

The News of Carbondale. FIRE CONSUMES A CARBONDALE CHURCH

The Handsome House of Worship of the First Methodist Society in Ruins.

STORY OF YESTERDAY'S CONFLAGRATION

The Flames Break Out at 7 o'Clock in the Morning and Rage With a Fury That Is Beyond Control. Charles Hull, a Member of Columbus Hose Company, Has a Narrow Escape from Death—Four Blackened Walls Are All That Remain of the Beautiful Edifice—Fire Supposed to Have Been Caused by the Explosion of a Furnace.

The most sorrowful Sabbath in the history of Carbondale was yesterday when the town was visited by the greatest disaster in years, the destruction by fire of the handsome edifice of the First Methodist church, the most imposing church in the town. The four walls, blackened and partially baked by the inferno that raged within, are all that remain to mark the spot of the house of worship that represented the labors and sacrifices of the congregation that but a few weeks ago held a public celebration over having freed the church of debt. On that occasion the bonds of the church indebtedness were burned, but through the mystery of the ways of Providence, the joy of that night was yesterday changed to the bitterest sorrow by the cruel and relentless hand of fire. Within the church walls is a mountain of blackened ruins, the symbol of the darkened hopes of the saddened pastor, Rev. A. F. Chaffee, and his faithful flock.

The fire broke out shortly before 7 o'clock, and raged with such deadly fury that an hour afterward the flames had the beautiful church within their merciless grasp. Everything within was consumed; not a timber was left unscathed, the heavy element feeding on everything that it could consume, defying the heroic efforts of the firemen until there was nothing left but the stone walls. These, the heat of the destroying demon fairly baked, causing portions to crumble and fall away.

The terrible visitation was preserved by the smallest margin from being marked by a tragedy. Charles Hull, a member of the Columbus hose company, the most courageous and daring fireman in the city, came near to being lost in the flames. A sweep of the flames caught him and he fell into a hole from head to foot. He tumbled out of the church and sent a thrill of horror through the multitude that surged around the blaze. A hundred hands mothered the flames that were searing his body, though there was little hope for recovery from the cruel flames. He was conscious and suffering terrible agony when carried to Dr. Wheeler's hospital, where his wounds were amputated. His condition is not regarded as dangerous.

The cause of the fire is attributed to one of the two furnaces in the cellar of the church. The supposition is that after the fire was started in the furnace, located in the room where the blaze was discovered, there was an explosion of gas, as often happens, which threw live coals on the kindling wood heaped in the furnace room. The janitor, Thomas Place, had been to the furnace about 6:30 and cooled one of them. He was upstairs attending to the registers about a quarter of an hour later, when he observed

THE PEOPLE'S EXCHANGE. WANTED—A good girl, middle age preferred, etc. A. W. HAWKS. Celebrated Lecturer. Sunshine and Shadow. GRAND OPERA HOUSE. Monday, Nov. 18.

RAILROAD TIME TABLES. Delaware and Hudson Railroad. June 6, 1901.

New York, Ontario and Western. Sept. 17, 1901. Trains leave Carbondale for Scranton at 7:00 a. m., 1:00 p. m., 4:30 p. m., 8:00 p. m.

Erie Railroad. June 27, 1901. Trains leave city station, Carbondale, daily except Sunday at 7:00 a. m., 1:00 p. m., 4:30 p. m., 8:00 p. m.

the overcoats were brought into play. The sufferer was rolled on the ground until the last spark was extinguished. He was recognized as Charles Hull of the Columbus company. The crowd on seeing him emerging all ablaze from the church rushed toward him. Some one shouted frantically for a stream of water, but fortunately for the sufferer the crowd was in the way. The throng continued to surge around blocking the efforts of the firemen to put out the flames on Hull's clothes and firemen were called into action. They sprang at the crowd and literally hammered them from the immediate scene.

Taken to Hospital. Hull was taken across the street to Dr. H. C. Wheeler's private hospital. His face was terribly burned, so severely that no one could recognize him except for his clothing. His injuries were dressed and the attending physician said that he would be all right, but he would have to wear a good word for Don's Ointment in cases of itching and bleeding hemorrhoids from which I suffered for several months. I tried one preparation after another. Some were worthless and others benefited me for a time, but I used Don's Ointment until I was cured. It gives me a quick relief and I continued the use of it, for four or five days and from that time I have been free from the tormenting affliction. It also cures Don's Ointment a good remedy for burns, as a fireman is liable to get a slight burn every day. It also cures the itching of this ointment will relieve the pain and heal it in a short time.

St. Rose Hall in Danger. At 8:30 the flames were so fierce on the side near St. Rose hall that this building for a time was in danger. One stream had been continually kept on the side and roof, but it was now found necessary to have a second one brought to bear on the hall. The stream sprang from a foot in length, heavy, and several times the crowd believed it had become ignited. The flames had now reached the stairs leading to the belfry and the tower had become ignited. The slates came in a downpour from the roof, but the crowd was kept out of danger. A large iron fixture on the tower riveted the attention of the excited spectators. All awaited with fearful anxiety the moment when it would fall and kept their distance. On the top of the fixture was a large ball with sharp points, and the crowd was slowly burned away and then the fixture fell, but only a short distance, resting on the side wall near to where the large bell is located. Shortly afterwards the heavy mass fell into the flames to the basement with a terrible report.

