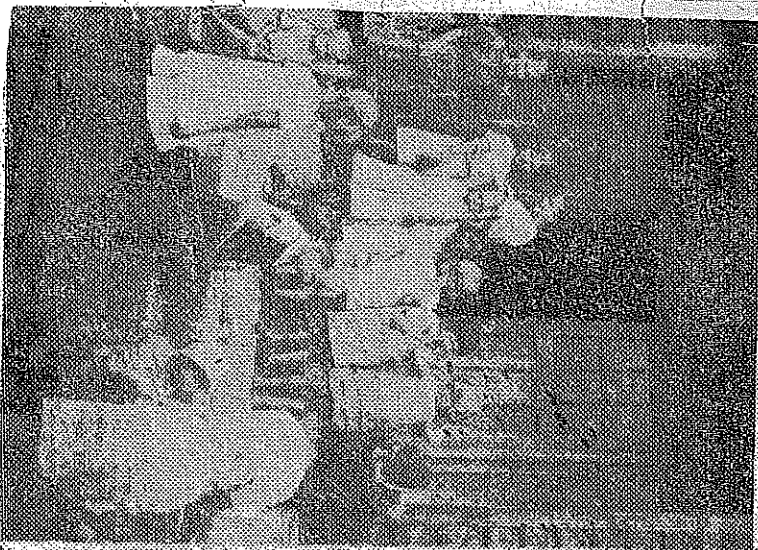




—Photos by Torchy Anderson
REFUGEES OF THE FIRE—Children from the Black Creek district, where homes were evacuated under the threat of the great Vancouver Island fire, are being cared for in Courtenay. They can be seen on the steps of the Agricultural Hall at the bottom left. At the top left are a number of the mothers with the younger children. At the top right is a bright little refugee who was carried for two miles by her mother, while below are Jacob Unger and Albert Wedel of Camp 3 road with some of the family possessions.

Australia Is Seeking General Empire Economic Conference

Disappointed at Collapse of London Parley—Earle Page Going to Ottawa.

By A. C. CUMMINGS.
From the Daily Province London Bureau. Copyright, 1938, by the Southern Pub. Co.)
LONDON, July 25.—Sir Earle Page, Australia's deputy premier, will leave for Ottawa this week to meet Premier Mackenzie King and discuss important aspects of future Empire trade treaties.
 Sir Earle, with other Australian cabinet colleagues, has spent months in London attempting to conclude a new Anglo-Australian pact without success.
 The Chamberlain cabinet felt its hands were tied until the outcome of the Washington negotiations was known. These were delayed first and again by unforeseen obstacles, and even now further delays are certain.

Stanley Park Pled To Prevent Fires On Beach

Special fire patrols to prevent citizens from lighting fires on the shores of Stanley Park have been started by the Park Board, it was announced today by Chairman R. Rowe Holland.
 Park officers have reported several fires along the shoreline between Second Beach and Siwash. Rock, generally between 9 p.m. and midnight.
 "A spark from one of those fires could easily wipe out the whole park," stated Chairman Holland today. "Anyone caught

The Australian ministers, consequently, decided to abandon the London negotiations and return on with the old Ottawa agreement for the time being.
ASKED MODIFICATIONS.

Flames Eat Path Down To The Sea But Fury Waning

Fire Crosses Highway at Oyster Bay; Comox Logging Company Timber Saved.

TWO WINDLESS DAYS AID MEN

By TORCHY ANDERSON.
(Daily Province Staff Correspondent.)
OYSTER RIVER BRIDGE, July 25.—The great Vancouver Island fire reached the satchuck for the first time early this morning.

The fire crossed the Island Highway into the scattered trees along the coast at Shelter Point on the north end of Oyster Bay. Water from the ocean is being pumped direct to the blaze along 200 yards of the highway.

Bert Conway, forestry supervisor, told the Daily Province this morning that no damage was done to any of the camps along the coast at this point. Communication Campbell River has been re-established.

This morning another giant caterpillar was being unloaded and will go into the fighting line on Cariboo Creek, where Comox Logging Company has already bulldozed out fourteen miles of fire trail in an effort to save 40,000,000 feet of cut logs.

