

BRITISH COLUMBIA SWEEP BY DISASTROUS FOREST FIRES

A despatch from Vancouver says:—The forest fire situation in British Columbia this season is the worst experienced for many years, it was announced at the District Forestry Office here on Friday. From all parts of the province reports have been received that fires are burning, and in some districts, fanned by strong winds, the flames have got out of control of the fire-fighters and have done serious damage to towns, villages and ranches, as well as threatening to destroy valuable standing timber.

Six weeks of dry weather and warm sunshine has dried out the underbrush. Practically no rain has fallen at many points since the first of June. These conditions have added to the menace of fire.

One known dead, several persons missing and ten houses destroyed in the early toll of casualties in a fire which descended on the soldier settlement at Merville, on Vancouver Island Thursday night. A change in the wind brought into the settlement a fire which had been raging in the bush near here for two weeks. Many settlers fled in a panic, and no check has been possible as yet. Meantime citizens of Courtenay, nine miles away, are fighting the flames, along with the soldier settlers here.

This success means the ridding of the south of the menace of an attack from the south. The scattering of the irregulars also prevents concentrated action, though the army authorities will not desert till they have driven them farther from the Wicklow Hills, whither the fragments have fled.

This morning's success was the result of a cleverly planned operation from the south of Dublin and Curragh, culminating in an almost perfect encircling movement around the Brittas, Blessington and Kildare areas, whither large numbers of the irregulars retired.

More than 100 prisoners were taken, including leaders Andy Macdonnell and Jerry Boland, the latter a brother of Deputy Harry Boland, one-time Dail envoy to America.

Commandant Dinnin was wounded and some volunteers of the National forces were killed.

Documents captured on prisoners showed their objective was to retire to the town of Naas, County Kildare, and cut off communications between Dublin and Curragh. In this they have been foiled.

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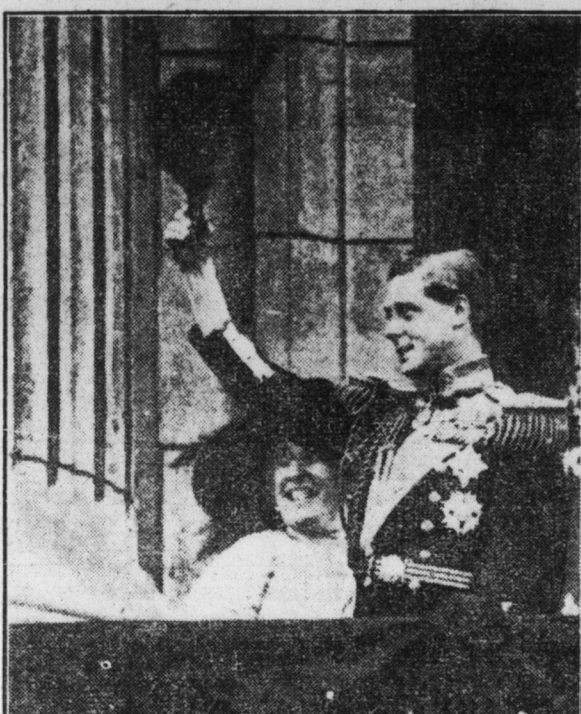
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THE EMPIRE'S AMBASSADOR
The Prince of Wales on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, acknowledging the cheers of the huge crowds which greeted them on their return from the Orient.

CALL BUSH WORKERS TO COMBAT FIRES

Lieut.-Governor of B.C. Issues Proclamation for Lumber Camps.

Courtenay, B.C. July 9.—Two men are missing and camp No. 2 of the Comox Logging Company, comprising headquarters and 14 houses, was totally destroyed to-day when caught in the crush of forest fires which destroyed Merville soldiers' settlement.

So fast did the flames travel that the residents had no time to remove belongings, and the fourteen families are fleeing to Courtenay, where the Merville refugees are quartered.

Victoria, B.C., July 9.—A special proclamation by Lieut.-Governor W. C. Nichol issued this afternoon calls for the cessation of all logging operations on Vancouver Island and mainland coast districts, the last-mentioned district embracing the territory from the international boundary as far north as Ocean Falls, B.C.

The purpose of the proclamation is to enrol bush workers to combat the fire menace. Several thousand men employed in their scores of camps will be released from regular work and turned to fighting the flames.

Many logging camps have already abandoned work.

There is no immediate probability of rain that will halt forest fires which are sweeping Vancouver Island and coast districts at present, according to P. Napier Denison, Superintendent of Gonzales Observatory here. The barometer dropped, but rose again yesterday morning. Rain, however, has fallen in the Okanagan district and in parts of Kootenay.

Fire is still burning fiercely at Merville and late reports are that twenty-seven houses have been burned, and the total loss is estimated at \$75,000. Efforts to place the fire under control have been almost abandoned, as the whole town is practically wiped out. Efforts are being made to save as much personal property as possible.

Residents of Kettle River and Kitty Combe settlements in the vicinity of Courtenay, have been warned to flee and they are coming into Courtenay by the score with wagonloads of salvage.

