

**“Neither Day Nor Night”:  
The 1960 West Prince Forest Fire**

**A Scrapbook Kept by  
Vivian Phillips of  
Freeland, Prince Edward Island**



## 🌀 Notes On A Scrapbook 🌀

I was born 6 years after forest fires swept through this part of Prince Edward Island in 1960. As a child, the 1960 West Prince Forest Fire (or The Fire, as it was usually called) seemed to be an event as unconnected to me as anything else that happened before I was born, but it was always clear that it had been an important marker in the history of my family and community, events being referenced as happening “before” or “after” the fire.

Of course, it really wasn't that long ago. Even now, 50 years later, there are reminders around our home in Foxley River of the great effort that went into fighting the fire: the diminished remains of burned stumps, fire breaks (now in our woods, then in a field that had just been harvested) built to save our neighbour's house, melted glass and metal items abandoned after the sheds they were in burned to the ground. Even one small corner of our 1930s log cabin caught fire as the devastating sparks flew over and around it.

My parents, Harold and Vivian Phillips, ran a busy Lucky Dollar general store in neighbouring Freeland. When the fire started in August, my mother remained at the store while my father helped the firefighting and evacuation efforts. During this confusing and busy time, my mother had the great foresight to save newspaper clippings of stories related to The Fire. The following winter she glued them into a scrapbook that was stocked in their store, one with a nice photo of Princess Margaret on the front, price 25 cents. In the back of that scrapbook, she also glued mementoes from a trip she took later that same September to visit her aunt in New York City, a much-needed break after a very hectic time.

The Fire was actually a number of separate fires that started the week of August 21, 1960. The fires were not considered very serious at first, but the wind picked up on August 28 and those smaller fires suddenly became out of control blazes that destroyed acres of woodland, homes, barns and livestock. Volunteers carried out firefighting duties at first, with help from the RCMP, who assisted with communication between the fire front and operation headquarters at the Ellerslie Legion.

As the fires increased in severity and more homes and villages were in danger, airmen from RCAF Station Summerside arrived, bringing with them a field kitchen to help feed the firefighters. By September 2, there were approximately 500 men fighting the fires over 200 square miles, employing 15 tanker trucks, 12 pumps, and countless backpack sprayers. 75 dump and transport trucks were moving people and their belongings. Bulldozers worked steadily to cut firebreaks.

Firefighters ate and slept at the Ellerslie Legion. Women and girls from the area provided meals around the clock, using local donations and ingredients provided by the Red Cross. A new well had to be dug at the Legion to keep up with the huge demand for water. Donations then came in from across the Island. Even the Lieutenant Governor's wife brought food when she visited the area with her husband.

At the peak of the firefighting efforts, there were 1,000 men at work and 2,000 meals were served at the Ellerslie Legion over a 24-hour period. By September 7, an estimated 6 miles of fire hose was deployed in the fight, some having been flown in from as far away as Montreal. The newspapers at the time considered it to be the largest firefighting effort in Island history, as well as the largest army manoeuvre, with 500 troops from Camp Gagetown, N.B. camped in a field between Ellerslie and Tyne Valley through September. I imagine those two records probably still stand today.

Somehow life went on as best it could during the disaster. A new school year had already started to allow for a potato harvest break later in the fall. Businesses tried to remain open although, as in the case of my parent's store, often with dwindled supplies as transportation became difficult. Farmers hurried to bring in crops before their fields were consumed by fire, sometimes with firefighters wetting the edges of their fields while they combined.

The tales that are told of this time are mostly about the panic and destruction that occurred, but here on the Island, people tend to ease their sadness with laughter, and the funny things that happened are also remembered.

One such tale involved our neighbour, Ida, who, like everyone in the area, didn't want to leave home. It wasn't until the fire had almost reached her house that she reluctantly agreed to leave. Being a widow without a truck or car, volunteer forces swooped in to move her belongings to a safer location. The moving service was rough by necessity, things thrown onto a dump truck as quickly as possible. Ida had watched all this frenzied activity with concern and the occasional sharp comment. One of the last things to go on the truck was a wind-up Victrola, which she asked the volunteers to treat carefully. Finally loaded, the truck lurched forward and the Victrola flew off the back of the truck and smashed in our lane. I still have a piece of the Victrola's mechanism that was recovered later, but Ida's colourful comments on seeing her prized possession ruined have, unfortunately, been lost to history.

In reading these newspaper stories, it is clear how things have changed since 1960. Two-way radio communication was not widespread, so RCMP officers drove messages to the fire fronts. Meals and hot drinks were provided free of charge to the firefighters, but it's unthinkable to us now that cigarettes were also made available and thought to be as necessary as food and drink. The firefighters were mostly adult men, but teenage boys from as far away as Summerside donned backpack sprayers and joined the battle. Trains moved water tankers between Portage and Eilerslie. Electricity only arrived in our area around 1959, so there isn't any mention in the articles about power cuts because, of course, people hadn't yet begun to rely on electricity and were well prepared to live without it.

The transcription of these articles was certainly time consuming, but it was also a joy to get to know the articles so intimately. Newspaper deadlines can be unrelenting, so reporters can usually only tell the basic facts of a story, but many of the articles written about The Fire contain very moving and poetic prose. The reporters were able to put themselves in the stories, more so than they can today, giving us an intimate impression of what they experienced.

I found some images from these stories difficult to forget: a woman standing in the ditch outside her home trying to save the preserves she had probably finished bottling just before the fire began; animals blinded by smoke and heat; smoke from the fires thick enough to bring tears to the eyes of Charlottetown residents 60 miles away; the Premier and his officials, on a tour of the fire area, stopping to help save a house on the Murray Road; a small girl with her hair in curlers swinging in her yard while the fires burned in the woods nearby.

Of course, all the credit and thanks for what was in this scrapbook goes to the writers and photographers, who included:

John Bond, <i>Guardian-Patriot</i>	Jim Kennedy
Ralph Cameron, <i>Guardian-Patriot</i>	Elmer Murphy, <i>Journal-Pioneer</i>
Hartwell Daley, <i>Journal-Pioneer</i>	Arthur Pratt, <i>Journal-Pioneer</i>
Ron England	Roy Turner, <i>Guardian-Patriot</i>
Heckbert Studio	George Wotton, <i>Guardian-Patriot</i>

As I write this introduction, there are massive forest fires in British Columbia, and I can only imagine the turmoil and danger those people are facing. I grew up to be accepting of a rainy summer day because I was always reminded of what could happen if a hot, dry summer were to occur, so I am keeping an eye to the sky in the hopes that rain will come.

Thelma Phillips  
Foxley River, PEI  
August 23, 2010  
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🌀 Transcription Notes 🌀

This scrapbook my mother assembled 50 years ago became a popular reference for school projects and history buffs, but time has not been kind to this poor book. The pages are now ripped and brittle, the cover has come off and the double layer of acidic newsprint and glue, combined with less than archival storage conditions, has made the book very fragile. I wanted the scrapbook to be preserved, but recognised that the information was of interest to others and



needed to be shared. I decided to transcribe the articles and reproduce them as best I could so as to be available in a fully searchable document.

The pages are formatted for printing on legal size paper (8.5" x 14") and set up with mirrored borders to allow for double-sided printing and binding or hole punching. I have only made changes to the text to correct three problems: obvious typos and misspellings; to standardise spellings of names within an article; and punctuation to make the text easier to read. I have noted where a few articles suddenly end because of an unfortunate scissor cut or printing error.

In many ways, reading this scrapbook is similar to reading 3 daily newspapers as information is often repeated and, in some cases, the same articles appeared in more than one paper. I kept all the articles that were included in the scrapbook in this transcription in the interest of preserving a complete historical record.

Most of the articles were not dated, and in many cases I don't know in which paper they appeared, but they would have all been from one of three daily papers published on PEI at the time - *The Journal-Pioneer*, *The Guardian* and *The Evening Patriot* - and all rights remain with them.

As the articles and photos are not necessarily in chronological order, I've included calendars for August and September 1960 as a reference for readers.

AUGUST 1960						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SEPTEMBER 1960						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5 Labor Day	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Rosh HaShanah begins at sunset	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30 Yom Kippur begins at sunset	



## Woodland Holocaust Out of Control, Fight to Save Homes, Farms

Woods fires that had been burning for more than a week in Prince County flared into violent activity yesterday and today are still out of control in an area between Mount Pleasant and Portage, north of the Western Highway.

A fire that was burning yesterday in the Port Hill area, and was threatening the C.N.R. station there, this morning had changed direction and was burning in scrub toward Ellerslie, and at press time was not considered a serious threat.

Most seriously threatened of the inhabited sections in the fire region is the tiny settlement of North Enmore, where several homes were evacuated yesterday and which was still ringed by fire this morning. A crew of Indians from the Lennox Island reservation are working in this area, keeping the woods around the settlement wetted down by using a portable pump drawing from the nearby streams, and were able to save the houses last night by this method.

With a change of wind direction at dawn today, the big blaze shifted direction and was burning this morning towards the western highway. The most serious outbreak was located south of Inverness. Last night the woods were burning as far west as Portage but this morning this settlement was at least temporarily out of danger, with only smouldering trees in the burnt-over section.

While covering a huge area, the fire is a comparatively slow-moving one and is burning mainly among deciduous trees. It appears to be travelling extensively underground, causing isolated outbreaks at a number of spots which sometimes burn themselves out and sometimes continue on to join the main body of fire.

The only method of control at present is to protect buildings in the area and to try to check small outbreaks as they start. Aiding in this work is a 1,000-gallon tank truck equipped with a portable pump, which is being despatched to areas where needed. The truck and crew are under supervision of Frank Gaudet, chief forester with the department of industry and natural resources.

The big blaze apparently started last Thursday in the vicinity of West Devon, and has been smouldering since then, sometimes breaking into fairly serious proportions. Not until yesterday, however, did it reach a size which many people say is the biggest forest fire ever experienced on P.E.I.

Yesterday afternoon the entire horizon over the Gulf of St. Lawrence was filled with dense smoke, and on the roads in the burning area visibility was practically zero. Hordes of terrified rabbits and other small animals were fleeing the woodlands and were to be met with everywhere scurrying across the [clipping ended here]

# Residents Flee Homes In Prince As Raging Forest Fires Threaten

BY GEORGE WOTTON  
Guardian-Patriot Staff Writer  
SUMMERSIDE BUREAU  
OF THE GUARDIAN

Fires raging out of the control are destroying hundreds of acres of woodland between Portage and Tyne Valley, in an area about twenty-five miles west of Summerside, causing evacuation of homes in their path, with the thick smoke reducing visibility to a few feet in some places as it drifts over the area, billowing skyward in a thick cloud that can be seen for about forty miles east and west of the area.

The fires, which are spreading by sparks carried through the air, are located in three separate areas, one in Inverness, just east of Portage, and another in the adjoining district of North Enmore, while the third is running through woodland between Ellerslie and Tyne Valley.

Fanned by a strong breeze yesterday, the fires, which have been burning for a week or more in some sections, developed rapidly into serious threats to the communities. As flames leaped from tree to tree, inching closer and closer to their buildings, residents were seen evacuating their homes while wild rabbits, bewildered by the fire and blinded by the smoke, hopped around the feet of fire fighters, seeking shelter from the smoke and heat in the lee of buildings, or cars on the roadway.

## GRAIN THREATENED

As falling embers continuously set a pattern of new fires in woods and grassland, farmers with grain crops threatened were hauling in their cut grain from the fields, and one man was busy cutting a large field of grain in an effort to save it from the fire, a team of horses was led to safety through thick smoke, and two cows had to be hastily saved from being barbequed when their pasture field took fire.

Two men were observed chasing and capturing a goat that had become terrified by the approaching roar of the fire. R.C.M.P. who were directing the efforts being made by local fire fighters, a couple of pumper trucks, and a few bull dozers, had a busy time trying to control traffic on dusty clay roads close to the fires as sightseers attracted by the smoke converged on the area from east and west.

The fire in the Inverness area is said to have started a week ago on the estate of John Durant, and yesterday was burning fiercely in woodland owned by Charlie Milligan, and threatening woodland on the farms of Ernest MacDonald and Jim MacKinnon and others in the area.

## 1500 ACRES

In the next district of North Enmore alone, the loss was estimated by one property owner at more

than 1500 acres, with the largest single loss said to be on the estate of William Bryant, where 517 acres of woodland had been destroyed.

Fire fighters had hoped to control the fire at the Mill Road in North Enmore, but even before it reached the road area, it had been carried into the woods separated by the road, and was continuing eastward towards Mount Pleasant, northward towards the Western Road.

Early in the afternoon, residents in the Mill Road area including those of Charlie Shaw, Bill Gillis, Mamie and Millie Stewart, Harry Bryant, Fred Coughlin, Hack Ballem, Fred Ballem and Wilfred Campbell were in grave danger but were still intact last evening.

On the Western Road the homes of Winfred Bridges, William Shaw, Reg Campbell, James Bridges, and Wendell Phillips service station were being approached by the fire west of the Mill Road, while homes on the Western Road east of this point were endangered by the fire moving towards Mount Pleasant, and included the homes of Peter LeClair, Bayfield Shaw, Alfred Murray, Wilfred Campbell and John Adams.

The woodland that is being devastated by the two fires East of Portage has already covered an area of five or six miles, and it appeared that only a heavy rain could prevent it spreading in any direction the wind might blow.

## STATION THREATENED

The fire in the Ellerslie area is said to have started in woodland on the farm of Alvin Waite almost two weeks ago and this weekend was also fanned into more rapid spread by the breeze yesterday and was burning in thick woodland between Ellerslie and Tyne Valley. Yesterday it was reported to be threatening the Port Hill railway station located about a mile west of Tyne Valley village.

An unconfirmed report also indicated the fire in swamp woodland on Lennox Island had also sprung up again over the weekend.

In mid evening Sunday residents of these areas were preparing for an anxious night of fire watching, as smoke continued to make eyes water, breathing difficult, and an eerie glow reflected from the low smoke clouds drifting across the sky as the fire intermittently flared into brilliant flames and subsided in smoke, roaring through the tinder dry woodlands leaving the brilliant green landscape blackened, burned, and completely devastated.

["Aug 29"]

# Many Homes Destroyed in Roaring Fire Inferno

BY GEORGE WOTTON

**Guardian-Patriot Staff Writer**

**SUMMERSIDE:** An uncounted number of homes and hundreds of acres of woodland fell in a roaring inferno of fire that yesterday swept the area between Portage and Mount Pleasant.

About noon the fire leaped the Western Highway and continued to spread and grow in intensity as it swept along a new path into Foxley River, Freeland, Conway and MacNeill's Mills. Another fire was burning briskly in woodland between Ellerslie and Tyne Valley and further east, fire was sweeping through heavy woods on either side of the Western Highway between Victoria West and Northam Corner above Richmond.

Thick grey smoke blanketed the whole area as residents worked frantically to evacuate their homes.

In haste, or without transportation, they merely moved furniture and household appliances outdoors.

At one time in mid afternoon six properties were on fire at the same time in the Inverness and north Enmore districts, and last evening at ten o'clock many others seemed certain to be destroyed by the raging fires.

At dusk last evening a Guardian reporter found one of these homeless people, Mrs. Jane Brown, a 73 year old lady, crying sadly as she stood in a ditch in front of the still burning embers of her house and barns. Her plight was similar to many others in the areas swept by fire yesterday. Her home was gone, and with it everything she owned except the smoke-blackened clothing that she wore.

As she cried in sorrow, Mrs. Brown described her personal losses in addition to her buildings: 22 cases of home-canned food products that she had prepared were lost in the fire.

Finding some unbroken bottles of preserves as she walked along the smoke filled ditch, she expressed heartfelt appreciation to volunteer workers who had thrown them from her burning home, as she clutched them tightly and cried aloud "God bless the hands that saved even these."

With nowhere to go and almost reluctant to leave, Mrs. Brown at dusk had no idea where she might spend the night or how she would get along in the future, with nothing saved from the past, and no insurance on the property.

At times during the afternoon and evening travel on the Western Highway was extremely dangerous and difficult due to smoke and flames, and as the fires spread northward the road between Portage and Foxley River became impassable.

In an unsuccessful attempt to reach Freeland from Portage, a Guardian reporter found the way blocked by fire at Foxley River at 5 p.m., and along this road observed five homes all blazing fiercely.

## CATTLE PERISH

Cattle, pigs, and poultry which had to be left behind survived or perished depending on where they sought refuge, and rabbits which dazedly fled from the woods to highways seemed completely bewildered.

Fanned by winds of 30 miles per hour which frequently gusted to 50 miles per hour, the flames spread so rapidly that some persons barely had time to get to safety, and many more took great risks to protect their houses and barns. Embers from fires sailed through the air setting new fires often a mile distant, which repeated the process that kept turning the whole tinder-dry countryside into a flaming mass of destruction.

## VILLAGE IN PERIL

The wind direction during the afternoon that carried the fire from the south to the north side of the Western Road, also kept the drifting embers just a few hundred yards east of the Portage Village, but only a slight shift in wind would send sparks raining down on Sharbell's store and the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Dalton which are located close to the burning woodland, and the whole village seemed in imminent danger.

Light and power poles were destroyed by fire along the western road, cutting off communication and electricity into the area last evening.

## ACROSS ISLAND

The seven-mile fire front between Portage and Mount Pleasant last evening was burning virtually across the entire width of the Island for a depth of about ten miles, and covering such a vast territory that it became almost impossible to establish the names of property owners whose homes kept going up in flames.

With the situation changing and developing new fronts continuously, a conservative estimate of homes and barns that were already laid waste before midnight could total twenty-five.

The fire located between Northam and Springhill is said to have originated yesterday afternoon in woodland belonging to Ken Williams, and was burning fiercely on both sides of the Western Road at ten o'clock last evening as bull dozers worked against time to throw a fire break around the residents of Mr. and Mrs. George Paugh which was almost surrounded by fire at that time.

Traffic congestion caused by carloads of sight seers caused tie ups in the area, and motorists trying to further west were diverted through Northam and Ellerslie because of the fire danger beyond Northam Corner.

[“Aug 30”]

# Five Homes And At Least Seven Barns Known To Be Burned

As far as could be ascertained this morning, five homes were lost and six or seven barns in the fire which last night burned out much of the area between Foxley River and Portage.

Mrs. John Lynch and Alfred Culleton lost homes on the Rafferty Road between Portage and Foxley River.

At Foxley River, Hugh Bulger lost a house and barns. He has a family of 20 children.

Arthur Adams, Conway, lost a house and barn and Mrs. Jane Brown, Inverness lost a house.

Barns lost belonged to Mrs. Robert Skerry, Foxley River; Thomas MacKinnon, Inverness; John Paugh, Western Road; George Coughlin and Peter LeClair, Portage-Inverness district.

A more serious loss was a large barn and a quantity of farm machinery owned by Kevin Kilbride, Foxley River.

## Disaster Fund Is Established

The Ellerslie branch of the Canadian Legion will establish a disaster fund to assist those families burned out in the recent forest fires which have already left an Island-wide path of death and destruction across Western Prince Edward Island.

Cyril Williams, Ellerslie, zone commander for that area of the Prince County branch of the Canadian Legion, and Dean Crosby, manager of the Royal Bank at Tyne Valley, who is also a Legion member, will accept financial contribution at any time.

At a date to be announced later contributions of household equipment and possibly clothing will be accepted at the legion branch in Ellerslie.

The branch will appoint a committee to administer the fund.

## Police Curtail Area Travel

An RCMP spokesman stressed last night that concerted effort is being made to curtail all unnecessary travel in the fire stricken areas of the province.

This is being done, it was explained, as a safety precaution to the motorists as well as to help make the task of the fire fighters less difficult.

They are asking the co-operation of all motorists.

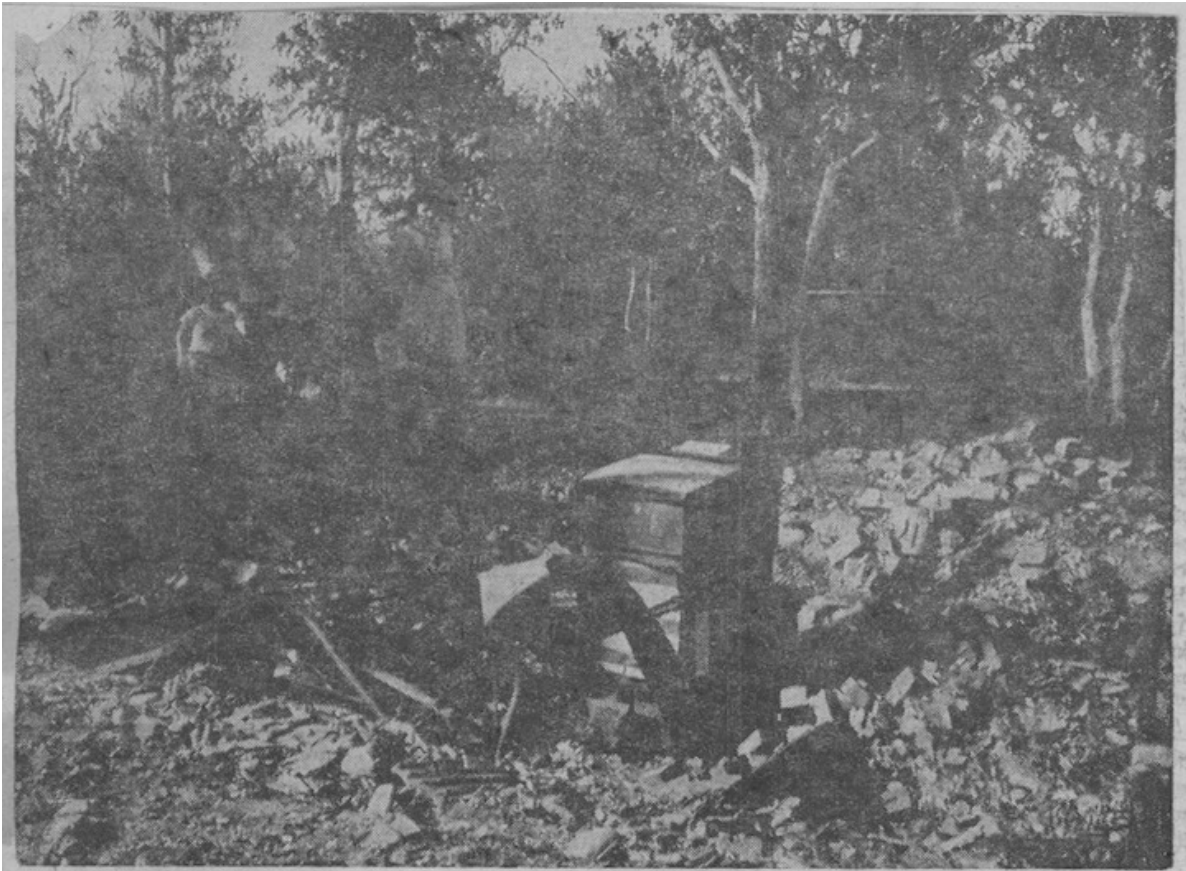
# Alberton Boats Called On Evacuation Mission

Responding to a report that a number of people were trapped by fire in the Foxley River area and were unable to escape by road, two Alberton fishing boats and a cabin cruiser left Alberton South at 6 p.m. yesterday and sailed across Cascumpec Bay and up Foxley River.

The three boats cruised up both branches of the river but were unable to locate anyone looking for evacuation by water. In conversation with Frank Bulger of Foxley River, the fishermen were told that 15 homes had been destroyed by the bush fire.

While they were on the shore they saw a barn go up in flames and cattle running across the fields.

The boats were operated by Charles and Roy Fraser, Mont Hutt, Bryden Smith, fisheries officer Ron MacKinnon, Myrl Basil, and Silas Mathews.



## SAD SURVEY

Relatives and neighbours sadly survey the smoking ruins, all that remains of the homestead and farm buildings of Mrs. John Lynch near Foxley River. The property was

destroyed last night in a freak burst of flame from the forest fire in that area, while surrounding woods were not burned. — (Journal-Pioneer photo by Art Pratt).

# FIRE DANGER DECREASES



## FIRE'S AFTERMATH

Smoking ruins of home, barn and automobile remain on the property of Harold Bridges, Inverness, after fire swept across the Western Highway borne on the wings of gale winds against which ordinary fire

fighting methods could accomplish nothing. This home was burned although other nearby properties and woods were untouched as the fire roared along a rapid, erratic course. — Journal-Pioneer staff photo).

## New Outbreaks Feared If Wind Increases; Heavy Rain Is Only Solution

By Arthur Pratt

It looked this morning as if the worst was over for weary residents of the fire-ravaged sections of Prince County, but resumption of dry, hot weather and a freshening northerly breeze renewed fears that the forest fire which has been raging fiercely since Sunday would sweep through remaining timber towards the settlements of Freeland, Conway, Ellerslie and Port Hill railway station.

Rain showers which occurred shortly after last midnight aided the fire fighters considerably in dampening down the blaze, but were not sufficient to extinguish it. Both fire fighters and residents of the affected areas are of the opinion that nothing less than a downpour of tropical proportions will completely put out the fires, since they are burning underground.

In the vicinity of Inverness and Portage the fire assumed terrifying proportions last evening as it was born on the wings of a south-westerly gale across the Western Highway and through the bush toward Foxley River. Residents said the flames came soaring through the air in "huge balls of fire high over the tops of the trees," setting homes and barns alight and burning the woodland in an erratic pattern of

intensely burning spots with strips in between untouched.

Five homes and a number of barns were burnt during the height of the gale, but fortunately no lives were lost and the number of livestock destroyed was limited, as far as was known this morning, to about 10 pigs and half a dozen sheep. The latter, in the Foxley River section, had had their eyes burned out by the flames, and had to be killed by fire fighters who took pity on the plight of the animals.

The rain that came during the night had been prayed for and fervently welcomed by residents of the threatened areas. People told this morning of hearing the first rain drops on the roofs of their houses and of coming out to stand in the open to receive its blessing. With the rain, the fierce winds died down, and the fire was cut to proportions where

it was burning in isolated pockets which are very easy to control.

At North Enmore, which has been surrounded by fire since Saturday, the situation eased this morning. Fires were all out in all directions except west of the small settlement, and residents were cutting fire breaks to prevent the flames from reaching houses which they say have been saved "only by a miracle."