SITUATION UNCHANGED.

Otherwise the situation this morning remained unchanged. The fire sulked and flared alternately during the week-end. It crept forward, hour by hour, widening the reeking path which it has ripped through the heart of the Island.

Highlight of the week-end was the surprising discovery that

No Sign of Rain

VICTORIA, July 25.—(CP)—
 While Vancouver Island fire fighters saw rain as the only salvation for the safety of millions of feet of standing virgin timber and the several communities threatened daily by the Island's worst forest fire, weather officials forecast continued prospect whatever of the much-needed rain.

Some forty million feet of felled and bucked and cold-decked timber on Cariboo Creek, property of Comox Logging Company and situated about eight or nine miles directly inland from Oyster Bay had survived the flaming flood of Friday.

By tonight there may be eighteen powerful caterpillar bulldozers at work on the different fronts of the fire. These machines tear fire-trails through deadfall, slash and life timber. They can brush aside a group of twenty-foot second growth like an army tank stamping down barbed wire.

New pumps and hose from every available source are being rushed into the line.

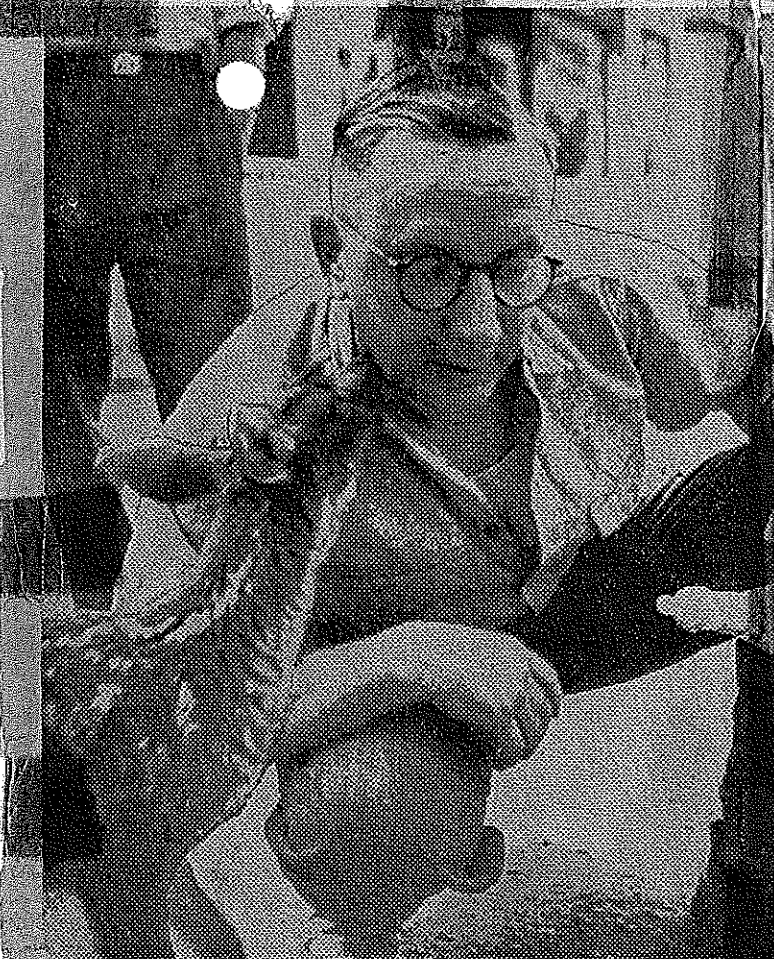
GAINED RESPIRE.

The almost windless days on Saturday and Sunday, while extremely hazardous in every other respect, gave the fire-fighters a chance to regroup their forces and attempt to counter-attacks by back-fires.

Heat on Sunday was terrific. At Campbell River headquarters

(Continued on Page 2.)
 See FIRE.

DRAMA OF THE WOODS - - B.C. Fights Its Greatest Battle - - SCENES FROM THE FRONT



A forest orphan gets a helping hand from one of the firefighters at Oyster River. The little fawn eagerly accepts a drink of water from a milk bottle.



