

# FIRE FIEND PLAYS SAD HAVOC

## \$100,000 Consumed by Fire.

### ALLISON-STUDABAKER BLOCK IN RUINS

#### Thrilling Scenes and Narrow Escapes—Good Work Done by The Fire Company.

The Allison & Studabaker, block by all odds the most beautiful in Decatur, and one of the handsomest in all Indiana, lies in ruins, the result of a few hours fire that broke out as near as can be ascertained at 2:45 Sunday morning. The wreck is complete and what was Saturday a thriving, bustling, prosperous business scene, is today a monster pile of charred timbers, broken stone, fire and water stained merchandise and general debris. The block, as all our readers know, was occupied by Kern, Beeler & Company's big department store, known as The Big Store, whose stock of goods valued at from \$80,000 to \$90,000, covered the entire floor space of the three floors. Saturday was as busy as the usual Saturday, and it was nearly one o'clock Sunday morning before the last clerk had left the store after cleaning up and arranging his department. About a quarter before three o'clock Night Watchman William Geary, on his regular rounds, started down the alley at the rear of the Big Store and noticed smoke issuing from the building. He ran immediately to the Murray hotel and sent in the alarm. Both companies responded promptly and before three o'clock had several streams of water at work. The fire started in the basement just at the foot of the elevator shaft and near the large tanks in which the stock of oils was kept. The blaze raged fiercely and the elevator proved a chimney for the blaze and furnished such a draught that before scarcely anyone had arrived, the fire was raging on all three floors, as well as in the basement. At 3:30 a second alarm was turned in and for ten minutes the whistles kept up a continual din, calling citizens to assist. The firemen were unable to cope with the fire and many men were ordered into service and responded nobly. Four hours the fight was kept up, the flames apparently gaining ground every moment, and not until the three floors were gone and the charred remains of the big stock were a black and ugly looking mass in the basement, did success crown their efforts. The fire was confined to the block, and that is the only good thing about the fire. The basement was stored the surplus stock of clothing, shoes, dry goods and groceries aggregating \$18,000, and this was the first to go, flames spreading among the boxes rapidly. Almost as quickly, however, the dry goods, grocery, clothing department and office on the second floor and the furniture department on the third floor were enwrapped, and by five o'clock it was a fierce, raging inferno. The fire department was the last to take fire, and while the stock in this room was practically a total loss the scene is not quite so awful, as the gutted building still stands. A few hundred dollars worth of clothing, shoes and dry goods is all that was saved, as before people could be sworn into service, the heat was so intense and the smoke so dense that entrance was almost impossible. At 5:35 a fearful crash was heard and the entire south wall plunged into the street, many persons narrowly escaping being caught. Two firemen and two boys, Will Bobo and Paul Beardsley were in the grocery department at the time and were almost caught. The front wall was pulled down by the fire company about nine o'clock and all day hundreds of sight seers from the city, country and nearby towns, have crowded the streets, watching the wreck. The loss is estimated at \$100,000 and that amount is not far off. The building is owned by Robert B. Allison and David Studabaker, was worth \$20,000 and the loss is practically total with but \$8,000 insurance, divided as follows: Achen & Munich, \$500; British American, \$2,000; Royal, \$1,000; North Western National, \$2,500 and Agricultural, \$2,000. The loss on the stock is estimated at \$80,000 with about \$51,000 insurance. The fixtures valued at \$8,000, were totally destroyed with but \$2,500 insurance. Chas Chapman, who had charge of the furniture repair room, lost all his tools, valued at about \$200, with no insurance. The store was owned by John E. Kern and E. D. Beeler of this city, and Harry Hirsch of Chicago, and none of the members of the firm were in the city. Mr. Beeler left for Chicago at midnight and Mr. Kern and family and Mrs. Beeler were at the home of relatives several miles in the country. They were notified by telephone and arrived about six o'clock, after the fire fiend's work had been completed. The fire is a severe blow to many people and aside from being disastrous to the owners of the stock and building, means much to the twenty-five clerks who were employed, as well as to many other business interests. The block was pointed to with pride by every citizen and admired by every visitor. The handsome building was constructed by Major Allison and Judge Studabaker in the spring of 1899, the exact date being February 24, and took the place of several small business rooms then occupied by Everett, Hite & Company, Frank Gast & Company and Cordua & Roop. The plans were drawn by Hiram Elder, an architect of Marion and something like thirty-five bidders tried to land the contract, which was divided and F. M. Benner of Marion, given the excavation. Wellman & Meadows of Jonesboro, the brick work, John Evans of Jonesboro, the cut stone, P. J. Hyland of this city, the plumbing, Gerding & Aumann Brothers of Fort Wayne, the galvanized iron and tinning, Baker & Christen of this city the carpenter work, Mann & Chronister of this city, the plastering, and A. Gregory & Son of this city, the painting. The total contract figured something like \$12,000, but today it could not be replaced for less than \$20,000. It was built expressly for the firm of Kern, Britton & Beeler, who took possession and formally opened the same to the public September 23, 1899. That opening and the success of this enterprising firm since is well known history of thrift and progress. The firm at that time was known as Kern, Britton & Beeler, and remained so until about Oct. 1, 1899, when Mr. Britton retired, and since then the firm name has been known as Kern, Beeler & Co. The cause of the fire, which is unknown, is believed to have been spontaneous combustion, starting in some waste used in caring for the engine. The fire company did excellent work considering everything, and the firemen and his men are to be commended.

