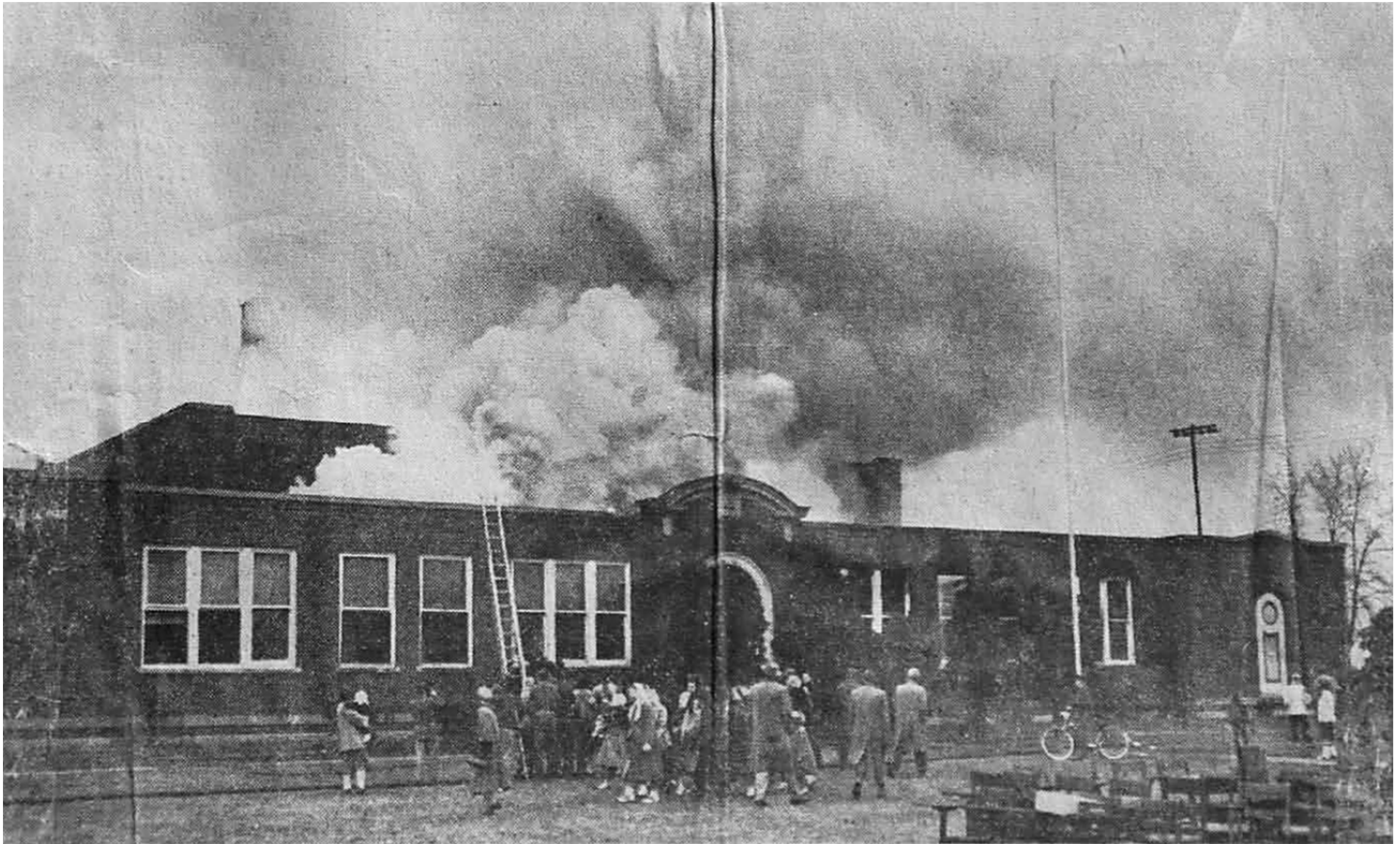


CAMBRIDGE CITY HIGH SCHOOL BURNS

\$500,000 FIRE GUTS LINCOLN H. S.

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The source of these articles are unknown and credit is given where known



(Palladium-Item Photo)

Billowing clouds of smoke pour from the roof of the high school building as firemen struggle to bring the blaze under control. School pupils and Cambridge City residents attracted by the fire watch the battle.

CAMBRIDGE CITY - "The cooperation and spirit shown by everyone has been wonderful!"

That was how Maynard Wolf, principal of Lincoln high school, Tuesday described the activity of teachers and students in helping clean up school equipment damaged by the \$500,000 fire which occurred, February 25, 1955.