Mrs. Barbara Marriott of Courtenay is one of the heroes of the great fire. She shields from the camera but has been doing yeoman service as a truck driver.



Hungry firefighters at their base camp at Forbes Landing for occasional meals. Here they are in action during one of their brief respites.



Here's John Matthews, naval telegraph operator, who is stationed at Camp 3, Comox, assisting firefighters with rapid communication to all fronts.



This is all that's left of the hotel at Forbes Landing, the well-known fishing spot at the end of Lower Campbell Lake. Photo by Torchy Anderson.

THEY'LL CALL IT B.C.'S GREAT FIRE Eyewitness Tells Grim Saga of Man's Fight Against Flames

By **TORCHY ANDERSON**
(Daily Province Staff Correspondent)

COURTENAY, July 23.—The great Vancouver Island fire —you will live to hear it referred to that way historically—is already a provincial calamity.

Within hours it may reach proportions of a national disaster.

It's a picture too big for any one man to paint from any one point.

It has travelled—as this is written—some forty miles and nearly 200 square miles lie smouldering in its wake.

It has cost thousands in wages and equipment. It has cost millions in lost timber and property.

It is now gnawing into the standing timber—eating away the future prosperity of British Columbia.

I think there is no better way to give an idea of its scope than to follow my course through the hectic Friday that I finish in the

Water poured down on the roofs of the buildings. Ashes and smoke floated through the air.

Distant, like a constant hiss, came the sound of the fire. Coastline Hill loomed like a treed ghost in the smoky gloom. After we could see the fire bounding along on its western crest, headed for the beautiful Forbidden Plateau country.

In Courtenay a sound truck was sending out a warning to citizens—what to do in case fire attacked their prosperous community. In Bevan and Cumberland the same warnings were echoed.

Canadian navy destroyers St. Laurent and Fraser lay off Comox. Courtenay lived under a constant rain of ash. There was but one topic of conversation . . . fire.

Wildly Impossible Rumors Were Rampant

Rumors, some of them wildly impossible, were rampant. The road was blocked with excited, curious sight-seers who might have been better employed than blocking the way of working trucks and cars.

Back again northward up the Island Highway, with the roaring

B.C. to Probe Incendiarism On Fire Line

By Daily Province Staff Correspondent

VICTORIA, July 23.—Incendiarism is believed to have caused the fire to jump the Island highway eight miles from Oyster River, and forestry officials are holding an enquiry into the matter on instructions from Chief Forester E. C. Manning here.

Seventy-five more men have been dismissed as "definitely unsatisfactory and troublesome." They are being sent back to Vancouver.

VICTORIA BANS USE OF WOODS

SHIFT IN WIND SAVES ISLAND TOWNS TODAY

Citizens Ready to Leave Bevan If Necessary, However

Daily Province Staff Correspondent.
COURTENAY, July 23.—If conditions remain calm, backfiring may be tried today in an attempt to check the great Island forest fire on its southward march inland near Courtenay.

Crews are defending a line which forms a rough arc from

nearly 200 square miles lie smouldering in its wake. It has cost thousands in wages and equipment. It has cost millions in cut timber and property. It is now gnawing into the standing timber—eating away the future prosperity of British Columbia. I think there is no better way to give an idea of its scope than to follow my course through the hectic Friday that I finish in the railway office at Courtenay as the clock slips past midnight.

Things Were Looking Safe at Six a.m.

At 6 a.m. the tireless northwest wind was whipping the waves in front of Campbell River while behind the town boiling smoke poured upward from the valley of the Quinsam.

At that hour things looked pretty safe on the northern front. The fire was held outside the town and a radio flash from Camp Eight on the northwest corner of the fire indicated that things were no more than normally dangerous.

The new danger lay southward where the fire had whipped past Camp Three and was raging on the established logging community known as Headquarters.

On the way southward the west flank of the fire was clearly discernable. At Shelter Point, just south of Campbell River it was clearly close to the coast. Later in the day, it was reported to have broken through to the highway at this point.

