

d only by the greatest exertion. Although despaired of several times, the building emerged unharmed.

The fire was halted on this same side of the street at French's building which was occupied by William Palmer's saloon, just west of the Marble Shop. This was a terrific battle. Several of the volunteer fire fighters were roasted by heat and over exertion. Here again, the stubbornness of the fighters stemmed the spread and averted what might well have been a disaster many times greater.

SCATTERED OUTBREAKS

There were scattered outbreaks all over the town as the wind reared flaming fragments over wide areas. Several homes on Main street were ignited but advance precautions enabled the owners to extinguish them before serious damage was done.

J. Burnham's house and barn caught on the roof, Mark Gray's buildings took fire several times, R. Donnell's house caught fire on the roof and also on the stable. George S. Plummer's barn on Pleasant street caught fire on the roof and also, the home of Albert Urleigh, a mile further east on Pleasant street, caught in two places.

These scattered outbreaks were all successfully stopped and the flames finally brought under control after a bitter battle that lasted all day.

The people theorized that the flames had been started by careless smoking in the Swanton stable, as a party of fishermen had departed from there not more than 15 minutes before the fire broke out.

ONLY PARTIAL INSURANCE

A great many of the buildings that were destroyed were partially covered by insurance but this did not give much comfort to the homeless families nor to the stores that were put out of business. Twenty one buildings were counted among the burned, 13 families had been made homeless and the losses added up to a total of \$25,000.

Dr. Lewis B. Johnson appeared to be the heaviest loser, his ruined buildings being valued at 3000 with no insurance. Charles Tenney's loss was placed at 5,500 but he prudently had 3000 of insurance coverage. Ben Woodbury placed his loss to his home and its contents at 7000, with \$4000 of insurance.

One of the obstacles to more prompt playing of water on the blaze was because the cover on the reservoir in Market Square had been sealed in by ice several inches in thickness and had to be chopped free. Thus was valuable time lost.

While all this was going on, the building in which the fire started quickly became enveloped in flames. The blaze spread rapidly up and down Main street in both directions, hungrily lapping up the four-story Houlton Exchange, to the east, Burnham's saloon, and a two story building adjoining.

HELP FROM PREVIOUS FIRE

Here the fire fighters reaped a dividend from their stubborn battle nine months before when they had demolished a building to stop the spread of fire. The Madigan and Donworth building had not been replaced. A vacant spot still stood there. Here the fire again burned itself out without spreading further.

Westward from the Gray building stood Staples' building and the O. F. French drug store, also spared from the previous fire. John Rose had a harness shop on the east side of Court street next to the drug store on the corner and, south of this point, was a small dye house, the blacksmith and carriage shops of W. D. Buzzell, the James P. Kinney two story building, the three story building that housed the Pioneer office and Dominick Sweeney's residence.

All through this stretch of buildings the flames roared to take everything in their path.

The victims, many of whose descendants are still residents of Houlton and some are still in business, include the Staples building which was occupied by the J. A. Browne Company, dry goods dealer.

FRENCH BUILDING

The French building, which was occupied by the store on the first floor, in the same location as the French drug store of today. On the second floor were William Robinson and the law offices of C. M. Powers as well as the dental offices of Dr. F. F. Innes. In the Buzzell building on Court street were located the blacksmith shop of M. J. Kiely, the carriage and paint shop of W. W. Sweeney and the cabinet shop of S. D. Stone.

In the Gray building, the law offices of Powers and Powers

A July Fourth Celebration In Houlton 65 Years Ago



This is an historical scene of Market Square during an observance of Independence Day, 1892. In the left background is the picturesque group of willows fronting the Mansur property on which site the Houlton Trust Company building now stands. In the right background can be seen the partially completed Rice Block. The old familiar bandstand and horse trough are in the center. Only identifiable figures in the photo are, Black Hawk Putnam, astride his famous white horse, an indispensable part of any Houlton parade of that era. The youngster with the trombone in the band is the late C. B. Esters and slightly behind to the right may be seen the late Albert G. Merritt and his drum. There is no explanation for the float in the foreground.

because it was given credit for on fire in several places. areas of the town. Fragments of Southerly along Court street, defending the jailer's house and In this fire, too, the spread of burning wood, shingles, and cin- dwelling houses were endangered the county wodshed which were flaming cinders endangered other ders were carried broadcast. along both sides of the street for

a considerable distance. The homes of H. T. Frisbie, at the corner of Military and Court streets, the residence of Mrs. Nelson Herrin, further to the south and others were among those which caught fire but were quickly put under control.

TWO CHURCHES SAVED

Two churches in the path of the fire were saved from serious damage and possible destruction by the alertness of their pastors who stood guard as the danger grew greater.

The Congregational church on Court street caught fire near the belfry but was promptly smother-

ed by the pastor Rev. Zenas Crowell who was watching it. How the worthy pastor scrambled up to the belfry is not revealed in the account of the incident.

The pastor of the Baptist church was equally alert in protecting his church by quickly halting fire which struck it.

Broken plate glass in the business section was common. The glass front on the Hatheway drug store was a victim of the intense heat and sudden cooling. It was demolished at a cost of \$500. There was no insurance.

