

Benjamin BILBO

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Benjamin Bilbo Burned to Death

At about five on Wed. morning, those who were not already up were awakened by the fire bell. The fire proved to be at the home of Benjamin Bilbo on N. Cross Street. On reaching the scene the people were horrified to learn that a misfortune was also a tragedy -- a home was burning, and the owner was dying from terrible burns. It seems that Mr. Bilbo had started a fire in the kitchen range, using the coal oil, as was his custom. The fire did not burn briskly enough to suit him, so he gave it another dose from the can. In some way the oil in the can became ignited and the flames filled the room, setting both the house and Mr. bilbo's clothing on fire. He fought the flames as best he could, all the time telling his wife to keep away from him, and finally staggered out into the yard where he fell, almost crisp from head to toe. Carson Dietrich and Bert Felton were the first to reach him. They smothered the remaining flames with comforts. In spite of the awful experience, Mr. Bilbo was still conscious and told the men how the accident happened. He was removed to Isaac Ritter's home and medical aid summoned. Little could be done. As a last resort, he was taken to Culver hospital on the morning train, wher ehe died about half past ten. The wife and daughter were summoned by phone but did not reach his bedside before his death. The house was beyond saving before anyone arrived. The fire company and citizens, however, did very effective work in saving the adjoining house of Elmer Dietrich. They were able to do this only by the fortunate chance that there was no wind, and there happened to be a full cistern on Mr. Dietrich's premises. Even then it was touch and go. Marshal McCall braved the intense heat between the building with a shutter as a backstop. The body was brought back on the evening train and taken to the home of the daughter, Mrs. Hubert Loudermill, where funeral services will be held at ten this morning in charge of Rev. FB Solin. Interment at Maple Ridge Cemetery. The casket will not be opened at this service. The fire was as complete a loss as ever occurred in Waveland, everything being burned. Mrs. Bilbo escaped in her night clothes. The loss on the building and contents would probably go over \$2000. There was \$500 insurance on the house, \$200 on furniture and \$50 on a small barn, which was not damaged greatly.