

WITBECK'S HOTEL RAZED BY FLAMES

Witbeck's hotel, in the western turnpike, about half a mile west of the Albany Country club, was destroyed by fire early Thursday morning with a loss of \$20,000. The hotel, which was built in 1793 was one of the old landmarks of Albany county, probably the oldest hotel in the Capitol District, and the scene of many famous Albany county political fights.

The fire caught three inmates of the hotel asleep, and they escaped only by climbing from their window to the top of the porch and sliding from there to the ground.

Those who escaped in this way were: Charles Ebel, the proprietor; Miss Margaret Nolan, a domestic, at the hotel; Robert Cummings, an employee at the hotel.

The hotel, an old wooden building, burned like tinder and was virtually destroyed fifteen minutes after the fire was discovered. There is a rifle range in the rear of the hotel and a bucket brigade, which had been formed by neighbors to fight the flames was scared away by incessant reports from the interior of the building. It developed later that these were caused by a case of cartridges which had been stored in the hotel.

Mr. Ebel, the proprietor, leased the hotel August 1 from A. W. Witbeck, the owner. He was preparing for a winter's trade, and had recently bought \$600 worth of stock and stored it in the hotel. It was all destroyed.

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