

BURNING OF A COAL BREAKER.

A PICTURESQUE AND DESTRUCTIVE FIRE AT FORTY FORT COLLIERY.

WILKESBARRE, Penn., Nov. 27.—This morning about 2 o'clock the night watchman at the Forty Fort Colliery, at Forty Fort, operated by J. H. Swoyer, discovered flames coming from the top of the breaker. It was some time before assistance could be had, and the watchman was compelled to handle the hose prepared for such emergencies single-handed. The flames spread rapidly, and in twenty minutes after the fire was first discovered the great wooden structure was an immense mass of fire. For ten miles around it threw its lurid light, and lit up the heavens in every direction. It was a novel sight. Finding it would be impossible to stay the course of the flames in the breaker, the employes turned their attention toward saving the fan house and engine house. Three sections of hose were attached to a large steam pump, and for over four hours the men heroically battled against the advancement of the fire. About 4 o'clock the breaker began to crumble, and soon after the whole thing fell to the ground with a terrible crash which could be heard a distance of five miles. The men succeeded in controlling the flames and the other buildings were saved without any damage. There were 510 tons of coal in the breaker at the time of the fire, every ton of which was lost. This large amount of coal, with the heavy machinery, was what caused the loud crash when the structure fell. The breaker was built in 1875 and cost \$35,000. The loss is placed at \$50,000; insured for \$30,000. This evening nothing remains to be seen of the once stately building but ashes and old iron, everything being destroyed. Four hundred and fifty men are thrown out of employment by the fire. The breaker will be rebuilt at once, but it will take three months to do it.

The New York Times

Published: November 28, 1884

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