The beautiful Allison & Studabaker block is to be rebuilt and at once so say the owners. Major Robert B. Allison, one of the owners, arrived home from Oden, Michigan at 2:30 Monday morning, drove to the scene and was surprised to see the complete wreck. However he takes no stock in the business man he simply said "It means much work and some expense." He and Mr. Studabaker conferred together that morning and decided to begin work at once and to push the new block to rapid completion, having it ready for occupancy by October 1st if possible. The block is to be rebuilt of the same material as before and will be just as handsome and convenient. The details have of course not been arranged as this requires time, but several days or a week at farthest will find workmen busy on the walls. The contract will be let just as soon as possible. Allison & Studabaker will of course receive their full insurance, \$8,000 which is less than half the actual cost of rebuilding. While the loss is a severe one it does not detain for an instant such veteran business men as the owners, who realize that it is simply one of the chances taken on such a block. Added to this cheering news which means much to the citizens of Decatur comes the assurance that Kern, Beeler & Company will again operate a monster department store in the same location if terms can be arranged and they feel confident they can. It is probable a new lease on the block

will be agreed upon within a few days. There has been some talk of them renting smaller buildings and running several different stores, thus giving their clerk employment and keeping their trade together, but this has been declared impossible as no buildings can be obtained and the expense would overbalance the benefit. They will be out of business therefore until suitable quarters can be obtained. E. D. Beeler and Robert Ehinger, manager of the clothing department arrived home from Chicago at an early hour Monday. They had left for that city Sunday morning to buy stock and were informed of the fire when at Hammond. The news almost unnerved Mr. Beeler whose health has not been the best for a few months. As nearly as can be ascertained the insurance on the stock is \$51,500 and it is expected that representatives of the companies will be here within a day or two to adjust the loss. The ruins are still burning in the basement, making work impossible for a day or two yet. Several narrow escapes were reported Monday from people standing about the ruin and it became necessary to stretch ropes and put up signs keeping people at a safe distance. A little girl while watching the general work came near being struck on the head with a large stone which fell from the top of one of the walls. A peculiar freak action of the smoke and water was noticeable upon the west wall Monday morning a beautiful picture is shown, apparently representing an old-fashioned castle city. It is very pretty and looks like the handiwork of some famous artist. The small amount of shoes, dry goods and clothing stock that was saved was gathered up and placed in the Allison building formerly occupied by the News office, where it will be kept temporarily until disposed of in some manner. The stock of shoes and a few dollars worth of queensware in the north building of the Big Store and which are greatly damaged will be kept there until released by the insurance company, though manager George Bailey is showing the right disposition by doing everything in his power to save as much of the stock as possible and properly caring for it. While other heroes have been given their share of honorable mention we have neglected to speak of the gallant work of the two firemen at the water works station. Harvey Rice and Tom Baker who