

SWEPT BY THE FIRE FIEND.

GIBSON A SMOULDERING HEAP OF RUINS. ITS RESIDENTS HOMELESS AND DESTITUTE.

FULL DESCRIPTION OF THE SPREAD OF THE CONFLAGRATION.

PLAN OF THE BURNED DISTRICT AS IT WAS ON TUESDAY MORNING.

BLAZING CINDERS STREWED THE RIVER BANK FOR SEVEN MILES.

On Tuesday afternoon last, the 29th inst., the greater portion of the village of Gibson was swept by a storm of fire and completely annihilated.

The fire originated in a barn belonging to Arthur Sewell, just south of the old Woodford Smith property. In a few minutes Mrs. Sewell's large dwelling house was in flames. The next to go was the Harry Currie house occupied by Alex. Heron.

The Malcolm Brown residence caught next and the fire became general on the river or west side of the street. The double tenement owned by James McMurray carried the fire across the street to the widow Nell's dwelling, and both sides of the main street.

It was about a quarter of three o'clock when the alarm was made; most of the men were away at work, some at the Phoenix mills, at the Douglas house, at Marysville and Fredericton, so that there was no assistance to fight the flames nor any property.

Help arrived from the city, a detachment of the fire brigade and the Infantry school men under Lieut. McDonald, rendered efficient aid through their efforts, with the exception of the St. Marys firemen, Babbitt's mill, Hallett and Logan dwellings, Methodist church and W. H. White's tenement were saved.

The roaring of the flames, the dense smoke, the shouts of the excited men and the screams of frightened women and children made it a pandemonium indeed. The heavy wind which was blowing from the west of everything made it impossible to do anything to stop the progress of the fire, and all turned their attention to saving what household stuff they could.

With the exception of the Babbitt brothers, R. Macklin, James Gordon, W. H. White and one or two others, the residents of the village were mechanics and laborers and in nearly all cases lost all they had.

There was no loss of life. Children strayed away but all were luckily found safe and sound, one little girl of five years wandered across the bridge and out into the fields beyond the mouth of Nashwaak.

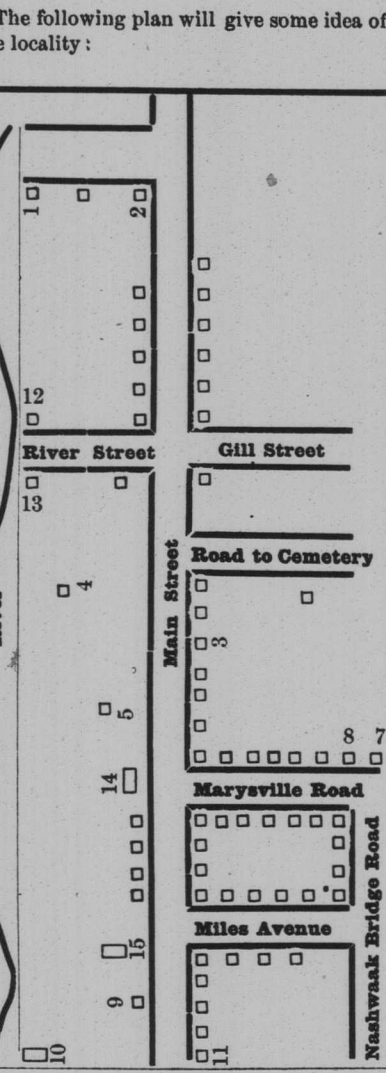
James Rusel, ar, and a ship carpenter named Fenny, belonging to Chatham were severely burned. Mr. Rusel was burned on the chest, back and shoulders, the skin and flesh coming off with the removal of the shirt. He was taken to Victoria hospital where he is doing fairly well and may recover.

Fenny was also severely burned but being young he will come around all right. Several women were also burned but not seriously. Rev. Mr. Parkinson had his hands burnt pretty badly.

The ship carpenters, working at the Gibson schooner found well as saved the C. E. R. station and old lanterny, thus stopping the spread of the flames to the village at Barker's point. Large pieces of glowing shingles, three inches square, were found down river at Matlock's, a distance of seven miles.