Yesterday afternoon practically all homes between Mount Pleasant and Portage were evacuated as the flames swept down on the Western Highway, but only one house and three barns were destroyed, and today people are moving back. A tank truck and pump operated by the forestry division of the department of natural resources performed great service during the night in wetting down the houses and was able to prevent



far greater loss. Near Inverness, the fire crew pumped a stream completely dry, so that small fish were left without water to swim in. They saved the home of Thomas MacKinnon, although his nearby barn was destroyed.

Fire fighting operations today are being highly organized under the supervision of Provincial Fire Marshal MacLeod and all available equipment in the way of bulldozers and earth-moving machines, owned by both government and contractors, is being used to cut fire breaks. Pumpers at Summerside, Kensington, the RCAF Station and O'Leary are standing by for instant response if they are needed. Robert Grindlay, MLA, schoolmaster at North Enmore, has closed the school for the day and is acting as liaison between the fire fighters and residents generally. He told the Journal-Pioneer that there is still a definite threat in the Tyne Valley and Conway areas and there is some fear that the Roman Catholic Church at Foxley River may be in the path of the flames. All precautions are being taken to prevent the flames from reaching the settlement, however.

At press time the situation was this:

Fires were still burning in a roughly triangular section bounded by Portage at the apex, Foxley River to the west and Freeland to the east. However they were burning in pockets and

crews were standing by to prevent their spreading.

Fire was still burning west of North Enmore but was not considered serious and the pumping crew had been removed to a more vital area, subject to instant recall if the situation worsened.

At Springhill, east of Mount Pleasant, a fire apparently unrelated to the larger blaze had started south of the Western Highway, crossed the road last evening, and this morning was burning slowly in scrub growth toward Grand River.

Residents of Conway, Freeland, Ellerslie and Tyne Valley were apprehensive that the freshening wind would bring the flames across the woods from Foxley River and strong patrols have been set up with about a dozen bulldozers cutting fire breaks.

There is no fire beyond Portage and Foxley River to the west, or beyond Springhill to the east.

The most seriously hit area is the Rafferty Road between Portage and Foxley River. This morning residents had returned to this section and were sadly viewing remains of homes and barns that still smouldered along the road.

For those burned out of their homes, help was forthcoming from various agencies last night. The Canadian Legion at Ellerslie opened their hall to receive homeless persons, and the parish hall at Wellington was also open

for them, as well as private homes everywhere out of the fire zone.

## Wind Gusts To 57 M.P.H. Last Night

The meteorological section at RCAF Station Summerside reports that from three o'clock yesterday afternoon to 11 p.m. winds were blowing in the vicinity of 35 miles per hour with gusts to 57. These winds were from the south west.

The winds began to diminish at midnight and there was a rain shower. While not much rain fell it amounted to half the quantity that has come down in this area in the month of August. Last night's fall amounted to two-tenths inches.

The average for the month of August in a ten-year period is 3.5 inches. The rainfall this year is the lowest in that period.

## Premier Visits Fire Area

Premier W.R. Shaw, Highways Minister Philip Matheson, Welfare Minister Henry Wedge and Deputy Minister of Highways Gordon White are in West Prince today inspecting the fire area.

Last evening Mr. Wedge and Dr. O.H. Phillips, M.P. were very busy in the area helping to organize fire fighting services, obtain equipment and help those who lost their homes.



**FIRE PUMPER**

This is one of the several fire pumpers being used to quell the blaze which raged at Inverness yesterday. Firefighters are forced to the ground by the searing heat.

— Photo by Heckbert Studio



## MAKE EFFORT TO SALVAGE HOUSE

Fire fighters at McNeill's Mills, R.R. are showing making a desperate effort to save

this dwelling by having it water soaked before it is reached by the oncoming flames.

— Photo by Heckbert Studio



## RESTORE LINE

Linemen from Maritime Electric are shown as they try to upright a pole at In-

verness. The base of the pole had been burnt in the sweep of the flames.

— Photo by Heckbert Studio.





# FIRE SITUATION REMAINS STATIC

Forest fires are still burning steadily in the West Prince area and due to the calmness of the last twenty-four hours the situation remains pretty well the same.

Fires which are most threatening are located north of Foxley River and south of Ellerslie. Fire breaks are being cut in the Foxley River district by two bulldozers and fire fighting equipment is standing by. There is quite a bit of equipment standing by at Ellerslie and the men have reported that they are getting along pretty well with the fire in that district.

The Civil Defence have set up headquarters at the Legion home in Ellerslie as well as the Red Cross and anyone wishing aid can contact officials of either organization there. Mjr. Orin Simons is acting as civil defence coordinator.

Mr. G. Kerr is despatching fire fighting equipment and co-ordinating all transportation in connection with the effort to subdue the fires. Dick Found of the Biological Station is in charge of field operations, Gordon Bell is in charge of operational fire fighting.

Fire fighting equipment from Alma, O'Leary, Alberton, National Park, RCAF Station, Tyne Valley, Wellington, Miscouche and Kensington is all standing by or in use. Some of the people in the Foxley River area who vacated their homes during the gale on Monday are moving back while others on the Rafferty Road are moving out because of the closeness of the fire.

Several army personnel from Charlottetown are also on hand. The ladies auxiliary of the Legion

and the Women's Institutes are serving meals to the fire fighters, the food being provided by the Red Cross.

## ***Mass. Woman Offers Help to Fire Victims***

In connection with the fire disaster in Prince County Mrs. Carolyn Emery of Massachusetts telephoned the Summerside Branch of the Red Cross of her intention of collecting blankets and other suitable articles through her local Red Cross and forwarding them to the Summerside branch for distribution.

She said she would make this collection immediately and forward the articles as soon as possible.

## **Men injured**

Three men suffered injuries last night in fighting forest fires near Tyne Valley. Two of the men were treated at the scene while a bulldozer operator was taken to Stewart Memorial Hospital for treatment to undisclosed head injuries.

# Legion Votes \$1,000 To Fire Fund

A generous gift of \$1,000 to the fire disaster fund has been donated by the Canadian Legion, George R. Pearkes, V.C. Branch, Summerside, it was revealed last evening after a meeting of the executive presided over by president Mercier Mullin.

The fire disaster fund has been set up by the Ellerslie branch of the Legion and the Red Cross.

The fund will be used for the rehabilitation of residents of Prince County who lost their homes or other properties in the fire.

It is hoped that other organizations and individuals will follow the lead of the Summerside Legion Branch in giving to this fund, in order to give assistance to residents of the county who have suffered heavy losses during the past few days.

# R.C.A.F. Station Giving Valuable Assistance

RCAF Station Summerside is playing a big part in fighting the forest fires.

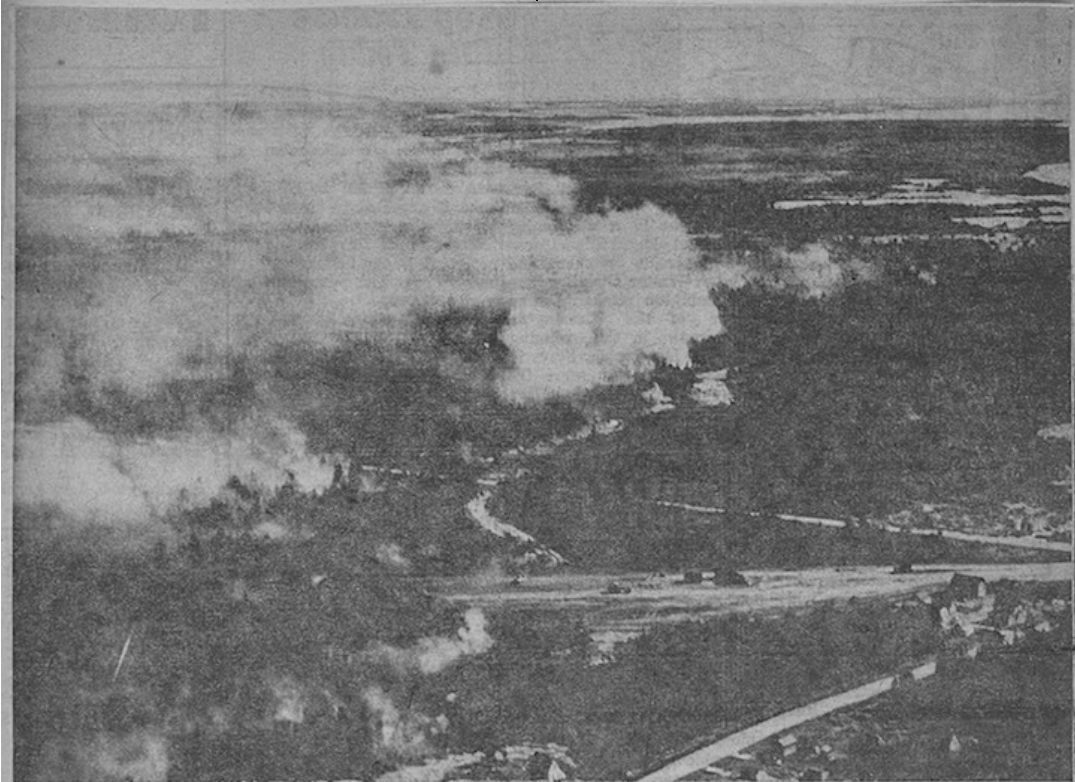
A detachment of 60 men under Fire Chief Warrant Officer Somerville has been on duty since yesterday morning. They are operating three forestry pumps and hoses and operate 24 hours a day on 12-hour shifts. They take responsibility for certain sectors and operate as six crews.

In addition a pumper truck from the fire department stays on duty all day under civilian control.

This morning on short notice four trucks and a bus were sent up to help in evacuation operations and several other trucks are constantly on the job.

The Red Cross report that yesterday tanks of hot stew were sent up from the station and distributed to the men on the lines.

It is understood that even more help will be given if required.



AERIAL VIEW OF WOODS FIRE

This photograph taken from an RCAF plane shows a section of the woods fire which is burning in the area of Portage and Foxley River. Six homes and a number of barns and small sheds have been destroyed in the blaze that has

been burning now for two weeks after it first started in West Devon.

— (RCAF Photo).



FLY OVER FIRE AREAS

At the invitation of Group Captain J. E. Creeper, DFC, Premier Shaw and other officials flew over the fire areas yesterday. From left to right are G. C. Creeper, Premier

Shaw, Highways Minister Philip Matheson and Welfare and Labour Minister Henry Wedge.

— Photo by Heckbert Studio.

# Premier And Party Fly Over Fire Areas

By Elmer Murphy

Yesterday afternoon I accompanied Premier W.R. Shaw and a party of Government representatives on a flight over the burned out and burning area of West Prince. The flight was made through the courtesy of the commanding officer, Group Captain J. E. Creeper, DFC, who piloted the plane.

On such a beautiful summer afternoon this could have been a most enjoyable pleasure flight if it were not for the grim sight below. Smoke was billowing up from six main areas of fire and all around, gaunt and black, stood areas of bare tree trunks where the devouring flames had passed. In some of these burnt-over areas no vegetation of any kind lived but in other places certain types of trees remained almost untouched in the midst of desolation and ruin.

In several places we could see the blackened remains of what had once been a home. What was more cheerful was the fact that many more homes had obviously been in great danger during Monday's gale and had remained untouched.

Clearly visible from the air were the fire breaks which had been slashed through the trees. These in places had been most effective.

Squadron Leader George Dennison used a map to help the party pinpoint the areas of fire. These total about 25 square miles of fire area. S/L Dennison located six main fires which areas follows:

No. 1. The Northam area. This is about a mile and a half long and a mile wide and is on both sides of the Western Road from Northam to Victoria West.

No. 2. The Mount Pleasant area which is about the largest area, measuring four miles by two. (All these figures are approximate.) It is on both sides of the Western Road and is bounded by the Mount Pleasant Airport, the MacNeill's Mills Road and the Percival River Road.

No. 3. The Portage area. This is a large wooded area about six miles long by about a mile wide. It is also on both sides of the Western Road.

No. 4. Conway Station area, about a mile square.  
No. 5. Woodbrook area, about two miles by one.  
No. 6. Foxley River area. This seemed to be the most vigorous fire yesterday. The area measures about two miles by one, north east of the river.

There are also several small fires between Conway and the Western Road.

In addition there are two relatively small fires burning near Tignish in the Peterville area.

Looking down from the area it could be seen that under certain circumstances the Catholic Church and parochial house at Lot 11 could be in danger. However, a fire break had been constructed and yesterday there was no fire burning in the immediate area.

It is necessary to fly over the area to realize the immensity of the woods in this part of the Island. Although the fires have so far done great damage to the woodlots, not one-twentieth of the woods have yet been touched.

While there was a considerable quantity of smoke billowing up from the fire areas yesterday there was not much movement to the fires, and they pose very little threat to buildings unless the wind rises when the situation would again become serious.

Also in the party yesterday were the Hon. Henry Wedge, Minister of Welfare, the Hon. Philip Matheson, Minister of Highways, Mr. Gordon White, deputy minister of highways and Ron MacArthur, Journal-Pioneer photographer.

Early in the day the government party had visited the fire area by car and had spoken to most of the people who had lost property. Mr. Wedge told The Journal-Pioneer that three welfare workers of his department are in the area interviewing these people to determine what their needs are and what can be done to help them.

At the conclusion of the flight Group Captain Creeper assured Premier Shaw of his desire to do all he can to help in this unfortunate situation.

## RCAF And CNR Helping With Equipment And Men to Fight Fires

Both RCAF Station Summerside and the Canadian National Railways are making important contributions to fighting the fires raging in West Prince.

This morning the RCAF flew over from the supply depot at Moncton two Wajax forestry pumps with 5,000 feet of hose. They also brought over 59 back packs which consist of four-gallon cans and a pump, and are worn on the back of a fire-fighter.

This morning a group of airmen left the station with this equipment for the fire area.

The Canadian National Railways has a shuttle service going between Foxley River and Ellerslie, bringing water to the RCAF and other fire-fighters.

A special train left Charlottetown last evening with seven tank cars filled with water. Today this train is travelling back and forth between Ellerslie and Foxley River bringing water.

The Regional Supervisor of Fire Protection, A. I. Atkinson, is directing the CNR operations on the scene.

Yesterday Mr. Dave Blair, general superintendent for the Maritimes, called Premier W. R. Shaw and offered the assistance of the CNR which was gratefully accepted.

### *S'side Legion Gives \$1,000 To Disaster Fund*

The Summerside branch of the Canadian Legion has started off the drive to raise funds to re-establish the burnt-out people of West Prince by making a donation of \$1,000.

A committee to organize the drive has been set up as follows: Honorary President, Lieutenant-Governor F. W. Hyndman; Cyril Williams, past president and zone commander and includes the branch president Earl Colwill, Harold Phillips, Bud William, Carmen MacNeill, D. R. Montgomery and William Noye.

# To Remove Children From Fire Area

The forest fire area of West Prince has been declared a "Health Hazard Area" by the Minister of Health, the Hon. Hubert McNeill. The purpose of this declaration is to give the department authority to remove infants and small children from the area who may suffer from the effects of smoke and gas.

It is expected that many of these children will be evacuated today. This work will mostly be done by the staff of the Prince County Catholic Welfare Agency and the agency reported this morning they believed they have sufficient homes ready in Miscouche and Summerside to house all the children that will be brought in. Many people have volunteered to look after these children.

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## FIRE SITUATION AGAIN CRITICAL Freshening Winds Are Fanning Fires to Life

Just before noon an appeal was sent out for vehicles to evacuate families from the Foxley River area and it was expected that about forty trucks would be needed. The RCAF Station was sending four trucks and a bus and government trucks were being mobilized as the situation has once again become critical.

As a Journal-Pioneer reporter checked the area about 11:30, volunteers were spraying the home of Doug. Milligan on the Rafferty Road, near Portage, while flames across the road were mounting to the height of his home.

The forest fire situation this morning was unchanged but the immediate outlook is not good. The meteorological unit at the RCAF Station said at 11:30 that winds are blowing from the south-west at about 20 miles per hour, gusting to 33. The forecaster said this condition would pertain all day but they would diminish some this evening. There is no rain in the offing, he said.

Mr. R.H. Found of Bideford Biological Station said that when the dew dries out the situation will become dangerous.

Headquarters for the fire fighting effort is at the Ellerslie Canadian Legion Home and the atmosphere there is almost a wartime one. An RCMP radio equipped patrol car stands by at all times for communication purposes and other RCAF cars are constantly on patrol. A squad of army vehicles and drivers are on hand and the RCAF and volunteer civilian fire fighters also go out from this point. The fire fighting equipment is also dispatched to strategic areas from here as well.

The building is equipped with bunks where weary fire fighters can rest and in the basement meals are constantly being served. In addition snacks are prepared and sent out to the men in the field.

## Appeal Made for More Volunteers to Fight Fires in West Prince

An appeal for more volunteer fire fighters was issued this morning through The Journal-Pioneer by Mr. Gordon Bell, director of fire fighting operations. He said that volunteers are greatly needed and they can report at any time to the Ellerslie Legion Home.

Fire Chief Heath Warren of the Summerside Fire Department said that his department is organizing a fire fighting crew to leave Summerside at six o'clock for an all-night stint on the fire lines and he is appealing to the civilian population to join this group.

All who are interested in helping in this emergency should report to the fire hall before six o'clock.

Mr. Bell also said that he could use more tanks on trucks and pumpers. At present he has under his command eleven bulldozers, eight tankers and four pumpers, also seven CNR tank cars are stopped at strategic spots.



# West Prince Fire Region Termed Disaster Area

## Bronchial Smoke Injury Brings Evacuation Order

**BY GEORGE WOTTON**  
**Guardian-Patriot Staff**  
**Writer**

**SUMMERSIDE** — The section of Prince County swept by fire was declared a disaster area from the medical aspect yesterday afternoon. Evacuation of residents suffering from smoke was authorized by Dr. Hubert McNeil, minister of Health.

Dr. McNeil took the action because of bronchial congestion caused by smoke in the fire area. Young children are especially affected, Dr. McNeil said, and Major O.R. Simons, civil defence co-ordinator operating from the Co-ordination centre at Ellerslie, has been authorized to evacuate any and all persons who are now or likely to be affected by the smoke.

Two nuns from the Prince County Welfare Agency in Summerside, Sr. Mary Eugene and Sr. Mary Eleanor, who have been in the area since Tuesday, distributing food, clothing, and providing assistance to burned out families, yesterday made a house to house survey of most of the area, and last evening requested transportation from co-ordination headquarters for women and children to shelter accommodation that they have arranged at Summerside for those who had to be evacuated last evening.

### SMOKE SICKNESS

The survey they conducted yesterday revealed a number of cases of sickness from the smoke, also indicated that many residents of home threatened by fire and smoke were reluctant to leave, and that most of them had arranged for their own transportation in the event of emergency.

Watchful concern for those who are without transportation, however, is being maintained by RCMP and personnel at the coordination centre.

Many homes are located in or along wood-lined roads, and some are situated in places where the

only escape route could be cut off by sudden fire.

Typical of these persons is the family of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kelly situated between Portage and Foxley River. Their 17-year-old daughter Reby, returning home from grade 12 classes at O'Leary high school for the past two days, has found the woodlined driveway to their home blocked by smoke and fire, and has had to reach her home by a longer detour.

She arrived yesterday to find her father desperately extinguishing a ring of grass fires a few yards away from their home.

Several miles distant, on the Mill Road, a fire center five days ago, Charlie Shaw was still lugging hundreds of pails of water daily to control new out breaks which continue within a few yards of his home, and the nearby home of a neighbour, Mildred Stewart.

Mr. Shaw said he has probed the earth to a depth of four feet in the surrounding woodland swept by fire, and found fire burning to almost that depth in thick peat-like topsoil.

The Summerside branch of the Canadian Legion made a \$1,000 donation to commence a rehabilitation fund that the Ellerslie Legion organized, and to which the Ellerslie branch and the ladies auxiliary have donated \$500.

A dozen or more women and children were being evacuated from areas of danger from advancing fires, and many others were keeping watch ready to leave their homes during the night if fire nears.

Weary fire fighters, bull dozer operators, pumper tank crews, RCMP, and co-ordinating officials were working late last night with plans made to continue in some area all night, and to start in others at daybreak.

With priority fire emergencies developing constantly over the entire area from Northam to Portage, every available RCMP

car assisted by two from the biological station at Ellerslie, patrolled roads and provided communication links that kept 12 bulldozers and 14 pumpers and tanker trucks in action which prevented destruction of any homes or buildings yesterday.

The Ellerslie Legion Disaster Fund is being directed by a committee composed of Lieutenant-Governor F. Walter Hyndman, as honorary chairman; Cyril Williams a past president of the Ellerslie branch, and the Legion zone commander, as chairman; Earl Colwill, Harold Phillips, Budd Williams Carmen MacNeill, D.S. Montgomery, and William Noye.

The donations, which may be made direct to the Ellerslie Legion Branch or to any branch of the Royal Bank of Canada, will be used to assist in the rehabilitation of homeless persons and others who suffered personal losses in property, machinery, furniture, and household effects destroyed or damaged in the fires.

Forty members of the RCAF yesterday joined local volunteer workers, bull dozer operators, and tank truck crews in the front line of fire fighting which helped contain the fires from spreading in several danger spots.

Red Cross disaster services and civil defence volunteers workers continued the co-ordination of the fire fighting activities from headquarters established Tuesday at the Canadian legion home. Here ladies from the district worked steadily in preparing and serving food and coffee supplied by the Red Cross, and hot beef stew sent from RCAF Station Summerside by the commanding officer, Group Captain J.E. Creeper, who also sent an RCAF bus, 57 back pack fire extinguishers, a pumper truck and a portable pumper.

Other pumper trucks and pumpers were in the area from the Dept. of Forestry, Alma, Tyne Valley, Kensington, O'Leary and Coleman.



The main fire areas last evening, from east to west, were located in the area between Springhill and Northam, in the area between Ellerslie and Port Hill Station, in the areas along the Western Road from Mount Pleasant through North Enmore, and Inverness to Portage; in the Conway area, in the area between Portage and Foxley River, and in the Black Banks area.

Extensive fire breaks were established yesterday by bull dozers working along the barren road between Foxley River and the Murray Road, and in the Springhill area, while fire breaks of smaller proportions were thrown up around woods and buildings in many areas where they were needed.

While the fires burned above ground and through tree tops in the areas named above, other fires smouldered at and below ground level in hundreds of other spots where the heat underfoot was too intense to stand or walk on for more than a few minutes.

At the co-ordination center in Ellerslie, Red Cross disaster workers have been working round the clock, and have supplied food which has been

prepared and served by lady volunteer workers from the Ellerslie area to the fire fighters and other workers in the fire fight, some of whom have worked without sleep for more than twenty four hours in the seemingly endless battle.

As the wide spread area of fire fronts necessitated co-ordination of all fire fighting units and relief volunteers, disaster service workers yesterday were working under the direction of civil defence co-ordinator Major Simons, doing everything possible to aid in the battle.

### S'side Legion Votes \$1,000 To Fire Fund

A generous gift of \$1,000 to the fire disaster fund has been donated by the Canadian Legion, George R. Pearkes, V.C., Branch, Summerside, it was revealed last evening after a meeting.

It is hoped that other organizations and individuals will follow the lead of the Summerside Legion Branch in giving to this fund, in order to give assistance to residents of the

county who have suffered heavy losses during the past few days.

### Fire Fighters Sustain Injuries

Mr. Kendall Godkin of Summerside who has been one of the volunteer fire fighters in West Prince severely burned both hands on Saturday while fighting a blaze in the Foxley River area. He is taking treatment daily at the Prince County Hospital.

Kendall is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Heartz Godkin.

Yesterday an RCAF member, Walter Marchbank, fell off a fire truck and sustained injuries to his back. He is in hospital in Summerside.

One other person was reported to have suffered burned hands but his name could not be ascertained today.



# Ellerslie Village Peril Eased As Rain Showers Check Blaze

## Fire Fighting Gear Massed For Effort

**BY GEORGE WOTTON**  
**Guardian-Patriot Staff**  
**Writer**

**SUMMERSIDE** — Following an afternoon of uncontrolled fire, and the greatest concentration of fire fighting facilities ever seen on P.E.I., tension on the fronts in Prince County eased when scattered showers crossed some of the districts at 6 p.m. last evening. They checked a rapidly advancing fire that during the afternoon threatened to destroy Ellerslie Village and the co-ordination centre located there.

The most devastating fires yesterday were located in the Black Banks, Foxley River, Portage and Ellerslie districts.

Families were hastily evacuated from several homes between the Western Road and the North Shore, and the number of property losses included the residence, barn, garage, and one other building of George Tuplin, on the Murray Road; a barn and machine shop of James Gain, on the Murray Road; a barn of James MacDonald on the Black Banks road; the residence of Hattie Bell, on the Western Road in the Mount Pleasant area.

### OTHER LOSSES

Other property losses were reported but not confirmed last night, and at a late hour, fire fighters were continuing the battle to save the residence of Lowell Matthews whose house is situated on the shore line of Cascumpec Bay, where a portable pumper had been landed by a fisheries boat from Alberton when the only road to the home was cut off by fire which was surrounding the area.

Four other homes on this road, upwards of a dozen more on the Murray Road, and the village of Portage were all in danger last night, but fire pumper trucks and fire fighters were being sent into each area to look after all properties.

Reminiscent of Monday's spreading fire, the winds reached peak intensities about 3 p.m. as fierce fires roared through woodlands in 80 degree temperatures until rain fell in the evening. It gave relief in the

Ellerslie area and permitted fire fighting forces on stand-by duty to be diverted to assist in other areas.

An efficient communication station was established by RCMP radio cars strategically located and patrolling the entire area, giving steady reports of conditions and the needs and deployment of fire fighting equipment within their districts.

An emergency appeal, shortly after noon, brought volunteer assistance pouring into the area in greater numbers than could temporarily be dispatched.

### EQUIPMENT MASSED

A count of available equipment included 15 tanker trucks, 12 pumper trucks, approximately 12 bull dozers, 75 dump and transport trucks, and about 500 men, which included two shifts totalling 120 men from RCAF Station Summerside.

During the day contributions to the disaster relief fund established by the Ellerslie branch of the Canadian Legion were received at the Tyne Valley branch of the Royal Bank of Canada to which the Ellerslie Legion and Borden Legion have each donated \$500 and the Summerside Legion had contributed \$1,000.

This money will be used in the rehabilitation of persons who suffered losses of property, household furniture, machinery, and livestock in the fires.

### GREATLY EASED

Heavy rainfall about 10 o'clock last night confined the fire at Palmer's Road and greatly eased the situation in the area.

