

BISHOP AND STUDENTS JOIN WITH SISTERS IN RESCUE OF ORPHANS

One Hundred and Fifty-Eight Children Are Brought To Safety As Flames Sweep North London Roman Catholic Orphanage—Damage Is Estimated at \$75,000.

SISTERS PRAY AS FIRE MENACES CHAPEL

Yesterday's fire at Mount St. Joseph Catholic orphanage was one of the most spectacular and remarkable London has experienced. The building burst into flames at about 1 o'clock, at a time when risk to human life was considerable, for the children were scattered in almost every room of the building. The blaze itself, although not too destructive, at times threatened the whole institution. Sisters of Mount St. Joseph today realized the danger which was only averted by the quick response of children to a general alarm and the veering of the wind when the flames were sweeping west across the top to destroy the chapel.

The sisters today gave general thanks to the students of the University of Western Ontario and citizens who bravely offered their assistance in clearing the building of its fittings. The sisters themselves come in for much praise and commendation for their own heroic work in caring for their charges at critical periods of the fire. The damage was estimated at \$75,000.

Babies Are Rescued.
Twenty babies, five from sick-beds, were the first to be carried from the building in the arms of sisters. Then older boys and girls, summoned from

all parts of the orphanage by a general alarm after they had dispersed from their noon-day meal, walked out with little confusion. Assured of their safety, the sisters returned and prayed beneath the rush of falling water and roar of flames—prayed that the hand of Divine Providence might save the remainder of the building and the holy sanctuary from destruction. And their prayers were answered.

Students of the University of Western Ontario volunteered to carry fittings of the orphanage to safety. Two hundred of them worked valiantly in clearing the building of furniture.

Before the flames had gained serious proportions, the orphanage was stripped of practically every article of worth. Only a large crucifix was left hanging in the hall of the ground floor, ordered not to be removed until that section of the building became seriously menaced.

Furniture Hurdled Out.

Clothing and furniture were hurled from the windows in the threatened section of the building. Hundreds of spectators joined in loading the children's blankets, clothes and furniture, saved from the fire, in loaned automobiles.

A little crippled girl, Emily Bogart, was asleep on the third floor of the building when the fire started. She was unable herself to walk to safety, but with her crutches tucked under her arm, she was carried from the building in the arms of the mother superior.

In the rush to save the fittings, and as articles were being thrown from the windows, William Green, 9 years old, a pupil at the Ryerson public school, had his arm broken when a chair struck him.

The fire attracted hundreds, who stood on the spacious lawns of Mount St. Joseph, and peered through the smoke as firemen, perched high on the tower and roof, fought to keep the blaze in check.

Taken To Refuge.
The children were huddled together on the lawn of the home of Mrs. Ed. Nelles nearby. Bishop Fallon gave orders they were to remain together until taken from the grounds to homes in the city. In three and four, the smaller children first went, the larger ones followed.

Sisters went to and fro from the threatened building, paying little heed to warnings and regardless of the soaked condition of their clothing. They worked fearlessly, walking into the heart of the falling bricks and timbers, intent only on doing their duty in caring for their charges and seeing that all children were properly looked after.

Fifteen minutes after the fire department had arrived, the blaze had spread from the front to the rear of the top of the building. The tower roared with flames at about 2 o'clock, and blazing furiously with a sacred cross aloft it gave every indication of collapsing.

Boy Hero.
A small red-haired boy, standing below with a garden hose in his hand, worked heroically to keep water played upon dripping pieces of burning timber which shimmered on the steps. Spectators, who feared for his safety, tried to him to go back to safety, but he remained at his post in the shadow of the falling tower.

Had it collapsed it would have crashed through the veranda, roof upon his body. Pieces of timber fell and thundered on the veranda roof, but the boy continued to play water upon the fire, apparently not in the least affected by the warnings of spectators.

For an hour four companies of the fire department fought bravely to prevent spread of the flames. Four lines of hose, connected to city hydrants, were played from the fifth floor to the roof. The water pressure was low and only the pumping engine provided an effective line of pressure. Smoke became intensely thick, and firemen experienced great difficulty in their battle. A state



CHILDREN RESCUED AS FLAMES SWEEP ORPHANAGE.

Through the bravery of the sisters in charge, 158 orphans at Mount St. Joseph, London north, escaped the fire which gutted the top floors of the building and for some time threatened the entire orphanage. Here are shown several scenes taken while the fire was at its height. On the upper left is little Emily Rogart, a cripple, who was asleep on an upper floor when the fire broke out. She was carried to safety by Mother Superior Magdalene. In the upper center, on the orphanage veranda, is a young red-headed lad, who helped fight the fire with a small garden hose. He refused to leave his post despite efforts of fearful adults to induce him to seek safety. Unmindful of burning timbers falling on the fragile roof of the veranda, he directed a small stream of water on all embers which came within his reach. On the upper right is the fire at its height. The picture on the bottom left was taken before the arrival of the fire reels. A sister is seen directing the children to safety as flames roared above. On the bottom right, wee babies, which were carried from the building, are shown closely held in the protecting arms of older orphan girls, in whose charge they were left.

