



Three Devastating Fires In Six Months Destroy Crocker Landmarks

The 10th of November, 1914, Crocker lost a lodge to fire and on Saturday night, March 27th, 1915, 8:30 p.m., a fire started near the old Wagner Hotel building in Crocker.

The fire spread to adjacent buildings north and south until every building was burned out to the street and was only checked in the old

brick bank building on the north side of the block. All the buildings were two stories tall.

The Teeple Hotel (formerly Sanatorium) was destroyed. The ground floor of the solid concrete building on the corner was occupied by the Head and Fisher General Store and the second floor by the Thos

Jones family along with the local exchange of the Pioneer Telephone Company.

Fire burned out the city drug store... Dr. J.E. Rayl's offices... Arthur Singleton's Barber Shop and part of the area used as a city hall meeting place for the city officers. Next in line of the concrete block building was

Onnie Gifford's Meat Market and Restaurant... The Wagner Hotel... Palace Drug Store and Vandegriff Barber Shop.

The brick bank building, which was not destroyed, but was damaged, was occupied on the ground floor by the Crocker State Bank, which was burned out in November of 1914 of its old location. The

second floor was the residence of Dr. Tice. The fire started from a gasoline heating apparatus that was being lighted by Charles Vandegriff in the barber shop. Vandegriff was blown against the wall and his clothing set on fire by the exploding gasoline.

The third disastrous fire occurred less than a month later in April of 1915. The

large business house owned by S. Gleave, J.L. Hoops large grist mill and grain elevator, the new lumber sheds, 2,500 railroad ties of the Hobart-Lee Tie Company and a small stock of lumber owned by E.S. Bond were reduced to ashes. The buildings were located south of the Frisco Depot immediately on the east side of the railroad.

Crystal Soda Water Made In Crocker

In 1911, a bottling plant was nearing completion in Crocker. Tom Peterson's plant was already putting out quite a bit of soda known as "Crystal Soda Water!"

Peterson had a very successful run the year before on a smaller scale. He could hardly furnish the demand for his popular Crystal Soda Water and put all his energy into equipping a plant to turn out the product in very large quantities.

His engine, ice cream freezer and other equipment were placed in a 28 by 70 foot

building with a well and cistern for water supply and he erected a large water tank at the top of the building for water storage.

The Crystal Soda Water was considered a healthful drink, if used moderately did not intoxicate and quenched a thirst for the otherwise injurious alcoholic drinks.

Crystal Soda Water was made in Crocker.

Did You Know?

The city of Dixon once had a pickle plant named the Dodson-Brown Pickle Plant.

Did You Know?

Crocker once had a glove factory.

Skeletons Found In Caves

Skeletons in various stages of decay were found in Miller's Cave in Pulaski County in 1921 about three miles northeast of Big Piney. More than twenty skeletons were found.

In another cave, fourteen skeletons were found. It was believed that the caves were at one time inhabited by an extinct cannibalistic race; although some skulls were found that varied slightly from modern Indians.

Explorers also found twenty-five mortars... hundreds of flints... flint knives... and spearheads.

Crude pottery fragments, a few tomahawks and some pipes.

Did You Know?

Waynesville had an optical company that manufactured "nite light" sportsman shooting glasses.

Did You Know?

A record album was released by singers, Brewer and Shipley, titled, "Welcome To Riddle Bridge!"

Did You Know?

The Rolla Artesian Mineral Well Company planned to bottle water with "purgative" effects and named the drink "Kenkelesha!"

Movie Filmed In Pulaski County

The movie, "The Glory Brigade," starring Victor Mature and Lee Marvin, was filmed in Pulaski and Miller Counties around August of 1952. Many scenes were shot on the Big Piney, Gasconade and Osage Rivers. The film was made under the title, "Baptism of Fire," but was changed upon completion.

Many local citizens saw the film being shot and a Dixon resident, Wayne Burns, was employed as chauffeur for Mr. Mature while he was here.

The film's storyline took place in Korea and it was

filmed here because the Hollywood film-makers thought the terrain resembled that of Korea.

Did You Know?

Dixon had a tomato canning factory!

Did You Know?

Waynesville once had a fort overlooking the city.

Did You Know?

Two large St. Louis breweries invested in branch depots in Rolla in 1885 (W.G. Lemp Western Brewery and Anheuser-Busch).

Did You Know?

Richland once had a fruit canning factory.

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