Janitor Discovers Fire. Within twenty minutes after the fire was discovered by the janitor and before the firemen had turned any stream on the church was beyond saving. It was 6:30 when Janitor James Place first discovered smoke coming from the registers in the auditorium. He ran to the basement and discovered fire near one of the furnaces, the one situated nearest to the pulpit, directly overhead. He gave the alarm and two young men, Charles Mann and Hugh Murphy, being in the vicinity, ran into the church. They saw the seriousness of the blaze at once. One of them turned in an alarm from Box 42 and Janitor Place ran to the hose house of the Columbus company, summoning the young men who sleep there, Thomas Brennan, the janitor, and Arthur Thomas, Alfred Huddy, another member of the company, was returning from his work and helped to get the team out. They were on the scene a few minutes after 7 o'clock.

At Highest Point. At 7:15, the flames had completely encircled the interior of the auditorium and were coming out of the windows. The heavy black smoke drifted with a slight wind to the southeast and was plainly seen from that section of the city.

Six Streams. At 7:30 six streams were playing on the first company having three connections. Arthur Thomas, in charge of the first team on the scene, was in charge of the Columbus until Police-man John Loftus arrived. Water was pouring on the fire from the rear and front on each side was a stream. The Columbus company had one connection with the rear of the gallery on the corner near St. Rose hall. This they directed to the ceiling and on the burning fixtures, which were rapidly falling a prey to the spreading flames. A hose to the garret would have proved very effective, but the firemen were unable to get to that section, not knowing the layout of the interior of the church. Ex-Fire Chief Moffitt was in charge for a time, confining his orders to the Columbus company, which were doing splendid work in battling with the seething flames; and in their efforts toward saving St. Rose hall, which stands with a very few feet of the Methodist church, a hose attached to a rope was drawn up in the belfry of the church, which stands on the corner near Salem avenue, and thence directed the stream down on the flames. The fire, as yet, had not touched the roof. The heavy element effective for a time. The Mitchell company arrived with more hose and made another connection. The large stained-glass window in the front of the church, crumpled and shivered like burning waxed paper, fell in, and others in front and on the side followed in rapid succession.

Spectacular Show of Fire. From the broken windows the flames shot with terrible force, shooting to the large crowd outside a spectacular sight of the interior. The flames, with but little smoke, the latter finding egress from the roof, were terrible, and it was realized that no power would stop them.

Fireman Terribly Burned. The flames were now eating their way to the stairs leading to the belfry, and the alarm was given to the firemen above. One by one they came down in a hurry, but none of them felt any urgent cause for their hurried flight, after they had passed the steps at the door leading to the belfry of the church. Behind the door, they heard the vivid crackling of the burning timbers and from the cracks they observed the bright glare of the devouring element. Four of the firemen came down and out the door was thrown violently open, and to the horror of the crowd, a man appeared enveloped in flames. At the landing, he suggested, and plunged down the stone steps to the ground.

Public Sympathy. The action of the trustees was announced in a congregation at 10:30 service, and on motion of O. L. Utley, seconded by Deacon P. S. Joslin, the action of the trustees was ratified by the congregation in a rising vote. While the members remained standing, the pastor invited all to rise, among whom were the members of the Methodist church. Rev. William H. Gow offered a prayer, full of tenderest sympathy, for the afflicted congregation, and at its close the congregation all united in singing "Hark Be the Tie That Binds Us."

From Brother Clergymen. Sympathies from ministers and priests in the city were promptly extended to Rev. A. F. Chaffee, his flock, Rev. Charles Lee, of the First Presbyterian church, was in Scranton when he heard the sad news, and at once dispatched a message of sympathy to Mr. Chaffee.

Church Board Meets. Gives Twenty-five Dollars to Each Hose Company—Offers from Other Churches—Will Take Steps Tonight Towards Rebuilding.

The pastor of the church, Rev. A. F. Chaffee, and his congregation, while depressed by their loss and affliction, are not dismayed, before the flames had died, steps were taken to deal with what confronted them.

Thousands Seek It. Many Scranton People Join in the Search. Nights of tossing—days of misery—nearly crazy from the constant itching. Such is the lot of every sufferer with eczema, piles or any itches on the skin. Thousands seek and fail to find relief. Many a Scranton citizen can tell you that a certain ointment will cure all itching skin diseases.

Notes of the Fire. The indicator bell in the home of Fire Chief McNulty failed to ring, and as a result he was unaware of the fire until notified by a messenger. He was soon upon the scene and took charge, conducting the details in a very capable manner. He deeply deplored the failure of the bell to do its duty at his residence, and at once set to work to have it repaired.

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