The Alberton Fire Department, aided by two bulldozers, water tankers and volunteer workers, worked for the past three days to confine the fire to an area between Peters Road and the DeBlois Road.

A mile-long fire break was cut by bulldozers and steady patrols were kept on the cuts. Back-firing was carried out under the direction of Alberton fire chief Stephen Burke and former chief Perley Hardy.

This fire zone was visited yesterday by Dr. O.H. Phillips MP and Henry Wedge and Dr. Hubert McNeil, MLAs from the

area. They were guided by Herbert Lovatt of Alberton.

Two homes in the area were threatened at one time but fire breaks prevented the flames from getting too close. The Palmer Road church was out of immediate danger last night but a constant fire watch at the building was being kept.

### OPERATORS PRAISED

The bulldozer operators are being highly commended by local residents for the fast and continuous work they are doing in establishing fire breaks, in the face of great personal danger. Yesterday 4 of these operators, Alcide Gallant, Lawson Oatway, Lester Silliker, and Arnold Culleton, barely escaped the fire which roared across the Black Banks Road where they had been constructing fire breaks.

Unaware of the approaching danger from the flames which raced through the woods in that area, the men were notified just in time by an RCMP car, and flames sealed the road in fire just feet behind them as they raced for safety through this long, narrow, heavily wooded road.

Two other bulldozer operators suffered minor injuries and were brought into the co-ordination center for first aid attention last night.

### 2 ARE INJURED

One of these was Harold Clements who was struck by a falling tree he was bulldozing out of the fire path, and resulted in a minor cut to his face. The other operator, unidentified, received a minor cut to the back of his head.

Local ladies under the direction of Mrs. Budd Williams of Ellerslie have worked in shifts which are on continuous duty in a well-organized program of preparing food and hot drinks supplied by the Red Cross and RCAF station Summerside for thousands of sandwiches and other food items served to hungry fire fighters and volunteer workers.

Six girls from Summerside and St. Eleanors arrived at the centre last evening to assist or provide relief for the Ellerslie ladies in kitchen duties throughout the night.

**GAS TRUCKS HELP**

Oil tanker trucks from Summerside and other areas changed their loads of oil or gas for loads of water and answered the call for water carrying vehicles yesterday afternoon to feed the portable pumpers fire fighting in areas where no sources of water are available.

Almost every single volunteer fire department west of Charlottetown was represented in the area with men and equipment, and a large water tanker owned by the city of Charlottetown was also sent to assist.

Communication lines were out at Portage late yesterday afternoon as the fire in that area temporarily blocked the Western Highway.

Most of the water supply used by pumper trucks who needed to

re-fill tanks was obtained from the biological station at Ellerslie, where furniture from homes being evacuated was also taken for storage, while evacuees needing shelter and food found these facilities readily available to them at the co-ordination centre in Ellerslie.

An RCAF bus was available to transport them out of the area to Summerside where accommodation was ready for them.

Dispatching of fire fighting equipment and personnel was directed throughout the day by Cnst. Ronald Pettit of the Summerside RCMP detachment, and Richard Found, local co-ordinator.

**MOVED 5 TIMES**

The twenty members of the Bulger family whose home in Foxley River was destroyed on

Monday, yesterday made their fifth move in four days as fire forced them to move from place to place in the area during this time. Four members were evacuated out of the smoke and fire-filled area in Foxley River by a Guardian-Patriot staff car to the control centre in Ellerslie about 2 p.m., and other members were preparing to leave for Summerside with relatives at that time.

While the state of emergency that existed through the area seemed slightly relaxed just before midnight, the direction and intensity of wind was still the major concern until heavy rain can fall on the districts, and the outlook as expressed by an official at the control centre was summed up in his words that “anything can happen tonight.”

**Red Cross units give disaster aid**

Red Cross Disaster Units from Summerside, O’Leary and Charlottetown have been on duty since last Monday bringing aid to the disaster struck area of Western Prince County where forest fires have been raging since last week-end.

Robert Younker, chairman of the Red Cross disaster services reported that units from Charlottetown, O’Leary and Summerside have been on duty at the Disaster Center at Ellerslie since Monday, and that at least three other units have been on the job in their own areas.

Frank MacDonald of Charlottetown, vice-chairman of the disaster committee, was in Morell yesterday afternoon to confer with James Jay, chairman of the disaster committee in that area in connection with the fires in this section of the province. Mr. Jay reported that a committee of women had been organized to prepare sandwiches and coffee for distribution to fire fighters who have been battling recurring flare-ups in Kings County.

In the Western section of the province the Red Cross are doing all possible to provide assistance to families who have lost their homes to the raging fires.

**A WARNING**

Police officials again warned sight-seers and the curious to stay away from the fire area in Prince County. These people, police say, will only hinder the fight by adding to the confusion and may endanger their own safety. No one who is not part of the fight will be allowed at the scene.

**EARLY AID SEEN FOR FIRE AREA**

The possibility of early government aid for the hard hit people in the province’s fire area was seen yesterday when Premier Shaw and most of his cabinet toured the Prince County sector.

“Action will be taken as soon as possible to help those in such distress”, the Premier said feelingly.

Discussing the matter during a brief stop in Portage two senior members of the Cabinet fully agreed on making help available. “It has got to be done,” they said as they unofficially discussed methods of providing aid.

One of them noted “it makes no difference that we will be over our budget.” The other remarked, “we will have to create a special fund. There is real justification here for it.”

The Cabinet, whose regularly scheduled meeting yesterday was cancelled in order to visit the fire area, will hold a meeting this afternoon, the Premier announced. It is expected much of the discussion will centre around aid for the disaster area.



**PREMIER SHAW** is looking at the home of George Tuplin, shown on this same page, and coughing as he is choked and red eyed with smoke from the fire and forest blazing nearby. “Terrifying saddening” was his observation.





## ‘Terrifying, Saddening’ Is Premier’s Comment

“It was a terrifying and saddening spectacle,” Premier Walter R. Shaw said late yesterday as he finished an exhaustive tour of many fire-blackened sections of Prince County.

Accompanied by all members of the cabinet excepting Highways Minister Matheson and Attorney General Bell, the Premier drove through dense black smoke and along back roads where flames almost reached the cars as he saw for himself the terrifying extent of the catastrophe which hit the areas.

His tour ranged widely through central Prince from Ellerslie as he crisscrossed the country through Tyne Valley, Portage, Foxley River, Conway and countless small settlements.

“Action will be taken as soon as possible to help those in such distress,” he said as he saw the tremendous losses in homes, crops, farmlands and woodlots.

Of the work being done Premier Shaw said “I cannot too highly praise the efforts of the men in charge and the wonderful support given by local residents, the RCAF, the RCMP and all towns and villages which provided equipment.”

### SPLENDID EFFORT

“I found a splendidly organized fire fighting effort,” he stated.

He noted units of the Army has supplied men and equipment “to take part in the difficult job of control and protection,” and regretted that further homes and buildings have been destroyed.

The Premier said one of the gravest dangers was the threat posed to larger community centers.

He was pleased when rain started to fall at six o’clock. “I hope it will continue as nothing but heavy rain can stop the progress of these fires.”

“I am sure the sympathy of all the people of the province will go out to those who have suffered such losses,” he said, “and action will be taken as soon as possible to help those in such distress.”

Just before leaving Ellerslie last evening the Premier received a message that fires in the eastern part of the province were again breaking out beyond control. He said that Hon. R.R. Bell, attorney general, and Hon. J.P. Matheson, minister of highways, were in that section of the province to assist wherever possible.

## Mobilization, Protection Effort Mounted in P.E.I.

With the fire situation in Prince County rapidly deteriorating Thursday, a super mobilization and protection effort was made throughout the province.

All woodlands in the province have been closed to travel. Hon. Leo Rossiter said yesterday that campers in provincial camping grounds and trailer parks would have to vacate immediately. National Park forests are also closed but campers will not

have to vacate. Open fires, even on the beaches, have been prohibited.

### FIRE CREW SENT

Eric Kipping, superintendent of National Parks, ordered a fully equipped firefighting crew in to the area to help fight the blaze. The two men, park warden Al Murphy and foreman Reg MacDonald, brought with them a highly mobile trailer pumper of 250-gallon capacity; a Wejax centrifugal fire

pump; a jeep; 2,000 feet of forestry fire hose, several back-pack pumps and a 10-man fire tool kit.

The mobile fire pumper is one that Murphy designed and has been brought into general use by the National Park Services.

CITY SENDS AID

Mayor A.W. Gaudet ordered the city water tanker and two operating crews to the fire area in Prince County. The truck has an 1,800-gallon water capacity and is suitable for fighting ground fires or carrying water to the scenes of large fires.

The mayor also said that city mechanics and mechanics from Maritime Motor Supply would work round the clock to get the two disabled city pumpers back in action. They are expected to be ready early this morning.

If the fire situation has not improved after the pumpers are repaired, the city will consider sending one of the machines to Prince County.

DEVISED MACHINE

The city has also devised a machine to at least partially relieve the regular pumpers from answering calls to grass and brush fires in the city.

It consists of a 250 gallon tank loaned by an oil company mounted on the back of a light truck. Firemen equipped with back-pack stirrup pumps can effectively fight grass fires, taking their water from the tank. The truck can be taken through fields and rough country to the scene of fires.

The CNR has said that no more tank cars will be sent into the fire zone immediately. Division Superintendent G. R. Greenough said that a check with the senior railroad man in the fire area has shown that no more tank cars can be handled above the seven that are already there.

Mr. Greenough said however that he personally would make an inspection of the area and plan the railway course of action in regard to more equipment.

MILITIA GROUP

No. 2 Militia Group in Charlottetown has joined the fight in the Prince County fire area, supplying mainly transportation equipment.

In the area are four heavy trucks, four light trucks, and three jeeps all with army drivers. Also in the area are three members of the Provost Corps, equipped with motorcycles.

Brigadier A.W. Rogers said last night that regular troops of the militia group will not be called into action until the RCAF base in Summerside is no longer able to supply men. Brig. Rogers said the reason for this is because the No. 2 group is not a regular Army unit.

Chief project of the No. 2 group at present is the establishment of a field kitchen that will soon be ready for action, the brigadier said.

‘Unbelievably Bad’ Is Word On Prince Co. Destruction

BY RALPH CAMERON  
Guardian-Patriot Staff  
Writer

The fire destruction in Prince County is unbelievable unless witnessed.

Miles of burned out stretches; forests and fields just blackened ruins. Houses and barns left smouldering wrecks. Whole districts evacuated.

Women and children sitting dazed by the disaster which struck so swiftly.

All types and makes of trucks hauling people away from the path of the flames; more trucks loaded with a few pitiful belongings saved.

UTTER DESOLATION

Yesterday afternoon mile after flame-filled mile it was the same picture of utter desolation.

“This is awful. It is just awful”, Premier Walter Shaw muttered time after time as he saw the extent of the disaster.

With all members of his Cabinet excepting Highways Minister Matheson and Attorney General Bell he toured the stricken area.

A five-car motorcade drove over interminable miles through smoke so dense at times the side of the road could not be seen.

Over one terrific stretch of road with fires blazing fiercely on both sides the Press car

accompanying the officials was able to get through even with headlights blazing only by following the big white truck which the City of Charlottetown uses for watering the streets. It was in service carrying badly needed supplies of water to aid embattled firemen.

Countless other trucks, mobilized from all parts of the Island, hauled water in casks or tanks or any other container available.

One fire-blackened and smoke-filled driver from Kensington said he had come to Ellerslie on Monday to help with his truck. He had been there ever since.

PLEADING FOR HELP

Exhausted operators of bulldozers were pleading for help so they could get some rest.

On a side road in deep back country a lone Holstein cow wandered over blackened fields looking for grass. Nearby a battered stove was all there was to be seen where a home had once been.

A few miles further and within a mile of one of the fiercest blazes, an elderly woman slowly drove four cows down a road leading nowhere but to the shore.

On the Murray Road another blaze had destroyed a barn and was just beginning to catch on a

beautiful two-storey house owned by George Tuplin.

Headed by the Premier the entire official party left cars and ran to man a bucket brigade. Almost every man in the group had a farm background and the action was instinctive. But it was a wasted gesture.

HOUSE DESTROYED

Before available buckets could be reached, the house itself became a raging inferno as it burst into flames in all sections at once and the heat was so intense it was impossible to get near it.

The fire raced through the nearby orchard and jumped the road to start a terrific blaze in deep woods opposite. Car owners ran to get their autos turned around as it rapidly became impossible to go ahead on the road. Within minutes the house was gone.

Its owners had left and moved out his furniture only a few hours before.

Along almost every roadside bulldozers and grading machines were cutting away shrubs creating ditches in an effort to help halt the rapid advance of the flames.

Ellerslie was the never-centre of fire-fighting activity with communications centres set up by civil defence units under co-

ordinator Orin Simons at the Ellerslie Hall.

TRUCK CONTROL

Outside on the roadway an RCMP car maintained radio control of truck movements in the area. Mounties were to be seen everywhere helping or directing traffic. Inspector A.S. McNeil was in personal charge on the scene.

He recalled similar battles with brush fires in Western Canada and remarked on the, for this country, unusual sight of a 'crown' fire racing over the tops of trees 60 feet high while leaving the lower parts relatively untouched.

Along one road where the homes were as yet not affected by fire, one farm home was noticed with outbuildings crowded nearby. Jammed against one wall of a barn was a towering hay stack which seemed to offer an invitation to disaster.

Down one of the roads leading to Portage a deserted farm home was seen with doors open as the family had apparently departed hurriedly. On the porch was a large console radio and a washing machine obviously left to their fate.

FIRES EVERYWHERE

It was not just one fire the tired people had to fight. There were fires everywhere. On the road approaching Ellerslie fires burned stubbornly on both sides.

Only a short distance away children casually strolled home from school along the same road.

Approaching the village huge columns of smoke could be seen in at least three main areas.

What had been a beautiful summer day in Queens County became a nightmare in Prince. There was neither day nor night, only an in-between smoke-filled eternity.

Heavy gusty winds fanned embers into roaring fires all over again in countless valleys and along hillsides.

Only occasionally could anyone get a lungful of clean air.

Small animals and insects were particularly noticeable through their complete absence. Not a cat or dog was seen.

Scattered across the deserted country were many rural churches, many in the path of the innumerable fires raging on all sides.

DESERTED VILLAGE

As one settlement after another was passed there came a strong reminder of the famous poem by Goldsmith "The Deserted Village."

In one such, apparently devoid of life at first, some activity was seen. A small girl with her hair done up in curlers was calmly enjoying herself on a common rope swing.

Some areas were used as concentration points of standby trucks so they could be rushed where needed. The drivers, weary and fresh alike, sat on the roadside munching sandwiches supplied by Red Cross workers.

In Ellerslie Hall women volunteers provided refreshments and welcome hot coffee to all workers.

Late in the afternoon segments of the military units based in Charlottetown arrived with huge trucks and a spokesman said by today there would be 100 Army men in the fight.

One sergeant approached Premier Shaw and said he was a government employee in civilian life and asked permission to stay to help in the fight. "Son, you stay here as long as you are needed," the Premier told him.



THE BEAUTIFUL residence of George Tuplin, Murray Road is shown as it burned yesterday despite the efforts of fire fighters which included Premier, Walter Shaw and most of his cabinet members. The fire caught as the cabinet members were nearing the area and they turned in to join in the hopeless battle.



# Co-ordination Seen Brighter

Red Cross and Civil Defence units, working in close co-operation from their Ellerslie headquarters reported last night that the co-ordination picture in the Prince County fire areas was looking brighter.

Communication, traffic, welfare, feeding and equipment dispatching are being controlled from the joint headquarters, set up in the Legion Hall.

Food and drink is being distributed by mobile units to the men on the fire lines. Much

of the food is being prepared by the ladies of Ellerslie, and one hot meal per day is prepared by the RCAF at their base. The Prince County Catholic welfare agency is also aiding in looking after refugees.

RCMP are looking after all fire area communication with the dispatcher working in the headquarters building, Civil Defence is handling traffic control.

The refugee problem was not as great as first indications showed, and only 15 people had yet to be moved early last night. Many others had stayed temporarily at the headquarters but later moved

in with friends, or were able to return to their homes.

Plenty of space had been prepared in advance for any who might not have been able to find lodging. Grocery stores in the area distributed groceries to some of the disaster victims.

Red Cross units from Charlottetown, O'Leary and Summerside are in the area, under the immediate direction of Miss Ephigenie Arsenault and Gordon MacDonald. Civil Defence and militia personnel are under the command of Major O.R. Simons. Dick Found is headquarters dispatcher.



SHOWN HERE are sergeant "Chuck" Martin briefing Corporal J.H. Brown and Leading Aircraftsman I.B. Ruthven on the mysteries of the Wajax forestry pump. The three airmen are part of a 21-man group of RCAF Station firefighters detailed to help fight Prince County forest fires under the direction of Officer G.L. Som-

erville, Station fire chief. On August 29 the team fought fires in the Inverness and Foxley River areas, and five minutes after this picture was taken on Wednesday they were off to Ellerslie to be given the day's directions. New equipment was specially flown in from No. 5 Supply Depot in Moncton, comprising two Wajax forestry

pumps, fifty-nine backpacks (4 gal. tins with hand pumps) and 5,000 feet of hose. The furniture shown in lower picture, was piled on the bank of the Foxley River, mute witness to the fear that the destructive West Prince forest fire struck in the hearts of residents. The owner's name was not available at press time.



# Hope Is Held For Tyne Valley Although Partially Evacuated Fire Demon Halted On Village Doorstep

By **GEORGE WOTTON**  
**Guardian-Patriot Staff Writer**

**SUMMERSIDE** — Partial evacuation of Tyne Valley village, the largest community in the Prince County Fire area, was hastily conducted yesterday afternoon in the front of advancing fire that last evening appeared in check within yards of homes in the village.

Only the presence of sufficient fire fighting equipment and volunteer fire fighters saved all homes yesterday in this and other districts in the area.

Rising winds in excess of 40 miles per hour stirred new fires that were heaviest in the Tyne Valley, Conway, and Mount Pleasant areas, and still burning in threat to residences in every district in a twelve-mile belt extending across the full width of the Island in the area between Northam and Portage.

For the second day, an emergency call for assistance brought trucks and volunteers pouring into the area to assist in fire fighting and evacuation.

## **1,000 MEN**

A complete army mobile field kitchen arrived from Camp Gagetown, N.B., with food supplies sufficient to feed 200 men for four days. Food donations arrived from many parts of the Island to feed the working force that grew to upwards of one thousand men during the day.

In the worsening situation, 10,000 feet of fire hose was flown in from Montreal.

Inspector A. S. McNeill of Charlottetown reduced every detachment on the Island to an absolute minimum staff and moved every available officer and radio patrol car into the area, under his personal direction, in continuing the communication network in all areas that kept the fire fighters, machines and evacuation trucks moving to urgent positions.

In Tyne Valley the four patients from the Stewart Memorial health centre were moved to Prince County Hospital because of the dense choking smoke that blanketed the area most of the afternoon and evening.

The area around the control centre at Ellerslie assumed an atmosphere like a wartime battle front as priority requests were supplied for everything from bandages to bull dozers.

Heroic feats of courage and narrow escapes from flames were heard of from all fire fronts.

## **ESCAPED BY RAIL**

A dozen men, trapped on a road in a wooded area near Port Hill station, with every escape route cut off by fire at 3 a.m. yesterday morning, slacked the front tires on their army panel truck driven by Ken Ford of No. 5 Signals Regiment, Charlottetown, lifted the vehicle onto the railway tracks, and in their "automotive train" drove out of their trapped position to safety at Ellerslie Station where the truck was lifted back to the highway and the twelve men drove down the road to the control centre.

The Summerside RCAF Station yesterday sent 133 men who worked a twelve hour shift, and were relieved by another 133 men at midnight last night. In addition to the many ways the RCAF station has already assisted, they sent in six more forestry pumps yesterday, complete with crews.

The personnel from the RCAF station are under command of F-L Mel Gilmour, with W-O Somerville as fire chief, and W-O Mitchell as deputy fire chief.

## **PROVOST CORPS**

Members of the army provost corps, assisted by two members of the Summerside Police department, were on traffic control duty at all intersections in the area.

A number of the homes in the village and vicinity were evacuated, along with household effects, and librarians arrived from Charlottetown to direct the removal of the books from the public library.

A receiving center for evacuees was established at the Canadian Legion home in Miscouche, from where accommodation was arranged in Summerside or Miscouche for any who had not made other arrangements, and when storage facilities were exhausted at the Ellerslie biological station, household effects were diverted to the Legion Home in Miscouche for temporary storage.

## **DETERMINATION**

With almost fanatical determination to save properties, the volunteer fire fighters from scores of Island districts are becoming familiar faces each day on the fire fronts, and in many cases work almost any length of time, regardless of fatigue, until replacements arrive.

Grim also are the faces of the men, women, and children whose homes and buildings, representing a life time of work in almost every instance, cling tenaciously to hope that seems futile, as they climb to rooftops to pour buckets of water on roofs soon to be scorched, or throw water to dampen the sides of buildings situated in what previously had seemed beautiful green woodland shelter that is now being transformed into heat waves of flame and frightening clouds of dense smoke.

On this Labor Day weekend holiday, the last of the summer season, the long made plans of residents of West Prince fire fronts are forgotten by men and women so busy they are scarcely aware that the weekend has arrived.

After a full seven days of fire fighting, the concentration on the job at hand, which has no ending in sight short of prolonged and heavy rain, will continue today, and until residents of these fire stricken areas can return to their homes, and under less tension than now exists, the work of rehabilitation can't commence for those whose homes are in ashes, and for all those who have suffered unprecedented losses by fire in this area of more than one hundred square miles of Prince county farm and woodland districts.

# More Equipment Going To Prince

Sorely needed help in fire fighting equipment is on its way to the embattled Prince County area, Premier Walter R. Shaw said last night.

The aid is coming from Sackville and Fredericton, N.B., and from the Canadian National Railways on the mainland.

Premier Shaw said yesterday's meeting of the cabinet was largely taken up with discussion about the fire situation in the province as late reports at that time indicated matters were serious in Tyne Valley, Conway, Enmore River and Mount Pleasant.

He said even further organization of the fire fighting system was underway for the weekend

holiday and made a plea for all and men machines to stay on the job.

As an additional aid to workers, he said the Department of Public Works office would remain open 24 hours a day and when workers needed either information or additional material they would only have to call Charlottetown 4111.

The Premier also announced Hon. Henry Wedge, minister of Welfare and Labor, had been appointed to set up a special 'disaster' committee which would receive any donations made to residents of the burned out areas. This committee, he stated, will function entirely separately from the Red Cross or other organizations now taking part.

## Disaster Fund Made Official



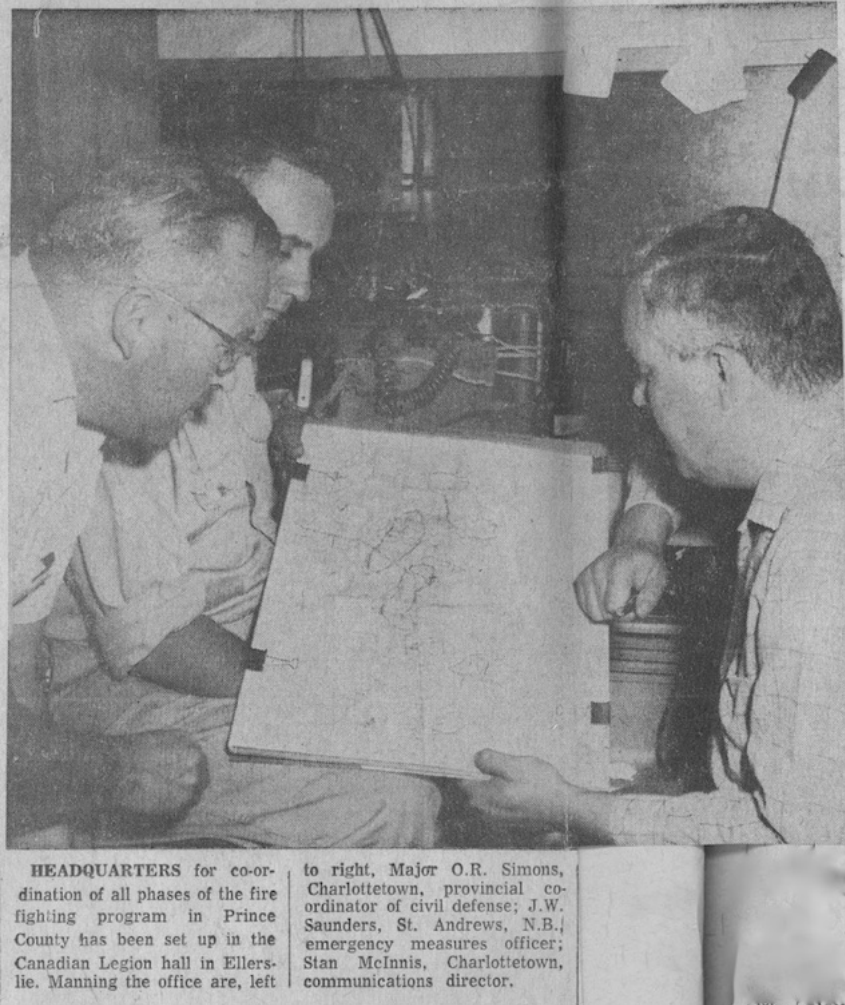
Welfare Minister Henry W. Wedge said last evening the government recognizes the Ellerslie legion disaster fund committee as the official disaster fund committee for Prince County and that

Cyril Williams, the legion zone chairman has accepted the chairmanship.

Mr. Williams said the committee will be enlarged shortly. The provincial welfare department will work in close conjunction with this committee, said Mr. Wedge, and will provide social assistance to the needy families.

People have been requested to make their cash donations to any of the chartered banks in the province who will in turn transfer the contributions to the official committee.

The announcement was made to clarify earlier reports that another committee was being set up under Mr. Wedge to administer [clipping ended.]



HEADQUARTERS for co-ordination of all phases of the fire fighting program in Prince County has been set up in the Canadian Legion hall in Ellerslie. Manning the office are, left

to right, Major O.R. Simons, Charlottetown, provincial co-ordinator of civil defense; J.W. Saunders, St. Andrews, N.B., emergency measures officer; Stan McInnis, Charlottetown, communications director.

# Weather Change Saves 5 Villages

By THE CANADIAN PRESS

A shift in the wind and light rain were credited Friday with saving five Atlantic provinces' villages from destruction by ravaging forest fires.