"Everyone has pitched in and helped in every way they could," Wolf said; "It certainly seems like an endless job but we're making headway."

There have been no senior, or junior high school classes held since the disastrous fire. Grades seven through twelve were housed in the main building which was destroyed by flames.

To Make Class Rooms

Carpenters are scheduled to divide the new school addition, which was undamaged by the fire, into small class rooms in order that the normal high school schedule may be resumed as soon as possible.

Monday a general shuffling of grade school class rooms was made in an effort to make temporary quarters for the ousted seventh and eighth grade students.

A second and a third grade class were moved from the Central elementary building to temporary class rooms at the Dublin school. Another second grade class was transferred from the Central building to a room at the-East Germantown-school.

The Cambridge City seventh grade classes, formerly housed in the high building, will begin classes in the

three grade school classrooms which have been vacated.

The eighth grade classes will be held in a warehouse building owned by the Marson Construction company. The building is being fitted out to house the classes and it is expected the structure will prove to be satisfactory temporary classroom quarters.

Wolf said it is hoped to have both the seventh and eighth grade pupils started in the temporary rooms by March 14.

May Start March 21

If carpenters complete partitioning of the new addition on schedule, high school classes may be

started about March 21, the principal noted.

Many students and teachers have volunteered their help in scrubbing scorched school furniture, cleaning up fire debris and moving books and supplies saved from the flames to needed quarters.

The cafeteria section of the new addition is being used as a clearing center for equipment and books and a score of teachers and students scrubbed desks and chairs Tuesday.

Several teachers helped the janitorial force in trucking books and supplies from the addition to the, Central school building. for the use of the seventh grade next week.



(Palladium-Item Photo)

Two huge clouds of flame burst from the roof of the 33-year old building, sending showers of sparks into the sky.

Fire At Cambridge Causes Traffic Snarl; Detour Set Up

CAMBRIDGE CITY. - Police officers, as well as firemen, had a big job at or near the scene of the Lincoln high school fire at Cambridge City Thursday morning.

Sheriff Edward (Corky) Cordell and his deputies, state police troopers, Cambridge City marshals and Dan Brown, Hagerstown marshal, all helped to keep traffic moving or away from the, fire scene.

One of the hoses had to be strung across US-40 and this brought another traffic problem. Boards were placed across the hose and westbound motorists drove slowly over them. Eastbound drivers detoured around the block. Long lines of westbound traffic piled up as the drivers drove cautiously over the board-protected hose.

Lincoln high school is located two blocks north of US-40 in the northeast section of Cambridge City.

Many of Cambridge City's fire men are businessmen or are employed in the city. Stores were opened as usual, however, minus the services of the owners or employees.

Superintendent of Schools Stuart Shipman and Robert Johnson, basketball coach at the school, expressed their gratitude repeatedly for offers of help which poured in. Johnson's cage team meets Centerville Friday night in a sectional tournament game.

Shipman, Maynard Wolf, principal, and Joseph Seal, teacher, were among the first at the fire scene and they carted out all the minutes and the financial records of the school system retained since the 1880's. The records were taken to Wayne Trust company, a local bank for safekeeping.

Fire Chief Walter Rihm joined Shipman in praising the help of the many visiting firemen.

The first class to complete a high school course at Cambridge City was the 1874 group. The school then

was on the site of the present grade school.

Members of the School board when the destroyed school was built in 1922 were Dr. Charles Kniese, president; E. R. Huddleston, treasurer, and H. T. Kepler, secretary and Jackson township trustee.

RECORDS ARE SAVED

Stuart Shipman, superintendent, who arrived at the scene a few minutes after being notified the building was on fire, was able to retrieve school board minutes, books and high school records from the office safe before it was engulfed in flames. Pupils records also were saved.

The 20-room school and gymnasium, built in 1922, served 450 junior high and high school pupils. No classes had been planned for today because Cambridge City was contending in the Richmond sectional basketball tourney.

Plans were under way tonight to resume .high school classes next week in basements of churches, vacant office rooms, the American Legion Building and elsewhere.

Superintendent Shipman said there were no chemicals or other fire hazards in the biology room, where the fire is believed to have started. His only guesses, he said, were defective wiring or a smoldering cigarette, but the school has a ban on smoking. The-furnace room was still intact when the fire was brought under control and only water damage was reported there.

Some damage was reported to the vocational workshop in the new addition.

Firemen, endangered at times by falling bricks and caving roof, escaped serious injury. Only four first aid cases were reported by Red Cross personnel at the scene.