BOY IS RESCUED FROM RIVER BY KING'S SCOUT AT CHATHAM

Special to The Advertiser by a Staff Correspondent.

Chatham, April 14.—Bert Peck, a young Chatham boy, owes his life to Vanee Needham, a King's Scout and an enthusiastic member of No. 1 Rotary troop of this city. Peck was standing near the river breakwater at Violet street and was struck in the neck by a stone hurled, in play, by one of a group of nearby boys. Unfortunately the lad is subject to epileptic fits, and the blow is thought to have caused a seizure. The lad

that date several additions have been made, including the erection of the chapel on the west side.

Is Beauty Spot.
Mount St. Joseph has been regarded as one of the beauty spots of London. Situated as it is on the high bank of the river Thames, a beautiful view of the city and surrounding country is afforded. It overlooks the links of the London Hunt and Country club.

Mount St. Joseph is one of the finest structures in London. Although it was built years ago, it is an example of excellent architecture. Chief Aitken said yesterday that the building had not been so well constructed, it would have been unable to withstand the fire.

Mother Superior Magdalene and Sisters of Mount St. Joseph returned to the orphanage last night, after being assured that all children were safe for the night. They made an inspection of the building and spent the night with residents on nearby premises.

Children Not Impressed.
The 158 children who were brought to safety when the fire broke out were not impressed with the danger of the blaze. They looked on the fire as being a "show" well worth witnessing, and many were reluctant to leave the grounds for other homes while the fire was still in progress.

"We'll get a holiday now," one boy, only 8 years old, stated when he saw water flooding class rooms on the ground floor. "You needn't be so glad," another replied. "You left your football in your cubicle, and maybe it's burned with the fire."

"Gee, I ran like a mischief when I saw all the smoke," a small boy said in telling of his experience. "I told the other fellows upstairs, and we ran down like sixty."

"Oh, but you didn't see all the smoke," another voice piped up. "The smoke was all outside, pouring all over the whole place, and we saw it more than you did, because we were outside here playing ball."

Helps Rescue.
"That's nothing at all," one boasted, fully declared. "I ran inside, and goodnight, I was right in the whole."

The prompt work of the fire department received the praise of every spectator. Chief Aitken's management came in for much commendation, the men being judiciously directed about their work.

Mount St. Joseph Orphanage was formerly the home of the Hellmuth Ladies' College. It was erected in 1869, under the direction of Bishop Hellmuth, and it was used as a college until 25 years ago.

Prince Arthur inaugurated Hellmuth Ladies' College on September 23, 1869, although the college was opened to pupils on the first of the month that year. Sir John Young, governor-general of Canada at the time, his wife, Lady Young, and Sir John A. Macdonald were visitors in the city for the occasion.

In 1900, it was purchased by Philip Pocock as an orphanage, and since

run up the embankment, suddenly wheeled round, and ran blindly into the river. Scout V. Needham, who was near at the time, and, fully dressed, plunged into the river, and with great difficulty brought the unfortunate boy to land.

Needham is the second member of Rotary troop No. 1 to distinguish himself in life-saving. Some time ago Max Malster saved a boy from drowning in the river, and received the life-saving medal of the Scout association. Application for similar recognition of Needham is to be made.

It was burning something awful, and I helped to carry out the stuff."

All the children were exceptionally obedient, however, and gave the sisters no trouble. They remained quietly at a distance from the fire, the majority spending the afternoon in play on nearby lawns. Girls were more subdued at the fire than boys. They would say little in relating their experiences.

RELATIVES SEARCHING FOR HOWARD FARMER
Fred Cowley, Victim of Nervous Breakdown, Left Local Institution Week Ago.

Special to The Advertiser. Thamesville, April 14.—Relatives are conducting a search for Fred Cowley, farmer of the Ridge road, Howard township, who last week left a London institution, to which he had been confined, suffering from a nervous breakdown. He is supposed to be wandering somewhere in this territory.

His description is as follows: Age 33; height, 5 feet, 6 inches; sandy hair, blue eyes, wearing a dark blue suit and a dark gray hat. He is an Englishman by birth, but had resided in Howard for over 20 years.

FRIENDS HOLD SHOWER FOR MT. ELGIN COUPLE
Special to The Advertiser. Mount Elgin, April 14.—A pleasant time was spent at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Baskett, when about 75 friends gathered in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Greer and presented them with a "miscellaneous shower" of very pretty and useful gifts.

They were also presented with a number of pieces of silverware by the members of the Baptist congregation. The evening was spent in games and music, after which lunch was served.

BEACHVILLE BOYS' CLASS GUESTS OF WOODSTOCK 'Y'
Special to The Advertiser. Beachville, April 14.—The boys of Mrs. Charles Downing's "teen-age Sunday school class were given a real treat when on Saturday afternoon they accepted the invitation of the Woodstock Y. M. C. A. to spend the afternoon at the Y. Gym games, a softball game and swimming tank were heartily enjoyed. The softball game proved a real contest, resulting in a victory for Beachville with score 2-2. Before the class returned home refreshments were served in the boys' parlor.