It would be impossible to insert the names of all those who deserve praise for the help they rendered but the following are worthy of special mention: Alex. Gibson, C. H. Hat, F. Merritt, H. Niles, J. H. Simons, Jos. Kierstead, Bruce Dayton, Jos. S. Smith, Jas. Roberts.

The Ogden, colored, father and sons, several of the Indians and the men and officers of the Infantry school have taken the loss in building and furniture, clothing, etc., totaled \$250,000 with an insurance as follows:



The following plan will give some idea of the locality.

Figure 1 marks A H Sewell's house where the fire started. 1, The McMurray tenement which carried the flames across the street; 2, the Baptist church, costing \$3,000; 3, Babbitt's mill, saved by the firemen; 4, W. Bradley's residence saved; 5, C. P. R. roundhouse, burned with snow-blower, table and other effects; 6, W. Bradley's residence saved; 7 and 8, Methodist church and W. H. White's tenement, both saved; 9, C. P. R. station, saved; 10, the tannery, saved; 11, Jewett's house, saved; 12 and 13, Hallett's and G. Logan's houses saved; 14, C. P. R. station and tunnel, destroyed; 15, C. E. R. Machine shop, saved.

Now the excitement and bustle have died away and the sufferers are beginning to realize their losses and many feel gloomy indeed. The village was a pleasant place to reside. It was convenient to Fredericton and united many of the advantages of city life with the privileges of the country. It had a good school of four departments, and its three churches, Methodist, Baptist and C. P. R. Baptist had good congregations and clergymen of marked ability. It is probable that these denominations will hold united services in the only church left standing. Its stores though small supplied the necessities and many of the luxuries and all in all Gibson was a favored place and its residents are glad to do and prospering people.

Harry Stone, who he runs a grist mill at Blackville, where he runs a grist mill. R. Johnson has removed to the John Stafford house at Marysville, Mrs. Colwell and T. Hoban have their rooms at St. Marys. F. Pond has gone in with Hazen Pond, John Chapman has the upper part of R. Harvey's, R. Bagnall occupies the C. P. R. station here, H. Pickett is in the C. P. R. station at Gibson. M. Brown and A. Rideout have the new Nell house, the widow Titus is with W. Robinson's family, and it may be said here as it stood. Some cash and the books had been for split milk but he is making the best of it. Daniel has purchased the H. Garrety lot and the firm will have up three houses in a short time. They will likely put up two or three tenement houses also. Their total loss is \$120,000 with \$6,000 insurance. Geo. Bailey has also been crushed out almost totally. Matlock Brown's store was locked while he and his family were fighting the fire at their residence across the street and the store with its contents burned as it stood. Some cash and the books had been secured. The fire is also extremely hard on Mr. Gill who is in extreme old age and lives a comfortable home. He is being well cared for however.

Much has been said in public and by the press respecting the origin of the fire, it being stated that A. H. Sewell's little boy started it when playing with matches. While it may be true, yet there is no proof of it, and there is evidence that he was not in the barn when the fire started.

On Friday Mayor Beckwith sent over to the lunch room a goodly supply of cooked fresh beef which was handsomely received. The village of Gibson is carrying on the post office in the church hall, where those using the Gibson office will find their mail. It will likely be continued there for some weeks.

B. H. Babbitt rejoices in the midst of his woes, as a little daughter has arrived to cheer his joys and sorrows. Mrs. Babbitt and the baby are doing well. The village of Gibson is carrying on the post office in the church hall, where those using the Gibson office will find their mail. It will likely be continued there for some weeks.

nine hacks, carrying from five to twenty passengers left the village for the factory every morning, and the factory men, who Gibson was located directly opposite the southern portion of Fredericton, on the east side of the St. John river. It consisted of a main street, the Marysville road and several smaller streets, but with cottages costing from \$50 to \$3,500.

Among the many scenes of woe there were some amusing features. One was the frantic flight made by several of the soldiers to rescue a large pig. They took it out the flames several times, at last they tied it to a log on the shore where its squeals accompanied the notes of the engine whistle. Officers Hawtorn and Roberts had hard work to prevent stealing, as the Indians and several white people carried away pairs of boots from three St. John tramps, but did not waste time arresting them. Robert turned out of the Methodist church some twenty loafers who were destroying the foot sent by Alex. Gibson. Mrs. Wm. Dennison had \$10 stolen. She saw the thief but did not carry it off despite her opposition.