though not in view of the cheering crowd did more than any one else to combat with the flames. When the fire started Harvey Rice was on duty. He realized the importance of keeping the pressure and keeping the big tank full of water. The tank contained 24000 barrels of water but with four streams of hose playing on the fire this amount was rapidly cut down though the water was being pumped in as fast as possible. It required some of the tank was fast work to do this and both men are to be praised for their work. It is not always the greatest hero who runs over falling walls or climbs steep ladders, though each is entitled to his respective share of glory. Quite a crowd of Bluffton people were here Sunday viewing the scene of the disaster and hundreds of farmers and people from nearly every town were here at the same time. Several pictures of the fire were taken. In an interview with John E. Kern, one of the members of the firm, Monday, that gentleman said, "I understand that Allison and Studabaker are going to rebuild, and I hope sincerely that they will do so. If our insurance is adjusted without trouble, as we have every reason to believe it will, we will be 'Johnny on the spot,' ready to try it again. While we feel very keenly to the loss, and realize we have lost the labors of five years in a few hours, we also realize that there is no use crying over spilled milk. We shall try to regain what we have lost." This is the right spirit and is sure to win, and it takes the right kind of nerve to make a statement of this kind after a man has stood and watched his life's earnings go up in smoke. The firm will be better able, however, to make a positive statement after a few weeks time, within which period the insurance adjusters will have, no doubt, concluded their work. On every hand can be heard words of sympathy and every stranger who has visited the city is awe stricken by the scene. However, the smoke is clearing away and a more cheerful aspect already presents itself.

Abe Stoneburner, an employee of the VanCamp Machine shop and Roller Mills on First street, was quite badly burned about the left arm and face Saturday morning. He is an engineer at that place and was getting ready to start the big gas engine, which runs the plant, when the igniting box exploded and he was enveloped in a sheet of flame. His arm and face were swollen considerably but no serious results are expected.

Adams county court cases were acted on in both the appellate and supreme court Friday. In the case of B. W. Quinn vs the Chicago & Erie railway company the action was peculiar. The case was transferred from the appellate to the supreme court because the judges were evenly divided and no decision could be reached. A Mr. Boblett, agent for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company was killed by a C. & E. train here several years ago. C. M. King was appointed administrator for his estate and brought suit for damages. Afterwards he left here and B. W. Quinn was made administrator. The case was tried in the Jay circuit court on change of venue and the estate was victorious, the jury returning a verdict for \$3,300 damages. There were a number of interrogatories to be answered by the jury, and a big dispute ensued, the case finally being appealed. The question is certainly a close one when the six judges are evenly divided. Another case from this county was acted upon and the decision of the lower court was affirmed. It was the case of the State ex rel. vs. Erastus Fritzinger, a paternity proceeding in which the plaintiff was awarded seventy-five dollars damages. This case was appealed on a minor question and all expenses in the case have been settled excepting the costs, which now are on Mr. Fritzinger.

