoulder and a badly bruised and burned head. bystanders say he climbed a ladder to help fell over on the burning building and the log wall fell over on him, crushing him to the ground. Rescuers dragged him from under the burning logs, one of them lying across his head. The doctors think there is no reason why he should not recover. Dan Millon was struck on the head by the pole of an axe being carried by a busy fire-fighter. Dan was led away by friends, bleeding from a friendly drugstore and a few days of complete rest put him to rights. Someone pulled a cabin over while W. A. Jones was examining in order with the result of a battered head for Jones. Nothing serious, only Jones was mad. Someone reported that Constable Tip fell in to a burning building but escaped without much injury. The report was not yet verified. Private England, of the artillery, was one of the men who stayed close enough to his post of duty to get his face scorched, but nothing serious.

Incidents in Brief. Al Haskins was thrown over some details by a sudden tightening rope, and is laid up with a badly wounded leg in consequence. A number of men lost eyebrows and mustaches from the burning heat.

Opening of The Phoenix. Burned out three times since 1894, the Phoenix, but escaped this time, is the history of Peter Alexander McDonald with the devoting element of fire. The old building was built in 1894. Last year his place of business was wiped out by the disastrous fire of that time, but undaunted and phoenix-like, he rose up this morning with a new and more substantial building. The Phoenix is a complete building upon the same ground as the old one. Where formerly was the Hoffman House, Mr. McDonald has transformed it into one of the most attractive resorts in the city, and when the work of busy days is over, the general workmen shall have left in a city in Dawson and equalled by few. When formerly was the restaurant portion of the house a complete reconstruction has been made. A new floor has been laid of the best seasoned matched lumber, making it the smoothest and best dancing floor in the city. The main platform occupies a position in one of the rear, admitting entrance as well as the restaurant boxes, which there are nine, which will be painted, appropriately furnished and handsomely draped with portieres and lace curtains. The front part of the building has been entirely remodelled, handsome bar fixtures have been placed and a looking glass will be handily furnished retiring rooms where gentlemen and business men may sit down and talk over business matters in pleasant, comfortable quarters. The building will be brilliantly lighted with acetylene gas. On next Thursday evening, October 20th, will occur the grand opening, which will be formally dedicated to the public and will be the most successful occasion since work in the history of Dawson's entertainment. It has been engaged for the occasion, so that this celebration will try the fire of the most accomplished musicians. The commendable enterprise and energy of the grand proprietor is deserving of more than ordinary mention. Whole-souled, big hearted, greater than any single individual with his knowledge, courteous to the superlative degree, generous to a fault, he numbers his friends by the thousands. We congratulate him upon his remarkable luck and perseverance, and in the appropriately named place, "The Phoenix" we wish the whole world will undoubtedly receive the generous patronage and success his enterprise and generosity deserve. Staple and Fancy Sundries. Complete stock Kelly & Co., Drugists, Front street.

fireman. This work, being wholly voluntary, is deserving of special mention. Business was generally hurt practically suspended and a fine haze existed everywhere to check the dreadful devastation of Dawson's most dreaded element. McClure was on duty at the New England at the time of the alarm, facing that everything had to be saved except the building of their property in the rear of the postoffice. The frame building falling out into the burned area and injured is evidence of their prompt action. C. W. Crampet was seen doing good work firing the steamer. The hospital at the barracks took fire from a hot fire during the progress of the big fire. Owing to the absence of most of the force up town, the roof was built up before the flames were finally subdued. Two Chisholms had 12 kegs of the Irish whiskey, 3 cases of champagne, 100 cigars and six chairs which had been removed to a vacant lot in the rear of the burned area Friday morning during the fire. Goods in front, like the rest of the water water front, were saved. The stock by lowering it through the back door to the beach below. However, the front of the building is demolished. A number of the burned buildings contained quantities of rifle shells and there was occasion a general scattering of the crowd, whenever a single shot was heard. Bob Simmons was struck by the leg and several men were struck by shrapnel to the leg and hand, which caused them to be lying on the ground. Belle Mitchell and Tony Dugan occupied the rooms which the great fire destroyed. Belle Mitchell will be remembered as the occupant of the cabins on Third street recently burned. She was also from the burned area. The water front was a scene of confusion. The buildings were burned down and the water front was a scene of confusion. The buildings were burned down and the water front was a scene of confusion. The buildings were burned down and the water front was a scene of confusion.

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