

\$75,000 FIRE FRIDAY MORNING  
**Five Brick and Three Wooden**  
Buildings and Contents Burn

The Soper Democrat February 21, 1918 - transcribed by Ron Henson

Last Friday morning at 1 o'clock this city was visited by the most destructive fire ever known here. The frame building belonging to R.C. Crowder, and filled with corn and cotton seed bought by Houston Dumas for the Madill Grain and Elevator Co., was discovered to be on fire. The fire company made a quick run but discovered after the hose was laid that they had no water to fight the fire, due to an unfortunate breakdown of the waterworks engine. The bucket brigade did all they could to stop the raging flames but owing to a strong wind from the northeast they quickly spread to the adjoining buildings and were not checked until they had wiped out the remainder of the block. The only buildings left in the block is the brick building occupied by E.A. Ingle's store and the small building occupied by W.H. Winston.

The losses are estimated as follows:

Fails Bros. & Co., general merchandise, stock \$37,000.00, insurance \$12,000.00. Saved considerable goods. Buildings owned by T.L. Griggs, valued at \$6,000.00, insurance \$2,000.00.

Soper Trading Co., general merchandise, stock \$25,000.00, insurance \$14,000.00, saved about \$4,000.00 worth of merchandise. Building owned by Dr. R.C. Bills, value \$3,000.00 insurance \$1,500.00.

A.A. Ferguson & Co., general merchandise, stock \$7,500.00, insurance \$1,300.00. Saved some goods. Building owned by A.A. Ferguson, value \$2,500.00, insurance \$1,200.00.

McWhortor Drug Co., drugs, stock \$8,000.00, insurance \$3,000.00. Saved some goods. Building owned by W.E. Ferguson, value \$3,500.00, insurance \$1,600.00.

The other buildings were wooden structures and losses were as follows:

Two-story building, lower floor occupied by Wilson Walker as a restaurant. Loss \$350, insurance \$-. Upper story occupied by Mr. Henderson and family. Loss, household goods, no insurance. Building owned by Jim Surreth [?]. Loss \$300, no insurance.

Bakery and restaurant. Building and contents owned by Joe Fry. Entire loss \$1500, no insurance.

The building the fire started in was owned by R.C. Crowder, loss \$300.00 no insurance. The seed and corn belonging to Madill Grain & Elevator Co., should have been about 800 bushels of corn and 36 tons of cotton seed. Almost a total loss.

All of the business firms burned out will [remainder of article unreadable]