At Oyster River anxious wives of fishermen who were holidaying at Percy Elsy's hotel came out to ask for the latest news. Their's was the tension that I have found for the past week in all the communities that border on this great fire. People are nervous, taut. They live in a world of amber light reflected from the vast pall of smoke overhead. Distances take on unnatural shades of purple and mauve.

And Here There Was Unnatural Stillness

I went westward from the highway, about eight miles north of Courtenay, to Headquarters. Here men waited to battle with the flames which would eventually attack the little community. There was an unnatural stillness about the place.

The cosy gardens with their sweet peas, roses, banked rows of standing corn looked incongruous. Hoses lined the street and emergency ladders stood at every telephone pole.

... fire. Wildly Impossible Rumors Were Rampant

Rumors, some of them wildly impossible, were rampant. The road was blocked with excited, curious sight-seers who might have been better employed than blocking the way of working trucks and cars.

Back again northward up the Island Highway, with the roaring hiss of the fire audible above the hum of the motor.

Anxious faces at Merville. Farther north people moving out of the more westerly farms of the Mennonite colony.

The fire noticeably closer the highway north of Oyster River and ominously threatening at Shelter Point.

Back to the forestry office in the outskirts of Campbell River. Here C. J. Haddon, fire-fighting boss, carries on with his even-tempered energy—a dog-tired man who won't admit that two hours sleeping night for a week is not enough for any man.

The short-wave set in charge of Geoff Playfair, who has been faithful to the job night and day for a fortnight, gives a warning call. We crowd close.

It's a Distress Call From Camp Eight

It's Camp Eight of the Elk River Timber Co., and the operator sends a message from "G.H.E." Tiernan, assistant district forester. "Fire's got into the slash and the felled and bucked timber and decks north of Quinsam Lake are in the path."

Two days before I looked down on that vast accumulation of cut timber from the plane of Ted Dobbin. It lay like an array of spilled matches—thirty million feet of tinder, ready for a single spark.

It was saved by a miracle on Thursday, Friday was not a miracle day. Tiernan said the crews had retired, now bending their energies to saving the great sprawling camp on the shores of Echo Lake.

"Tell the wife I'll be home at the end of August," was the grim joke of Tiernan as Haddon wished him luck in a situation where luck has run out long since.

As Tiernan went from the microphone Haddon told us that the standing timber on the long, rocky ridge above Forbes Landing had

(Continued on Page 2.)
See ANDERSON.

satisfactory and trouble-some." They are being sent back to Vancouver.

VICTORIA BANS USE OF WOODS

Part of Island Highway Closed—Camping Hit By Fires.

By BRUCE HUTCHISON.
Daily Province Staff Correspondent.

VICTORIA, July 23.—The Provincial Government today took the most drastic step on record to reduce the forest fire hazard on the coast of British Columbia.

It forbade anyone to go into the woods on Vancouver Island south of Salmon River and on the mainland coast south of Knight Inlet.

This meant a legal ban on camping and fishing during the present dry spell.

It also ordered the Island Highway between Courtenay and Campbell River closed to all traffic and logging halted.

LOGGING BANNED

There will be no interference otherwise with tourist travel, officials emphasized, but tourists will not be allowed to go into the woods. Only local residents and free miners may travel through wooded areas, and they will be discouraged from moving about.

All logging operations are forbidden in the closed area. Two days ago logging was ordered to stop on Vancouver Island south of Salmon River, and this prohibition was extended to the mainland by the cabinet this morning, on the recommendation of E. C. Manning, chief forester.

Announcement of these new regulations was made by Premier T. D. Pattullo who said, "this closure is for the purpose of stopping all recreational and unnecessary use of the woods for the time being such as berry-picking, camping and fishing."

'Caddie' Is Reported Active Again At Victoria

VICTORIA, July 23. (CP)

—It begins to look as though Cadborosaurus had returned to these waters after a long absence. Summer residents at Deep Cove report having seen a strange creature that resembled in many respects Victoria's famous sea serpent.

Albert Ward of Sidney and his father Charles Ward, contractor, with Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Macdonald.