But other villages lay in the paths of some of the 100-odd fires, many of them still out of control. The forest fire situation in Prince Edward Island is the worst in memory.

Rain fell on the lobstering village of Garnish 100 miles from St John's Nfld. checking the flames less than half a mile away while most of the 900 residents fled with bits of personal belongings.

In northern Nova Scotia where a mile-wide fire roared over a hill less than half a mile from the lumbering village of Collingwood, 10 miles from Springhill, the rain had little effect. But the winds switched as the 300 residents prepared to move out and drove the fire into a 10-mile stretch of spruce and maple.

## WIND CHANGES

The 300 residents of Ellerslie, civil defence co-ordination centre for a 100-square-mile disaster

area in western Prince Edward Island, had been preparing to evacuate when a wind change came. But more than 100 trucks, mostly privately owned, continued to move families from the threat of a dozen fires burning in the area since Sunday.

Winds were gusty, raging from 15 to 50 miles per hour, and humidities were low as Thursday night's scattered rainfall disappeared and fires sprang to new life.

The western Prince Edward Island village of Tyne Valley was thrown into confusion during most of the day as mass evacuation began while two fires bore in.

Men, women and children were seen on the streets carrying everything from dishes to ice boxes.

Prime Minister Diefenbaker sent a message of sympathy to the area and offered aid. Premier Walter Shaw, who visited the area Thursday with members of his cabinet, described the situation as "unbelievable."

# Murray Road Fire Victim Leaves Home Reluctantly

SUMMERSIDE BUREAU OF THE  
GUARDIAN

The story of Mrs. Beatrice Bulger, Murray Road, a widow with an 11-year-old daughter, could well be one of many residents of the fire stricken area of Prince County, who had to evacuate their homes because of the potential fire threat.

Mrs. Bulger, like many other residents of the area, was reluctant to leave her home and possessions behind. "I had a feeling I wouldn't lose my home," she said.

She told a Guardian reporter last evening that it was only upon the advice of the RCMP, who reminded her of the danger of bronchial congestion caused by the smoke, that she finally decided to leave her home on the Murray Road.

She said that with the help of neighbours, she gathered up what possessions she could Thursday morning and that night stayed at the home of Mrs. Mickey MacDonald, located about a mile from her home.

"My furniture is scattered all over the place," she said. "I have a stove in one place, my couch is in a field."

## 'OUTRAGEOUS FIRES'

She described the fires as being "something outrageous" and stated that firefighters were doing a wonderful job.

Yesterday morning Mrs. Bulger and her daughter were taken to the Legion home at Ellerslie, where they were fed and later taken to the Prince County welfare agency in Summerside.

She said she was so bewildered that she never once thought of her relatives in Summerside, Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Bulger, 67 Central Street, with whom she is now staying.

"It was only late this afternoon (Friday) that I thought of them" she said. She had been placed with another family in Summerside prior to going to her relatives' home.

Also staying at the Bulger home in Summerside are three of Mr. Bulger's young sisters, who were also taken from their home in the fire area.

Mr. Bulger stated that his parents were still living in their home at Foxley River, from where the children were taken Wednesday, and that he plans on going to visit them today.

Determined to visit her home on the Murray Road, Mrs. Beatrice Bulger remarked that she was going with him to see if her home was alright.

"I don't know if my house is still standing or not but I am going to see. I won't be staying there. I just want to see if everything is alright."

## S'side Council Makes Donation To Fire Fund

SUMMERSIDE — The Summerside Town Council has approved a donation of \$1,000 to the fire disaster fund it was learned yesterday from His Worship Mayor W.A. Currie.

At the same time Mayor Currie expressed deep regret at the terrible catastrophe that has struck Prince County and extended sympathy to those who have lost their homes, crops and farms and woodlands.

Another cash donation reported yesterday was that of \$50 from the New Annan Women's Institute who have also pledged a box of clothing and other useful items.

Cash donations to the disaster fund may be left or sent to any chartered bank in Summerside or to the Royal Bank in Tyne Valley, fund headquarters.

## Smoke Is Seen In City Streets

Smoke from the West Prince County forest fires was thick enough in Charlottetown streets shortly after midnight to bring tears to the eyes, and car lights cut through as late motorists returned home.

This was in spite of the fact that the wind was down to a mere six miles per hour at the time, according to the meteorological station at the airport near the City.

The weather predictions, unfortunately, are for clear weather with no trace of rain, although the wind was expected to be much lighter at a predicted 15 miles per hour.

# FIRE FIGHTERS FACING NEW PEAKS OF PERIL

## Weather outlook has little promise

### SUMMERSIDE BUREAU OF THE PATRIOT

Bone-weary firefighters faced new peaks of danger today as their grim battle against wild forest fires in West Prince County moved into its sixth full day.

Forecast of a rainless, hot, sunny week-end with winds up to 20 mph this afternoon brought renewed fears that the flames would again rage out of control. Preparations were being made to completely evacuate the stricken village of Tyne Valley should the necessity arise.

Last night the firefighters aided by heavy dew and a decrease in wind velocity managed to contain the fire just outside the village that had been partially evacuated in the afternoon. But with the dry weather and winds again forecast to blow up this afternoon fighters are uncertain of what the outcome will be.

"If we get more wind," Communications Director Stan McInnis said this morning, "we can't be sure what will happen."

### NINTH HOUSE BURNED

Authorities say that they can only hope to fight a holding battle against the flames. Any hope of controlling and mastering the fire will only come with the first heavy rainfall.

Firefighters fought valiantly to save the Lot 11 Catholic Church and managed to contain the flames just short of the building. When the winds increase today, however, the church will be in jeopardy again.

Friday the second emergency call for assistance in two days brought trucks and volunteers pouring into the area to assist in fire fighting and evacuation.

### 1,000 MEN

A complete army mobile field kitchen arrived from Camp Gagetown, N.B., with food supplies sufficient to feed 200 men for four days. Food donations arrived from many parts of the Island to feed the working force that grew to upwards of one thousand men during the day.

In the worsening situation, 10,000 feet of fire hose was flown in from Montreal.

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**BIRD'S EYE VIEW** of disaster on the march is shown in this aerial picture of multiple fires as they advance in the Conway region. The picture is by Bob Hambly.

## Buildings start fire in woods

ALBERTON – Fire of unknown origin destroyed a house and barn near Miminegash shortly after 8 a.m. this morning.

Nothing was saved from either of the two buildings owned by Glen Costain. At the height of the blaze two exploding gasoline drums blew through the roof of the barn and spread the fire into the woods nearby.

The Alberton fire truck was called to the scene and two hours later O'Leary fire truck came up from Tyne Valley to assist in preventing the bush fire from reaching major proportions.

The Kensington pumper arrived at 5 this morning to lend assistance. A large fire party remained at the scene and although the fire is under control, a close watch is being maintained today.

## Western Fire Is Controlled

### ALBERTON BUREAU OF THE GUARDIAN

The woods fire in the Leoville-DeBlois area near Tignish is believed under control but a constant watch is being maintained in case the blaze breaks out again. The Alberton fire truck left the area Saturday night for the first time in four days.

The Alberton men were joined Sunday by the Tignish fire truck and a number of volunteers from Tignish and Palmer Road.

A minor fire in a swamp about a mile from Elmsdale and sealed off yesterday by a dozer and is not considered dangerous. The fire was reported to have been burning for some days but it was decided to have it eliminated as a possible fire hazard.

## Fire bugs suspected by minister

By THE CANADIAN PRESS

Forestry officials today said they "couldn't hazard a guess" on the amount of destruction caused by 100-odd fires burning through Atlantic provinces' forests.

In southern Nova Scotia, near the Shelburne County lumbering community of Jordan, flames approached through pine forest and bushland. The 100 residents packed their belongings and waited.

Forests Minister E.D. Haliburton termed the situation "desperate" and said an immediate assessment of the damage would be impossible.

"It is unbelievable that all these fires could have started in the same week by coincidence. I hate to think anyone is setting them...but they must be," he said.

A total of 63 fires were recorded in the past seven days in Nova Scotia.

Newfoundland's worst fire was being contained near Garnish after a province wide appeal was issued for assistance. Eight others were burning in spruce and scrub but none was out of control.

New Brunswick's 30 fires were under control, mostly in jack pine ridges in the northern part of the province.

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PAGE 4

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 1960

## Prince County won't suffer through lack of assistance

It is six days today since billowing clouds of grayish-white smoke began rising lazily into the air a few miles from the McNeill's Mills area as the sun started climbing over the eastern horizon on a Sunday morning that was as lovely as any of the lovely mornings the people of Prince County have experienced in this loveliest of summers.

Residents in that immediate area could tell by the height of the towering clouds of smoke that this was not a small fire, but as they idly watched the slowly moving clouds, there was not thought in their minds of organizing themselves into a fire-fighting body. They had seen such high clouds of smoke before, and they had no reason to believe that, since there was but the slightest of breezes, this fire would not burn itself out as so many others had done in the past.

But the billowing clouds of smoke did not decrease in volume. By three o'clock on that warm, sunlit Sunday afternoon, the breeze had noticeably increased and the great volumes of smoke now began to move with a speed that was easily perceptible. By five o'clock, the smoke, now visible forty miles away, was making visibility difficult for motorists ten miles from the area in flames.

For six days now, and five nights, the fires have been burning while outside help from the mainland and from other parts of the province has been pouring into the county. With no hope of rain for the next forty-eight hours, the people of Prince await the coming of the grimmest Labor Day they have ever experienced.

Meanwhile, the battle against the devouring flames goes on with men and women fighting against weariness and loss of sleep to save something from a life's work. But they are not alone now, and the help that has been pouring in will continue to come until the long battle is over and the smoking, charred ruins of a lovely countryside are surveyed and plans made to begin life anew.

Fortunately, all resources of assistance are not exhausted in this province. Yesterday, Lieut.-Colonel J. A. Macdonald, M.P., called on this newspaper. With his own worries over the fire threats in his own county, Colonel Macdonald expressed the utmost concern for the people of Prince and informed The Evening Patriot that the P.E.I. Regiment, of which he is Commanding Officer, is ready upon receipt of orders to move into the fire-endangered areas of Prince County to render all assistance it can.

## Evacuees stunned by fire threat

SUMMERSIDE — A story that could have come from any of the residents of the fire stricken area of Prince County was yesterday related by Mrs. Beatrice Bulger, Murray Road, a widow with an 11-year-old daughter, who had to evacuate their home because of the threat of fire.

Mrs. Bulger, like many other residents of the area, was reluctant to leave her home and possessions behind, "I had a feeling I wouldn't lose my home," she said.

She told a Guardian reporter last evening that it was only upon the advice of the RCMP, who reminded her of the danger of bronchial congestion caused by the smoke, that she finally

decided to leave her home on the Murray Road.

She said that with the help of neighbors, she gathered up what possessions she could Thursday morning and that night stayed at the home of Mrs. Mickey MacDonald, located about a mile from her home.

"My furniture is scattered all over the place," she said, "I have a stove in one place, my couch is in a field."

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Also staying at the Bulger home in Summerside are three of Mr. Bulger's young sisters, who were also taken from their home in the fire area.

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# Many Problems Involved in Fight

By JOHN BOND  
Guardian-Patriot Staff Writer  
SUMMERSIDE - Living memory cannot recall a greater effort in the province than that being made by Prince County firefighters.

The effort is being made by a great number of people under strain and hardship that quickly crushes the weak.

Fire is not the only problem workers must face; they are called upon to endure smoke, wet, cold and extreme fatigue in combating the red menace.

Smoke is probably the most crushing problem at hand. Thick and black and often lying nearly on the ground it chokes the lungs, inflames the eyes and parches the mouth.

Hundreds of smoke masks have been issued but many firefighters must still walk barefaced into the sickening clouds.

## ADD TO MISERY

Wet and cold combine forces to add their bit to the misery. Warm days are followed by crisp, cold nights. The breath turns to vapor as it leaves the nose and the cold combined with wet clothes had knocked more than one good man off his feet.

Sleeping accommodations for the bone-weary men is for the most part where they find it. Only at the general headquarters at Ellerslie are there prepared sleeping places. On one floor of the two story building Red Cross people have placed mattresses in all available floor space and have provided blankets and pillows.

The emergency feeding measures are now done by an amazingly well organized system.

Sandwiches, drinks, cookies and cigarettes are placed in the hands of men on the firelines. Volunteer workers in cars are on the access roads making continuous circuits of the fire area with food.

## 3 HOT MEALS DAILY

At the base station three hot meals a day are served, one meal frequently overlapping the other between breakfast and supper.

There is no real beginning or ending of the job.

The hot food is prepared in military field kitchens near the building and served by local ladies who work round the clock in shifts. From one room in the hall emerges an unending stream of sandwiches, also made by shifts of Prince County women. Hot coffee, tea and chocolate is available by the gallon.

## MASS OF EQUIPMENT

The mass of equipment at the fire scene is astounding. Dozens of heavy trucks line the road at the headquarters, ready to move at a moment’s notice.

Bulldozers are everywhere in almost uncounted numbers. To the observer, many are only a noise in the forest. These machines, some rubber tired some crawlers, are operated by steel nerves ‘cat-skinners’ and have counted unmeasured miles of fire breaks, sometimes through walls of flame and frequently in blinding smoke.

Motor graders, floats, welding machines and light trucks appear and disappear periodically. Regular fire engines and dressed firemen are a common sight. In addition to these are dozens of small portable pumps and miles of hose.

Machines are repaired and serviced on the site. Mechanics are on constant call and welders are readily available. Government trucks carrying tanks of gas and diesel fuel maintain a 24 hour patrol of machinery.

Another instrument in extensive use is the often cursed but proved useful ‘back-pack’. A small water tank and a piston hand pump it is carried on the back of the firefighter. Deep in the woods men toil with the heavy packs cutting deep scars into their shoulders.

## WATER SOURCE

Water is being taken from every available source, with Tyne Valley and Foxley River the main supply points.

Tank trucks are loaded by pump at the water sites and

shuttled at high speed to waiting pumpers on the fire lines.

The Red Cross is constantly administering first aid both at the Ellerslie headquarters and in the field.

Burns, cuts and cinders in the eye are the most frequently treated injuries. Aspirins are handed out by the dozen.

Most vital machinery are of course men. And at the fire zone they are machines. And there is an estimated 1,200 men in the area.

Working fantastic hours without sleep, they are still ever ready to answer calls for volunteers. A call for volunteers might send them to work in a danger area, to ride the back of a tanker in the freezing night air or relieve a fire crew even more weary than themselves.

Sometimes relieved crews pull into Ellerslie only to volunteer for work elsewhere.

## ONLY LUXURY

The men work without regard to food or sleep, aware that they are doing the most important job in the province at the moment. The only luxury they allow themselves is a constant grumbling about lack of food and sleep.

The message and dispatch centre located in front of the headquarters is a masterpiece of organization. Information is fed to the centre, an RCMP radio car, from an unknown number of police cars that constantly patrol the entire 80 square mile area.

Radio equipped Army and Air Force vehicles on patrol each feed information to their respective headquarters, and the information is passed on to the dispatch centre by intercommunication boxes and field phones. In formation also comes by runner from the message centre in the headquarters.

From the dispatch centre, men machine and everything going into or out of the fire area is given orders. The dispatcher is never idle and a cluster of workers is always at the car window awaiting briefing.

# Terrific Fire Fight Seen As Enemy Held in Check

## Buildings Saved Monday By Super-Human Efforts

By **GEORGE WOTTON**  
**Guardian-Patriot Staff**  
**Writer**

**SUMMERSIDE** – Entering the tenth day of fire swept fury in Prince County, residents and fire-fighters look back with satisfaction on a Labor Day weekend on which their almost super-human efforts saved every home and building in the paths of fires that continue to sweep the area without any sign of abatement, that now appears possible only from heavy rain, not yet in sight.

As dusk fell last evening on the smoke shrouded countryside, firemen in smoke masks, with water “back packs”, climbed from transport vehicles parked beside a “welcome to Freeland” sign barely visible in the dense smoke, and disappeared into the rolling grey mass of hot choking smoke to join pumper truck crews already pouring water on buildings which stood only yards

from the fire front rolling forward through thick timber from the barren road.

### HOMES SAVED

At the same time, residents along the road from Conway to the Western Highway were barely discernible in smoke, atop roofs on which they poured water to save their homes from a similar destruction of a neighbour’s who, along with six others, lost his home last week.

In a telephone call to The Guardian from Ottawa yesterday, Hon. J. Angus MacLean expressed concern about the fire situation on the Island, and said his colleagues in the Federal Government were also concerned. Any co-operation the Government can give in meeting this emergency, he said, would be gladly forthcoming.

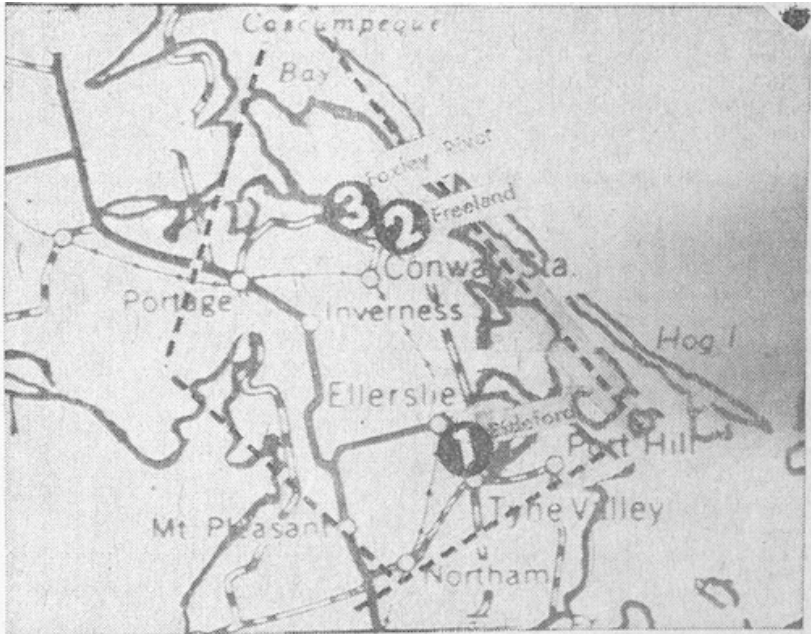
The advance of fire south of Portage, noticeable for the first time in several days, was

developing new life as it sent smoke billowing in the air.

East of Portage village, along the Western Road, fire burned briskly in and at woods edge, on the north side of the highway, and grass fires were running freely towards fire breaks that seemed capable of retaining them.

On the south end of MacNeill Mill’s road, about a half mile from the Western Highway, bull dozers could be heard but not seen, as their truly fearless operators cut new fire breaks in burning timber on the west side of this road.

In the woods of Inverness, North Enmore and Mount Pleasant, fire in greater intensity than seen for a week was fanned to new activity, with the setting sun reflecting a reddish glow from smoke clouds that took on a spectacular reddish glow.



**MAIN AREA** in which Island woodland fires are raging is outlined by broken lines on this map. With some 600 men battling the outbreaks, which by now encompass upwards of 200 square miles, numbers indicate

key points where the struggle was at its peak yesterday: 1—Bideford, the close neighbor of Ellerslie which is the headquarters of the fire fighters; 2—Freeland; and 3—Foxley River, a centre which has been hit by some of the heaviest losses.

### TYNE VALLEY MENACE

North of Port Hill Station heavy timber fires added new danger to the village of Tyne Valley, while fire that had Sunday crossed the paved highway between Tyne Valley and Ellerslie roared on toward the eastern end of Bideford District where neighbours helped Stenning Williams combine a

huge field of grain in the path of the fire, while tanker truck crews faced the smoke at the edge of the field to wet down the trees at woods edge.

The fires at Freeland and Bideford presented the greatest threats to property yesterday.

The concentration of organized assistance took on added efficiency over the holiday

weekend, in the co-ordinated effort of RCMP, fire fighters, Air Force, Army, bulldozer operators, tank and pumper truck crews, civil defence, Red Cross committees, and local volunteer workers.

An army mobile field kitchen unit produces hot cooked meals for the weary fire fighters who find Red Cross sleeping facilities

and first aid post in the Ellerslie Legion Home, which has become command headquarters for co-ordinating the entire fire fighting program.

Never was a Legion home in P.E.I. more literally a "Home" for the hundreds of persons who seek temporary rest and food within its walls, and never has any Legion home on the Island seen so many people enter its doors in a ten-day period.

From the small kitchen in the basement, meals and hot coffee are served continuously by women under direction of Mrs. Budd Williams of Ellerslie, who have volunteered for kitchen duties from points as far distant as Summerside and yesterday included members of the Summerside Legion Auxiliary and Girl Guides.

### **300 AIRMEN**

The Red Cross committee in charge of food supplies are active in transporting and serving food to workers right at the face of the fires, and the RCAF yesterday started serving at least one hot meal daily to the upwards of one hundred and fifty personnel from the Summerside RCAF station who are constantly on duty at the fire fronts on twelve hour shifts, making a total of about 300 airmen active on the fire fronts each day.

The RCAF, rendering magnificent assistance not unlike what would be expected from them in time of war, have entered the Prince County fire with as much concern as any local property owner.

Over the weekend they established headquarters in an Air Force mobile trailer located beside the Ellerslie control centre, and have radio links with their vehicles, their headquarters at Ellerslie, and the RCAF station in Summerside, as well as maintaining constant liaison with the civil defence control centre and dispatch car.

### **PROVOST CORPS**

The Army, in addition to providing a mobile field kitchen from which hot meals are served, have relieved the RCMP from traffic control duties in the area, enabling the police to concentrate on the important task of maintaining radio control from all fire areas, with the dispatch

car at Ellerslie, from where the fire fighting forces, heavy equipment, tanker trucks, and evacuation vehicle can be quickly deployed to the areas of greatest hazard.

The provost corps members include eleven men from Camp Gagetown and twelve from Halifax, all under command of Lt. R.W. Parker.

These very efficient and courteous traffic officers have a busy task in turning back sightseers who still continue to seek entry to the area already dangerous from a motoring standpoint of dusty roads and limited visibility in smoke. Road blocks were established at Northam Corner and at Portage Village to control this traffic on the Western Road and provost members are located at all intersections leading into the fire area.

The dusty, bearded faces, the smoke-sore throats and eyes of the weary men at the fire fronts are borne without complaint by these men who have voluntarily worked far too long in these conditions which have, for some, produced fatigue that has caused medical concern.

Men who came into the area to work a shift come face to face with the gravity of the fire situation and find themselves staying on in the area to continue their assistance. Particular sacrifices in personal comfort and family plans for the Labor Day weekend holiday became unimportant to all who were working in the area, and almost every person there put self second in the struggle, and became part of a team that faced overwhelming opposition with a confidence of winning that rivalled anything ever seen in such proportions in this province.

Men like Lawrence Brazel, an employee of a Charlottetown wholesale firm, who reluctantly missed a long-planned birthday party for his nine-year old daughter, to assist at the fire front, felt, like others, that it was almost a duty to stay on longer at the fire front to help in any way possible.

### **SPIRIT OF HELP**

Incidents like these revealed the spirit of assistance that has readily been offered from many sections of the mainland, where

fire pumper trucks and crews were on the scene from Sackville, Dieppe, Port Elgin, and army and Air Force units from Halifax and Moncton.

In the fire area the spirit of determination was expressed in such sights as the continued construction of a wooden shed by Thomas Coughlin of Inverness, on a site where fire has twice already approached the very foundation of the shed he is building, and even some of the new boards on the building caught fire and were extinguished by the owner.

In Freeland, fresh milk from a Summerside dairy was delivered to the modern new store of Harold Phillips, as smoke brought embers over his house and store from fires that seemed destined to destroy almost every building from the Anglican Church in Lot 11 eastward to the store.

In an almost predictable pattern the fires began to subside as night fell, and strong winds of the afternoon became a light breeze. A beautiful, full harvest moon rose brightly over a large section which remains a blackened mess of tree trunks standing grimly in blackened soil where, in some sections, even the tree roots are burned to exposure and trees topple over in disordered fashion.

With nighttime came the glow of fires from many directions, intermittently flaring against the black horizon, as smoke in the area seemed to thicken with dampness as it saturated the fire area and drifted eastward to and beyond Summerside, while firemen move into nighttime positions on all fire fronts to protect any homes or buildings, as other firemen slept on Red Cross mattresses in rows on the floor of the control centre, or in trucks, cars or any convenient location where they would be readily on call for action this morning on the eleventh day of fire fighting.

Weather forecast last evening held no promise of relief in the form of rain, that must come before this fire peril can end and the weary residents and firefighters can return to normal activities.

