

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

WISCONSIN STEEL COMPANY

Benham, Ky., March 4, 1918.

Mr. F. B. Dunbar, Supt.,  
Benham, Ky.

Dear Sir:

Please find herewith my report of the fire which occurred on Sunday evening, March 3, 1918, in east end of Blair addition, which resulted in the total loss of a ten room shanty, building No. B-1 to B-9 inclusive. This building was within 250 ft. of our east boundary line and near U. S. Coal & Coke Company's office and was occupied by several colored people.

The fire originated in the roof of shanty B-2 on extreme north-  
*East* corner and when noticed covered an area of several square feet around stove pipe. The first alarm given was given by firing several shots, probably 6:54 P. M. The alarm by steam whistle was sounded at 6:56 P. M. and was responded to promptly by fire crews with hose carts and equipment, but due to the fact that there were no fire hydrants within the neighborhood hose was no service.

The roof for about one half the length of the building had fallen when I arrived at 7:03 P. M. and the roof for entire length had fallen at 7:16 P. M. Protection to the next shanty was given by wetting down by bucket brigade. This building was scorched slightly but no damage to mention. The room, B-2, where fire originated was occupied by Henry Jackson (colored), who was building fire in stove and had placed kindling wood in stove and had gone to U. S. Coal & Coke Company's tippie for a basket of coal and on his return found the roof on fire and the room burning near roof inside and beyond control, he having only time to save a few articles of clothing and travelling bag. Joe Cloud, living in adjoining room B-1, probably discovered the fire first from the smell of burning wood and the smoke and raised the alarm. He states the fire was in roof and upper part of walls when he discovered it. Joe Barefield, living in shanty A, states the roof of room B-2 was ablaze when he first saw it when alarm was given.

The building was a total loss amounting to \$600.00 and a part of contents was lost but no estimate could be arrived at as to actual value. The absence of fire hydrants and equipment in this section also in parts of camp above reservoir pressure leaves us to the efficiency of bucket brigade and if water should be low this would be of little value.

I would recommend installation of at least three fire hydrants and one hydrant hose equipment in east end of Blair addition in vicinity of the burned building. I would also recommend chemical truck extinguishers for machine shop hollow (above water pressure), also a like equipment for near Scott's Branch dam in the orchard. Both chemical trucks to be kept at points near top of hill where water pressure is absent and a down-hill run to any point below. These precautions might easily save an expensive fire.

Respectfully submitted,

*L. P. Roach*  
Safety Inspector.