

MENTONE

Our Home Grows

By Linda L. Oden

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Taken from The Mentone Gazette, March 27, 1886

CONFLAGRATION

**J. W. Christian's Grain-House and Agricultural Rooms Burned.
Insurance No Good**

FIRE

About 8 o'clock last Monday evening an alarm of fire was turned in, or rather turned out judging by the whooping and yelping of the alarmed as they began running toward the four quarters of the globe. The Gazette representative was soon in the midst of the confusion and happening to distinguish the word "elevator" from among the babble of sounds, we bent our steps to the south which soon brought into view the scene of the conflagration just as the flames were bursting through the roof of the doomed building, which proved to be not the elevator but the grain houses belonging to J. W. Christian, located on Franklin Street south of the Railroad. The establishment consists of the old wooden schoolhouse and church buildings which had been moved together, was very inflammable and soon melted down. Luckily, no other building was located near enough to be in serious danger, and the large piles of wood near were not dry, consequently the fire was easily contained to its immediate quarters. The buildings contained a lot of agricultural machinery which was removed without injury, and about 900 bushels of wheat, 500 of which was stored. About 400 bushels was carried out and saved. The value of the buildings was held at \$1,500, which with 500 bushels of wheat burned was the extent of the loss. The buildings and contents were insured in the North British Merchantile Insurance Company of New York for \$1,400. The adjuster of claims arrived Wednesday and proceeded to exercise his shrewdness to discover some technical loop-holes by which the company might escape from paying Mr. Christian his just dues. In this he claimed to be successful, and not withstanding the contract had been made in good faith and the premiums promptly paid. Christian found it advisable to compromise the matter by accepting a small percent of the amount properly belonging to him. Comments are unnecessary among people who are acquainted with the circumstances, but we shall miss our guess if the "British" are not called upon to evacuate and give place to companys showing less disposition for unfairness. It is thought that the fire originated from the flue near the roof as it was principally in that location when discovered. A well organized hook and ladder company could easily have extinguished the fire. This is a text worthy of a lengthy discourse, but as steps have been taken to secure protection against fire, we refer our readers to the published proceedings elsewhere in this paper.

PROTECTION AGAINST FIRE

The citizens of Mentone met at the school house Wednesday evening for the purpose of arranging some means for the protection of their property against fire. The meeting was called to order by R.C. Railsback, J.W. Sellers was chosen chairman for the evening and S.A. Boggess, secretary. R. C. Railsback being called upon stated the object of the meeting after which J. Foulks gave a brief explanation concerning the proposition as to supplying the town with water, giving the probable cost of its construction and which no doubt if carried out would be successful. The chairman appointed a committee of three, as follows, C. E. Doane, J. Foulks, and John F. Johnson, for the purpose of investigating the different methods of protections against fire, also a committee of three was appointed to see in regard to a hook and ladder company. The meeting then was adjourned to meet Wednesday evening, March 30.

Let every citizen of Mentone attend the next meeting and establish some means for protection against fire. The people have had three warnings by the burning of some of the most useful buildings in the town; but as it happened they were situated in the business part of the town or today our town would be in ashes. Do not let this subject pass with but idle thought but everybody come out to the next meeting and hear an explanation in regard to a stock company being formed to raise funds to secure the supplying as proposed by the Novelty Works and if this be done it will save the town from a heavy taxation and by forming this stock company and securing water ourselves it will lower the rate of insurance and above all, remember our town is in its infancy and do not overburden it with taxation, always learn to crawl before we walk. S.A. Boggess, secretary.

The location of the fire in the first article is now occupied by the recent building just south of the railroad track on the east side of

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