The fire is burning fiercely in almost every direction, but it is believed that Courtenay is not in danger. No further loss of life has been reported.

Premier John Oliver, on his return from the fire area, declared there is

need for public aid for the sufferers, and appealed to the people to supplement the aid which the Government is ready to give. He also announced the Government will co-operate in the restoration of the soldiers' settlement of Merville.

The Government will assist any of the settlers who wish to rebuild.

The Government firefighters in every part of the province are working under maximum pressure. Aeroplanes are being used to rush pumps and supplies to the fighters.

The total number of fires so far this season is 1,038, which sets a record, according to forest officials.

CANADA'S ENVOYS TO LEAGUE MEETING

Will be Represented at Geneva by Fielding, Larkin and Lapointe.

A despatch from Ottawa says:—Hon. William Stevens Fielding, Canada's veteran Minister of Finance; Hon. Ernest Lapointe, Minister of Marine and Fisheries; and Hon. P. C. Larkin, Dominion High Commissioner in London, will represent Canada at the third assembly of the League of Nations, which opens at Geneva, Switzerland, on September 4 next.

The two Cabinet Ministers will leave for Europe about the third week of August, and they will be joined in London by Mr. Larkin. Mr. Fielding, in addition to attending the League Assembly, will spend considerable time in London and Paris on matters relating to his department.

One of the matters which it is thought may engage his attention while in Paris will be that of resuming negotiations with the French Government for a more comprehensive trade treaty between Canada and France than now exists. There is also the question of a treaty with Greece, which may be taken up while the Minister is overseas.

Canadians Win British Scholarships

A despatch from London says:—The appointment of three Canadians to post-graduate science and research scholarships of the Exhibition of 1851 is announced by the commissioners.

Those appointed are: James Murray Luck of the University of Toronto, for biology; William Harold McCurdy, B. A., Dalhousie University, for physics; and Donald Frank Steadman of British Columbia University, for chemistry.

PANIC CAUSED BY FIRE IN NEW YORK SUBTERRANEAN RAILWAY

Gas Fills Ten Cars in New York Tubes 75 Feet Below Surface with 500 Persons Aboard—160 in Hospital.

A despatch from New York says:—Fire, smoke, carbon monoxide gas and panic imperilled the lives of more than 350 men and women trapped in a short-circuited Interborough subway express train, 50 feet below the surface of Lexington avenue, at east 59th street, shortly after 11 o'clock on Thursday, and 125 passengers were overcome by the choking gas and smoke, with several burned or injured by falls or trampling, and three firemen hurt in effecting rescues.

Eighty-seven persons were attended in Bellevue, Flower and other hospitals in the central section of the city for partial asphyxiation. Of that number 57 were able to go to their homes after being treated, but the condition of thirty was so serious that they had to remain at the hospitals.

The comfortably filled ten-car train, bound uptown, had just left Grand Central Station when passengers and guards smelled smoke. The train's next stop would have been Eighty-sixth street. It dashed down to the lower level of the subway tunnel at terrific speed. Just before it reached Fifty-ninth street, where there is a

local station, and the express tracks are depressed ten feet below the level of the local track, there was a flash of fire and a loud detonation.

Clouds of smoke rolled up from burning insulation as the train came to a stop in darkness broken only by small storage battery lights at either end of each car. Guards played the chemicals from small emergency hand extinguishers on insulation above heads the three forward cars and one fire in the emergency motorman's switch box in the front of the third car. The smoke, occasioned immediately by the short circuit, was so thick that passengers could not see their way out of the train. As the tunnel filled with smoke and the noxious gas, alarm grew into panic. More excitable male passengers fought frantically with guards who refused to open the car doors opening above the deadly third rail on one side of the train and against a solid wall supporting upturned local tracks on the other side.

Calmer men used their flats to subdue others who were howling over women and children alike, breaking windows and seeking to force their way to escape from the choking fumes.

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AIRMAN BURNS IN PLANE CRASH

Noted U.S. Army Pilot Killed When Motor Fails to Function.

A despatch from Mt. Clemens, Mich., says:—Capt. George C. Tinsley, an army aviator with overseas services in the world war, was killed when his plane fell and burst into flames at Selfridge Field on Thursday afternoon.

Tinsley, flying a Spad, was about 150 feet in the air, when he turned sharply to avoid striking a hangar. The motor went dead and the plane fell. As it struck the ground it burst into flames. Witnesses rushed to the scene, but were unable to reach Tinsley until they had put out the fire. He was found in his seat, his body covered with burns, and a hole in his chest, apparently made by a sharp piece of wreckage.

Physicians expressed the opinion that Tinsley had been killed instantly or rendered unconscious by the fall and suffocated by the flames and smoke.

Tinsley was a member of the first pursuit group of the Army Air Service, which reached Selfridge Field last week after a flight from Ellington Field, Houston, Texas. The plane in which he fell was the same ship that he had flown north.