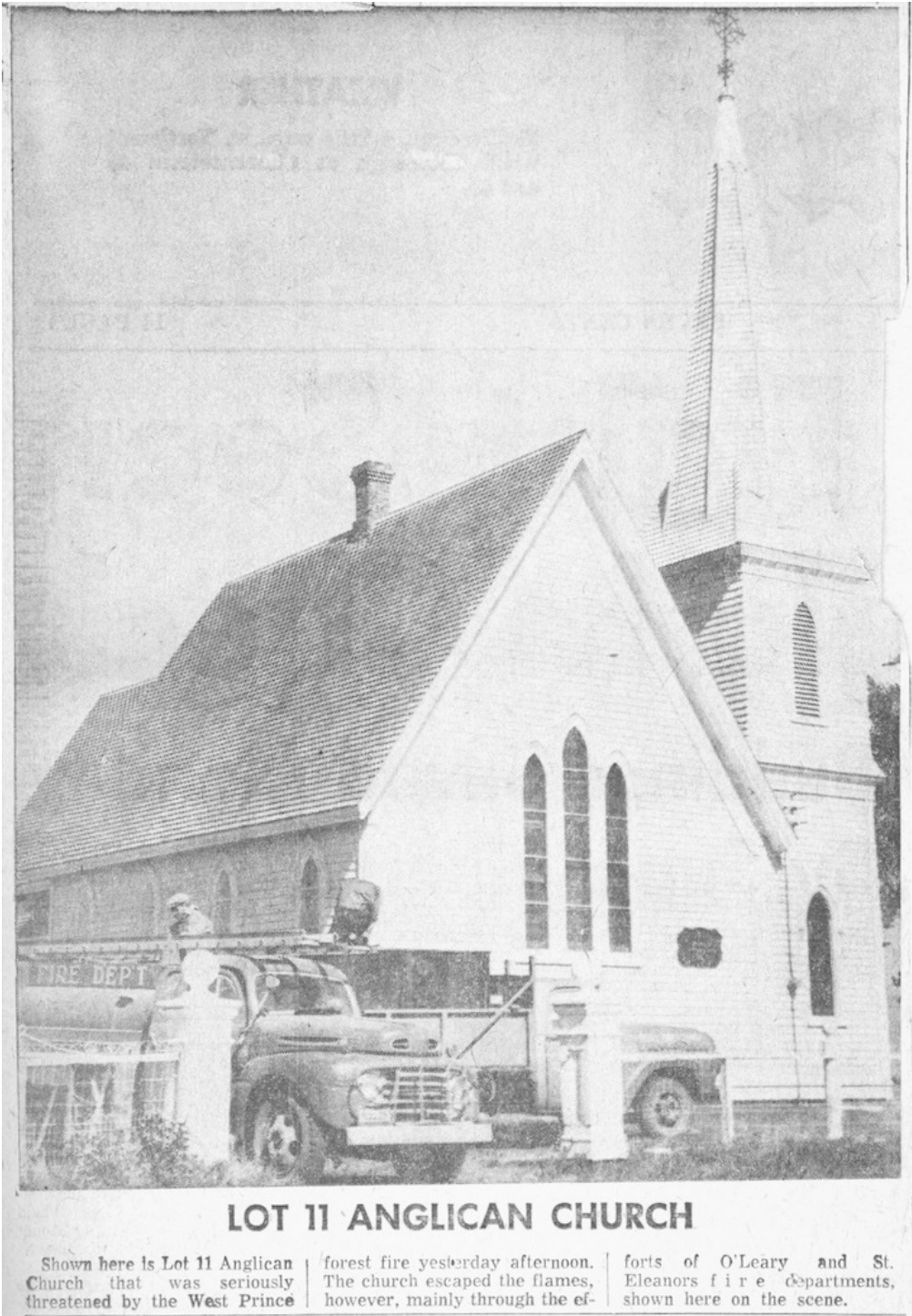
# RCAF firefighters play major role

SUMMERSIDE – An all-out effort to help halt the fires in Prince County is being made by RCAF Station personnel from Summerside, under the co-ordination of Squadron Leader G. R. Denison.

Fighting side-by-side with civilians and Royal Canadian Mounted Police are 240 men from the station, working around the clock in shifts of twelve hours. Directed by fire marshal Flight Lieutenant Mel Gilmour and the fire chief WO2 G. L. Somerville, 24 pump crews of ten men each alternate in a determined attempt to save the villages and hamlets in the paths of the fires.

In addition to the actual fire fighters, a fire truck, stake truck, and bulldozer, with their crews, are engaged in the operation. There are two 500-gallon water trucks, 12 pick-up trucks, and 9 RCAF pumps in use. Yesterday a further 140 back-packs, flown in for the emergency, were added to the 50 already in use. The newest equipment sent to the field is a field kitchen, in which one cook can feed 500 men.

All regular activities on the station, except the most essential, have been suspended to send personnel into the fire area.



LOT 11 ANGLICAN CHURCH

Shown here is Lot 11 Anglican Church that was seriously threatened by the West Prince forest fire yesterday afternoon. The church escaped the flames, however, mainly through the efforts of O'Leary and St. Eleanors fire departments, shown here on the scene.



# People In Fire Area Living In Unbelievably Strange Conditions

By Elmer Murphy

The people of the fire area of west Prince are living under unbelievably strange circumstances. At times their homes are in danger, at other times the air is filled with dense smoke and at all times they live in an "occupied" area. It is occupied in the sense that for all disciplinary purposes it has been taken over by the organizations that are fighting the fires.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police cars patrol the roads constantly, army and RCAF vehicles are to be seen in large numbers, the smartly turned out members of the army provost corps are on duty at all main intersections, strange fire trucks and men in a great variety of fire fighting attire are busily engaged at various points, and civilian cars are stopped as soon as they reach the perimeter of the area and are turned back unless the people have a legitimate reason for being there.

Focal point of all this activity is the Canadian Legion Hall at Ellerslie which is headquarters for the whole fire fighting effort. Yesterday afternoon the usual air of great activity and urgency prevailed. About 75 large trucks were lined up from the hall through the village and out into the country. These trucks are ready should it be necessary suddenly to evacuate an area. Fortunately this has never been necessary, although a few homes have been emptied and the furniture moved to a storage point.

Directly across the road in a yard is the RCMP dispatch car. To this car come messages from the patrolling RCMP vehicles asking for fire fighters and equipment which are then dispatched.

Adjacent to the building is a yellow Royal Canadian Air Force vehicle which has been brought to the area to serve as the RCAF headquarters. It is equipped with a telephone, short wave radio communication with the air station, and communication with the RCMP car across the road and with the other units in the building by means of an intercommunication system which has been set

up. From this headquarters communication is also maintained with RCAF vehicles in the field. The RCAF has 270 personnel detailed to fire duty under F/L M. A. Gilmore and Warrant Officer Somerville.

In the area next to the building are parked miscellaneous RCAF and Army vehicles and to the rear is an army field kitchen operated by the RCAF. Here, hot meals are prepared for the fire fighters.

About 25 army provost corps men are in the area, some from the mainland and the remainder reserve army personnel from Charlottetown.

The upper floor of the building is a large dormitory with cots and mattresses covering the floor. Here weary fire fighters catch some sleep while off duty or between calls. The number of men who have come in to the area to serve on the fire lines has been very gratifying and to date there have always been sufficient men.

In the basement the main area is a dining room where food is constantly, night and day. It is estimated that over 2,000 meals are served here during a 24-hour period. This is being done by the Red Cross, the ladies of the Legion Auxiliary, Women's Institutes plus volunteer helpers brought in by the Red Cross from Summerside and other centers.

On this floor is also located the communications center where telephones are manned night and day to take calls from people needing help and to maintain communication outside the fire area.

At some time in the future when this fire has finally been extinguished and all the people and vehicles have left and the area returns to normal, the people will have undergone an experience that will be unique for their lifetimes. However, for many years evidence of the fire will remain in the blackened and bare forest areas and the giant slashes made through standing timber as fire breaks. It will be years before nature will be able to erase the evidence of the fire tragedy of 1960.

## Fires Continue to Burn But Kept Under Control Over Holiday Week-End

Over the holiday weekend not much change occurred in the forest fire situation in West Prince. The fires continued to burn and at times threatened some buildings but for the most part were kept under control. There now appears to be sufficient men and equipment in the area to contain the fires under normal circumstances but only nature, by means of a lengthy period of rain, can extinguish them.

Yesterday the most serious area was in Foxley River and Freeland where the Catholic and Anglican churches were both in danger. There were also brisk fires burning in the Portage and Enmore areas.

However, the situation as explained to a Journal-Pioneer reporter yesterday by Major Orrin Simons, civil defense chief, is that north of the Mount Pleasant airport there is now really one big fire burning. This includes Enmore, Portage, Foxley River, Freeland, Black Banks area and Conway. Another fire is centered in the area bordered by Tyne Valley, Port Hill and Ellerslie.

Yesterday these fires were throwing up dense clouds of smoke which were clouding the

atmosphere over all the central part of the province. However, a drive through the area discovered few areas actually blazing, although there must have been considerable burning deep in the woods to make such a pall of smoke.

In many places the fire fighters were standing guard to protect properties and crews were spotted throughout the area. One such place was the farm home of Mr. Russell Key of Foxley River which has been in danger since Friday. Dense woods border Mr. Key's property and a crew from the Hayes Construction Company was posted in his yard. At times they have had to hose down his buildings but he has not moved out nor does he intend to. He has confidence that the fire fighters can handle any situation that may develop.

About 20 fire engines, some 30 portable fire pumpers and a great many tankers and bulldozers are in the area with approximately 800 men in various capacities. Major Simons said that undoubtedly this represents a greater accumulation of fire fighting equipment than has ever previously been assembled in this province.

Major Simons expressed gratification that in spite of the large number of men working with large pieces of equipment, accidents have been almost nil. There have been several minor incidents but nothing to cause concern.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police have taken over the Freeland school as a headquarters and are also using the building for sleeping quarters. The Mounties patrol the roads constantly day and night and several times a day. As soon as every building is inspected or a new outbreak is spotted, word is

radioed to the police car which never moves from the headquarters at Ellerslie. The dispatcher is located in this car and he sends out whatever help is necessary.

One of the reasons that the fire is impossible to extinguish is that it is burning underground. It was explained that a person could walk in some of these wooded areas which show no signs of fire but that in places one's feet would sink about 18 inches in the ground and, if not removed quickly, the shoes would catch fire.

## A Sad Sight

Some day, which we hope will not be too long deferred, the forest fires now burning so fiercely and so dangerously in west Prince will be extinguished. When that happy day arrives, and for some time afterwards, the area will be visited by a new horde of tourists. These will be people from other parts of the Island who will drive through these districts to see for themselves the damage that the fire has wrought. They will travel through places which have been so much in the news like Tyne Valley, Ellerslie, Port Hill Enmore, Portage, Foxley River, Freeland, the Black Banks. They will drive along such thoroughfares as the Murray Road and the Rafferty Road, which they no doubt never heard of before.

They will be different from the sightseers who have been making a nuisance of themselves since the fire started by being in the way of the fire fighters while attempting to satisfy their curiosity. These people, who visit after the fire is out, will be legitimate travellers who will have a perfect right to travel through the area and view the results of the Island's worst forest fire. What will they see?

They will see a sad sight. They will see acres and acres of charred tree stumps and blackened ground. Where once stood fire stands of timber they will see only forest graveyards. They will see the remains of destroyed homes – but fortunately only a few. They will see other ugly scars where men and machines devastated the forests by knocking down trees in order to avoid greater destruction.

These blackened areas and ugly fire-breaks will remain for years as evidence of this great conflagration. However, the standing homes will be a monument to the almost super-human efforts that were made by many men during this long period. This will be an event that will not soon be forgotten either by the people who live in the area or by those who visit it for many years to come. Certainly an area of great natural beauty will be defaced and scarred until nature can heal the wounds.







AN AMERICAN summer resident flees in car, above, as flames close in behind. His two-story summer residence was evacuated in fifteen minutes by four men working at

extreme speed to clear the advancing flames. But the ordinary tasks of life must go on regardless of fire or other pestilence. Below is a picture of women peeling carrots to make

a part of the tremendous daily meal output to feed the hungry. The women are from the Summerside Canadian Legion ladies auxiliary.



**FREELAND, CONWAY, ENMORE**

# Fires Stir New Threats To Prince County Homes

## Speed Is Shown Under Pressure

By **JOHN BOND**  
**Guardian-Patriot Staff Writer**

The speed with which jobs have to be handled as men labor under pressure of peril and impending disaster was instanced yesterday as a home in the Enmore district was completely emptied within 15 minutes.

The two-storey frame building was occupied by an elderly American summer resident. Becoming aware of the threat to his home that was developing suddenly, he began to pile the most valuable of his possessions into his car. As he started from the house, some of the articles fell from the car and he was forced to stop and, still with no one in the area to lend a hand, reload everything into the trunk and onto the top of the car.

After making a few more feet toward safety, the load again fell to the road. By this time several vehicles had converged on the scene and volunteers helped the shaken man to reload his possessions.

Then while a fearless bulldozer operator turned his machine toward the oncoming flames and began cutting a firebreak around the house and a pumper kept it wet down, volunteers stripped the building of its furnishings.

### ACTION IS FAST

Six men and a girl removed every article of furniture, clothing and food in the house and loaded them onto a gravel truck that materialized virtually from nowhere.

The pantry was cleaned of the food it contained, dishes were taken carefully from shelves, family pictures taken down from the walls and furniture removed from every room.

Even the potted plants were rescued, as were the curtains at the windows. The whole process took less than 15 minutes.

Fire almost completely surrounded the house at a distance of about 50 feet while the evacuation was being carried out. The workers, realizing that they could easily be trapped in the upstairs of the building, worked on the sec [clipping ended and started again in another section missing part] removed. The stairs to the second floor were against the wall nearest the burning forest.

The scene was in the fire sector where sudden winds, shifting from north west to north east, drove smoke and flames back upon surprised firemen, throwing then into a panic.

Two other houses were immediately threatened by the oncoming fire. One of them disappeared from observers view in a cloud of smoke. It was not immediately known if it was lost.

With such an outbreak, men and machines can do nothing. All efforts are concentrated on cutting breaks to contain the fire if possible and to protect life and property. The fate of the forest has been decided by the fire.

The men and machines must wait for a drop in the wind and a subsiding of the wind before they can counter-attack the fire in the forest.

### DAILY PATTERN

The fire that caused the evacuations at Enmore and serious flare ups in most of the other fire zones seems to be following a grim schedule. Daily, at nearly the same hours, the fire launches a new attack that continues to a seeming predetermined hour, when it will once again subside.

When the fires flare up, strange things happen. One fireman looked down to see his socks inside the light shoes he was wearing catch fire. Fire destroyed a half-mile long stretch of bush leaving a foot wide strip down the centre untouched.

### SHEEP KILLED

Sheep were found wandering blindly some distance from any fire, their eyes apparently ruined by smoke. They were destroyed mercifully by firemen.

Wild animals look to humans for protection against the flames that destroyed their domain. Birds vacate the area at the first signs of smoke. Smoke turned the sun to an orange ball and daylight into night, leaving only an eerie glow in the sky.

Once narrow back roads have the appearance of turnpikes from the wide firebreaks cut along each side of them.

Scenes such as these are everyday occurrences at the fire scene but go unnoticed or are taken for granted by those fighting the fire. To them it is all part of the overall battle against the flames.

## Menace Is Checked On Properties' Edge

BY **GEORGE WOTTON**  
**Guardian-Patriot Staff Writer**

SUMMERSIDE — The Prince County fires yesterday continued to race through woodland towards homes and properties, only to be checked at woods edge only yards away from wooden structures.

The worst fire areas were again in new locations at Freeland, Conway, and Enmore, with other fires throughout the entire disaster area receiving attention of firemen while numbers of small fires again smouldered or burned up briefly.

A shortage of volunteer fire fighters, following the weekend holiday, necessitated in an appeal for fifty

additional men, and a number of volunteers responded to the call.

### 6 MILES OF HOSE

An additional 15,000 feet of hose was flown in from Montreal yesterday bringing to more than six miles the total length of new fire hose brought into the area since the fire began.

With water needed in large quantities for use in the kitchen area where the fire fighters are fed in numbers which result in a major dish-washing project, the Ellerslie Legion building committee hired a Summerside plumbing company to dig a sixty-foot well, from which water was flowing into the building as required, last evening.

Houses were still being evacuated yesterday and two homes in the Enmore district, one the residence of Charles Coughlin, and the other belonging to a Gillis family, were both emptied of household effects during mid-afternoon when a fire developed and spread quickly through woodland toward the residences.

At Freeland, fire moved practically to the back door of the new residence of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Blackett, while firemen held grimly to the defence of the home. When the wind changed suddenly the development of a fire on the other side of this woods sent fire tankers and back-pack crews into action in a new location where the home and buildings of Wilbur Hardy were in danger, along with the store and residence of Harold Phillips, all located near thick woods where the fire burned briskly.

LIKE OCEAN STORM

In the Conway district, flames raced through thick timber about a half-mile north west of Conway station, with a roar like a stormy ocean, flames leaped great distances in the sky, sending heat waves and smoke pouring upwards, as it advanced along a front of about a quarter of a mile until it burned the tall trees right to the edge of the woods.

In continuation of the teamwork which has made the fire fighting program so effective and efficient, the whole fire devastated area is under the control of Major O.R. Simons, civil defence co-ordinator, who directs the operation through a control center in the Ellerslie Legion, while an RCMP dispatch car at the centre maintains constant radio communications with patrol cars in the three areas into which the fire swept territory has been divided.

Dispatching from the control center is being done by local army officers, working eight-hour shifts with a member of the RCMP in the dispatch car. These men on dispatch work include Capt. W.B. LePage, Capt. Don MacIntyre, Capt. Harry Bishop, Lt. Jack Hobbs, and Lt. Tom Davies.

The fire area has now been divided into three sections, each patrolled by an RCMP car in which an RCMP officer works on a team with Frank

Gaudet, provincial forester, in the area north of the Conway Road; while Dick Found, of Ellerslie biological station, who has been on duty since the fire began, is in charge of the area between the Conway and Ellerslie Roads; and W-O Somerville, of RCAF Station Summerside, in the area east of the Ellerslie Road.

Gordon Bell, of Charlottetown, the chief fire fighter in the program, is in charge of heavy equipment and its use in the fighting of fires.

ABOUT 50 INJURED

Reports from the Red Cross first aid post at the Ellerslie communications center indicate that about fifty fire fighters have been treated for minor injuries from the smoke and fire.

Mrs. Harry Cudmore, director of first aid for the Red Cross, said the men were treated for minor burns, chapped lips, and smoke burned eyes, but to date no serious injuries have been reported.

Red Cross first aid posts have also been active in the Freeland and Foxley River fire areas to handle any possible emergency which may arise, and a mobile first aid unit is on constant patrol on the roads.

Several volunteer fire fighters have suffered from painful foot blisters caused by the intense heat penetrating their heavy boots as they battle the fire on the scorching earth of the burned woodlands.

Thick, choking smoke is the dreaded annoyance to eyes and throats. Respirators have been issued to men at the fire fronts, but these tend to fog and block the vision of the fire fighters making it more difficult to use.

FAIR GOES ON DESPITE FIRE

Despite the forest fire that has devastated a wide area of Prince County, plans are well underway for the annual Egmont Bay and Mont Carmel livestock Exhibition.

The big show will be held as usual at Abram's Village Thursday.



WELL-DRILLING AT FIRE HEADQUARTERS

When water supplies necessary for preparation of meals and other uses at Ellerslie Legion Home were depleted, a call

plumbers to drill a new well. The 60-foot well was completed last night, and a good supply of fresh water was made available at the busy

Ellerslie center of the forest fire fighting operation. The above photo shows the well-drilling crew in operation yesterday.

FAIR GOES ON DESPITE FIRE

Despite the forest fire that

# Strong Winds Expected To Fan Flames; Fire Fighters Now Being Hired

As the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the battle against forest fires got under way this morning, the prospect was for another day of vigorous battling against the stubborn flames. A Journal-Pioneer reporter driving through the area this morning reported the densest smoke that has yet been seen this early in the day. He reported that the road between Ellerslie and Tyne Valley was extremely dangerous for travelling as the visibility was almost zero.

Brigadier A. W. Rogers, who was in charge this morning, stated that last night was relatively quiet but that today outbreaks were being reported just before noon. The first call came from the MacNeill's Mills area.

Winds today will be stronger than yesterday, according to the Meteorological Section at the RCAF Station. Winds from the south-west of 20 miles per hour with gusts to 25 and 30 can be expected until sundown when they will again become light.

The forecaster on duty said that there is no rain in sight but he pointed out that should hurricane Donna reach this area it would bring the much needed rain. However that would not be for several days. He said that the heavy rains with the hurricane would offset any increased danger from the high winds.

Fire fighters were being hired at the Summerside office of the Unemployment Insurance Office yesterday for the Department of Public Works at 75 cents an hour and about 40 men from this area were sent out at this rate. Whether they are paid on a 24-hour basis could not be determined. Up until this time all workers had been volunteers and many people from outside the area had spent days and nights away from their own homes and businesses helping in the battle against the huge fires which threatened at one time to wipe out the area.

The word this morning was that more men may be needed if the situation should develop adversely this afternoon.

Danger spots this morning seemed to be near Bideford and at Enmore but in the words of Brigadier Rogers "fires are springing up all around."

## Prince County Fires Pose New Problem

CHARLOTTETOWN — (Special) — Premier Walter R. Shaw said this morning that one of the growing problems in connection with the forest fires in West Prince County is the large number of men who have been off their jobs for more than a week. These are among the volunteers who have been steadily fighting the fire during that period.

It was indicated here that the government intends to make an immediate effort to secure help from the Canadian Army at Gagetown, N.B.

Meanwhile, it was further learned here that some Charlottetown employers have released their employees while keeping them on the payroll. They say that they are perfectly willing that their men continue to fight the fire as long as the danger exists.

## Home Saved, Factory Lost

ALBERTON BUREAU OF THE GUARDIAN

For the second time in less than a week, fire swept to within a few yards yesterday of the home of Lowell Matthews in the Black Banks area of West Prince County.

Working under appalling smoke conditions, volunteers from Alberton, who crossed Cascumpec Bay in boats, assisted in saving the large two and one half story home although an abandoned lobster factory nearby was completely destroyed.

The Matthews barn was on fire for a time but the blaze was brought under control by prompt use of a portable pumper.

Southerly winds on Tuesday brought the fire west of the Matthews house and a change to west yesterday forced the smoke and flames directly toward the buildings.

A continuous spray of water was kept on the house during the afternoon and both the house and barn were reported still standing last night.

The lobster factory, comprising six or seven buildings, was operated for some years by Arthur Clark of Alberton and later by Frank Purdy, formerly of Alberton and now residing in Toronto.



### TOURS AREA

Highways minister J. Philip Matheson and his deputy, R. Gordon White, yesterday toured the fire stricken areas of West Prince County. Mr. Matheson paid tribute to all the organizations taking part in the campaign. "The organizations are in splendid shape up there and everything is being done that is possible to do," he said. The minister said the situation is still dangerous in the fire areas and the Department of Highways office in Charlottetown is maintaining round-the-clock contact with Ellerslie co-ordination center in case the services of the department are needed.

# Enmore and Freeland Areas of Greatest Danger From Fires Yesterday

**By Ron England**

Yesterday afternoon the fire situation in Prince County appeared to be generally in hand but several areas were in danger. The danger areas were in the Enmore district, the Freeland area and a large centre to the north west of Conway village.

Fire fighters battled desperately to save two homes at Enmore when roaring flames accompanied by dark billowing clouds of smoke fed by small gusts of wind soared in on homes belonging to Jack Ballem and W. Gillis. Both homes situated on a narrow sideroad on the fringe area on the North Enmore district were immediately evacuated in record time and tanker trucks, along with bulldozers, brought in. Pumper crews wet down the houses and adjoining areas in a valiant effort to hold back the soaring wall of fire from the wooden structures, while dozer operators dared the licking flames by breaking firewalls through the woods to hold back the menace. Fire fighters did their share when they pressed forward into the smoke carrying backpack tanks, most of them donning firemasks. Many of the fighters later complained that the masks were so uncomfortable and so very warm they would rather face the blistering smoke than wear the protectors.

Both the Ballem and Gillis residences were saved by the efforts of the fire fighters, with Mr. Ballem suffering a loss in that a huge cranberry patch and a beautiful hedge row adjoining the house were completely destroyed.

Approximately one-half mile south of the major fire area at Enmore danger was still very imminent as fire raged in the woodlot immediately behind the home of Charles Coughlin about supper hour last evening. Vincent DesRoches, along with other members of the Miscouche Fire Department, were standing by, watering the buildings down in preparation for any possible action. A firebreak was built back of the Coughlin building and at several points soaring flames could be seen as they licked alder bushes and then bit at tall spruce on the fringe area of the woodlot only yards away from the Coughlin homestead.

Approximately one-half mile away from the Coughlin home, towards the east, a home belonging to Wilfred Campbell was being evacuated. Mr. Campbell pointed out three separate fires in the Enmore woods, making the comment that the fire seems to flare up “between the hours of 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.” Other fighters agreed that this pattern seems to have been a fairly consistent one since the fire broke out over a week ago, with the heavy air which accompanies nightfall marring the sky with a low smoke ceiling and causing the flames to subside leaving only ground level smoke.

Near Freeland a mill owned by Wilbur Hardy caught fire in the afternoon but was saved. Firemen from the Charlottetown Fire Department and the O’Leary Fire Department, along with backpack carriers, battled the fire in the woodlot behind the mill, in an area covered by a thick layer of sawdust. The Hardy homestead adjoins the mill while a modern home and store belonging to Harold Phillips is situated a short distance down the road. The latter was in danger several times throughout the day.

Toward Conway it was noted that huge cup-shaped clouds of smoke were billowing up in the north-west section of the area. The fire had spread with amazing rapidity from a central section of the dense woodland to a fringe field area approximately a half mile away from several barns in Conway. Here the fire appeared to be burning intensely within, but only smouldering on the fringe area. Trucks and pumpers were scattered within the immediate area with firefighters awaiting in a long vigil just in case a sudden breeze might stir action or spread spark on village homes. Many of the villagers were sitting on their lawns or just standing around, some facing the west towards the smoke filled sky of Enmore, others keeping a precarious eye on the north west woodlot and farther back, the Freeland woods.

Other fire areas of a less serious nature appeared to be in the McNeills Mills west district where a small fire was burning in a woodlot back of the home of Austin Phillips, occasionally centering out onto the field boundary area. Another fire area was behind Portage station, where to the east a few billows of smoke were seen rising but all appeared to be under control. North west of Port Hill station appeared to be flaring up at intervals with a great deal of smoke but no real danger. Meanwhile in the wooded area between Bideford and Tyne Valley several fires continued to burn with tanker trucks and fire fighters battling any serious outbreak in an effort to stall what could be a dangerous fire. Out of immediate area, the word from Lennox Island is that all is well with just a bit of smouldering blaze burning away from the reservation section to the north.

“Much better” is the word from Gordon Bell of Charlottetown, who is chief fire fighter. In these words Mr. Bell described the situation generally.

Major O. R. Simons, civil defence co-ordinator, stated that there was very little danger that any homes would be lost from now on. He did note, however, that a sudden strong wind could cause some skirmishing and probably could cause a lot of damage, but this happening seems very unlikely, he added. He pointed

out that the full crew of about 600 fire-fighters, volunteers, members of organizations, etc. are doing a fine job in battling the blaze and assisting in other duties. 15,000 feet of additional hose was taken in yesterday making a grand total of over six miles.

Mrs. Bud Williams, who is in charge of the personnel detailed to kitchen duties, has maintained a steady staff of willing volunteers for around-the-clock service to hungry and weary fire fighters. The volunteers are members of Ladies Auxiliaries groups, Institute groups, Aid members and everyday civilian workers from all parts of the Island who want to lend a helping hand.

The members of the Ellerslie Legion branch are themselves rendering untiring assistance along with the facilities of their modern building. The members foot the bill for heat, water, accommodation, etc. and were highly commended by many officials. A well was constructed yesterday for the purpose of providing additional water for the kitchen.

