

ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY NOVEMBER 20



On November 20, 1907, fire destroyed much of the business section of Oceana.

CSO: SS.8.6, ELA.8.1

Investigate the Document: (*Wyoming Mountaineer*, November 22, 1907)

1. Where did the fire in Oceana originate? What sections of the town were lost?
2. What was the only business house left remaining in Oceana after the fire?

Think Critically: Hypothesize the effects that this disastrous fire had on Oceana. What were the economic effects on its citizens? Did people move elsewhere in the county? What prevented the fire from being extinguished?

Wyoming Mountaineer.

Virgil A. Lewis

PINEVILLE, WEST VIRGINIA, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1907.

OCEANA

WIPED ALMOST OFF
THE MAP BY THE
FIRE FIEND.

OVER \$100,000 GOES UP
IN SMOKE.

Every Business House In
The Town In Ashes
Except The TRIBUNE
OFFICE.

At one o'clock last Wednesday a message from Oceana to Jas. H. Gilmore was suddenly terminated by the statement that a fire alarm had been sounded.

For two long hours a number of us waited for communication to be again established.

At 3 o'clock the message came that the flames were under control, but all the business part of town was in ashes.

The fire originated in the Kelley hotel and the flames spread rapidly but in an eccentric manner as seen by the results.

The houses destroyed entirely are the Bank of Wyoming, the old Chambers store, the Kelley hotel, the old Christian building and two small offices on the lot, one of which was the P. O. and the Central telephone office, the new three story building belonging to the estate of Mrs. Ida Smith and the Wyoming Merchandise Co. store owned by A. R. Wittenberg. On the opposite side of the street is burned Capt. J. A. Cook's hotel, W. G. Cook's residence, the large store of W. G. and Fred E. Cook, Dr. Edgell's office and residence and the old court house and offices.

The loss is estimated at over \$100,000.

The only insurance in the town is what is carried by A. R. Wittenberg.

Every hotel and every store in town went up in smoke or left a pile of smoldering ashes.

The only business house left in town is the Tribune office.

W. G. and Fred E. Cook saved only one show case of jewelry valued \$1,000. They had a safe and no doubt saved their books and valuable papers.

A. R. Wittenberg also had a safe and likely saved all his books and papers.

The large safe in the Bank of Wyoming fully protected the valuables of the bank. The books outside the safe were cared for and its only loss is the building and a lot of stationary, &c, which can easily be replaced.

It will, perhaps, always remain a mystery how the old Chambers residence was saved with a seething fire on both sides of it. It must have been by the eccentricities of the wind that veered its course from time to time.

The people of Oceana have our profoundest sympathies.

We have a message from Jas. H. George, Cashier of the Bank of Wyoming, stating that the loss of the bank is but light outside the value of the building and that it will resume business as soon as the safe cools sufficient to be placed in another room and opened.

A wagon loaded with groceries left here yesterday for Oceana. "Surely misfortune makes brothers of us all."

"He that needeth aid has a right to ask of his fellow mortals and no one who has the power of granting can refuse without guilt."

How much more so is it to anticipate their needs.