COURTENAY, July 23.—If conditions remain calm, backfiring may be tried today in an attempt to check the great island forest fire on its southward march inland near Courtenay.

Crews are defending a line which forms a rough arc from the junction of Condensory and Piercy roads (about a mile and a half north of this city) westward to the junction of Bevan and Forbidden Plateau roads.

Five hundred Comox logging men were hurled into the fray, after the most disastrous day, since the fire began.

At this time, the fire is nowhere near the town of Bevan, south over Puntledge River.

Plans have been made, however, to evacuate 300 residents of Royston and Union Bay, in the near future.

FIRE IS QUIET.

The fire is quiet about four miles northwest of this town and extending westward an unknown distance. Comox Headquarters camp is safe after a hectic night.

Camp Three of Comox Company survived after flames licked all around it.

Police expect some refugees will be able to return to the territory north of Merville by tonight.

A Comox logging railway bridge over Oyster River, some distance inland, has been destroyed. Word from north end is that Elk River Timber Company has lost approximately half of thirty million feet of cut logs. Their Camp Eight and the house of Roger Cobb, general manager, survived.

NEARLY HAD THEM.

Farther up the main line of the Comox logging railway, running north from Camp Three, a gang of men were nearly nipped as they fought to save the bridge over the Oyster River (not to be confused with the highway bridge).

"It nearly had us," one of the gang said this morning as he tucked away a monster helping of ham and eggs, and then tottered off for some well-earned rest.

A shift in wind sent the fire sweeping toward the scenic wilderness of Forbidden Plateau and before the day is out it is quite possible that Clinch Wood Forbidden Plateau Lodge may be cut off or destroyed. Occupants have been ordered out.

SHIFT IN WIND.

The fire now is burning over an area twenty-five miles long by five or ten miles wide in the shape of a huge "L."

Indignation at "wild stories" about trains waiting to evacuate the population of this town was expressed by Mayor Milton S. Stephens of Courtenay to The Daily Province this morning.

"There are no arrangements of any kind."

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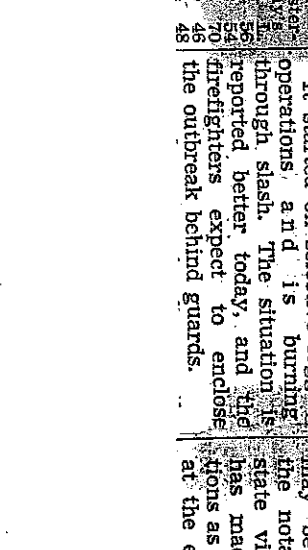
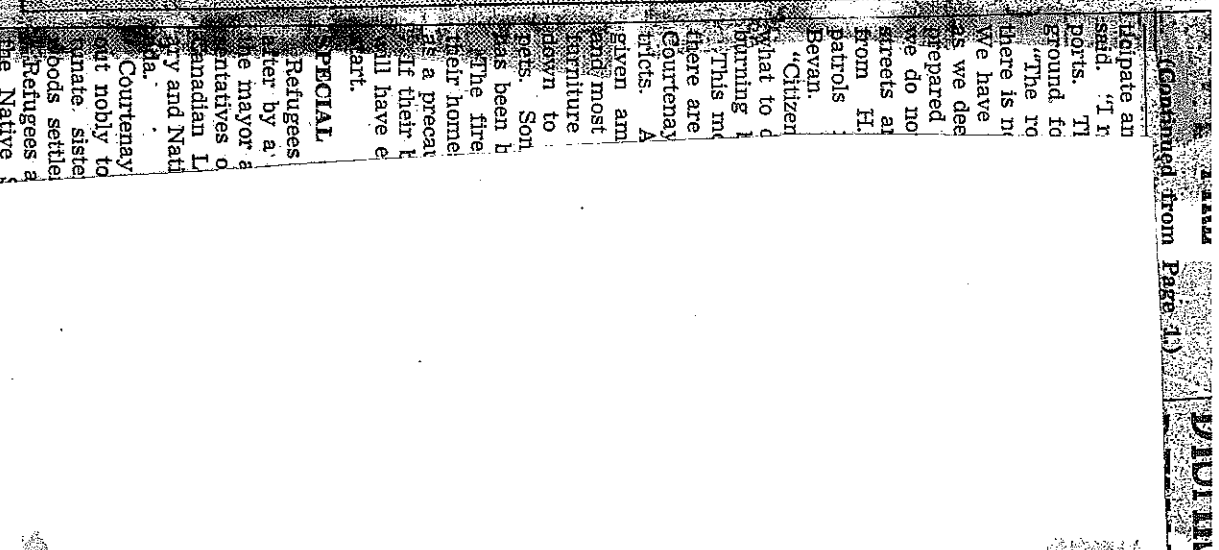
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Another

