TWO VALUABLE BLOCKS BURNED TUESDAY

Marquis Bruce Opera House Building and Northup Block

in Ashes—Enterprising Merchants Put Out of Business.

GOOD WORK DONE BY THE FIREMEN

Help Sent Us from Oneida and Syracuse—Most Disastrous Fire in Many

Years—John W. Stanton Will Not Rebuild the Opera House—Losses

Total $139,300 and Insurance About Half.

Canastota was visited by one of the most disastrous fires in its history

Tuesday morning. In two short

hours between 4:30 and 6:00, the

magnificent three story Bruce block

containing the finest theater in

Madison county, three stores, four

offices and a large hall was reduced
to a heap of smouldering ruins.

The two story double brick block

next south of the Bruce block was

gutted by the fire and the north half

is completely gone. The north half

was owned by Mrs. Margaret Northup

while the south half which is only

partially destroyed, is the property

of Mrs. William Good.

By the time the fire broke out there was

a stiff west wind that carried burning

embers a long distance and Chief

Thomas Hollinger, of the fire depart-

ment, fearing that the local depart-

ment could not control the fire, asked

off from Oneida and Syracuse, which

was promptly sent.

The Canastota firemen worked like

Trojan and by the time the visiting

firemen got into action they had the

fire under control.

Six of our leading merchants are

out of business. In the Bruce block

Mr. Frank E. Davis's big depart-

ment store occupied the north front

store and two smaller stores in the

rear of the block. All his depart-

ments were well filled with fall and

winter goods. He estimates his loss

at $10,000.

Next south was a small front store

occupied by George W. Verelands,

with a stock of clothing and men's

furnishings. Its valued its stock at

$5,000.

The large south store in the Bruce

block was occupied by Mrs. Cora N.

Plopper who had a stock of women's

furnishings and fancy goods valued

at about $6,000. Mrs. Mary M. Crow

occupied part of this store with a

stock of millinery and her loss is

estimated at several hundred dollars.

In the second story of the large

store was occupied by Mr. Carl W.

Rowe, a haberdasher, and his stock

was valued at $1,500.

The store in the rear of this block

was occupied by Mrs. S. O. O. Scott,

and was valued at about $5,000.

E. J. Clark's Bazaar in the Great

block is almost a total loss from

water. Seven years ago an one story

addition fifteen feet long was built,

making the store 120 feet in length.

Mr. Clark had an immense stock of

dry goods, ladies' furnishings, clacks

and furs. He estimates the value of

his stock at $18,000. What the

salvage will be cannot be known un-
til the insurance adjustment get to

work.

The tenants in the offices on the

second floor of the Bruce building

who lost their all were: Hamilton

Armstrong, coal office; H. G. Jaquay,

Insurance; E. H. Rose, Insurance;

Geo. W. Chapman, law office; Vincent

Clemente, tailor.

In the Northup-Groat block the

tenants were J. T. Robertson, law

office; Justice of the Peace, J. H.

Bell, office; John Garlick, barber shop;

Mrs. Florence Hart, living apart-

ments. The loss of John Garlick and

Mrs. Hart in the south half of the

block is only partial. Robertson and

Bell lost nearly everything. Mr.

Robertson saved his typewriter and a

few books.

There were four or five safes in the

Bruce block and three in the Nor-

thup block all of which went into

the basements. It is believed that

the contents of all of them will be

found uninjured.

HOW THE FIRE STARTED

The fire evidently started some-

where in the center of the Bruce

block, but whether in the basement

the first floor or under the front of

the stage, it is hard to say. It was

about half past four when it was first

discovered and those who saw it first

located it according to their point of

view.

Paul Lovett hostler at L. W.

Browne's stable was awakened by

smoke about 4:30 and he looked up

as if the fire was then in the

basement on second floor of the

store. The paper then in the

store was burning with a heavy

smoke and flames leaped through the

alley towards the rear of the block.

At 5:00 the fire had made such

progress when it was discovered that

there was no stopping it and the fire

began to spread. At 5:50 the roof fell

in and the rear wall tumbled outward

just missing J. H. Lewis's livery barn.

At the same time the south wall fell

outward on the Northup block.

Twenty-five minutes later the front

wall fell inward, and the flames sent

enveloping the building. At 6:00 the

fire had been put out and the dam-

aged block burned.

With the falling of the Bruce block

it was certain that J. H. Wilson's

three story block next north would

be saved, thanks to the thick fire wall.

Just then flames began shooting up

from the Northup block and the fire-

men turned their attention toward

that building. With the roof broken

through it was a hard fight but by

climbing to the roof of the new 100

Ferry block occupied by Stokes

druglist the firemen were able to

get a stream directly above the fire

and put it out.

At 8:30 when the fire had been

put out the total damage was esti-

mated at over $100,000.