GYM LOST

Damage Is Set At \$500,000 In Blaze Firemen From Eight Towns At Scene

CAMBRIDGE CITY, Indiana, February 25, 1955 (Special)
- The 33-year-old Lincoln High School building here was destroyed early today in a fire described as the most disastrous in the history of this Western Wayne County community.

A four-year-old addition at the rear of the school escaped with minor damage.

Cost of replacing the building may run as high as \$500,000, it was estimated. The loss was partly covered by insurance.

More than 60 firemen from eight neighboring communities aided Cambridge City volunteers in battling the roaring blaze for more than five hours. They came from Richmond, Milton, Connersville, New Castle, Centerville, Dublin, Hagerstown and Williamsburg.

Fire Chief Walter Rihm said the fire apparently started in the biology room but its cause was undetermined. The alarm was turned in by Paul Close, who noticed the blaze at 5 a. m. as he drove toward downtown

Cambridge City to pick up a supply of morning newspapers for his son, a carrier.

Edmund Johnson, who lives near the school, said he was awakened by a fire whistle and looking out a window saw flames shooting "75 feet into the air."

By 6:30 a. m. it was believed the fire was under control. Then, however, it struck the gymnasium and the flames erupted again. The heavy pull on the water supply at times "created a vacuum" which slowed down the streams of water from the hoses. Several fire companies placed lines in the west fork of the Whitewater River to obtain water to combat the fierce blaze.

TWO MEN CUT

Clarence Bryant, Jackson Township trustee and member of the school board, suffered a gash on his hand when he broke a window to help remove equipment. Jack Copeland, physical education director, received a leg cut in carrying equipment from the building.

Hundreds of spectators were attracted by flames and the towering columns of smoke. Townsfolk, pupils and faculty members aided in saving equipment from several rooms.

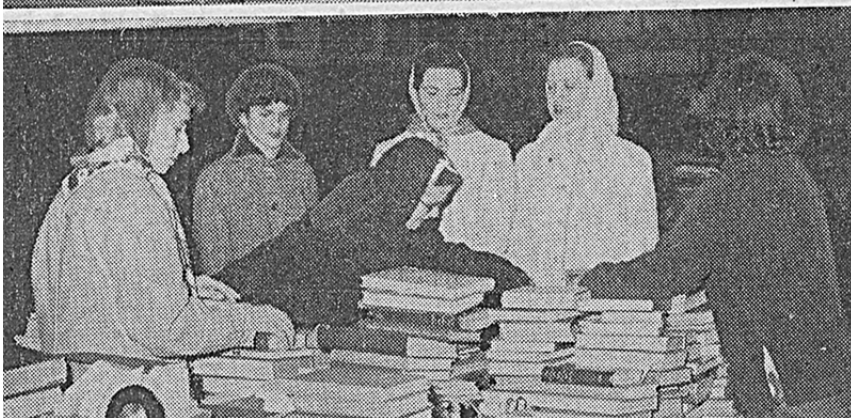
The Red Cross and Salvation Army were on hand to provide coffee and doughnuts for the firefighters. Red Cross workers from Hagerstown and Richmond joined those at Cambridge.

Many high school students, as well as adults, wept as the building crumbled before the flames.

Traffic along U. S. 40 and nearby streets was handled by marshals from Cambridge City and Hagerstown, the Wayne sheriff's department and state police troopers.

Offers of help poured in to the Cambridge City basketball team, which lost most of its equipment in the fire. Richmond, Centerville, Milton and Straughn schools, as well as two Richmond sports good stores, offered use of uniforms on learning the Wampus Cats had lost all of their varsity suits. Coach Bob Johnson said football, baseball, track and basketball equipment was burned. Sports trophies in a display case were carried to safety. "We do have our reserve team uniforms left," Johnson said. They were at the cleaners."

The fire came as city and township residents were in the midst of forming a corporation to build a new gymnasium. Leaders of the campaign could not say tonight what effect the fire would have on their plan.



Smoke and flames pour skyward at the height of the fire which destroyed Lincoln High School in Cambridge City, Ind., yesterday, at top left. At lower left, high school students arrange schoolbooks salvaged from the blaze. At right, students, faculty members and townspeople save equipment.



(Palladium-Item Photo)

Teachers and students join in the tremendous task of cleaning up chairs and desks which were scorched by the recent Lincoln high school fire. Much of the school equipment was saved by pupils who assisted firemen in carrying out books and files at the height of the fire.