burned at the north end of the island. The outbreak was brought under control after the fire-fighting crew had been increased from eight to 105 men. The spectators' safety was assured by the use of a fire hose.

loyalty



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C. J. Hadd
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A fire started around three o'clock, and flames and smoke were seen from the building. The fire was quickly extinguished, and the cause was found to be a short circuit in the wiring. The fire was caused by a short circuit in the wiring, and the cause was found to be a short circuit in the wiring.

Another crew of forty men was rushed to Richardson Ridge in the South Wellington district, where the sixth successive outbreak was burning over three The five was believed to

Mr. Holm
and park
options.

**Salt Spring Island
Situation Is Better**

Another
and the

papers a

into the assembly and the

Thirty-seven men are battling a twenty-acre fire north of Thompson's.

It started on selective logging operations, and is burning through slash. The situation is reported better today, and the firefighters expect to enclose the outbreak behind guards.

GO TO BEACH, URGES PREMIER

Appeal to Public to Aid Fight—Sabotage Established.

(By Canadian Press.)
VICTORIA, July 23.—Premier T. D. Pattullo said in a prepared radio address Friday night the British Columbia forest branch had "definitely established" that fire hose had been cut and pumps "doctored" along fire lines of the 100,000-acre Campbell River timber blaze.

"Malign influences are at work in our midst, and it behooves all law-abiding people to lend no encouragement to the activities of those who wield such influences," he said.

The Premier did not mention any specific group who might have been responsible for the "influences."

The Provincial Government was taking "all possible safety measures," he said.

STAY OUT OF WOODS.

While the present fire hazard exists, Mr. Pattullo appealed to the public to seek its "recreational outings" at beaches and parks rather than in the woods. He asked those who earn their livings in the forest to abstain from smoking or the use of fire in every form.

