

Fire Burns Factory End of Schwob Grain Cradle Building

Discovered Beyond Control In Boiler and Engine Room.
Burned Stubbornly Against Several Streams of Water.
Loss Heavy. Some Machines Of Their Own Invention Destroyed.

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Submitted by Laurel Meyer.

Somewhere between 2 and 2:30 o'clock Tuesday morning fire under strong headway was discovered in the J. A. Schwob Co. grain cradle factory at the corner of Thirteenth and Lockwood.

That portion occupied by the machinery is now charred ruins, with the probability of the machinery being entirely destroyed also.

The assembling, painting and shipping departments were not damaged much if any.

Loss cannot be estimated at present. There was insurance on the buildings but none on the machinery.

Some of the machinery can readily be replaced, but several cannot be without large expenditure of time, work and money. One in particular was a snath turning machine. It was their own invention and construction, and was the only one in existence and enabled snaths to be made much more rapidly than by any other known method. In fact the entire plant was the result of a lifetime's work.

It was the largest concern of its kind in the Ohio Valley, eastern and southern states, being rated by some as the largest cradle concern in America. The season just closed amounted to within a very few cradles of 15,000 being manufactured and sold by them.

Two different members of the firm go through the plant without light every night. C. C. Schwob made the last trip Monday night near 11 o'clock. No sign of fire was noticed. Policeman Steele was about the building after 12 and noticed nothing.

Some time after 2 Mrs. C. C. Schwob awakened and saw the fire already enveloping the boiler and engine room and spreading rapidly. Mr. Schwob did not stop to dress and was just in time to get the horse out of the stable within a few feet of the boiler room.

The fire was far beyond use of the chemical extinguisher which Mr. Schwob carried with him. The down town fire company soon had two streams on the fire and others were soon added by other

companies, but the blazes did not subside for some time and then kept burning out for nearly two hours.

Caused By Boiler Drop.

Since the fire has been quenched the cause has been discovered. The rear end of the boiler was supported by a heavy hook to a large iron beam which let go, after having held the boiler in that position for 21 years.

When the rear of the boiler dropped it caused a sudden outshoot of hot ashes toward the wood and coal bins. After the blaze started two or three minutes only would be required to reach the extent when discovered.

The most destruction was wrought in the middle section of the factory, nearest the boiler room, where everything is a mass of burned wreckage. In the south end on the second floor the snath machine was located and it appeared to be not beyond repair, although some of the woodwork is badly charred.

The tall stack fell just after O.O. and C.C. Schwob left the spot where it now lays, one gong in each direction. They did not see the stack falling but instinctively moved away.

The season closed a couple of weeks ago. Work on next season was to begin Tuesday. Monday steam was raised and the machinery was got in readiness for the year's run.

The Insurance.

The insurance on the building and materials amounting to \$4,000.00 was placed in the following companies and agencies.

By Scott & Booher, agency, Franklin Insurance company, of Wheeling, \$1,000.00. Providence Insurance company of Washington, \$800.00.

By Wright & Thompson agency, Phoenix Insurance company, of London, \$1,000. German Insurance company, of Wheeling, \$200.00.

By E. G. Roberts agency, Queen Insurance company \$500.00.

By Brown & Son company, The Royal Insurance company \$500.00.