Cyril Williams, chairman of the Disaster Fund and a member of the Ellerslie Legion, stated that the fund was growing steadily with many persons being generous contributors to the worthy cause. Also on the Disaster Fund committee are president Earl Colwill; Bud Williams; Bill Noye; Stewart Montgomery; Carmen McNeill and Harold Phillips.

About fifty persons were treated for minor burns, scratches and other injuries, stated Mrs. Harry Cudmore, director of first aid for the Red Cross.

The disaster fire area has been divided into three sections, each patrolled by an RCMP car in which RCMP officers work with Frank Gaudet, provincial forester, in the Conway north area; with W. O. Somerville of the RCAF station Summerside in the Ellerslie-Bideford area; and Dick Found of the Bideford Biological station in the Enmore-Ellerslie West-Conway area.

Dispatching from the control center is being done by local army officers with the help of an RCMP officer in the dispatch car. These men on dispatch work include W. B. LePage, Capt. Don MacIntyre, Capt Harry Bishop, Lt. Jack Hobb, Lt. Tom Davies and Lt. Vimy Gregory.

As one elderly farmer put it “she’s going to be a desolate place after the fire burn out.” Life continues to go on at a normal pace with a reading of strain on the faces of persons living in the area. Many are rendering assistance by giving their homes as sleeping quarters for fighters and hope for the day when the Island’s worst fire will finally burn itself out, with the prayer that no one else will go homeless from now until that time.



# Three Buildings Burned Yesterday As Strong Winds Fanned the Flames

By Jim Kennedy

Forest fires in West Prince once again broke out of control yesterday as flames soared high above the tree-tops due to the freshened southwest winds. At mid-afternoon fires were spreading and burning rapidly in the Foxley River-Freeland area and also in the Bideford district threatening many homes. This was one of the worst outbreaks in the disaster area since the terrifying afternoon of August 29 when many homes and properties were completely wiped out.

Fires broke out in the Bideford district yesterday at noon endangering many homes, but dozers were rushed to the scene and fire breaks were put up surrounding the woodland area and due to the many volunteer firemen who were fighting the blaze, the people of Bideford were considered to be out of danger last night. Dense smoke in this area was one of the major problems the fire fighters had to contend with as visibility at time reached zero.

A barn containing approximately 350 bushels of grain and belonging to Leo Lynch of Lot 11 was burned to the ground yesterday afternoon along with a woodshed as sparks caught on a haystack causing the barn to be completely destroyed in a matter of minutes.

Many trucks were standing by in the Foxley River – Freeland District for purpose of evacuation as nearly all homes in this area were in constant danger. Trucks, pumpers and firemen were standing by at nearly all homes

waiting for the fire to strike or subside as dense clouds of smoke covered the area.

For the second time in less than a week, fire encircled the home of Lowell Matthews in the Black Banks area. He had previously evacuated and then moved back again as the wind direction had changed. A pumper and thirty men from Alberton were standing by and an army truck from Gagetown was wetting down his home. The smoke was so dense in this area that gas masks were a necessity. The wild life from the woodland area were taking refuge on the sand near the water's edge at the Black Banks shore. Fires swept through an abandoned factory nearby wiping it out completely.

Fire swept out on the Tory Road which runs from Woodbrook to the Western Road and the homes of Mrs. Elizabeth Sullivan and her son, which were evacuated, were threatened while two trucks and pumpers along with many fire fighters were fighting the blaze under control.

Fires raging along the Murray Road burned to the ground an old, abandoned house as the woodland in this area was burning rapidly causing a dense smoke which surrounded the district.

Fires in the Enmore and North Enmore Districts were burning freely through the woodland area but there was no homes in this area in any immediate danger.

Stan McInnis, Civil Service Co-ordinator, stated that the fire is burning in a steady pattern as it breaks out at noon each day then

reaches its peak at 4 p.m. and begins to ease off at dark. The men move in with their equipment in the morning and are ready for the outbreaks which occur at noon.

Mrs. Evelyn Cudmore is Co-ordinator of all Red Cross Disaster Services. These services are co-ordinating efforts of volunteer workers in feeding firefighters and other workers, and delivering hot meals prepared in the Civil Defence Field Kitchen to hundreds of men in the woods. In addition to this, hot coffee and lunches are delivered to workers five times a day.

Besides the main centre at Ellerslie, there is another feeding centre at Tyne Valley under the volunteer leadership of Mrs. Carmen MacNeill, Mrs. Robinson and Mrs. Crosby. The cooking for this centre is being done by the women of the Tyne Valley area.

The services of Mr. Lorne Burleigh, Department of Welfare, have been made available to the Red Cross to investigate the needs of evacuated families.

Red Cross First Aid Service has set up a central post at Ellerslie where two qualified first-aiders are on duty 24 hours of the day. In addition three outposts have been established at Freeland, Foxley River and Enmore. There is a mobile unit patrolling the fire area and giving first aid wherever needed.

All Red Cross First Aid posts are under the direction of Mrs. Bruce MacLaren.



# RCMP Car is Nerve Centre For Direction of Fire Battle

An RCMP radio patrol car stationed outside the Ellerslie Canadian Legion Home, the rallying point for men, machines and equipment used to fight the forest fire peril in Prince County, is the nerve centre of the forest fire campaign.

About a dozen RCMP radio cars constantly patrol the fire areas and when additional men and equipment are needed, the requests are radioed to the dispatch car at Ellerslie.

Chief dispatcher Dick Found, Ellerslie, who has a complete knowledge of what men and equipment is available at all times, passes the order to the transportation director Gordon Kerr, Charlottetown, who sends the men and equipment out to the fire fronts.

### OVERALL DECISION

Overall decision on the dispatching comes from chief

firefighter Gordon Bell, Charlottetown, who listens by radio to all communications with the dispatcher and okays the movement of the fire-fighting forces.

A co-ordination centre to handle all communications with the outside world operates in the Legion hall. Manning the office are major O.R. Simons, provincial co-ordinator of civil defense; J.W. Saunders, St. Andrew's N.B., emergency measures officer; and Stan McInnis, Charlottetown, communications director. This office acts as a liaison among all organizations working in the fire areas.

In touch with the dispatch car by phone, the co-ordination office stands ready to call in help from outside areas, provide trucks and drivers for evacuation of areas deemed necessary by Mr. Bell, and requisition necessary supplies for all phases of the campaign.

### FEEDING WORKERS

There has been no problem in feeding the hundreds of volunteer workers. Kitchen facilities at the Legion Hall are being operated by the Red Cross, the legion auxiliary, the Ellerslie Women's Institute and women from the surrounding areas. Hundreds of boxes of food have been received daily from local residents and an Army camp kitchen which can feed 200 at a time has been set up outside the hall.

Evacuees from the fire districts have not been a problem for the co-ordination centre as a receiving center for the evacuees was established at the Canadian Legion Home in Miscouche. From Miscouche arrangements for accommodations were made in Summerside. Many families were staying with relatives until the fire threat eases.



### KEEPS LONG VIGIL

Jack Ballem, a resident of North Enmore is shown seated on a part of his household belongings last evening as billowing smoke swirled in the woodlands and marshland behind his home. Mr. Ballem, who lives alone, evacuated his home several days ago when fire fighters battled to save the dwelling. The home was saved but a large cranberry patch and woodlot were destroyed. He usually moves his bed back in at night and sleeps there.

— Journal-Pioneer Staff Photo

# Strong Winds Give West Prince Fires Early Start; More Fighters Recruited

Still another bad afternoon anticipated was the word this morning from fire fighting headquarters at Ellerslie as strong winds fanned flames that never completely subsided last night. While the winds normally drop at nightfall, last night the usual pattern was not followed and the winds blew briskly all night, so that this morning the fires were all well under way with the winds uncomfortably high.

Worst areas at noon were the Freeland, Foxley River, Black Banks, Conway and the Murray Road. A fire was reported burning south of the MacNeill's Road and last night a report was received that the dormant fire on Lennox Island had come to life. The fire at Bideford was reported as being pretty well in check.

Major Orrin Simons told The Journal-Pioneer that the large number of fire breaks that have been made pretty well ensures against any widespread expansion of the fires but that nothing will

put the fire out except a lengthy rain.

Last evening the National Employment Service sent an additional 94 men into the fight. Forty-nine of these were recruited in Summerside and 45 in Summerside. They were transported by truck. This number was in addition to 40 sent up from Summerside the previous day. This first group are still on the job. The going rate of pay is 75 cents an hour.

Meanwhile, 250 soldiers are en route by road transport from Camp Gagetown and should arrive this afternoon. They will be gradually integrated into the lines held by airmen from RCAF Station Summerside and will eventually replace the airmen.

It was explained that when a disaster occurs, the nearest service provides emergency assistance until such time as the army, which has civil defence as one of its responsibilities, can be brought to the scene. The airmen have done outstanding service and have been fighting the fire since August 29<sup>th</sup>, which was the most

destructive day.

The "met" section at the RCAF Station forecast winds of 25 to 30 miles an hour all day, gusting to 40. It is expected that the winds will remain strong. No rain is expected except possibly a light shower or two. Hurricane Donna is still several days away if it comes this way.

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## Hope Hurricane Will Strike

The serious and destructive fires which have now been burning for twelve days in West Prince have caused a most unusual situation.

A number of people have been heard to say that the main hope for resolving this situation rests in Hurricane Donna coming this way. It is felt that the drenching rains which accompany a hurricane will effectively quell the flames.

It is the first time possibly that people have been hoping a hurricane would strike.

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# Flames Shoot High Over Burning Trees

BY ROY TURNER

Guardian-Patriot Staff Writer

SUMMERSIDE – Fighting a relentless battle over an area covering more than 100 square miles, fire fighters had contained four major fires burning in West Prince last night, but officials stated an increase in winds would greatly add to the ever present danger of flames jumping the fire breaks, placing many homes in peril.

Flames were still shooting above the treetops late last night in several areas as the winds abated only slightly after sundown.

Fanned by southwest winds of 20 miles per hour with gusts to 25, the four major fires in the Conway, Bideford, Freeland and Murray Road areas and several fresh outbreaks kept men and equipment in high gear all day yesterday and an all-out battle was needed to prevent loss of homes as well as two churches in the Bideford and Foxley River districts.

## BARN IS BURNED

A large barn, filled with hay and grain, burned near "The Portage" Lot 11 yesterday afternoon. It was owned by Leo Lynch.

An old abandoned house near the Murray Road school was burned to the ground later in the day.

An abandoned cannery at Black Banks, comprising a cluster of buildings, also was lost to the wind-whipped flames during the afternoon when dense smoke covered almost the entire area adding to the many hazards.

The first major eruption yesterday occurred just before noon in the Bideford area, when several homes and the Bideford United Church were threatened but additional fire breaks hurriedly thrown up around the burning woodland contained the flames although the district was still in danger last night.

A fleet of trucks were sent to the Freeland area around 2:30 p.m. to evacuate several homes that were in danger but the occupants reportedly declined to move out, at least until the danger increased. The trucks were still standing by last evening in case they were needed.

Fresh volunteers arrived at command headquarters last evening to replace the men on the fire lines and these were dispatched to the areas that were causing the greatest concern.

## 250 SOLDIERS

Today about 250 soldiers from the Royal Canadian Dragoons Camp Gagetown, N.B. are expected to arrive to replace RCAF personnel from the Summerside station who have played a major role in fighting the fires since the outbreak twelve days ago in the Enmore district.

The Summerside fire department, working in liaison with fire fighting centre at Ellerslie, has offered much needed man power and equipment.

A shipment of 400 feet of damaged fire hose was sent from the area Tuesday night to Summerside, where members of the department worked for seven hours repairing and testing the blackened hose. A department spokesman said the inch and a half hose was badly damaged from the tremendous pressure of the pumpers and several sections were burned beyond repair. However, 2,300 feet were salvaged and went back to the fire area last night on the Summerside pumper.

Mrs. Evelyn Cudmore, director of Red Cross services, paid high tribute to those who are helping in so many ways at the Ellerslie control centre and especially to the local residents. Mrs. Cudmore said "they just can't seem to do enough – they want to do a little bit extra." She added "the best thing I know that comes of a disaster is the amazing desire of everyone to be helpful."

Meanwhile Mrs. Cudmore is on the job herself, day and night, co-ordinating the many services of her organization, assisted by other Red Cross officials and members as well as volunteers.

Winds were still blowing at 25 to 30 miles per hour from the south west late last night and the "met" section at the RCAF station Summerside reported that no rain is in sight for at least the next two days.



## NORTH ENMORE RESIDENT EVACUATES HOME

Photo shows the home of an elderly couple, Mr. and Mrs. William Gillis, as it is being evacuated last evening by relatives and volunteer workmen. In a wooded area northwest of the dwelling the forest fire was

burning briskly at the time of the evacuation. The immediate area has been in danger since Tuesday afternoon when winds swept flames and smoke across the surrounding woodland. — Journal-Pioneer Staff Photo





## FRANTIC EVACUATIONS

Mrs. Reginald Campbell of McNeill's Mills has been forced from her home by menacing flames five times, four of which times she was obliged to evacuate all of her furnishings. Shown here is Mrs. Campbell, her seven children and a neighbouring child. Each time the house was threatened RCAF fire-fighters came to the rescue.

— (DND Photo).



## HOMES SAVED

The homes of Mrs. Eliza Phillips (right) of Inverness and Mrs. Harry Bryant of North Enmore were saved by RCAF fire fighters after the families had been evacuated. The young lad shown with the ladies is Larry LeClair whose father's barn was destroyed by the fires.

— (DND Photo).





## LEADS FIREFIGHTING FORCES

Lt.-Col. John S. Ussher, 44, right, of Toronto, commanding officer of The Royal Canadian Dragoons, Camp Gagetown, is commanding all armed forces personnel engaged in combating rampaging forest fires in the province. Col. Ussher is the link be-

tween the provincial government and the army's Eastern Command Headquarters in Halifax. Here he confers with one of his squadron commanders, Major John S. Paisley, 41, of Toronto.

— (DND Photo).



## ARMY MOVES IN

More than 50 vehicles laden with troops, supplies and equipment head for fire-ravaged areas in Prince County after arriving in the province late Thursday afternoon. The 200-man task force from Camp Gagetown is

made up of personnel from The Royal Canadian Dragoons. Also included in the group are army engineers, signallers, mechanics and medical corps personnel.

— (DND Photo).

# Fire Fighters Put In Another Hard Day As Wind Gusts Keep Flames Raging

Fire fighters in Western Prince put in another hectic day yesterday as numerous outbreaks occurred along the Western Road at Inverness, Mount Pleasant, McNeill's Mills, and Enmore, while gusts of wind kept the fires raging at Conway, Foxley River, Freeland and the Black Banks districts.

At North Enmore, three fire trucks were standing by and a barn belonging to H. Harvey caught fire three times but due to the prompt work of the firemen, the building was saved as they extinguished the flames.

Fire was blazing out of control in Enmore as it jumped the Ballem Road in mid-afternoon and was spreading rapidly through the woodland in a southerly direction. Dozers were rushed to the scene and fire breaks were being thrown up in front of the blaze as fire was hurling over the tree tops. Just before dusk Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Campbell decided to play safe and moved all their furniture out.

At McNeills Mills on the Western Road a barn belonging to James Bridges caught fire and his house and a service station belonging to Wendell Phillips were in the direct path of the fire which was burning in the woodland less than twenty-fire yards away. A truck-load of men working for F.A. Tucker, who contracts for Maritime Electric, was passing by, they saw the situation and stopped, bringing a ladder with them. They carried water in buckets and doused the flames on the roof of the barn and held the fire in check until a fire truck came to the scene.

Fire burning along the Western Road at Springhill, Inverness, McNeill's Mills and Mount Pleasant were causing flames to shoot up over the tree tops and destroying many telephone poles which were in their path. There was no immediate threat to any homes in this area.

Fires in the Foxley River, Freeland, Conway and Black Banks areas were spreading rapidly through

the dense woodland in much the same pattern as the previous day causing much destruction and a dense cloud of smoke to hover over the area. In this area there are many acres of dense woodland still untouched in the direct path of the flames, and fire breaks are being thrown up with trucks and pumpers standing by in an effort to control the flames, knowing that they cannot extinguish it altogether unless they get a heavy downpour of rain. There were no homes in this area in any immediate danger.

Later in the afternoon crews were constructing fire-breaks in the Port Hill station area and back of Northam where large fires were burning.

Towards nightfall the winds dropped and while the fires continued to burn, they pretty well ceased to move.

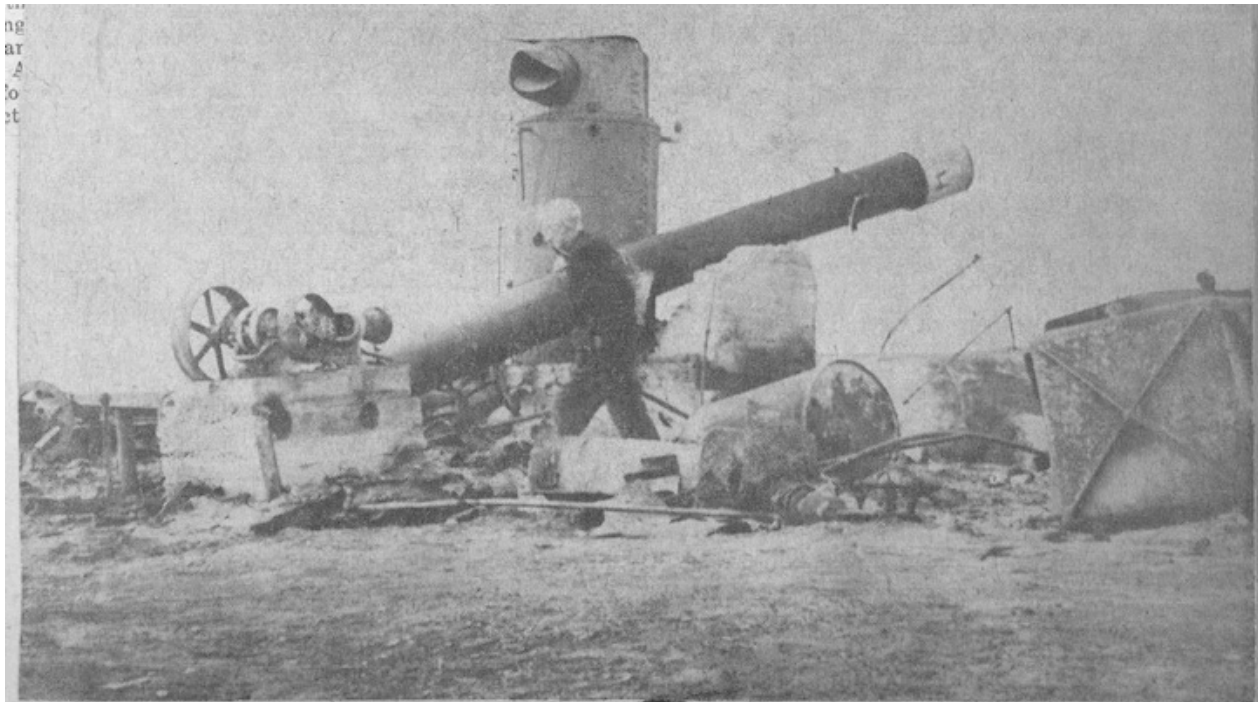
## Record Low Rainfall in Aug.

CHARLOTTETOWN — (Special) — Unless something happens within the next 48 hours August, 1960 will go down in history as one of the driest growing seasons in P.E.I.'s history.

The Meteorological branch of the Department of Transport told The Journal-Pioneer this morning that so far in August only 1.01 inches of rain have fallen. At the same time a weatherman said that there is little or no rain in sight for the next few days.

To this is added that the rain that did fall through August has been spotty. In other words, the 1.01 inches of rainfall does not apply to all sections of P.E.I.

Agricultural visitors to the province this morning said that although P.E.I. is dry, there is a far greater degree of dryness in both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.



LOBSTER CANNERY DESTROYED

Shown above are the charred remains of a deserted lobster cannery in the Black Banks area of Prince County which was destroyed by forest fires last Wednesday afternoon despite the vain efforts of fire-fighters. The factory consisting of three buildings contained almost new equipment which had been installed just recently, and a work truck which was also destroyed in the blaze.

# DISASTER FUND DONATIONS

The following donations have been received at the Royal Bank of Canada, Tyne Valley, for the Ellerslie Legion Disaster Fund. The Committee hereby express appreciation and thanks for donations received as of September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1960, totalling \$14,979.90.

Government of P.E.I.	\$10,000.00
Canadian Legion, Summerside	\$1,000.00
Canadian Legion, Borden; Canadian Legion, Ellerslie; Personnel R.C.A.F. Station Summerside	\$500.00
The Polyclinic, Charlottetown	\$300.00
Canadian Legion, Kensington	\$250.00
Artificial Breeding Association	\$200.00
Seventh Day Adventist Church, Charlottetown	\$160.00
Sen. G.H. Barbour, Ottawa; Summerlea Enterprises Co. Ltd., Summerside; George Dewar, O'Leary; Sumner Co. Ltd., Charlottetown; Mrs. Louise Hatheway, Charlottetown; Alberton Canadian Legion	\$100.00
Mrs. Carrie Holman, Summerside; Irishtown Women's Institute; Lower Montague Women's Institute; Kelvin Grove Women's Institute; Egmont Bay Altar Society	\$50.00
Fortune Cove School District	\$41.25
Birch Grove Women's Institute; Souris West Women's Institute	\$30.00
Mrs. M.A. Burleigh, Ellerslie; Mrs. H.L. Dawson, Charlottetown; Hyndman & Co. Ltd., Charlottetown; St. Nicholas Women's Institute; Fred M. Haines, Chicago, Ill.; Margaret Francis, Eastern Passage, N.S.; Windmill Restaurant, Charlottetown; Keefe Drug Co., Charlottetown; G.H. Toombs & Sons, Charlottetown; Trustees Greenmount Church; Ladies' Auxiliary Souris Canadian Legion; Miss H.S. Gates, Charlottetown	\$25.00
Dr. G.E. Robinson, Tyne Valley; Mrs. G.C. Ramsay, Charlottetown; Rev. M.K. Charman, Ellerslie; North Pinette Women's Institute	\$20.00
Succersale No. 220 De St. Theodore L'Assomption, Wellington	\$15.00
Sherbrooke Women's Institute; Mr. and Mrs. Keith Kennedy; Mrs. Barbara Stonehouse, New Glasgow, N.S.; Mrs. Belle MacLean, Summerside; Mrs. C.J. Brannan, Saint John, N.B.; Gardner Marks, Summerside; George Hogg, Summerside; Alex McRae, Charlottetown; St. Thomas Women's Auxiliary, French River; Oyster Bridge Women's Institute; Louise Hazard, Charlottetown; Bellview Women's Institute; West Point Presbyterian Young People Society	\$10.00
Mrs. Mabel Morrison, Norboro School, Pupils And Teacher	\$7.00
Milo Women's Institute; T.C. Ramsay; Joseph H. Arsenault, Wellington; Mrs. Gertrude Crocket, Charlottetown; G.L. Rogers, Summerside; Mrs. W.H. Kiezer, Iroquois Falls, Ont.; Thos. Maye and Edna Jenkins, Bedeque; Mrs. Boswell Jenkins, Mt. Allison; Mrs. M.C. MacDonald, Caledonia; Mrs. Florence White, Summerside; Ina Phillips, Summerside; Florence Robertson, Charlottetown; Louise Wedge, Summerside	\$5.00
Mr. and Mrs. R. Dalziel	\$4.00
Anonymous	\$3.65
A Friend	\$3.00
Mrs. Julia Arsenault, Tyne Valley	\$2.00
George MacInnis, Summerside; Susan and Ann Dalziel	\$1.00



## Half RCMP Force Were Constantly In The Field Fighting Forest Fires

CHARLOTTETOWN — (Special) -When the final story of the Prince County forest fires of 1960 is written, a large share of the glory will go to the Island's sub-division of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Today Inspector A. Sterling McNeill did a brief round-up of the effort made by the RCMP and at the same time he expressed appreciation for the cooperation his men had received from the government, the press and radio and the public in general.

Inspector McNeill says that during the fire one half of all RCMP personnel was involved in the field effort. While the Prince County fire was being fought the Montague and Souris detachments were busy playing their roles in the fire at Dundee. The men of the Alberton detachment stood by due to the danger of outbreak in the Palmer's Road area.

The head of the Island RCMP says that 13 radio cars were employed in the Prince County operation. One of these served, he said, as a communications control car at the Ellerslie headquarters.

As to the hours the men put in Inspector McNeill says that it would be impossible to tabulate. He reports that one man, purely by accident, was left on assignment for 36 hours without relief. All the men put in a great deal more than the average hours of a normal day.

The job of the RCMP was manifold. The basic service rendered was in the communications field. This work did not confine itself to radio alone. The radio cars moved about the area reporting new outbreaks and summoning new equipment to the

scene. Inspector McNeill says that the most important single role of the communications set-up was the continual calling for equipment and the deployment of the various pieces of apparatus and equipment in the area.

He speaks highly of the support that he got from provincial authorities who were continually on the scene. And Premier Walter R. Shaw told the Journal-Pioneer last week that he could not praise too highly the work of the RCMP.

Inspector McNeill says that the press and radio were particularly helpful when it came to appealing for help and appealing to spectators to keep out of the area.







## 200 Dragoons Arrive To Fight Forest Fires

Black-bereted soldiers of Canada's senior cavalry regiment, The Royal Canadian Dragoons, arrived 200-strong Thursday to join civilian authorities in combating major forest fire out breaks that have been raging in the western section of the province for the past two weeks.

The troops, from Camp Gagetown, N.B., left their home station at dawn, making the 225-mile trip in a convoy of trucks and scout cars. The Dragoons, one of the Regular Army's crack tank regiments, were ordered into the island province late Wednesday by Eastern Command Headquarters, Halifax.

Up until now, airmen from RCAF Station Summerside have been doing round-the-clock duty alongside civilian firefighting authorities.

The army troops, comprising a squadron group, make up a mobile, self-supporting force capable of operating independently for long periods. It carries its own tentage, rations, fuel and communication facilities. Although the majority of the force is drawn from the RCD, army engineers, signallers, mechanics, service policemen and medical corps personnel also are included.

### USSHER IS O.C.

Heading the army component here is Lt.-Col. John S. Ussher, CD, 44, of Toronto, the commanding officer of The Royal Canadian Dragoons. Other officers with his headquarters staff include Major John S. Paisley, CD, 41, of Winnipeg, a squadron commander from the regiment, and Capt. C.C.

Gaskin, CD, 40, of Sackville, N.B., the regiment's adjutant.