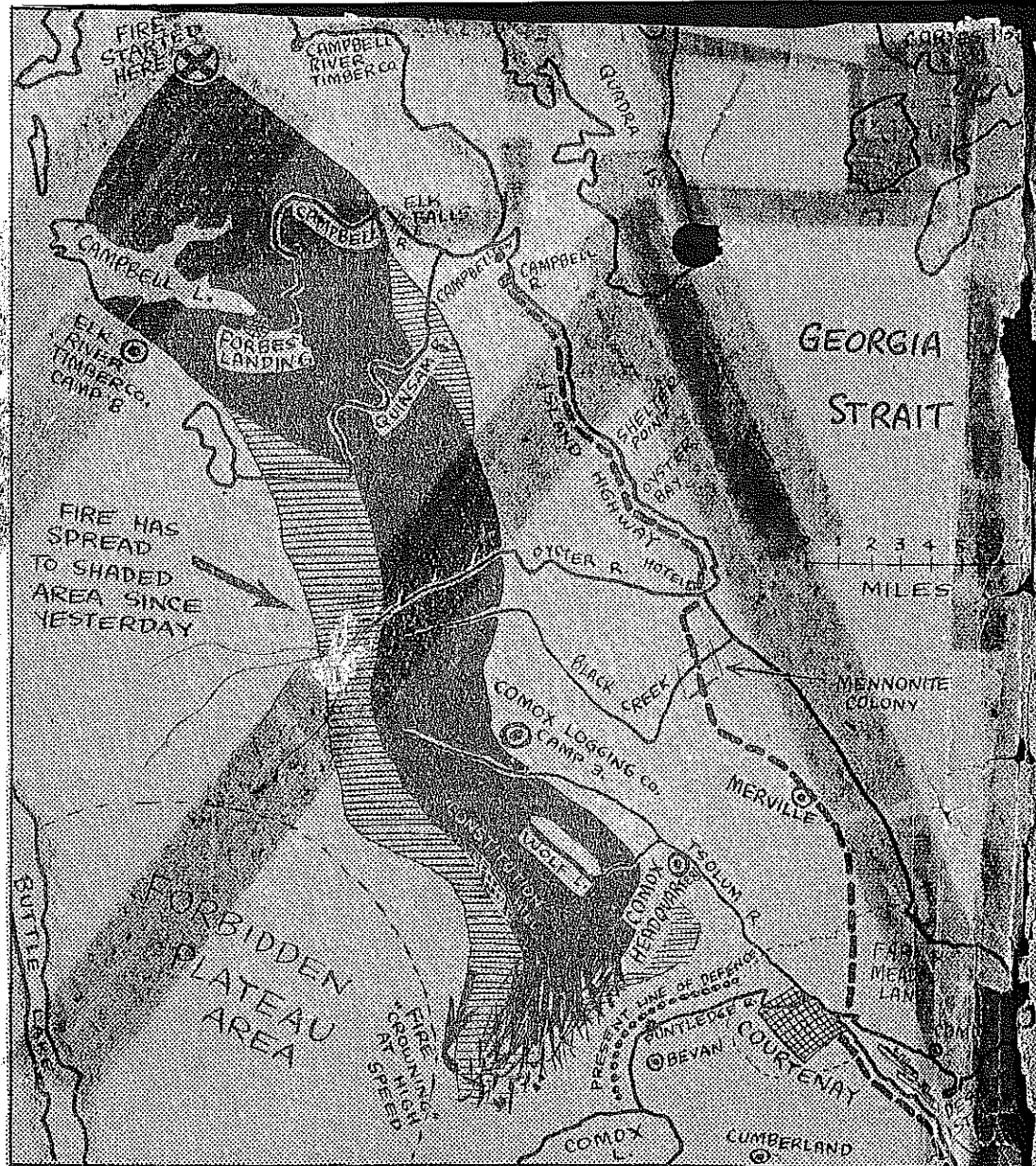
"The woods are tinder-dry," he said. "A match thrown aside, a cigarette butt, a bit of carbon from a car exhaust, a spark from a tractor-tread on a stone, a picnic fire, will readily start a fire of disastrous proportions."

The Premier said a week ago the Vancouver Island fire was "controlled" under the supervision of some 300 men. Whipped by a heavy wind, it had destroyed millions of feet of timber, burnt out Forbes Landing, spread more than twenty miles in the vicinity of Campbell River and Courtenay.

Edward L. Simms
OPTOMETRIST
522 Standard Bank Bldg.
510 WEST HASTINGS ST.
Phone Trinity 6409

DEAFNESS And Head Noises Overcome

A New 1938 Small Aid (The Midget)
We wish to announce that the qualified expert from the Great London Hearing Aid and Clearstone Laboratories of Toronto will be at Vancouver Hotel, Room 624, Monday, July 23 to Friday, July 28, showing a complete range of new 1938 hearing aids.



PATH OF GREAT FIRE—Here is shown the progress of the huge Vancouver fire during the past twenty-four hours, the most disastrous day since the blaze started its march of destruction. Already it has eaten its way over 200 square miles of forest land. Black portions in the map show the route of the holocaust and shaded areas the distance covered since yesterday.

THROUGH FIRE ON BLAZING CROW Comox Timber Crew Retreated Only After Being Surrounded

By TORCHY ANDERSON,
By Daily Province Staff Correspondent
COURTENAY, July 23.—

Thirty-five men of the Comox crew worked until their eyebrows singed within fifteen hundred feet of a \$250,000 bonfire above headquarters on Friday afternoon.

They finally retreated through 1800 feet of blazing forest slash and walked into camp office to remark "it was pretty hot up there" and ask where they were to go next.