Decatur society surpassed itself last week, and established a reputation for hospitality that will never die. That there can be too much of a good thing may be justifiable in certain cases but not so now, such at least, is the unanimous opinion of all whom it concerns. Perhaps the most brilliant affair of the season occurred yesterday, when one hundred and fifty guests mingled at the Allison mansion on Adams street. Then very few who sent regrets, regret now all the more the conditions that made their absence necessary. It was a typical "at home" and the hostess, Mrs. R. B. Allison, Mrs. J. C. Patterson and Mrs. P. B. Thomas, left nothing untouched to add grace to the occasion. In the afternoon from 2:30 to 6:00 o'clock the ladies were at home to the elder members of the invited crowd. In their own peculiar way they all enjoyed themselves, and reluctantly indeed did they leave. After ample time for making acquaintances, the hostesses had served to their guests a tray, luncheon, the elegance of which was certainly up to the standard with which these ladies have so long been credited. The dining table was beautifully decorated with a magnificent cluster of ferns and red ambers. Roses and ferns were also artistically arranged in the different rooms. Misses Dessie Beery, Vera Patterson, Marie Patterson and Carrie Thomas served, and Mrs. C. A. Dugan presided at the coffee urn. Bruce Patterson stood guard at the punch bowl. Musical selections were rendered and well received by those present. Mrs. Bolds of Peru, was the out-of-town guest. In the evening, from eight till eleven o'clock, the ladies were again at home to those who were not present in the afternoon. The merriment began early and the gay ripple of laughter was continuous throughout the evening, save when the ladies were otherwise engaged at the dining table. Miss Francis Dugan, Louise Winch and Wildred Winch of Fort Wayne, Margaret Hughes and Marie Allison served the delicious luncheon and Miss Hatte Studabaker presided at the coffee urn. Bruce Patterson served the punch. It was a faultless affair and will ever be remembered by those fortunate enough to be present. The guests of honor, both afternoon and evening, were: Mrs. Macke, Birmingham, Alabama; Mrs. Florence DeVilbiss and Mrs. Claude Cole, Lancaster, Ohio; Mrs. Vesey, Fort Wayne; Mrs. Malite Numbers, Austin, Texas; Mrs. Weicking, Mrs. Ellen Dailley and Mrs. Harry Deam, Bluffton; Mrs. Reynolds and daughters, Joliet, Illinois. There will be a reunion of the same crowd at Bluffton, Tuesday.

I have One Hundred Thousand Dollars \$100,000, to loan on real estate at 5 1/2 per cent interest. No commission. D. B. Erwin.

For a lazy liver try Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets. They invigorate the liver, aid the digestion, regulate the bowels, and prevent bilious attacks. For sale by Holthouse Drug Co.

Wanted at Once—An ambitious and energetic man over 21 years of age to work himself up to a good salaried position with a large company. Answer in own hand writing. P. O. Box 234, Decatur, Ind.

Thirty thousand acres good land for sale in Midland County, Michigan, at low prices and easy terms. For particulars write to David N. Maxwell or Phillip Gephart, Midland, Michigan.

No man or woman in the state will hesitate to speak well of Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets after once trying them. They always produce a pleasant movement of the bowels, improve the appetite and strengthen the digestion. For sale by Holthouse Drug Co.

The Indiana supreme court has just sustained the law which requires the township trustee to bury at the expense of the county, any veteran of the civil war who has not sufficient funds to pay the expenses himself. The case decided came from Knox county, where the county commissioners refused to pay a trustee for the burial service. The Knox county court held with the commissioners and the opinion of Judge Hadley reversed its decision.

VERY REMARKABLE CURE OF DIARRHOEA.

"About six years ago for the first in my life, I had a sudden and severe attack of diarrhoea," says Mrs. Alice Miller, of Morgan, Texas. "I got temporary relief, but it came back again and again, and for six long years I have suffered misery and agony that I can tell. It was worse than death. My husband spent hundreds of dollars for physicians' prescriptions and treatment without avail. Finally we moved to Bosque county, our present home, and one day I happened to see an advertisement of Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy with a testimonial of a man who had been cured by it. The case was so similar to my own that I concluded to try the remedy. The result was wonderful. I could hardly realize that I was well again, or believe it could be so after having suffered so long, but that one bottle of medicine, costing but a few cents, cured me." For sale by Holthouse Drug Co.

If it's Your Stomach, why not try the Waters at Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania.

Probably more than one half the ill health arises from disordered digestion. So long as the body is properly nourished the microbes of disease do not usually find lodgment; but, when the stomach fails, all bad things are possible. Some very remarkable cures of this nature were reported from Cambridge Springs the past season, and there was hardly a case that was not benefited. These waters are efficacious at all seasons and there is always enough going on at the Springs to make a stay there thoroughly enjoyable. For all complaints the cool air of Crawford county is likely to be more beneficial than a more enervating atmosphere. Booklets on application to D. W. Cooke, G. P. A., Erie Railroad, New York City, or to any Erie passenger agent.