Timber District Near Regina Destroyed by Caterpillars

A despatch from Regina, Sask., says:—Caterpillars have eaten up fifty square miles of timber in the Kipling district near here. Scarcely a green leaf remains and the district presents the stark appearance of a winter scene, forestry officials say.

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BITS OF LONDON NEWS

A despatch from London says:—The blaze of jewelry at this year's Court has been quite up to the standard of other years, but an interesting story lies behind many of the diamond tiaras and necklaces worn by the King and Queen's guests.

Fully half of the jewelry which glistened and sparkled that night was the property of its wearers for the night only, and in many instances it was returned to the safes of the jewelers to whom it actually belonged at midnight.

This practice, which London jewelers say has become more and more prevalent since the war, is brought about by the fact that many of the old and established families have been forced to get rid of their jewelry in order to keep their family establishments going.

"We do not make a practice of lending jewelry," said a representative of one of London's biggest firms, "but we oblige our customers when we know that they have had to get rid of their own jewels."

"We do not charge anything for the loan of the jewelry, but we insure it for the night and the customer pays the insurance. We only do it for customers with whom we have done business for years."

Surgeons Operate on Milk Can. An ambulance drove up to a London hospital late one night this week and a milk can was trundled out. "What am I supposed to do with this?" asked the surgeon.

"Operate on it," he was told, "there is a boy inside."

The doctor and his assistants, after obtaining some robust tools not ordinarily used, did as they were directed, and after two hours' hard work made a breach in the can through which they were able to remove Sidney Weinberg, aged nine. Sidney tells his own story.

"How did you get into the can?" he was asked.

"I slid in," he said. "Some of the boys dared me to get in and stay there for five minutes. I did it and they put the lid on. I was down on one knee, as if I were firing a gun, and I found I could not get out. Of course, an opener weren't any good, so they took me to a hospital. I felt like an Easter egg."

Find Remains of War Comrade. After an interval of more than five years, a former English soldier, while on a trip to France over the battlefields, discovered the skeleton of a war comrade who had fallen at his side while they both were taking part in operations against the Hindenburg line.

The incident occurred in Havrincourt Wood, while the living veteran was idly inspecting one of the scenes of his army life. He stumbled over the skeleton lying beneath some foliage with a rifle at its side. The dead man's identification disc, which had not been destroyed by time, left no doubt of his identity. He had been reported missing and had never been found.

The strangest part of the occurrence was that before leaving his home for the trip to France the former Tommy had promised the dead man's relatives that he would make a search for any traces or information about his comrade.

Bumping Head Restores Sight. An ex-soldier who lost his sight in the war has just regained it by a remarkable accident.

He was out walking with a companion when he hit his head against a street lamp-post. The blow apparently struck the optic nerve, for immediately afterward the man, who had been blind for five years, was able to distinguish light from dark. For a few days his vision was blurred, but after that he regained virtually normal vision and is now able to read with ease. The doctors say that the cure probably will remain permanent.

Teach Languages by Wireless. London experts have displayed great interest, but doubt the feasibility of the conference which has been summoned in the United States to consider the establishment of the universal language for the purpose of international communication by wireless.

Prof. Sir Israel Gollancz, of London University, is one who feels the task impossible.

"You might create a fictitious commercial language," he said, "but I do not believe in any international language becoming a living force unless it is one of the living languages, such as English, or French, or Spanish, or even Latin, if living force could be given to it again. You might create a language for the elements of commerce, but I do not think it would even be useful for the science of commerce."

Godfrey Isaacs, director of the Marconi Company, also expressed doubt as to the establishment of a universal language as a result of the development of wireless telephony. He thinks in regard to Esperanto that it is exceedingly improbable.

"At the same time," he said, "we are keeping in view the possibility of teaching languages by wireless telephony. I think this will play a highly important part of the educational section of wireless and it will in time come to supersede the use of gramophone records for this purpose. I can foresee the engagement of eminent professors of language for the purpose of wireless tuition."

WORLD PERIL SEEN IN IMMINENT COLLAPSE OF GERMAN REPUBLIC

A despatch from London says:—Secret reports of the gravest character were received by Downing Street from Berlin on Friday. It is stated that Germany is hovering on the brink of financial disaster, which is almost certain to entail the fall of the Republican Government. With the Government's fall the road will be left clear for open conflict between Royalists, aiming at the restoration of the Monarchy, and extremists, urging Communism.

Prime Minister Lloyd George is seriously alarmed at the portent in private advices from British agents in Germany. He is now conferring personally with Foreign Minister Schanzer of Italy regarding the measures the

allies may have to take when the crash comes. Diplomatic correspondence also is passing between Downing Street and Quai d'Orsay on the same subject. The tentatively arranged conference between the British Prime Minister and Premier Poincare for the end of July will now be held immediately, if conditions warrant.

The menace of a chaotic Germany, without a government and with the resulting dangers from Imperialists and Reds, all advocating tearing up the Versailles Treaty, was directly responsible for the British Government's sudden feverish interest in reorganizing its aviation and strengthening the aerial arm of the British army.