\$40,000 LOSS

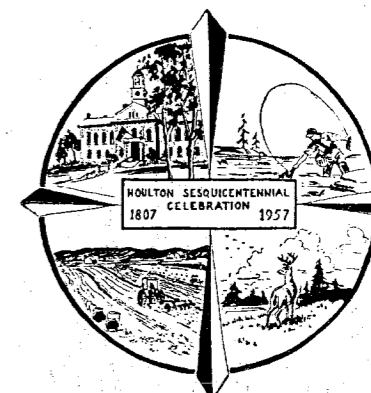
The total loss was placed at

Best Wishes to the PIONEER TIMES on your 100th BIRTHDAY....

AND OUR BEST WISHES TO THE TOWN OF HOULTON ON ITS 150th Anniversary

SKEEHAN'S Market

BANGOR STREET, HOULTON



We are proud of the part we have played in the building of . . . .



# HOULTON

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Since the days when this ancient, horse drawn dump cart was standard equipment, to the modern, fully motorized trucks of today, there has always been a Burleigh to furnish the sand and gravel that have gone into the building of homes, the construction of business blocks and public buildings, the paving of streets and the laying of sidewalks in the Town of Houlton.

Sure, our part has been inconspicuous . . . but it has been important. So, as we consider the privilege it has been to be of service in the past, we are likewise grateful for this opportunity to extend our thanks and pay our respects to this town and to its people, on this, its Sesquicentennial year. Best wishes, too, to the Houlton Pioneer Times on its 100th birthday.

LAURENCE E.

# BURLEIGH

SAND AND GRAVEL SINCE 1907

Burleigh Heights  
HOULTON

Dial 3770 or  
3284

\$7000, with \$4000 of insurance. In all, insurance companies are estimated to have paid about \$13,000 to their Houlton policy holders.

### LESS THAN A YEAR

Less than a year was at elapse before fire was to strike the young village of Houlton again. This time with even greater violence and causing loss more severe.

It was April 1, 1880, just nine months from the first scorching ordeal the townspeople had gone through in 20 years, when flames again erupted, this time from a workshop in the rear of Samuel A. Gray's workshop attached to his tinware and stove store on Main street.

This time two o'clock in the morning was chosen for the outbreak and the flames had made a strong start before they were discovered. This timing was bad for another reason. The darkness was a severe handicap to the fighters. In addition, ladders were not immediately available, pails for a possible bucket brigade were scarce, water in quantity was inaccessible and the fire company had been disbanded, so the report stated.

There is no explanation for the breaking up of the fire company but the foregoing are given as the reasons for the spread of the flames and the extent of the loss, which might have been avoided before any serious damage was done.

### PIONEER BLOCK BURNED

When it was all over Houlton people ruefully totaled up the score and found the total losses had reached \$40,000 with \$20,000 of insurance, 17 buildings lay in ruins, including the Aroostook Pioneer, the Exchange Hotel, French's drug store, J. A. Browne Company, and others. Burnham's saloon, which had come through the fire of the previous year without damage, was a victim of this one with a loss estimated at \$3,000, insured for \$2,100.

The Little Giant chemical engine was brought into play as quickly as possible but the flames apparently had gained too much headway for this apparatus to be very effective without additional help.

Since the fire of August, 1879, the town apparently had acquired new equipment because the Aroostook Pioneer reports of the fire notes that it was half an hour before "the new engine was in position to do effective work".

offices of Powers and Powers were destroyed as was the barber shop of E. B. Cornelson and the Medical offices of Dr. T. J. Fitzmaurice.

Worst sufferer from this second catastrophe to visit the town in less than a year, was W. D. Buzzell who owned the Houlton Exchange hotel and stables, shops and tenement building. He placed a figure of \$13,000 on his loss and admitted to \$6000 of insurance. But little of the contents of the hotel were saved. Of 38 chamber sets, only six complete ones were found after it was all over. Out of 40 carpets, only four were left whole.

### J. A. BROWNE INSURED

J. A. Browne Company reported that their stock of dry goods was insured for \$5,100 and about half of the stock was saved. O. F. French reported a \$3,000 loss on his building with \$2,000 insurance and added that the drug and medicine stock was save without loss.

W. S. Gilman of the Aroostook Pioneer owned to loss of \$3000 which included one power press, one hand press and stock worth \$1000. Nearly all the newspaper and job type and one job press were saved. Saving of the press made possible the usual weekly issue. For some time thereafter the Pioneer office was located in the Gilman home on Summer street.

The fire fighting equipment which the town had acquired between the two fires was a Button fire engine and it was given great credit for effective service in staying the spread of the fire and protecting exposed buildings, especially along the west side of Court street, where the building in which the Times office was located presented a prominent point of danger.

### PAYS FOR ITSELF

The Aroostook Pioneer commented: As an investment it (the Button engine) may be considered paid for in this one fire.

The fire fighters were able to prevent the flames from jumping across Main street by throwing water on the roofs with the Little Giant engine and a force pump at Merritt's store on the corner of Main and Water streets.

Southward, the path of the flames was checked by throwing water on the roofs of the jail and jailer's house and out-buildings, the Court House and A. G. Hunt's stables. Here, again, the Little Giant appeared to prove its worth