Legal Advertising...

APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed administrator of the estate of John H. Lennhart, late of Adams county, deceased. The estate is probably solvent.

E. BERT LEXHART, Administrator.

June 22, 1903. 15-3

APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed administrator of the estate of Ida Williams, late of Adams county, deceased. The estate is probably solvent.

WILLIAM FRAZIER, Administrator with will annexed.

June 15, 1903. 15-3 Clark J. Lutz, Att'y.

APPLICATION FOR LIQUOR LICENSE.

The subscriber hereby gives notice to the citizens and voters of Monroe township, Adams county, Indiana, that he will apply to the board of commissioners of said county at their July term 1903, for a license to sell spirituous, vinous and malt liquors in quantities less than a quart at a time with the privilege of allowing the same to be drunk on the premises where said liquors are sold. My place of business wherein said liquors are to be sold and drunk is located on the ground on the west twenty-two feet of lot number 27 in the village of Monroe said county and state. Said building and room front south on Jackson street. Size of room 20x35 feet with front and rear openings. I also give notice that I will apply for permission to run a lunch counter in the same room and sell cigars and tobacco therein.

June 15, 1903. 14-3 WILLIAM SHEETS, Applicant.

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATOR'S SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, administrator with will annexed of Ida Williams, deceased, late of Adams county, Indiana, will offer for sale at public sale at the late residence of the deceased, one-half

north of Steele Post Office, in Blue Creek township, Adams county, Indiana, on Thursday, July 16, 1903, at ten o'clock a. m., the following property to wit:

One mare, nine years old, two milch cows, one yearling heifer, sow and six pigs, chickens, household and kitchen furniture, and other articles too numerous to mention.

TERMS OF SALE:

All sums of five dollars or under cash in hand, all sums over five dollars a credit of nine months will be given, purchaser to give notes with approved security to the satisfaction of the undersigned.

WILLIAM FRAZIER, Administrator with will annexed of Ida Williams, deceased, Clark J. Lutz, Attorney.

15-3

APPLICATION FOR LIQUOR LICENSE.

To the citizens of the town of Berne, Adams county, Indiana:

Notice is hereby given that J. M. Ebsan will make application to the board of commissioners of Adams county, Indiana, at their regular session in July, 1903, for a license to sell spirituous, vinous and malt liquors in less quantities than a quart at a time, in the two-story brick building on the ground floor room which is 24 feet wide and 12 feet long fronting on the street, with billiard and pool room in the back part of the building, the building used for a home, with the privilege of allowing the same to be drunk where sold in and at the building situated on the following described premises in the town of Berne, Adams county, Indiana, to-wit: Commencing 30 feet west of the northeast corner of lot No. 2 in the town of Berne, Adams county, Indiana, township 21, north range 12, east, thence running south 132 feet, thence west 24 feet, thence north 132 feet, thence east 24 feet to the place of beginning. Notice is further given that the undersigned will also ask the commissioners for the privilege of carrying on the business of running a restaurant in connection with the sale of intoxicating liquors and in the same room where intoxicating liquors are kept for sale and are sold.

J. M. EBSAN, Applicant.

15-3

APPLICATION FOR LIQUOR LICENSE.

The subscriber hereby gives notice to the citizens and voters of Washington township, Adams county, Indiana, that he will apply to the board of commissioners of said county at their July term 1903, for a license to sell spirituous, vinous and malt liquors in quantities less than a quart at a time with the privilege of allowing the same to be drunk on the premises where said liquors are sold. My place of business wherein said liquors are to be sold and drunk is located in and at the building situated on the west part of the following described premises to-wit:

Commencing at a point on the south line of the southeast quarter of section 12, township 21, north, range 12, east, at east line the right-of-way of the Cincinnati, Richmond & Fort Wayne railroad thence running east 122 feet and 6 inches, thence north parallel with the east line of said section 12, thence west 115 feet to east line of said east right-of-way 153 feet more or less, to the place of beginning. Notice is further given that the undersigned desires to sell intoxicating liquors in the front room in the one-story frame building situated on above described premises said room being 18 feet wide and 12 feet long, and a public highway in said Washington township. Said applicant desires also to keep a lunch counter and cigar stand in said described room and sell cigars, tobacco and lunch therein.

