

Jan 1, 1903

# THE HOSPITAL LIES IN ASHES

**Dr. W. T. Stone's Fine Sanitarium Totally Destroyed By Fire.**

**EARLY LAST FRIDAY MORNING.**

**Origin of Fire Unknown—Patients Were All Conveyed to Places of Safety—Dr. Stone Narrowly Escapes—Insurance \$2,500, Loss \$18,000—Loss of Hospital A Great Calamity to the Community.**

Last Friday morning a little after six o'clock fire was discovered in the storage room of the Park Rapids Hospital and in less than an hour the entire large structure was in ruins, the flames having swept everything before them.

How the fire caught is a mystery, the room being without stove or chimney, and used altogether as a clothing closet in which were kept the blankets, bedding and clothes of patients not in use.

As soon as the fire was discovered Dr. Stone at once turned on the hose which he had connected with the water tanks of the hospital but unfortunately others in the lower rooms were trying to get water from the faucets at the same time thus preventing sufficient pressure from the tank to give a good stream of water.

The fire caught in the rear of the building and slowly but surely made its way to the different parts of the hospital until it was enveloped in flames.

The alarm was given as soon as possible and the fire ladders hustled up the half mile as fast as they could but when they got there, owing to the lack of hydrants for some blocks, could do but little. There were 17 patients and with the employes and the family about 30 people. All were conveyed to places of safety.

The thermometer ranged close to 30 degrees below zero and although many gathered to see the structure burn the severity of the weather prevented as much being done as otherwise could have been. Dr. Stone himself was the last to leave the burning and very narrowly escaped with his life.

There was but little of the furniture or goods saved.

The Park Rapids hospital with its contents Dr. Stone informs us represented an expenditure of \$18,000. On this he had an insurance of \$2500. On the building \$2000 in the Citizens Fire Association of Mankato and on the furniture \$500 in the same company. B. F. Wright is the agent of the Mankato company in this city.

The loss of the property is a heavy blow to Dr. Stone financially. The Dr. came here a few years ago and has steadily promoted and built up the hospital under adverse circumstances which would have overwhelmed a man of less resistless energy and medical skill.

He had this last season added largely to the building and had fitted it up with the latest improvements and facilities at a cost of several additional thousands of dollars.

The public mind had accepted his growing success as its own and today every citizen of Park Rapids feels not only a personal sympathy for the heavy loss sustained by the doctor whose pluck indomibility and recognized skill has so clearly been demonstrated, but it feels as well that the loss of an institution like this in which they are constantly from 20 to 50 patients or more, is a great calamity to the community.

Not only did the hospital go with its contents but the home, with many household treasures and valuables went with it.

Meantime Dr. Stone has shown the same untiring zeal and attention to his patients as ever, and has secured for temporary quarters the German hall for a hospital.

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