

# Fairfield Fire News in Newspapers

## Waterville Papers

“The Waterville Mail”

Friday Aug. 9, 1872

David Hudson’s house, on Elm street, caught fire from sparks of a locomotive about 3 o’clock to-day, (Wednesday) It was speedily extinguished before the fire got underway.

“The Waterville Mail”

Friday Sept. 20, 1872

Lawrence Brothers are at work with energy upon a new mill to replace the one burned at Somerset Mills. A proposition to exempt the mill property there for a term of ten years was defeated in a recent town meeting, but we understand there will be a further hearing at another meeting.

“The Waterville Mail”

Friday April 2, 1875

p. 3. About eleven o’clock Sunday forenoon the dwelling house of Scotta Clark in this village caught fire on the roof from sparks coming from the chimney. It was speedily extinguished with trifling loss.....

“The Waterville Mail”

Friday April 9, 1875

Voted \$200 for fire company \$600 for incidental expenses; to have the bell rung heretofore

“The Waterville Mail”

Friday April 16, 1875

Fire Wardens, A. E. Lawrence, J. A. Cilley, T. W. Fogg, R. R. Hall, Albert Harvell.

“The Waterville Mail”

Friday May 14, 1875

p. 2. Column 2: Mr. Hiram Blake- who now lives on the Oliver Marston place, on the road from Fairfield to West Waterville- lost his granary, hog pen and wood shed, by fire last Sunday night. The ell of the house, too, was somewhat damaged, and Mr. Blake lost a hog, some grass seed, oats, corn, and beans, and a few cords of wood and some farming tools-in all amounting to about \$250; insured for \$100. Mr. Blake carried some ashes into one of these buildings, the day before, but they were in an iron kettle, and he cannot conceive how the fire originated. It was well under way when discovered and it was only the active exertions of Mr. Blake and a few neighbors that his house was saved, in which they were aided by the stillness of the night.

“The Waterville Mail”

Friday May 28, 1875,

Column 5: Fire at Fairfield. *Steam Mill Burned- Loss about \$25,000.*

About 3 o'clock Thursday P.M., a telegram from Fairfield announced to the fire department in Waterville, that the steam lumber mill was on fire, and asked for aid. At the same time a dense column of smoke, towering higher and higher, signaled to our whole town that the alarm was one to be heeded. In just 17 minutes from the last word of the telegram, “Waterville Three” with men to handle her, was at the place of landing ready for orders. The large building and appurtenances of the Fairfield Manufacturing Company, with their extensive machinery and stock, were already enveloped in flames beyond hope. The wind was high from the north-west, and the heat was so intense that other buildings in the vicinity, and a large amount of lumber near by, demanded great effort to prevent their taking fire.

Victor Engine of Fairfield had worked promptly from the first alarm, and with the aid of Waterville, was doing all that could be done close by the fire; but so great seemed the danger to property more remote, that another dispatch called for our Ticonic Ones. The Ticonic boys were looking for it, and report says

that in less than fifteen minutes they had their machines at the fire. But the danger had so far abated that it was not necessary to land it from the car.

The main building, with all the machinery, together with a large amount of partially manufactured lumber within and some piled near by, made an entire loss of twenty to twenty-five thousand dollars. The building and machinery are set at \$16,000-owned by Geo. Newhall, Samuel Gibson, Ruel Woodman and T.W. Fogg, under the name of the Fairfield Furniture Co. In lumber waiting for manufacture E. Totman & Co. lost about \$2,500, Duren Bros. \$1,800; Emery, Bradbury & Co. \$150. No insurance on building or property. There was considerable damage to the M. C. Railroad, whose track ran close in front of the buildings.

Our reporter says:

The fire started from the furnace, where the shavings were consumed, by a gas explosion that threw open the door and scattered the burning fuel in all directions among the various combustibles. The room was so quickly filled with flame and smoke that the man in charge had not time to sound the whistle. The Victor was promptly at work, and continued to do good service to the last. The mill was largely filled with furniture about ready for market.

Mr. Clark's house was several times on fire, but was saved by the efforts of the citizens-whose work from the first to last was well and vigorously directed to the safety of surrounding property. In three-quarters of an hour from the alarm the building had entirely fallen.

The loss is serious not only to the owners, but to some thirty persons thrown out of employment. Not one person was hurt-though a Victor fireman is reported as losing his hat and vest.

The women worked most usefully, regardless of smoke or dirt, in distributing refreshments, just adapted to the wants of firemen. Our Waterville boys are credited with doing good service which elicits frank expressions of thanks.

"The Waterville Mail"

Friday Nov. 12, 1875

p. 2. Column 4:

Column 6: Fairfield Items- The farm-house occupied by widow Stinson, on the east side of the river between Benton and Clinton, was destroyed by fire Saturday night. Furniture saved....

“The Waterville Mail”

Friday June 30, 1876

p.3. Column 3: A Hunneman fire engine has been purchased for the use of our village corporation and a new engine house will soon be constructed in which to keep it...

“The Waterville Mail”

Friday July 14, 1876

Tuesday evening of last week Victor fire engine No. 1, manned by volunteers played a stream 211 feet. How is that for a fire extinguisher? .... The name of the new engine is the “Fairfield.” It was tried on Main street Friday evening and played 157 feet with 275 feet of hose through a 7-8 inch nozzle....

“The Waterville Mail”

Friday Aug. 18, 1876, cont.

Column 2: Fire in Fairfield – The light seen between 9 and 10 o’clock last evening, was from the burning of Pratt’s steam mill, at the head of the island in Fairfield Village. No insurance.