Parker, Babbitt and Chestnut of this city aided the widow Titus very efficiently, saving considerable of her household stuff. The eight from the city was grand. The wharves were soon lined with crowds many of whom could name house after house as the flames leaped across the vacuities and fastened upon the buildings. The fire reached Marysville teams with workers and eighteers started to the scene and these with those gathered from this city and elsewhere made a crowd of fully a thousand people. They rendered what help they could in carrying furniture, etc., to where it could be stored.

It is a desolate looking place to-day, where neat and tidy residences stood Tuesday morning, with trim gardens and pleasant surroundings, there is nothing but a heap of ashes, with bits of chimneys, stumps of trees, broken stoves and sewing machines the only land for the fire-stricken people. A dog standing on its feet, turned to a cinder just as the fiery blast hit it, may be seen, while hens perch on the tree stumps and cattle low over the places where they had recently found shelter.

The Baptist and F. C. Baptist churches will not likely be rebuilt for a year or two, but preparations are being made for the erection of some new buildings. Among those going to build are Alex. Gibson, T. Hoban, A. Sewell, M. Brown, T. D. and B. H. Babbitt, J. Kyle, A. Belyea, G. Bailey and C. Titus.

At a meeting held at Gibson on Wednesday night the following were appointed a Relief committee, to help the sufferers made homeless and destitute by the great fire of the 29th: Thomas Hoban, Hubbard Niles, George S. Peters, and James R. Simons; and at a meeting of the committee James E. Simons was appointed chairman, and George S. Peters, secretary. The committee feel great for help already rendered, and provisions have been sent from Marysville, Fredericton and other places, and they have been able to temporarily supply with food those who are destitute. They appeal cordially to a generous public in this time of great need. Many whole families have lost everything, having barely (and in some cases) not enough clothing to cover them, and these the poorest of the poor. With their money are coming in, and get the relief we mention Dr. G. H. Coburn, \$20, and through the kindness of Mayor Beckwith, \$25 from the Hawker medicine company, St. John. We hear that Alex. Gibson headed a list at Marysville with the magnificent sum of \$500. Contributions may be sent directed to the secretary of the Gibson Relief Committee, 45 St. John street, Fredericton, N. B.

On Sunday morning last at Tweedside Mill, St. John, a young boy named James E. Simons, 12 years of age, died of inflammation of the bowels. He was a daughter of John Rutherford, postmaster of that place and was universally esteemed. The sympathy of all is extended to the bereaved husband and relatives. Mrs. Wm. B. Taylor died at White Cove, N. S., on Friday the 10th inst., of heart failure. She had been quite well apparently, but died of a sudden. Her death was buried on Sunday last in the C. E. cemetery. The sermon was preached by Rev. E. P. Hurley. Deceased was much respected in this country.

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aid. McCull, that the Mayor appeal through the press and by telegram to the Mayor and chief officers of the city asking their aid and contributions. The Marysville fund for the Gibson relief has reached the magnificent sum of \$1,000. Mayor Peters has telegraphed to Mayor Beckwith and chief officers of the city asking their aid and contributions, and willingness on behalf of the citizens of St. John to co-operate with committees for relief of sufferers.

It is believed that the Rev. Mr. Davidson will accept the pulpit of the Baptist church in this city with occasional services at Gibson for a time, till matters can be arranged. A Friendly Chat About Stoves. Summer is here; it has brought with it pleasant sunshines, some other things not so pleasant. Now most everybody needs a cooking stove, and when one makes up his mind to buy one, he ought to buy the best as it is the cheapest in the long run. The Jewell range and the Charter Oak are acknowledged to be the best offered in our market to-day; they are the best because they do best. Some say, but why should you wait? We have taken it upon ourselves to do the waiting; there is, therefore, no need of your doing so. Nor will this waiting be in vain, for in the end an additional expense to you. 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