

BIG BLAZE AT WAVERLEY

SMITH'S COMMERCIAL HOTEL.

BURNT TO THE GROUND.

A disastrous fire occurred in Waverley last night (the Patea Press reports), when the Commercial Hotel, owned and occupied by Mr J. Smith, was burnt to the ground. The outbreak was discovered about 1.30 a.m. An hour later three chimneys only were standing. The whole of the inmates escaped unharmed.

THE CLARENDON CATCHES.

The brigade arrived to find the Commercial a mass of flames, and directed all their efforts to saving the Clarendon Hotel, which had already caught alight from the showers of sparks carried across the road by the driving wind. The arrival of the

WAIROA RIFLES

saved the situation so far as the Clarendon was concerned. About 20 men of the corps were on the scene at 2 o'clock and afforded the brigade invaluable help in fighting the outbreak, which took two hours to subdue.

The front of the Clarendon is badly charred, and every window is broken.

The Commercial and its fittings were insured, but Mr Smith will be a heavy loser.

So rapid was the progress of the fire that salvage operations were impossible. The inmates tumbled out in night attire. The house was full of boarders, who lost almost everything.