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BISHOP CAREFULLY GUARDS CHILDREN

Rt. Rev. M. F. Fallon Directs Work Among Orphan Refugees.

The tall figure of a man, wearing a black hat, could be seen rushing in and out of the spectators at the fire in Mount St. Joseph orphanage yesterday afternoon.

It was the Rt. Rev. M. F. Fallon, lord bishop of London and administrator of the Roman Catholic church in Western Ontario.

Occasionally his eye would wander to the burning building, but he had a more vital object in view—the care of the orphan children.

Striding through the crowd his voice could be heard, "Has anyone a car I can borrow?" Then a volunteer would come forward, half-dozen children would be packed in and whisked away to the city.

One of the first on the scene, the bishop immediately took up the task of caring for the orphans. He gathered them together on the lawn, and at once sought the aid of motorists. As they began to arrive in greater numbers his lordship's task became easier, but he remained at the work until the last little chap had been stowed away and carried to a place of safety.

Personal Attention.
He stood at the side of the drive, lifting the little ones into the cars, and he turned only to study the fire loss when assurance was given him that all had been cared for.

The little girls of all ages up to 15 years were taken to the Monastery of the Precious Blood, 667 Talbot street. There the sisters took charge of them. At present there are some 80 girls staying at the institution. The mother superior in charge said yesterday that it would be impossible to state how long the children would be there.

Ninety boys were taken to the Sacred Heart convent, Queen's avenue, where they are housed for the time being. Whether the boys will stay at the convent until the orphanage is repaired is not known. No immediate plans for their removal have been made.

Fourteen infants were taken to St. Joseph's hospital. Five were girl babies. Their ages range from one to two and a half years of age.

Carry Supplies.
As soon as the boys and babies were whisked away to the various institutions by willing motorists, car after car followed filled with blankets, pillows, dishes and furniture. Costly sedans were filled with bedding, touring cars were piled high with furniture and crockery. Heavy trucks were elevated to the position of passenger cars, and transferred their cargoes of humanity from the danger area to Catholic refuges in different parts of the city.

Although smoke issuing from several quarters gave the first note of the ravaging fire, it was probably left to the little Western boys to locate the exact spot where the fire had gained the greatest headway.

The boys were Arzene Laframbois and Roy McEwen. Sister Amelia had asked them to go to a cupboard near the tower for some fresh linen.

"We had no thought of fire," said Arzene. "There was no smoke in the hall, but as we opened the door a big cloud of smoke rushed at us, and through it all were the red flames. We did not wait. We both ran back down the hall to tell Sister Amelia, and when we reached her side we were all out of breath and could not tell her. Then other sisters came hurrying down the hall and said there was a fire. By that time we had our breath again, and said it was the linen closet that was on fire."

The secretary-treasurer has not yet been appointed.

PRAYERS OFFERED TO SAVE CHAPEL

Wind Changes As If in Answer To Sisters' Supplications.

Untouched by the rush of the flames, the stately chapel at Mount St. Joseph Orphanage stands today spared, the sisters believe, by the hand of God.

Yesterday at noon, while the fire swept through the adjoining building, the Sisters of St. Joseph knelt in prayer. With the crackling of flames and nearer, the mother superior and two sisters remained bowed before the altars, fearless in their prayer for the protection of their chapel.

Then as the flames reached the very edge at the rear of the adjoining building, and firemen were pouring water on the roof of the chapel, the wind changed, the prayers of the sisters had been heard—the chapel was safe.

Angelus Rings.
When the Angelus rang the warning of fire, the children, who were playing outside, were brought by the sisters into the chapel. There they knelt a minute to send up their appeal for aid, and then were hurried outside again.

As the word of fire spread among the sisters, the candles on the two side altars were lighted, and all knelt for a few moments to ask for deliverance. Then with some to care for the children and others to assist in the rescue of property, a few remained bent silently.

When it was realized that the chapel was in danger, a priest removed the blessed sacrament from the tabernacle in the main altar and carried it to a place of safety. Sacred vessels of gold, and beautiful, costly candlesticks were stored in boxes ready to be carried from the building.

Move Altar Cloths.
Altar cloths of linen and valuable lace were looked after by the sisters. They were removed from the altars and placed at the extreme front of the chapel. They represent 30 years of work and are of untold value. Many articles it would be impossible to replace, and this caused grave concern as the flames kept creeping nearer.

When the sisters heard the rush of water on the roof above them they thought for a moment that the building was doomed, but a minute later the water ceased and a strange quiet fell. The roar of the fire seemed fainter, and then the news spread that the wind had changed.

When all danger was passed, the sisters all gathered to aid in the work of restoring provisions and clothes to undamaged parts of the main building, and they did it with a thankful heart and the belief that their prayers had been heard.

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