“The Waterville Sentinel”

Thursday 20 February 1890

p. 3. Column 1: Last Friday evening the fire department was called out by an alarm caused by a blasé at Fairfield. The hose cart proceeded only a short distance up College street. A barn and shed, owned by Cotton and Brown, was destroyed, together with a large amount of hard and soft wood.

“The Waterville Sentinel”

Thursday 3 April 1890

p. 3. Column 2: Maine circuit of races - Fairfield the fourth week in June and 1<sup>st</sup> week in August. Fire broke out in the store of Mrs. J. H. Nye and occupied by D. W. Foye on Main street Fairfield, at 10:30 Friday evening. It spread to adjoining store owned by Miss Mary Owen and occupied by E. F. Files, dry goods dealer. Both stores were nearly destroyed and the goods were removed from several others. The upper story of Mrs. Nye’s store was occupied Mrs. Abbe Brown for a boarding house. Mr. Fred Davis lived upstairs in the other building. The losses are \$2000 on each building. Miss Owen had \$1,500 insurance. Mrs. Nye was also insured. E. F. Files loss was \$5000;

insurance \$3,000. D. W. Foye's loss was \$1500; insurance \$900. Fred Davis loses \$500; no insurance. Mrs. Abbie Brown \$500; no insurance.

"The Waterville Sentinel"

Thursday 24 April 1890

p. 2. Column 1: "The adoption of a fire alarm system by our neighbors in Fairfield, reported in our columns..... (rest trying to system in Waterville)

p.3. Column 2

The Fairfield village corporation assembled in a largely attended meeting Wednesday to consider the question of providing a system of fire alarms for the village. After an extended discussion as to different methods it was voted to authorize the assessors to put in the Gamewell fire alarm system and to purchase the right to use the Rogers Auxiliary. A provision was made for the two strikers and four boxes, the cost not to exceed \$1,700.

"The Waterville Sentinel"

Thursday 10 July 1890

About 7 p.m. on Tuesday evening one of the heaviest showers accompanied by the most terrific winds known for several years visited this place; many trees were blown down and other damage done. Lightening struck the stable of H. Marston and soon the whole building was a mass of flames. Fire soon caught on the adjoining barn which was impossible to save with the means at hand, but by diligent work of the men and because of a favorable wind the house which was a little distance away was saved. Mr. Marston's loss consists, besides the barn and stable, of several tons of hay, harnesses, farming tools, etc. Loss about \$700. Insured.

p. 3. Column 1:

The Fairfield steamer company on their trip to Portland, on the 4<sup>th</sup>, won first prize with a record of 270 ft. 1 inch and a fraction against steamers from Bath and Gardiner. The steamship company had a celebration in honor of their victory on Saturday.

## In Early Fairfield Newspapers

Fairfield Chronicle V. 3 #21 Weds. 20 May 1874 Whole # 108

George Henry Colby, editor

– the double dwelling house of Mr. Eleazer Getchell, near the Me. Central Depot, took fire in the attic Thursday afternoon. Both our fire engines were on hand, and with most commendable efforts succeeded in extinguishing the flames, with the destruction of the roof. The block was occupied by four families - Mr. Eleazer Getchell, Rev. Mr. Merrill, Mr. Daniel Wescott and Mr. Estes. No insurance except on Mr. Merrill's furniture and the library. An extensive fire seemed threatened, and was prevented only by the very marked promptness and good management of the firemen.

Fairfield Chronicle V.3 #48 Weds. 25 November 1874

An alarm of fire was given last Friday afternoon, about four o'clock, caused by a chimney burning out in the house of J. M. Nye. It was extinguished without damage being done.

Fairfield Chronicle V.8 #11 Weds. 2 Apr. 1879

Mr. David A. Pratt whose steam mill in this village was burned a few months ago will move to Fort Fairfield about the middle of the month. His engine and machinery will be transferred to Fort Fairfield where he intends to erect a steam mill.

Fairfield Chronicle V.8 #17 Weds. 23 April 1879

The house and outbuildings belonging to Napoleon Cayford and occupied by O. G. Corson and family were burned Fast Day. Nearly all the furniture and clothing were consumed.

Fairfield Chronicle V.8 #18 Weds. 30 April. 1879 Whole #368

The house of Mr. Randall hall caught fire on the road last Wednesday afternoon. Very little damage was done. Both engines were on the spot about as soon as the alarm was given, but did not have to unlimber. We noticed that Chief Engineer Hall and Asst. Engineer I. P. Totman were promptly at their posts of duty. A good fire department is of great benefit especially in a village of this size; but the energetic use of water pails when a fire starts is often of more service than twenty engines could be after the fire gets a good hold on the buildings.

Fairfield Journal Vol.1 #5 Weds. 30 July 1879 Whole #381 Augustine Simmons, Editor

The terrific screams of the steam-mill whistle called out the people about ten o'clock last Friday evening. Nobody knew where to go, as no fire could be seen. The watchman at the steam-mill thought there was a fire in the factory of the Fairfield Furniture Company, and gave the alarm at once. The engines were very soon in readiness, but there was no need of action. The officers of our fire department cannot be excelled outside of cities.

Fairfield Chronicle V.8 #23

Col. Chase was formerly a resident of Fairfield, where for many years he was largely engaged in the lumbering business. He owned a fine farm on the banks of the Kennebec, but in 1852 having had his home destroyed by fire, he sold out and removed with his family to Illinois.... He was laid to rest beside his wife, who seven years before preceded him. ...