### 400 IN ACTION

The move of RCD personnel to P.E.I. brings the number of Camp Gagetown troops battling forest fires in the Maritimes to more than 400. About 200 infants of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada, have been committed to the Shelburne area of Nova Scotia.

The RCD, formed in Quebec City 77 years ago, is the armoured component of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade Group of Camp Gagetown. The regiment returned to Canada last fall following two years duty with NATO forces in West Germany.



# Quiet Seen Yesterday

## SUMMERSIDE BUREAU OF THE GUARDIAN

The fire area in West Prince was relatively quiet yesterday for the first time in nearly two weeks as the fires, for the most part, failed to follow the usual pattern of exploding through the wooded areas during the day.

A light rain fell over most of the fire ravaged area around 9 o'clock in the morning, but had little or no effect on the deeply embedded fires.

The fires in the Enmore, Conway and Black Banks areas did flare up somewhat during the day when a brisk southeast breeze was blowing but they were not as dangerous as they have been during the past few days. However there has been no let up in keeping fire fighters and equipment constantly at the firelines checking smouldering fires and keeping them contained.

### 200 MORE

A squadron-group of Royal Canadian dragoons from Camp Gagetown arrived Thursday evening and are bivouacked in a field about one-quarter of a mile from Tyne Valley.

Another squadron-group consisting of approximately 300 men is expected to arrive this

evening bringing the total number of army personnel to nearly 500 to assist in the fire fighting.

The women of Tyne Valley and Ellerslie, with assistance from volunteers from various parts of the county, are doing a tremendous job in keeping the fire fighters well fed.

Delicious hot dinners are served in the Ellerslie Legion Hall and at MacNevin's restaurant in Tyne Valley.

Hot dinners are also taken to the men at the firelines as well as coffee and sandwiches at various intervals during the day and night. These are delivered by Red Cross volunteer helpers.

### FOOD IS GIVEN

A request for contributions of food met with an overwhelming response as food items of every description were brought or sent to the two feeding stations. These consisted of pies, doughnuts, cookies, cakes, hams, other meats, fruits, etc., that have assured the fire fighters delicious meals each day.

Donations have come from as far east as Charlottetown and on Thursday Mrs. F. Walter Hyndman, wife of the lieutenant-governor, left a donation of food at the Ellerslie Legion while visiting the fire area with His Honor.



## CONTROL TRAFFIC IN FIRE AREAS

Ten service policemen from Canadian Provost Corps units at Camp Gagetown, N. B., are shown boarding an RCAF Dakota at nearby Fredericton airport last Saturday for Summerside, where they are now assisting in controlling traffic in the fire-ravaged

areas west of here. The provost squad is headed by Sgt. John P. Templeton of Montreal and Oromocto, N. B., extreme right. On his right is Cpl. Douglas D. Larlee of Plaster Rock, N. B.

— (DND Photo).

## Summerside Youths Battle Flames



Three Summerside boys, Joe Sonier, Layton Sonier and Kier Arsenault are shown as they pump water from their back packs on

to a smoldering flame. The boys are making an effort to hold this fringe area fire in check.

— Journal-Pioneer Staff Photo.

## Helicopter Procured

A helicopter to permit faster coverage of danger areas by Gordon Bell, chief provincial firefighter, has been procured at the request of the provincial government, it was learned last night.

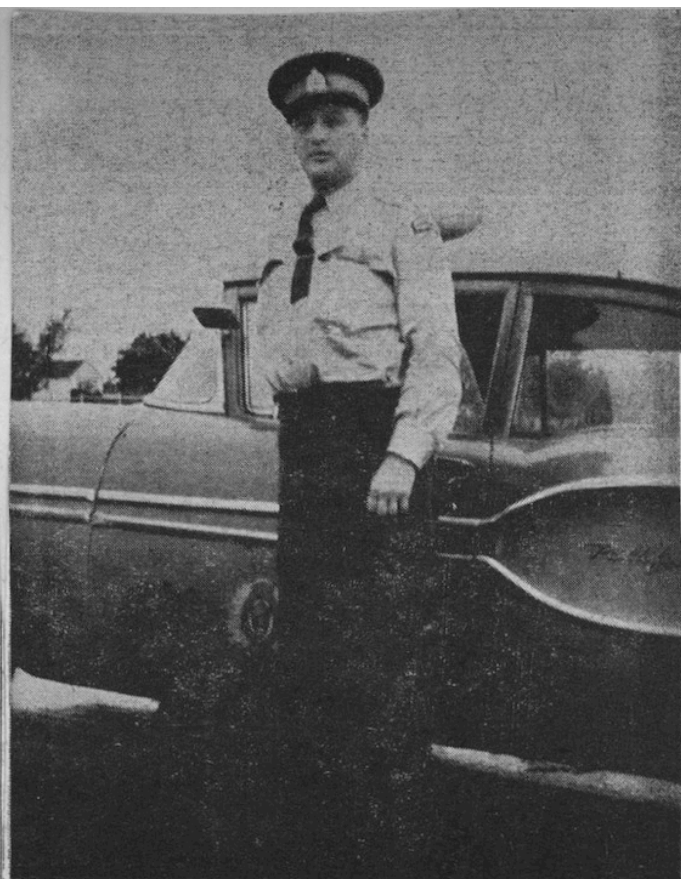
The copter is coming from Greenwood, it was learned.

Efforts to adequately handle the big fire fighting force in Prince County have frequently been hampered because of the time consumed in getting from one threatened sector to another by car.

It was felt that a helicopter would permit Mr. Bell quicker access to places sometimes difficult to reach by road. At the same time it would permit faster disposition of the forces at his command.

Yesterday afternoon he flew in a RCAF plane over the eastern Kings fire area near Dundee in order to assess the situation there and possibly offer technical advice to hard-pressed fire fighters also in that section.

Also in the Dundee area were Hon. J. Philip Matheson, minister of public works and highways, and R. Gordon White, deputy minister. Mr. Matheson said the situation was undoubtedly bad but apparently there was no shortage of either men or equipment to fight the blaze.



### ALWAYS ON ALERT.

One of the head men in the RCMP communications effort was Corporal Marshall MacKinnon, who was in charge of the RCMP officers at the scene. Corporal MacKinnon, stationed with the Charlottetown Detachment of the RCMP, made regular patrols of all the fire areas keeping in contact with headquarters at all times. Corporal MacKinnon had high praise for the assistance and co-operation of people living in the disaster areas as well as all other fire fighters taking part in battling the blaze.

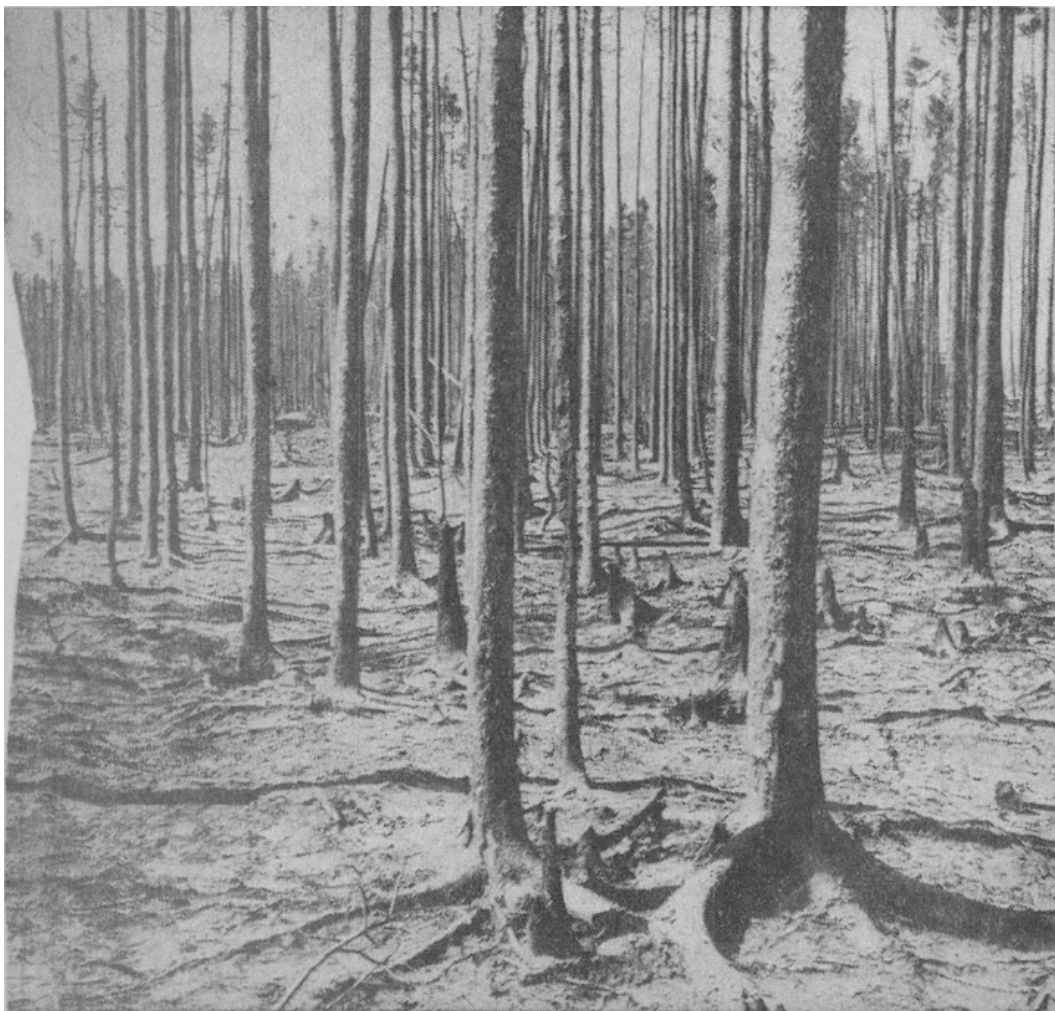


## BIDEFORD CHURCH IN DANGER

Photo shows Bideford United Church which was at several times yesterday afternoon in danger of being burned down as it was in the direct path of the roaring forest fire. Last evening, after the immediate danger had subsided a bit, a tanker truck was

standing by just in case any new outbreak might occur, after fire fighters had battled earlier in the day to save the structure. Choking white smoke filled the area at dusk last evening.

— Journal-Pioneer Staff Photo.



## LAND LAID WASTE BY FIRE

The stark outline of fire-bared spruces against a background of scorched earth tells

the grim story of a raging forest fire that swept across the area shown above. Many

scenes like this have been duplicated during the past week in the fire-ravaged sections of Prince County.





### FEED HUNGRY FIRE FIGHTERS

These three ladies from the Miscouche Ladies' Auxiliary of the Canadian Legion are a few of the many volunteer workers helping to prepare and serve food to hungry and weary fire fighters at Ellerslie. Shown from left are: Mrs.

George Veno, Mrs. John LeClair and Mrs. P. C. Martin as they work in the canteen at the Ellerslie branch of the Canadian Legion.

— Photo by Heckbert Studio.

## New Outbreaks Seen In West Prince Area

BY ROY TURNER

Guardian-Patriot Staff Writer

SUMMERSIDE — New outbreaks caused by wind-fanned embers mushroomed over a wide area of Western Prince County Thursday, adding to the already heavy demands on fire fighters and officials.

The new fires flared up in several sections along the Western road between Springhill and Inverness and in the Murray Road-Foxley River area, while brisk winds renewed the vigor of fires that have been burning north of Tyne Valley, at Freeland, Conway and Black Banks.

The fires at Black Banks and Inverness burned fiercely in wooded areas during the afternoon and the Black Banks fire was continuing to rage late last night.

For twelve days it's been a never ending battle against the rampaging flames with several communities in danger almost daily but mercifully saved by the super-human efforts of the men manning the fire lines.

### "NO END UNTIL RAIN"

"There's a tremendous area of fire, but there's still a tremendous area of woodland. I can see no end until rain comes." This was the appraisal of civil defence coordinator Major. O.R. Simons, after he completed an aerial survey of the fire situation yesterday afternoon.

Major Simons was accompanied in the Otter aircraft from Greenwood by Lt.-Col. J.B. Ussher who will be in command of the army troops from Camp Gagetown, the first contingent of which were expected to arrive late last night, and Gordon Bell who is in charge of the fire fighting.

Major Simons added that the fires generally can be contained unless very high winds sweep the area.

Some fire fighters have been on duty for several days without a break, declining to leave their post or take a rest, and working tirelessly with little sleep to comfort their weary bodies.

Farmers in the area have been assisting in the fire fighting effort, many of whom are urgently needed at home to help with the harvest.

Yesterday winds were from a northerly direction, the opposite to the previous day, and several fires backtracked threatening areas along the Western Road near Inverness. At the intersection of the MacNeill's Mills Road and the Western Highway the service station owned by Wendell Phillips and nearby buildings and the home of Reginald Campbell were in danger but the flames were controlled within yards of the buildings.

Mrs. Campbell said her family had moved out of their home four times since the fire originally threatened their home ten days ago due to the chance of winds causing the fires to backtrack.

However authorities yesterday asked those who have been evacuated to remain where they are until requested to move back home.

### VISITS MADE

Dr. O.H. Phillips, federal member for Prince, visited the area again yesterday and expressed his pleasure at the excellent organization that is immediately noticeable at control headquarters. Mr. Phillips said he was very grateful to the men who have worked long, weary hours on the fire lines, on equipment and driving trucks, etc.

Premier Walter R. Shaw and Education Minister Dr. L.G. Dewar also visited the fire area yesterday.

Major Simons said last night a helicopter from Greenwood would arrive today and stand by at fire headquarters in Ellerslie for use in reconnaissance and intelligence work and perhaps for picking up emergency equipment if needed.

The helicopter will be under the command of Major Simons.

The control centre which has been located in the Ellerslie Legion Home will be moved to an operational trailer which will be situated next to the Legion.

The trailer is being supplied by the RCAF.



## LOOK AT FIRE

Angus MacLean, federal fisheries minister, is expected in the province early today to take a first-hand look at the fire situation in Prince County. He will return to Ottawa where he will make a report to the cabinet. The minister will be accompanied by his executive assistant, John Smethurst.

## Fair Receipts To Help Fire Victims

Ten per cent of the gate receipts at the Egmont Bay and Mont Carmel Exhibition, which will be held tomorrow, will be given to the Ellerslie Legion Disaster fund. This was decided at a recent meeting of the Exhibition association. The fair will be opened by Premier W.R. Shaw at two o'clock and is a one-day show.

Apart from this announcement, donations to this important fund have been slow in coming in. The treasurer, Mr. Dane Crosby, reports a \$100 donation from Senator George Barbour and \$153 in smaller amounts. These are all that have come in addition to those announced last week which include Summerside Legion, \$1,000; Ellerslie Legion, \$500; Borden Legion, \$500; The Journal-Pioneer, \$200.



## LOAD WATER FOR FIRE FIGHTING

One of the many fire fighting scenes which have come to be normal in Prince County. Water is being loaded from a railway tank car into truck tankers for the spraying of

woods and homes. On top of the tank car are a Mountie and an airman while truck operators are shown on the truck.

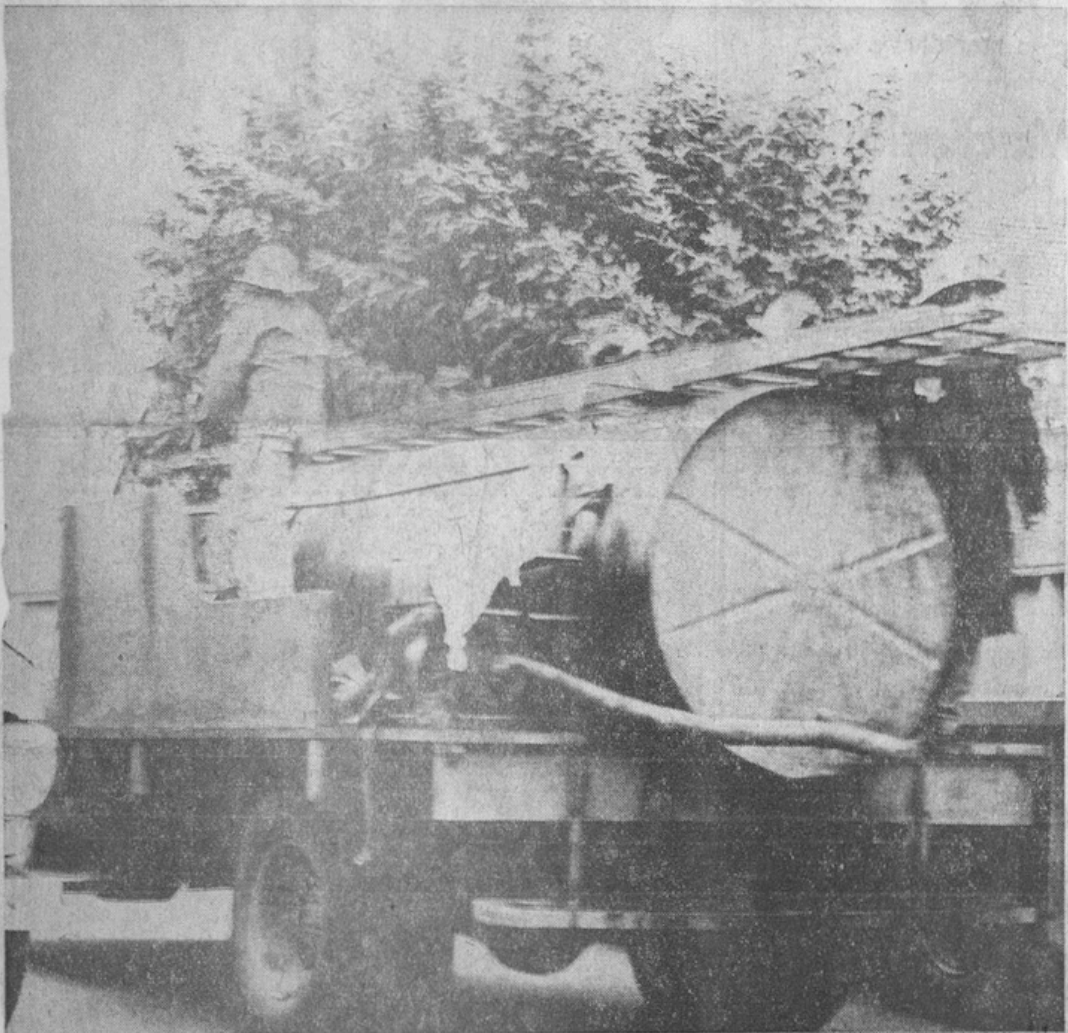
— Photo by Heckbert Studio.



## EVERY WATER SOURCE TAPPED TO FIGHT FIRES



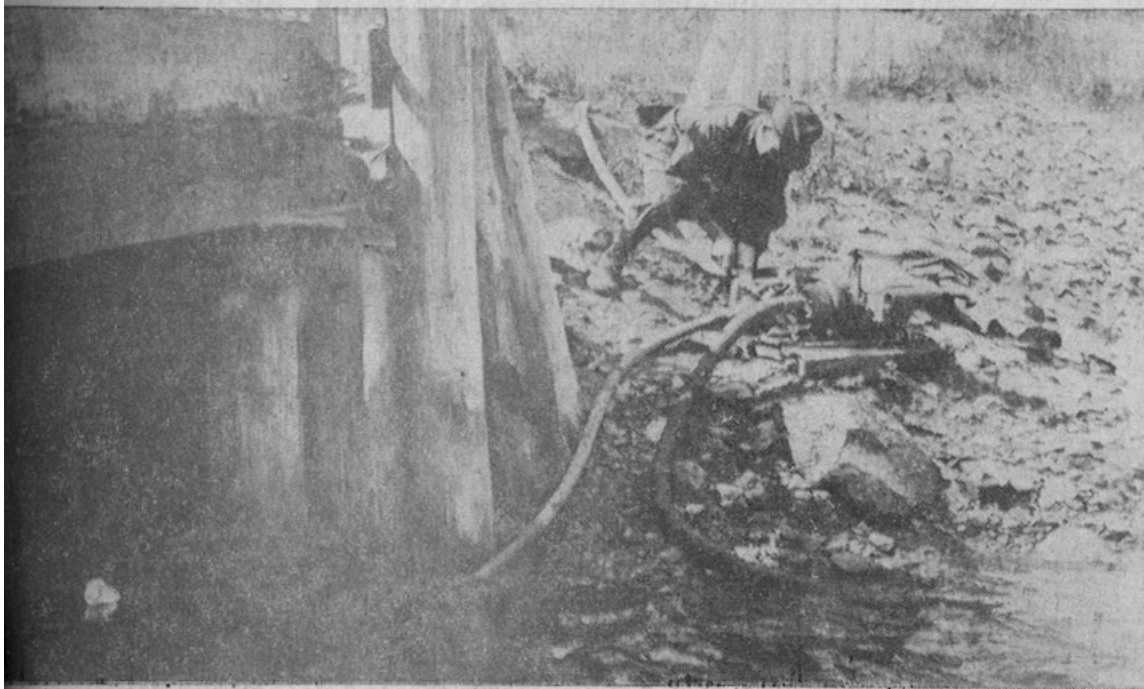
CREW REPAIRS PUMPER AT TYNE VALLEY AS PERIL MOUNTS



SCORES OF TANK TRUCKS SPEED WATER TO PERIL SPOTS



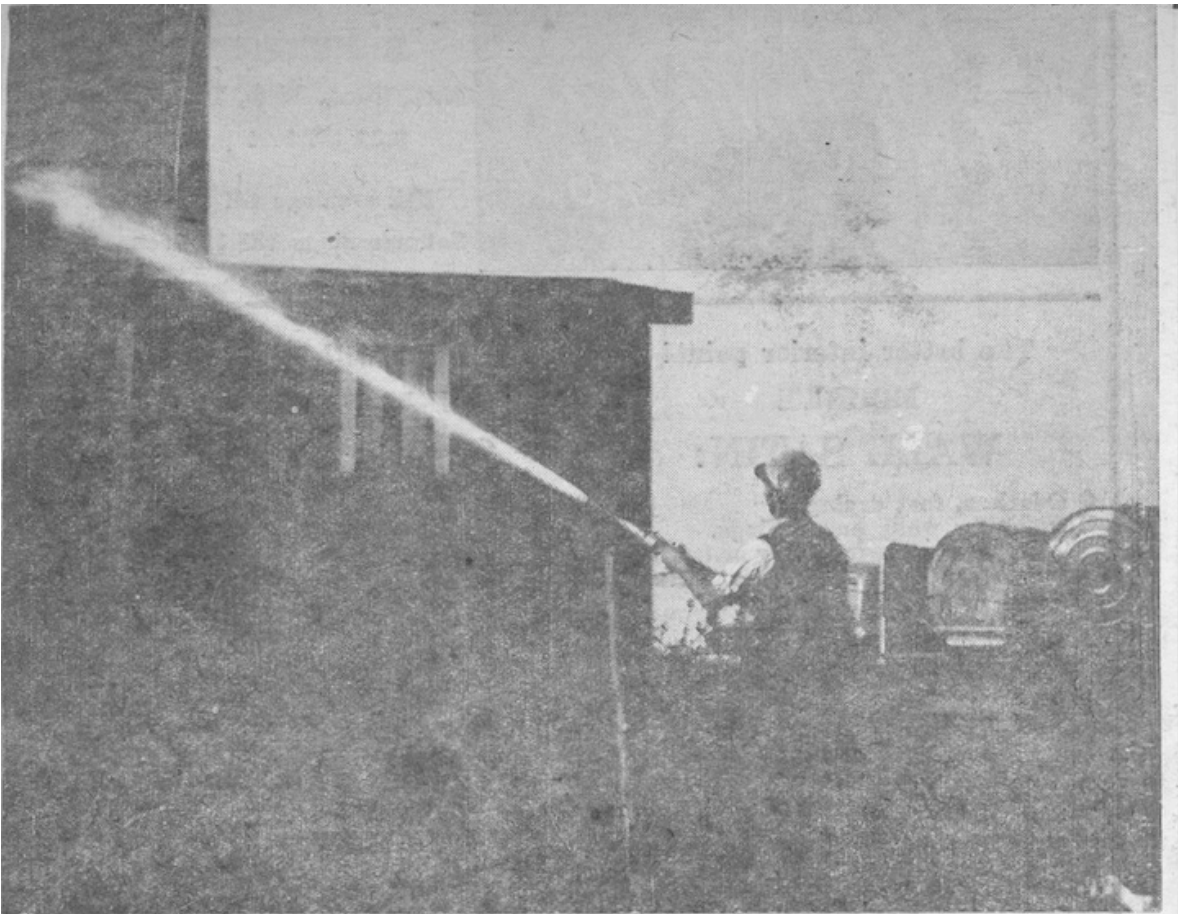
**SEVEN CNR TANK CARS ARE SPOTTED IN DANGER AREAS**



**HOSE LINES ARE FED FROM EVERY AVAILABLE WATER SOURCE**



**CHIEF DESPATCHER DICK FOUND IS AT RIGHT**



## IN PATH OF FIRE

Vincent DesRoches of the Miscouche Fire Department is shown as he wets down the home and barns of Charles Coughlin of

Enmore as flames roar in a woodlot immediately back of the building.

— Journal-Pioneer Staff Photo.



## HOLD FLAMES FROM SAW MILL

An unidentified firefighter, armed with a hose and a protective mask wades into white choking smoke in a heavily wooded area behind a saw mill and home of Wilbur Hardy. The fighter, barely distinguishable, is making an attempt to keep flames from getting to surrounding sawdust and the mill nearby

which caught fire earlier in the day. Tony Gallant and Bert Bryan of the O'Leary Fire Department wet down the flame at another point behind the mill. Not far away and earlier in the afternoon a successful battle was made by the firefighters in saving the new home of Thomas Blackett.

— Journal-Pioneer Staff Photo.





## FIRE HEADQUARTERS AT ELLERSLIE

Shown here is the nerve centre of fire operations in Prince County - the Legion Home at Ellerslie, which has come to be most important building in

Prince County these days. On the roof of the building, a workman is attaching another communication antenna. In front, an RCAF three-ton truck, com-

munication cars, and a few of the back-packs, which unmounted fire-fighters have come to know so well.



## RCAF FIRE FIGHTING HEADQUARTERS

This is the trailer vehicle which is now located at Ellerslie to serve as headquarters for the RCAF detachment de-

tailed to fire fighting duties.

— Photo by Heckbert Studio.

