

The \$100,000 Fire in Monroe on January 13, 1914 - Conclusion

This column concludes information about the \$100,000 fire of January 13, 1914.

In a small advertisement in the Times on January 31 Karlen & May shared that they had received \$10,850 from the G. W. Wilkinson Insurance Agency for the settlement of their loss from the fire. "We cheerfully recommend this agency to anyone desiring Automobile insurance or any other form of insurance."



This photo, also from the collection of the late Marv Ruffi, shows the remains of the \$100,000 fire that took place on January 13, 1914 as taken by Will E. Trukenbrod. It was taken from near the corner of 8th Street and 16th Avenue looking to the southeast. The remains of the former Miller Manufacturing Company can be seen in the background on the right with the remains of the D. C. Ryan home in the foreground. The Universalist Church, which received minor damage, can be seen near the center.

It had been announced one week after the fire that the Green County Herald would be located in the Eilert building [photo of this storefront on page 21 of A Glimpse Back in Time] on the east side of the square, which had been vacated by the Scott Music store shortly before. Any material that was saved from the fire would be moved as soon as the building could be put into shape. Unfortunately, nothing could be done with the machinery and stock as the insurance adjusters had not yet made an appearance. The Herald expected to be in the new location for a year or more, but had thoughts at that time of building.

The adjusters were here on Thursday the week after the fire and it was shared the following day that they would receive \$4,800 for the building and its contents.

On the Saturday after the fire, D. C. Ryan and family, along with Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Knight, were moving into the Gettings' flat, which was recently vacated.

On the Monday after the fire, Herman Karlen was selling new cars to replace those lost in the fire. Dr. and Mrs. W. B. Gnagi had gone to Madison on Sunday and returned with a Hudson Six to replace the one they lost in the fire. David Karlen had purchased a Hudson Six while the Argyle Cheese Company got a Studebaker roadster. Herman and David Karlen drove two Studebaker demonstrators, one a Six and the other a Four, from Chicago on Sunday. Mr. Karlen also had a carload of Hudsons and Buicks on the road

to Monroe. He had temporarily located in the garage vacated by Bear & Jaberg behind the office of the Badger Cheese Company.

Karlen received a carload of Hudson cars on the Friday of the week after the fire and was expecting "several other automobile shipments in the next two months." David Karlen, of Clarno, had purchased one of the autos that had arrived.

The Universalist Church announced on the Friday after the fire that there would be services in the church that Sunday as the damage to the church had been repaired. It was announced on January 20 that the insurance adjusters allowed them \$973.70 for damage done to the roof, windows, carpets, and the interior.

It was also announced on January 20 that the insurance adjusters allowed E. C. Copeland \$50 for damage done to paint and glass in the residence of his late parents. The Copeland House [shown on page 71 of the Pictorial History] was situated on the southwest corner of 9th Street and 16th Avenue. John Aeschliman, who owned the Ludlow Hotel, was allowed \$194.70 for damage to the paint and glass in the hotel.

M. J. Knight went to Rock Falls, Illinois on February 10 where he planned to purchase a new hearse for his undertaking establishment to replace to one that burned in the big fire.

The church society decided in June to have the interior of the church redecorated by George R. Stewart of the Almini Company from Chicago. Mr. Stewart's father had redecorated the interior of the church 22 years earlier. The walls were painted in a delicate green with the ceiling shaded into an ivory. The pipe organ was refinished with pipes being gold and the panels ivory. The broken pieces of glass in the memorial windows were also replaced. Work was to start on July 15 and was expected to take five weeks. The bid for this work was \$800.

The last service in the church before the decorating was started was held on July 12 with a special musical service to which the public was invited. Church and Sunday School services were resumed on August 30. As always the Universalists invited all to attend. Rev. McLaughlin had spent the month in Stoughton while the redecorating was being done.

The Monroe Evening Times reminded its readers on January 14, 1915 that, "Monroe's largest fire in the last ten years occurred one year ago yesterday. . . ." They also mentioned that a new two-story fire-proof building has been erected on the site of the garage, but there were no plans to rebuild on the Ryan lots or the Herold property. The 1917 city directory shows that the corner was occupied by the Faeser & Lynch garage and upholsterer George W. Moreau.

We are so fortunate to be able to relive so much history through the newspapers, city directories, and other information available locally. In addition, we have had many photographers who have helped preserve the history. One of those was pharmacist Will E. Trukenbrod, who followed photography as a hobby. He took many glass slides of this fire and had postcards made from them. Those slides were shown at the Monroe Theater on January 23.

In the undated photo of the Ludlow Hotel on the bottom of page 70 in the Pictorial History, one can see what must have been the D. C. Ryan home. The photo would have been taken sometime after the hotel was built in 1884 and before the white house across the street would have been razed before the Miller building was built in 1908. Notice that at least three of the four chimneys on the Ryan home are visible in the photo.