(Palladium-Item Photo)

Fire bursts from a ventilator, right, on the roof of the main school building while flames eat at window frames and gut the interior of a classroom at left. The picture was taken on the roof from a point at the extreme east end of the building.



(Palladium-Item Photo)

Florida Lowry, left, physical education instructor at Lincoln High School, holds the remains of a badminton racquet as she examines the debris in the ruins of the room that was once her office. Caroline Upton, right, commercial teacher at the school looks on.

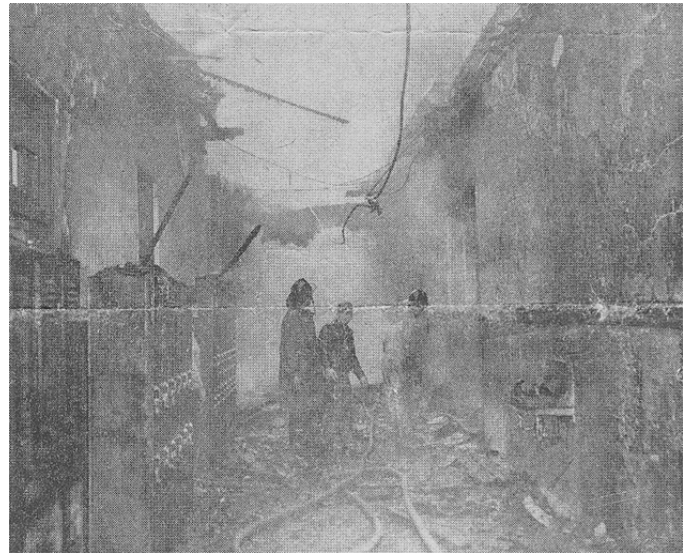


(Palladium-Item Photo)

Hard at work in a debris-littered hallway of the school are several firemen. This picture was taken at the front entrance.



A lone fireman is silhouetted against the fiery background of the burning structure at right while other firemen clad in white raincoats at left and center move to battle the raging blaze.



Firemen probe through the ruins of the north corridor of the Cambridge school. Lining the wall at the left are fire blackened students' lockers, many of them holding books and other valuables. At the right are the remains of a drinking fountain.



Piled on the school's lawn are books, tables and other equipment salvaged before the fire got to them. Miss Virginia Martin, one of the high school's teachers, is facing the camera. At the right is Dr. C. Emil Kenyon. Others are unidentified.

Blaze Called Worst In History Of City 60 Firemen From 7 Departments Fight Fire For 5½ Hours; Cause Unknown

CAMBRIDGE CITY-The most disastrous fire in Cambridge City's history gutted Friday morning a 33-year-old section of Lincoln high school here. A four-year-old new addition escaped damage.

Cost of replacing the brick building may run as high as \$500,000. When insurance claims are paid, the loss will probably be between \$325,000 and \$350,000.

The roaring blaze, fought for 5½ hours by the Cambridge City department and an estimated 60 firemen from six neighboring cities and towns, was first

reported at 5 a. m. Visiting firemen left for their home stations about 10 :30.

Cambridge City's volunteers remained at the scene until 8 p. m., 15 hours after the blaze broke out. The fire was still smoldering late Friday night and firemen left hose at the scene.

Fire Chief Walter Rihm said the fire, which sent a towering column of smoke into the air and attracted hundreds upon hundreds of curious, started in the biology room but its cause was unknown.

Furnace Room Intact

The furnace room of the building was still intact when the fire was brought under control and only water damage was reported there. The 20-room school and gymnasium, built in 1922 serves 450 junior high and high school students.

Stuart Shipman, superintendent, said Friday that no classes will be held for junior high and, senior high students until further notice.

Several plans for handling the classroom situation are under consideration, however.

Grade school classes will be held as usual in the Cambridge City-Jackson Township corporation's grade units here and at East Germantown and Dublin.

The fire was the most destructive in the community's history and it certainly was the most disastrous in the number of persons, students, teachers and parents, affected.

Moved Under Floor

Rihm said he believed tile fire moved from the biology room underneath the hall floors and into the stage of the auditorium-gym.

After it hit the gym Rihm said, the blaze fanned out in all directions.

"The smoke was so thick we couldn't fight the blaze from inside the hall," Rihm continued. "And it was difficult to get to it from the roof because of a double ceiling," he added.

Tears streamed down the faces of many, children and adults alike, as a high school filled with memories crumbled before the raging flames.

Most local citizens agreed that only one other fire, the destructive Imperial Mill blaze, could approach this one in magnitude.