## CARD OF THANKS

The women of Tyne Valley wish to thank all those who so generously contributed both food and time to help them in their work of serving meals and lunches to the fire fighters, while their community was threatened by forest fires.

The Women of Tyne Valley



FISHERIES MINISTER Angus MacLean confers with Lt.-Col. John S. Usher, right, during his visit to the Prince County fire area yesterday. Col. Usher is commanding the Royal Cana-

dian Dragoons unit that came to the province Wednesday for fire-fighting duties. Mr. MacLean came to the Island to get a first-hand report which he is to present to the federal cabinet this week.

# Fed. Fisheries Minister Sees ‘Fires Contained’

SUMMERSIDE BUREAU  
OF THE GUARDIAN

Following an inspection tour of the fire area in west Prince county yesterday morning Fisheries Minister Angus MacLean told a Guardian reporter that the fires appeared to be well contained and as far as could be seen everything possible is being done to prevent further loss of homes and property.

Mr. MacLean said he saw very pleased with the organization of the various services and all appeared to be well co-ordinated.

He commended the armed services who he said “are doing an excellent job,” and paid tribute to Civil Defence, Red Cross, Legion and all other organizations and individuals who are playing a part in fighting the fires.

Queried regarding federal assistance Mr. MacLean said that Eastern army command had been authorized to supply army personnel and equipment as needed.

Insofar as financial aid is concerned he said the losses would have to be assessed following the fire, and if the cost is beyond the resources of the various services and the provincial government, then aid would possibly be forthcoming.

Mr. MacLean expressed sympathy to those who have lost their homes and other properties and stated he would have visited the area earlier but for a speaking engagement in Ottawa Thursday night when he addressed the international conference of physicists.

Mr. MacLean was accompanied on the plane trip from Ottawa by his executive assistant, John Smethurst and newsmen.

Federal member for Prince County, Orville H. Phillips and Major. O.R. Simons, civil defence head, accompanied the minister on the fire tour.

## COST OF FIRES TO BE PROBED

A committee to examine into and report on the cost to the province of combating forest fires in Prince Edward Island was set up during a meeting of the Executive Council yesterday.

Comprising the committee will be personnel of the departments of provincial secretary, welfare and labour, public works and of forestry.

It is believed the costs into which the committee will inquire will include such matters as damage to fire fighting equipment on loan to the government for the emergency.



# Big Improvement Is Seen In Province's Forest Fires

## Woods Travel Restriction Is Seen Likely For Future

BY RALPH CAMERON  
Guardian-Patriot Staff Writer

That a brand-new type of legislation in this province may be expected when the Legislature next meets is a foregone conclusion.

The desperate fire situation now existing makes a new type of law almost mandatory if people and property are to be protected.

It is believed possible the Legislature will be asked to approve a bill giving the government the power in emergencies, such as now exist, to ban all woods travelling regardless of the fact that the woods may be private and not government property.

It does not possess such authority at present and as a result a large amount of property, and possibly many lives, are endangered and the attorney general is powerless to act.

Attention has been focused on the point in recent days by the presence in privately owned woodlands of crews of men cutting pulpwood.

Their use of power saws in the cutting and of small fires in preparing meals is felt to create an unnecessary hazard in areas tinder dry from a long summer with no rain.

Late this week a resident of Kings County telephoned to this city to complain of such a crew in Eastern Kings. He felt the danger of sparks flying from power saws in operation could create a serious fire threat.

Attorney General R.R. Bell, when questioned about possible action said the government had done everything in its power to lessen the danger by compelling evacuation of all parks and camping sites under its jurisdiction.

Though possibly considered drastic by camping tourists, the action was felt necessary in order to prevent any possibility of starting fires which might get out of control.

### POWERLESS

However, the attorney general noted he was powerless to prevent people from camping or even starting fires on their private property even when such property consisted of sometimes deep woods.

Freely discussed informally by a group of lawyers this week, it was noted they were in unanimous agreement that authority to control movement in all woodlands should be held by the government for emergency use.

The situation here was compared to that in the neighboring provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick where woods travel has been banned on many past occasions.

However, the governments there do possess such authority as vast wooded territories in both provinces are Crown lands. The question of whether the Federal government could step in here was also raised, but it was agreed that this could only happen in the event of a national emergency, not a local one.

### WOULD BE LIABLE

But there was one point on which every one of the lawyers agreed and that was that in the event of a fire starting through action of any owner on his own property such owner would be liable for all damages caused to neighboring woods or property owned by others.

Through civil action he might find himself responsible for large-scale payments of damages.

At the present time this appears to be the sole weapon fellow landowners have against the careless or thoughtless owner of woodlands.

## Minister Asks People To Stay Out Of Woods

An appeal to all Islanders to 'please stay out of the woods' was issued last night by Hon. Leo Rossister, minister of industry and natural resources and fisheries.

Deeply concerned with the fire situation across the province, the Minister said:

"I am appealing to the people for their own good. In my department, and in fact every other department of government, we have done everything possible to lessen the danger of new fires being started."

"We closed provincial parks and picnic sites because we own them and could do it. But we do not own the woodlots on the Island and cannot control movements of owners on their own property because we lack the necessary legislation."

"However, if the people who own these woodlots would only realize that this terrific fire damage could happen to them as well, I believe they would willingly refrain from using the woods at this time.

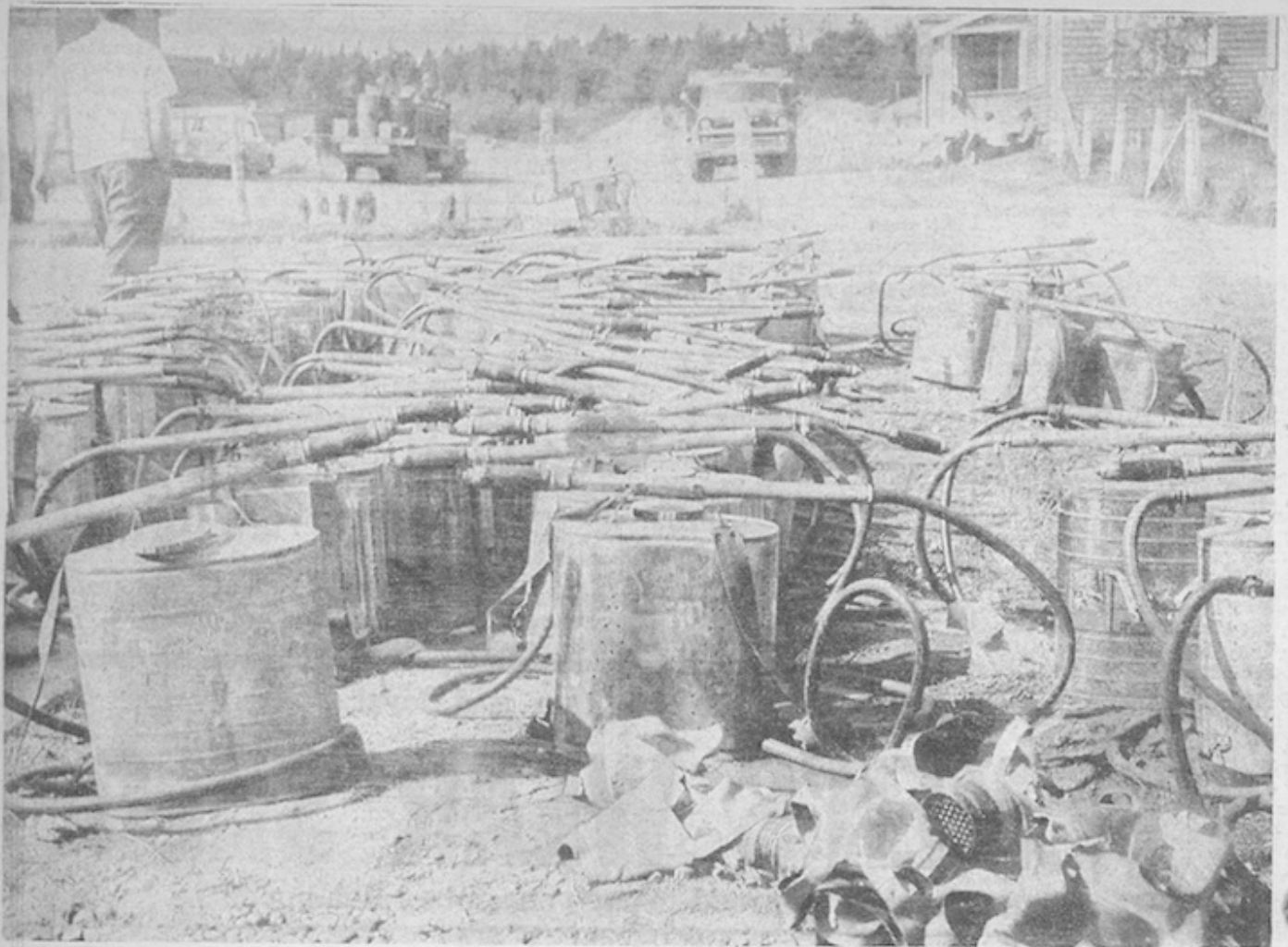
"Already," the Minister added, "far too much of our Island has been laid waste and great amounts of timberlands lost to us for many years to come. It will be a long time before Prince and Kings Counties recover from this great toll on their natural resources."

### URGENT APPEAL

In asking all woodland owners not to use their land now and particularly not to use power saws for cutting or to start even small picnic fires, the Minister pointed out the real danger involved was that such fires can easily get beyond control.

As it is now, he said, "we have only so many fire fighters and so much equipment and when we have to try to battle the blaze on too many fronts we are bound to suffer in efficiency. And loss of efficiency could be fatal to us."

"Already too many homes and buildings have been lost," he stated as he again reminded Islanders in every part of the province that it is now part of their task to see that so far as humanly possible they help prevent the start of any more fires.



## EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT USED TO QUELL BLAZE

Shown is some of the emergency equipment which was used to battle raging flames in the Ellerslie-Foxley River-Enmore area while the Island's most destructive fire in history flared out of control. The picture shows backpacks

and face protector masks used by the fire fighters and given to the cause by RCAF Station Summerside. Much of this equipment is still standing by should any new outbreak occur.

— Journal-Pioneer Staff Photo.



## FACTORY GUTTED AT BLACK BANKS

The photo is another one of the desolate scenes which can be seen following the worst fire in Island history in Prince County. A shore line lobster canning factory at Black Banks was charred to ashes last week by the wind swept flames. Although the factory, consisting of three buildings and a truck, has not been in operation for several

years. Many pieces of relatively new equipment were lost in the blaze, this equipment being installed prior to the factory closing down. The large home of Lowell Matthews, a few hundred yards away was in danger many times last week when the blaze was at its height.

— Journal-Pioneer Staff Photo



# Weekend Quiet Reported On Western Fire Front

## SUMMERSIDE BUREAU OF THE GUARDIAN

The army have taken over fire fighting duties from the RCAF in the fire fronts in Prince County where activity over the weekend was relatively quiet, with no homes or buildings lost.

The Red Cross first aid post at the control centre in Ellerslie concluded their last shift at midnight and left the area.

Almost overnight the Army have established camp headquarters at Tyne Valley where a sizable village of tents is located at the top of the hill on the road leading to Ellerslie. Here the mobile units of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, numbering about 500 men from Camp Gagetown, operate as a fire fighting group in what is probably the largest army manoeuvre of its kind in the history of the Island.

### MINOR FIRES

Yesterday afternoon a tour of the area indicated that minor fires are still smouldering in hundreds of places throughout the districts already swept by fires, and civil defence co-ordinator Major O.R. Simons said if winds should rise again before the fall of more rain, the situation would be serious because "it would not take much to start the fires again."

Major Simons and his group are still in charge of the administrative side of the fire fighting program, with Gordon Bell directing the use of the heavy equipment.

The RCMP are sill maintaining the area fire patrols and radio communication with the dispatch centre which they maintain in the RCAF mobile trailer office beside the co-ordination centre at Ellerslie. Here too the department of highways have established a trailer office through which they record and control the use of trucks and fire fighting equipment.

An army trailer beside the dispatch centre and the co-ordination headquarters maintains constant radio communication with their headquarters at Tyne Valley and with their many radio equipped

mobile vehicles which transport and assist the army men in their fire fighting activities.

RCAF personnel leaving the area yesterday expressed deep appreciation for the work done by women volunteers at the control centre in Ellerslie and in a restaurant in Tyne Valley, where women volunteers provided service in the preparing and serving of food on an around-the-clock basis.

### EQUIPMENT LIST

The urgent demands of the critical fire situation over the past two weeks has left at least some items unaccounted. In the change of fire fighters, items were abandoned or lost in the excitement and necessities of fire fighting and the work of rounding up equipment and tabulating the shortages may take a few days.

The Red Cross yesterday were still hoping for the recovery of some blankets, mattresses, and other items that were issued for the comfort of fire fighters and never returned.

While having no connection with these missing items, the sense of humor of fire fighters was evident yesterday on an evacuated home near Port Hill station, where fire fighters had established a sort of base near the fires in that area.

Across the front of the house that had itself been saved only by determined efforts of the fire fighters, someone had placed a huge card board sign reading "MacKenzie's Fire Sale", and with the front porch and lawn lined with "bargains" of "portable field lamp batteries, 2 for 98 cents", "slightly used clothing, 50 cents to \$1.25", "well used shovels, 98 cents", an airforce "stake truck, at \$198.00", someone's nice 1958 car, tagged "undamaged, at \$450", and "portable fire extinguishers - one for every building!"

With the tension of fire fighting lessened, the control centre also could enjoy a bit of humor, as indicated by a sheet of paper pinned to the wall with a large black dot in the center of a circle, and printed below, the words "panic button."



### VISIT FROM CABINET MINISTER

Summerside was the scene of a flying visit from the Hon. Angus MacLean, Minister of Fisheries, on Friday. Here to take a personal look at the P. E. I. fire problem for the Federal Government. The Hon. Mr. MacLean arrived in the early hours of Friday morning. He is to analyse the general fire situation and to investigate the possi-

bilities of declaring a national disaster area. shown in this picture are, front row, left to right: The Hon. Angus MacLean; Group Captain J. E. Creeper, Commanding Officer, RCAF Station Summerside. Back row, left to right: Dr. Orville Phillips, MP for Prince County; and Mr. John A. Smithurst, Mr. MacLean's executive secretary.

# Provincial Government Faces Huge Problems In Aftermath of Bush Fires

By Hartwell Daley

CHARLOTTETOWN — With fires dying out in Prince and Kings Counties, an overwhelming number of problems are appearing here in the capital. The problems are the aftermath of a hectic and hurried effort to meet the greatest single disaster ever to hit P.E.I. The list of problems is long and will engage the best efforts of the cabinet and department officials for weeks to come.

The Hon. Philip Matheson told The Journal-Pioneer this morning that during the emergency a great many things had to be done for which no advance provision had been made. Among the things that had to be faced were recruiting of fire fighters, the securing of pumps and equipment, extremely heavy telephone bills and the purchase of huge quantities of food. Mr. Matheson says that as the calls for help mounted twenty-four hours a day while the crisis was on there was not time to quibble over minor points. Help was needed and needed fast. And wherever possible, help was sent as speedily as possible.

Briefly, from the cabinet's standpoint the situation is this: bills are being presented for a variety of things. Some sort of relief program has got to be put into action. And as of the moment there is anything but a complete picture of either the bills that will come in or the extent of the relief program that will be necessary.

Deputy Minister of Public Works Gordon White is gradually listing the problems that have to be faced. At the moment his list includes, among other things, such items as: equipment to be returned or paid for; personnel that was hired to be paid; a huge gasoline bill; bills from truckers who used their trucks; pumps that were hired swiftly; food bills; cities, towns and villages that provided services and equipment; expenses due in the air force and the army; obligations to the Red Cross; telephone bills.

Mr. Matheson says that overshadowing even these matters is the great debt of gratitude owed to the hundreds of men and women who gave their time, effort and material to aid in the fight against the fires. He says that no one will ever know the true account of what these volunteer sacrifices meant.

Among the more pressing problems to be met is one involving pumps. Dozens of pumps were literally commandeered for use. Many of them were new and were provided immediately with no questions asked. Now the people who provided them are getting them back. They are no longer new but have been subjected to rough treatment, including salt water. The government is probably going to consider buying most of this equipment. Being carefully weeded are legitimate claims as over and against those that have no foundation.

In a last ditch effort to get additional men, an appeal was made of men with the assurance of pay at the rate of 75 cents an hour. These men were needed badly at critical moments and they will get their pay.

But here again there are problems. The province has no budget for hiring such help. There was no other way. Now the cabinet must take the necessary steps to meet this responsibility. Last week when the crisis was at its hottest no questions were asked. The men were provided. Now the question is, "Who authorized such a move?" But this is of little consequence. Just another problem that will have to be met.

On Mr. White's desk is a partial list of the organizations, both public and private, that made a maximum effort to fight the fires. Thus far there are 35 on the list and it is growing. Mr. Matheson agrees that the best was done that was humanly possible and that any problems remaining are small compared to what would have happened if the effort had not been made.



## WIVES PITCH IN

Firefighters must eat, and when there are over 250 men fighting fires the business of making lunches becomes an awesome task. Shown here, left to right, are four of the ladies from RCAF Station Summerside who helped prepare food: Mrs. C. A. Vivian, Mrs.

E. A. Ryan, Mrs. J. E. Creeper and Mrs. E. Q. Semple. Over 500 lunches were prepared Friday by the lovely volunteers, for the firefighters on duty in the disaster areas of West Prince.

— (DND Photo).



# Moonshiners Are Blamed For Forest Fires On Island

## Cause Is Known In 11 Fire Areas

Moonshiners and their operation of country stills are the known cause of 11 of the 28 fires the forestry division of this province was called on to fight this year, it was stated by the department of industry and natural resources yesterday.

During their fire fighting, forestry division officials uncovered 11 stills which they state were directly responsible for the 11 fires in the area where they were found P.A. Murnaghan, deputy minister, said.

One of the fires is reported to have resulted from an attempt to burn out a wasp's nest and at least some of the remainder are suspected to have been the work of arsonists.

### 200 SQUARE MILES

Worst of the fires was in Western Prince County and extended over an area estimated around 200 square miles. This estimate may prove low when an accurate picture is finally made.

At present Chief Forester J. Frank Gaudet, now in charge of fire operations in Prince County, will not guess at the extent of the damage. However, he stated that when the fire danger is over he will prepare a map covering fire areas which will present an exact picture of the districts involved and territory covered.

Naming of Mr. Gaudet to direct operations in Prince was announced by Hon. Leo Rossiter, minister of industry and natural resources.

The minister said that Orin Simons, co-ordinator of civil defence, had returned to this city to work with the other members of a committee recently named by the government to assess the fire damage.

Other members of the committee are P.A. Murnaghan, deputy minister under Mr. Rossiter; R. Gordon White, deputy minister of public works and highways; and W.W. Reid, deputy minister of welfare.

### TO CALL WITNESSES

They will have the authority to call in witnesses to aid in the decisions they will make and conclusions they will reach.

Prince County was under control though it still flares up occasionally. He said that four pumpers were still standing by but a really heavy rain was needed badly.

Both the Minister and his deputy paid tribute to the work of the forestry division under Mr. Gaudet in combating so many fires in one season.



### A FLARE UP!

Constable L. S. Robbins of the Summerside Detachment of the RCMP answers one of the many calls from a radio patrol car scouting the disaster area while fires raged. Constable Robbins immediately jots down the location and nature of the fire, so that such information could be sent to officials at a nearby despatch point, who would in turn send out fire fighting equipment. Constable Robbins worked in eight hour shifts at the Ellerslie headquarters.

— Journal-Pioneer Staff Photo.

# Organization Starts to Disband As Rain Continues to Fall

Hopes are high today that the fire menace will be a thing of the past in west Prince by tomorrow morning and steps are already being taken to reduce the size of the fire fighting organization on the job. Most of the duties have been taken over by the army.

Ever since the first rain shower on Friday broke the dry spell, the fires have been less threatening. Saturday morning a heavy shower was experienced and early this morning there were two showers. As of noon a light rain was falling and it was expected that rain will continue to fall until tomorrow morning by which time it is hoped the fires will have all been extinguished.

This morning the Ellerslie headquarters reported that only one alarm had been sent in. This had come from the Western Road and it was only smoke from a smouldering fire. A twice daily helicopter patrol is carried out over the area and the report from yesterday's afternoon patrol is to the effect that the only place a blaze was spotted was in the Black Banks area.

The Red Cross Disaster organization ceased to function in the area as of midnight last night and the feeding of civilian workers was taken over by the Department of Welfare under the supervision of Brigadier W.W. Reid, the deputy minister. It was stressed this morning by Mrs. Cudmore, Red Cross commissioner, that the Red Cross disaster organization stands ready to return to duty on three-

hour notice. The mobile first aid units have been removed and the feeding centers at Foxley River and Tyne Valley have been closed down. However, a first aid post is maintained at headquarters and there are other posts in the area.

Many of the civilian fire fighters are leaving as the army assumes more and more of the responsibility. The army has taken over the job of dispatching from the RCMP although the Mounties are still providing mobile communication and are patrolling the roads.

The area was still sealed off this morning except for emergency travelling and the army provost men are still on duty at the road entrances to the area.

The job is becoming one of cleaning up. Some of the heavy equipment will be kept in the area to level off rough ground where fire-breaks were made and in general to leave the area as tidy as possible. Men from the militia groups on the job are scouring the area salvaging equipment which had been scattered about due to the need to work as fast as possible without regard to details. Some equipment will probably never be found.

## Firefighting Chores Help Troops Gain On The Spot Experience

TYNE VALLEY - Troop participation in firefighting activities here has given 500 soldiers from Camp Gagetown their first on-the-spot experience in the latest responsibility assigned to the Canadian Army - national survival.

The smooth-working contingent from The Royal Canadian Dragoons encamped here has shown that a mobile, disciplined force, equipped to operate independently, greatly augments heavily-burdened civilian agencies.

The army, with its command and organizational structure and long-range communications facilities, is the only readily-available source in the country that can be tapped in disasters and extreme emergencies. This newly-acquired role is in addition to the peace-preserving contributions to NATO and the UN in Europe, Asia and Africa.

Although the task of troops in western P.E.I. amounted to little more than a routine military manoeuvre, officers and men did get a slight taste of the mechanics of working hand-in-hand with civilian authorities. The lessons learned, no matter how superficial in nature, could be applied in principle to any disaster, whether it's fire, flood or nuclear attack.

The task of training, equipping and maintaining a force in the field is all inherent in the soldiering profession. But in addition to keeping the operational capabilities of arms and service units up to peak efficiency, the army now has to be prepared to coordinate the operations of the three services when performing a national survival role.

The peacetime aim the Canadian Army is trying to achieve, according to Maj.-Gen. M.P. Bogert, general officer commanding Eastern Command, is "to be trained and fit to go to war today if called, or

at the very latest, tomorrow." The same criterion applies at home wherever an emergency is brought about either by natural causes or enemy action.

In the Ellerslie-Tyne Valley operation on P.E.I., units and detachments of seven of the army's 15 corps were represented on the ground. The majority of the 500-man force came from The Royal Canadian Dragoons, but smaller components had an essential supporting role to perform to make the contingent an effective, closely-knit team.

Sappers of the Royal Canadian Engineers moved in with their heavy equipment and explosives and Royal Canadian Signals personnel manned and operated wireless and line communications that kept the components of the force in contact with each other and with higher headquarters and civilian organizations.

Royal Canadian Army Service Corps troops delivered rations, petrol, oil and lubricants and operated field kitchens for both army and civilian firefighters. A small detachment from the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps looked after the health needs of the troops, as well as established a liaison with civilian medical authorities.

Artificers of the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers contributed their know-how in maintaining vehicles, wireless sets and heavy equipments.

But the soldiers who perhaps worked closest with civilian agencies and the general public were service policemen of the Canadian Provost Corps. They were the first outside troops to arrive in the province and earned warm praise from RCMP and provincial authorities for their assistance in the problem of controlling traffic in a disaster area.

# Fires Still Menacing West Prince; Constant Watch Is Maintained

The forest fire situation in West Prince is still far from the point where it can be considered no longer a menace, and active fires are still burning, though under control, at several points, Major Orin Simons, P.E.I. Civil Defence Co-ordinator, said this morning.

Both Major Simons and Lt. Col. J. S. Ussher, commanding the 440-man contingent of Royal Canadian Dragoons which is on fire fighting duty, confirmed that only a downpour of rain could bring an end to the threat.

Gordon Bell, the provincial director of fire fighting, was due to arrive at the Tyne Valley army establishment around noon today, and was to make an aerial reconnaissance of the entire area in company with Major Simons and Colonel Ussher. The latter said it is not known yet how long the Dragoons will be encamped in the fire region, and the order to move out will depend upon the decision of the provincial government as to when the threat has diminished sufficiently.

Throughout the entire big area of blackened woodland, surface and underground fires are smouldering and smoke is visible at many points. Fires are burning actively in the Northam-Springhill area, and around Inverness and Enmore. There are also fires in the Murray Road and Black Banks areas, but these are not considered serious as they are located on ground that has already been burned over with the exception of some skipped patches.

The operation now is one of continual vigilance, Major Simons said. Army men, civilian volunteers and provincial government employees are immediately available to handle minor outbreaks and other equipment is being maintained on a stand-by basis should it be needed.

The Civil Defence headquarters at Ellerslie now has been temporarily abandoned and it no longer is the scene of bustling emergency action as it was during the height of the fire. Major Simons has moved his headquarters to the Army encampment at Tyne Valley and from there keeps in constant touch with the situation throughout the region.

## Truck Burned In Sudden Fire Flare

Army firefighters were flown by helicopter from Tyne Valley to Poplar Grove about six o'clock last evening to deal with a straw stack blaze that was threatening a wooded area which previously had been untouched by the raging West Prince forest fires.

A truck owned by farmer Ira Banks was destroyed in the flash fire, which occurred when the truck backfired setting fire to a straw stack which had been left after threshing operations.

The fire fighters, equipped with back pumps, were able to confine the flames and prevented their spread to nearby woodlands.



### RCAF FIRE FIGHTERS IN ACTION

Wetting down a North Enmore home in the path of the advancing fire are two RCAF Station Summerside fire fighters, Leading Aircraftsman T. Mamay and Corporal R. K. Burton. These two airmen are part of a 135 man contingent from station Summerside helping to fight Prince County fires on an around-the-clock basis. The home belongs to the Misses Floranne, Mary and Millie Stewart of North Enmore.