

DESTRUCTIVE FLAMES.

The Santa Fe Railroad Station Entirely Destroyed by Fire.

Last Monday night, a little after 11 o'clock, a man came running across the flat on which the railroad station was situated yelling "Fire" at the top of his voice. It was not long before others joined in the chorus and then a few pistol shots were fired to arouse the town. People poked their heads out of doors and windows to see a bright glare caused by the burning of the railroad station.

It took but a few moments for a considerable number of people to gather, but by the time a sufficient number of men had gathered to accomplish anything, the north end of the building, which was used for the storing of freight, was a roaring mass of flames. A stream was got on the fire from the hose kept at the fire plug in the freight yard, but as the station was situated a considerable distance from town and the nearest fire plug, which is on Ninth street, near Bullard, was several hundred feet away, a stream could not be put on the fire from that plug. Several cars which were standing on the track, at the rear of the building, caught fire but they were promptly moved out of the way and the fire was soon quenched by a bucket brigade.

By this time a good many people from town were hastening to the scene of the fire when some one said that there was a quantity of powder stored in the burning building. This caused a number of people to beat a hasty retreat and they were content to view the blaze from a safe distance.

The building, being entirely of frame, burned rapidly and the firemen had an unequal fight with the flames, being able to get but one stream on the fire. For a time it seemed as though at least half of the building would be saved and that the fire would be confined to the end of the building in which the freight and baggage were stored. The local ticket case, records, typewriter and other light articles which were in the office were saved, but the big case in which the coupons tickets were kept was destroyed.

The fire, which had been kept from the south end of the building, by the efforts of the firemen, gradually worked around on the west side where the flames could not be reached by the single stream of water and by midnight it was apparent that the entire building would be destroyed. As soon as the uselessness of further attempts to save the building was apparent, the attention of the firemen was directed to keeping the safe, which was a small one, as cool as possible in order that its contents might not be destroyed.

The water pressure from the railroad

company's hydrant is very much less than the pressure in the city mains and it is a matter of not the slightest doubt but that if the station had been located in a place which could have been reached by the fire companies' hose from a city hydrant the fire would have been extinguished without the loss of anything in the office.

There was less freight in the building at the time of the fire than there had been for some time before and the loss in this direction was light. Among other articles of freight there were a number of cans of powder and a quantity of giant caps, but the caps exploded soon after the fire started and before a dozen people reached the scene of the fire and the powder burned up without doing any damage. In the baggage room there were a number of trunks and they were all destroyed. All of the records of the Western Union Telegraph company were lost as were also the instruments in the office at the station. Western Union headquarters were removed yesterday to the down town office in the postoffice building.

Prof. Miles had a quantity of goods in the building which he was going to ship to Rincon but they were all destroyed with the exception of a clock which was the last article rescued from the burning building. The firemen had been pouring a steady stream of water on the safe, which was not far from the rear door of the office, and this had kept the flames away from that part of the building. Prof. Miles happened to notice a box between the safe and the door and he concluded that it contained a fine clock which he did not wish to lose. The side of the building was about ready to fall but he crept in and secured the box which was dripping with water.

For the present box cars will be used as ticket office, freight office, baggage room and telegraph office. Whether the station will be rebuilt on the site of the old one is not known, but it is possible that the company may decide to locate the new building at some point more convenient to town and where it could be reached by the city fire department in case of a fire. This is one of the very few buildings which have been entirely destroyed by fire here since the organization of the Silver City fire department and these, with one exception, have been frame structures.

The origin of the fire is simply a matter of conjecture. It started in the room where the freight was stored, but beyond this nothing is known. Agent Mudge was at the station late in the evening and when he left everything appeared to be all right. C. Causland and Ed Dickinson were the first to discover the fire and when they arrived at the burning building the interior of the freight room

was all ablaze. All of the doors were securely fastened so that it is hardly possible that the building was set on fire. The safe was opened yesterday morning and the contents were badly damaged by water. General Superintendent Dyer and the division superintendent arrived last evening on a special.

The Van smelter below town was started up last Friday after considerable trouble in getting the plant ready for operation. It was blown in several times and each time it had to be blown out on account of a leak. There is a good supply of ore on hand and it is thought that the smelter can be kept running steadily now.

The contract has been let for the plastering of the Grayson residence west of the railroad station. It is expected that this residence will be ready for occupation in few weeks.

Miss Mulford, of East Orange, N. J., is here getting botanical specimens for an eastern botanist. Her baggage was in the baggage room and was destroyed by fire last Monday night.

It would be a handsome thing for the people of this city to give the firemen a ball or other entertainment, the proceeds of which should be used for the benefit of the firemen. The firemen have always done excellent service in cases of fire and it is but right and just that they should be recognized in some substantial way.

A party of young people left on Monday for the Gila hot springs to be gone a couple of weeks.

W. F. Lorenz has gone to the Mogollons. In his absence Col. Twomey is handling the mail at the postoffice.

The supreme court of the territory will meet in Santa Fe a week from next Monday. Quite a number of cases have been docketed for this term.

P. B. Heather has returned from a trip out to the Gila. While out there he broke a bicycle to ride and can manage the unruly things to perfection.

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