The mill fire, which occurred in 1945, was more spectacular but loss was estimated at about \$150,000.

Estimate Insurance

It was believed Friday that insurance may return between \$150,000 and \$169,000 to the school. Insurance appraisers had set the value of the plant, including the new addition, at \$275,000.

The type of insurance which the school has is called 80 percent co-insurance. This means 80 percent of the appraised value, or \$220,000 may be paid in the event of total destruction.

The new addition was not damaged, however, and its appraised value is about \$70,000. Thus the appraised value of the "old school" is \$150,000. The school also carried about \$19,000 insurance on its equipment.

This makes a total of \$169,000. Much of the equipment was saved as volunteer crews of men and

boys carried out desks, typewriters, expensive business machines used for business courses and other items.

Fortunately, the school had recently added about \$10,000 worth of new insurance.

The fire was reported at 5 a. m. by Paul Close, who spotted the blaze and smoke as he drove to downtown Cambridge to pick up the morning edition of The Palladium-Item. His son is a carrier for the newspaper.

Flames 75 Feet High

Edmund (Smoke) Johnson, who lives only two blocks from the school, said he was awakened by the fire whistle. As he looked out a window of his home, Johnson said he saw flames "shooting 75 feet into the air."

By about 6 a. m., it was believed the fire was under control. Then, however, it hit the gymnasium and erupted again.

Firemen at the scene used an estimated 7,500 feet of hose while battling the blaze. Of that total, 6,000 were of the 2½-inch size. The 1,500 other were 1½-inch.

Chief Rihm said the pull on the water supply at times "created a vacuum" which slowed down the streams of water.

Superintendent Shipman said there were no chemicals or other fire hazards in the biology room, scene of the start of the fire. His only guesses, he said, were defective wiring or a smoldering cigarette. The school, of course, has a ban on smoking.

No Sprinklers

There was no automatic sprinkler system in the building.

The recently-constructed new addition now houses a cafeteria, home economics and vocational shop departments and band, choral and art rooms.

Connersville and New Castle firemen combined to pull a steady stream of water from the west fork of the Whitewater river. The Connersville Crew stationed its truck on US-40 and strung a line along the river road to the New Castle line.

New Castle firemen, stationed 1,200 feet from the blazing building relayed the water to the fire scene.

Firemen from Richmond, New Castle, Hagerstown, Centerville, Connersville and Williamsburg aided the Cambridge volunteers.

Members of the Milton department volunteered their services but their equipment was not the right type for the fire's problems.

Fighting firemen, endangered by falling walls and caving roof, escaped serious danger. Only four first aid cases were reported Red Cross personnel at the scene.

Clarence Bryant, Jackson township trustee and a member of the school board, suffered a gash on his

right hand when he broke a window to help remove equipment.

Thanks Salvage Crews

Shipman had high praise late Friday for the many school children, citizens, church officials and businessmen who aided in salvaging equipment or who offered their services to school leaders.

Representatives of the community's churches offered their buildings to the superintendent long before the fire was under control.

The roaring fire chased up and down the school's long corridors but removal of the equipment was made well before the fire spread throughout the building.

Still uninspected late Friday were the lockers in which most of the students had left their books for the long week end. School was not scheduled to be held Friday because of the sectional tournament.

Maynard Wolf, high school principal, voiced the fear that water and smoke damage to books inside the metal lockers may lead to another major problem in resuming classes.

The fire came as city and township residents were in the midst of forming a corporation to build a new gymnasium. Subscription pledge blanks already have been mailed to many of the township residents.

Leaders of this campaign could not say what effect the fire will have on their plan.

Other members of the school board, in addition to Bryant, are Perry (Bill) Close, president, and James Sweet, treasurer. The school corporation operates as a separate taxing unit from the city and its members meet at least once each month.

Coffee Served

On the fire scene to provide coffee and doughnuts to firemen and others were the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Mrs. Thomas Holden, Red Cross county chairman, said her crew prepared about 50 gallons of coffee and purchased 25 loaves of bread, 10 pounds of meat and 12 dozen doughnuts. Red Cross workers from Hagerstown and Richmond joined those at Cambridge.

The school was constructed in 1922 and the senior class of 1923 held its commencement there although it did not attend classes there. The class of 1924 was the first to attend and graduate, according to Wilbur Ertell a member of the class.

Last to leave the school Thursday night were the members of the basketball team followed by the cast of a Kiwanis club minstrel which had held a practice session in the gymnasium. Neither group, the team or minstrel members, were in the biology room, it was reported.