JONATHAN ANDREWS, Applicant.

14-3

APPLICATION FOR LIQUOR LICENSE.

Notice is hereby given to the citizens of the Third ward in the city of Decatur, Adams Co. and state of Indiana, that I, Delma Elzey, a male inhabitant and resident of said ward a person over the age of twenty-one years, and a person not in the habit of becoming intoxicated, and a fit person to be entrusted with the sale of intoxicating liquors, will make application to the board of commissioners of the county of Adams, at their July session for the year 1903, for a license to sell spirituous, vinous and malt and other intoxicating liquors in quantities less than a quart at a time, with the privilege of allowing the same to be drunk on the premises where sold. The place where I desire to sell said intoxicating liquors is a one-story brick building fronting on Monroe street in said city, bringing the ground floor with front and rear openings and situated on the following described premises to-wit:

Commencing 41 feet west from the south-east corner of lot No. 130 in the city of Decatur, Adams county, Indiana, thence running north 18 feet, thence east 18 feet, thence north to the north line of Monroe street thence east to the place of beginning. Said building is situated on the south end of the above described strip of real estate and is 21 feet long by 12 feet 8 inches wide on the inside. I will at the same time ask permission from said board of commissioners to keep an upstairs lunch counter and public highway room for the purpose of selling lunch.

DELMA ELZEY, Applicant.

13-3

APPLICATION FOR LIQUOR LICENSE.

To the citizens of Berne, in Monroe township, Adams county, Indiana:

Notice is hereby given that I, Samuel L. Kuntz, a male inhabitant of said county of Indiana, over the age of twenty-one years, and who is a person not in the habit of becoming intoxicated will make application to the board of commissioners of said Adams county, Indiana, at their next regular session in July, 1903, for a license to sell spirituous, vinous, and malt liquors in less quantities than a quart at a time with the privilege of allowing the same to be drunk on the premises where sold. The place where I desire to sell said intoxicating liquors is located on the south part of a strip of land, twenty-two feet wide, the same being the middle one-third of lot No. seven (7) in said Adams county, Indiana, and is situated on the north and south, one on the east and one on the west side thereof, and the room to be used is the ground floor of said building, being eighteen feet wide and sixteen feet long, with two 62 feet long north and south, with one opening and glass front to the south and one opening in the rear north. Said room is fourteen feet high and is the only room in said building.

The applicant also desires to keep a cigar stand and upon the public highway and sell cigars, tobacco and lunch therein.

SAMUEL L. KUNTZ, Applicant.

15-3

NOTICE OF MACADAMIZED STONE ROAD PETITION.

Notice is hereby given that one, Louis Golden, together with numerous other persons, residents, free holders of the town of Kirkland township, Adams county, Indiana, have filed their joint petition in the auditor's office of said Adams county, Indiana, asking and praying that the board of commissioners of said Adams county, Indiana, build and construct a free macadamized stone road in said Kirkland township, over and upon the public highway situated on the following route, to-wit:

Commencing at the east end of the "Peterson and Prairie macadamized road" at the southeast corner of section two, in township twenty-seven north, range thirteen east, in said Adams county, Indiana, thence running north a distance of about one mile to the north township line of said Kirkland township, in said county and state aforesaid, and there to terminate.

The said improvement prayed for in said petition to be supplementary to and a continuation of said "Peterson and Prairie macadamized road" from the east end thereof north over and upon the located highway to the north township line of said Kirkland township. And that

Friday, July 10, 1903,

has been set and fixed by endorsement upon said petition as the day and date when said petition will be heard and when the commissioners in their room and office in the said auditor's office in the court house in said Adams county, Indiana, and of the petitioners said petition and of the hearing thereof all persons interested will take due notice.

ABE BOCH, Auditor, Adams County, Ind.

15-3