The tenants in the offices on the

first floor and the south story of

the block were the only ones in the

city to have any fire insurance.

Camron who was on his way to

the block when he discovered the

fire said that he thought it was

safes and started to go around to

the back of the block, but decided

at the last moment to go to the

water towers. When he arrived he

found the firemen had already

started the water tower and were

massing up the water. Camron says

he was surprised at their work and

that it then seemed to be well in

the back part of the Plopper

Clow store.

George Lunn who has been janitor

of the Bruce block since Nov. 3, says

that he visited the building around

ten o'clock Monday night and

heard the firemen say that the fire

was under control. Bobertson saved

his typewriter and a few books.

Just how the fire started will prob-

ably never be definitely known but

from the different stories told it

appears that it originated in an

enclosed alley or hall in the rear

of the various stores.

This hall formerly extended to the

rear of the block but a few years ago

when Davis rented the south rear

store partitions were put up cutting

this hall in two parts and connecting

the rear two stories. This left part of

the hall shut off from the rear except

where there were doors through the

Davis partition used by occupants of

the other stores in gaining the rear

hall.

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has been a great increase in the price of building materials and labor that it could not be replaced today for less than $60,000.

Some years after the block was built J. W. Bruce sold his share to his brother E. C. and later on his death left it to his son-in-law John W. Stanton. Mr. Stanton said Tuesday morning that he should never rebuild the block.

SOME NARROW ESCAPES.

Howard King, one of the Oneida firemen received a bad scalp wound by falling brick. Only his heavy helmet saved him from what might have been a fatal blow. He was taken to the apartments of J. C. Skaden in the Remiss flats and attended by a physician. He was taken home in J. H. McMahen's ambulance Tuesday afternoon.

Trustee William Dobson and several other men were removing books from J. L. Robertson's law office in the Northup block when the roof of the Bruce block fell in and the south wall fell outward crushing through the Northup block. It was a narrow escape for Mr. Dobson and the others and they made a hasty exit.

THE LOSSES.

J. W. Stanton, block $30,000 $16,000
Margaret Northup, blk. 8,000 5,000
Mrs. W. R. Great, blk. 8,000 5,000
Frank E. Davis, goods 25,000 13,000
E. J. Clark, goods 18,000 12,000
G. W. Crescent, goods 5,000 3,000
J. C. Skaden, goods 5,000 3,000
Miss Phooper, goods 3,000 1,000
Miss Clay, goods 1,500 500
Geo. A. Jayaux, office 2,000 1,000
Geo. W. Chapman, office 100 100
E. H. Rose, office 300 300
J. L. Robertson, office 100 100
Hamilton & Hamilton, office 100 100
Geo. W. Chapman, office 200 200
Geo. W. Chapman, office 200 200
J. L. Robertson, office 200 200
H. J. Wilcox, goods 600 300
Dr. F. H. Hewatt, office 100 100
Dr. A. L. Reynolds, office 50 50
L. D. Williams, furniture 50 50

$5,350,600 $2,100 to Syracuse was soon answered by sending steam fire engine No. 6, a hose wagon with 1,000 feet of hose and 25 firemen in command of Assistant Chief E. P. Ryan. A special train to Syracuse at 6 o'clock and made the run to Canastota in 25 minutes on track No. 1 on the Central. The engine was quickly unloaded and placed on the canal bank near the office of the Canastota City Co. and approval the latter part of last week. By 7 o'clock two and from it were

Canastota's firemen were early at the scene of the fire and were active in rendering such aid as they could. Rev. Father Flynn of St. Agatha's was first on the scene and Rev. V. S. Britten came shortly afterwards.

The sympathy of every Oneidander of and thousands of people elsewhere go to their neighbors and friends in Canastota in the great loss which they sustained by fire Tuesday morning. It is a heavy blow to the village from which it will take a long time to recover. But the indomitable energy and well known courage of the Canastotans are assurance that they will take heart, and with still greater enterprise rebuild the burned district with structures better than before.

Oneida Dispatch

J. W. Wilson removed a large portion of the stock from his drug store before the fire was under control. He was burned out in the same location 15 years ago and he decided to save all he could this time. Fortunately however, his building escaped with little damage and the largest loss is from goods broken and injured in the hasty removal from the store. This is fully covered by insurance. Mr. Wilson started to move his safe out of the back door but it broke down the rear steps and then when the walls of the store caved in no one was hurt. The Bruce block fell it was covered with white california paint. C. J. Fowler, the jeweler, who occupies part of Wilson's store also moved out the most of his goods.

The first outside assistance in response to Chief Hollinger's message for help came from Oneida. Chief Fernenweil and a detachment of ten men came in quick order with 1,000 feet of hose. The hose and some of the men drove here with a Watson dumping wagon while most of the men came by automobile. The call for help was sent out from the fire department headquarters.