That sort of thing has been done pretty often during the course of the great Vancouver Island fire by the splendid men who comprise the permanent logging crews of this district.

municative men who made that fight, this is the story.

The main line of the Comox Railway crosses the Tsolum a few miles north of headquarters. The bridge was a vital link in fire-fighting operations before the red wave swept southward past Constitution Hill. The boys were in with a "locie" (logging locomotive) and a tank car to hold it.

Northward an accumulation of forty million feet of felled and bucked and cold-decked logs were going into the belly of the fire monster. On their right a crown fire was sweeping over the standing timber on the slopes of Constitution Hill.

It's the ultimate danger.

The boys of the Comox kept the bridge levelled while the fire blazed in front of them, sucked by its self-made draft.

They kept on shooting water when their flanks were panned. It got so hot they had to spray water on each other. The fire on their right had reached the railway track directly behind them did, Oscar said, he would retreat.

COAT CAUGHT FIRE

Then locie started into action. The men lay on their backs, began their journey through 1400 feet of licking flame that set the

FIRE
(Continued from Page 1)
"I repudiate any such occurrence," he said. "I resent such alarmist reports. There is absolutely no ground for such statements."
"The roads are all clear and there is no cause for alarm here. We have taken such precautions as we deem necessary. We have prepared for eventuality which we do not expect to meet. Our streets are patrolled by sailors from H. M. C. S. Fraser. The patrols reach from here to Bevan."

"Citizens have been instructed what to do in case a gale sends burning brands into the city. This morning, said the mayor, there are nearly 300 refugees from Courtenay from surrounding districts. All those people have been given ample warning to move and most of them saved all their furniture and livestock, even down to chickens and family pets. Some of their machinery has been buried.

The fire has not yet reached their homes but they were moved as a precaution. If their buildings do burn they will have enough to make a new start.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE.

Refugees are being looked after by a committee headed by the mayor and comprising representatives of Women's Institute, Canadian Legion Ladies Auxiliary and Native Daughters of Canada.

Courtenay women have turned out nobly to help their less fortunate sisters from the backwoods settlements.

Refugees are housed chiefly in the Native Sons' Hall, Agricultural Hall and basement of the high school. None wants for food or shelter.

C. J. Haddon, district forester from Vancouver in charge of fire-fighting operations, estimated the main blaze had travelled four miles eastward from headquarters in eight hours. A stiffening of the night wind, which reached forty-five miles an hour at one time yesterday, could speed it forward again.

Nanaimo District Buildings Rerelled

NANAIMO, July 23.—(CP)—Forest officials early today pinned hopes of checking a 600-acre forest fire nine miles south of here on the third back-fire lit in twenty-four hours.

During the day flames leaped out of control and crossed a highway to within a few yards of the Steeles ranch property before they were halted.

A fire guard was plowed around threatened homes and buildings, and every effort was made by 160 men to keep them safe and protect them from flying sparks and embers.

DISMISS DEMAND

Jobless Make They Were Forbes Is

Armed with members of the Workers' Union missed from the after discovery of the sabotage, officials of the writing Premier demand a full investigation.

"We not only demand the gation of the sabotage but a full enquiry on the tions of who is responsible fire starting and who has been checked."

John Matts, secretary of union, declares now that from whom he has obtained davits was in the vicinity of Forbes Landing. He is reported to have seen with gasoline, dis-bill engine.

A statement issued from headquarters today reads in part: "The unemployed men do intend to be the goats in unfortunate affair nor do intend to take the blame for competence and neglect. Investigation. Yes, but let's have a real one."

Vancouver men who were "fired" had no chance to defend themselves, declares W. Bridgman, one of the discharged firefighters. Mr. Bridger is a member of the union.

"We were fired without justification," he states. "None the men had an opportunity defending himself because cause was given. We were that every Vancouver man n go."

HOLLYBURN PROBE WILL OPEN MOND.

An enquiry to ascertain whether the reports to the Provincial Government on proposed logs of Hollyburn Ridge coincide with views of ski and park experts will be held at the City Hall Monday, it is announced by Dave Holland, chairman of