

FOREST FIRES IN MERCILESS SWEEP DESTROY TOWNS IN COEUR D'ALENES

CITY OF WALLACE HAS NOTABLE HISTORY

COEUR D'ALENE METROPOLIS HAS BEEN THE SCENE OF THRILLING EVENTS.

The city of Wallace is the center of the great Coeur d'Alene mining district. There are no mines in its immediate vicinity, but the great producers which have made the region famous are situated in canyons which radiate from the city. To the north is Canyon creek, along which are the towns of Mace, Gem and Burke, which were wrecked by snowslides last spring. To the east is Mullan with its group of mines. Westward are Kellogg and Wardner. All these are mining towns which constitute the group of prosperous mining communities whose business interests have found their center and clearing house in Wallace.

The city had a peculiar site. It was built in a cup-shaped basin, closely hemmed in by wooded mountain walls, whose only breaks are the narrow canyons which lead up to the mines and their settlements. Wallace long ago outgrew the narrow confines of a little basin and the houses began to creep up the hillsides all around. The diminutive valley filled as closely as houses could be built, was the home of 6,000 people. Its financial and commercial interests were unusually strong for a city of its size on account of the vast amount of business which was cleared through its institutions. Here was the headquarters of the Federal Mining company and the allied companies. The furnishing of supplies to the great companies which operate in the district had built up a mercantile business of unusual volume in a city so small. Wallace was one of the most prosperous cities of the western mineral belt.

Ever since the Coeur d'Alene mines became famous, Wallace has been the center of disturbances after disturbances. Two great labor wars have shaken the region to its foundations. There have been vast snowslides in the canyons about; the latest slide occurring last February. There has been destruction to life and property in the labor wars; mills have been dynamited at Gem and at Kellogg and human lives have been sacrificed in this struggle between men.

No less serious have been the struggles with the elements. Lives have been snuffed out and thousands and thousands of dollars in property have gone glimmering in the onslaught of snow and fire. This latest calamity is the most serious that has ever smitten the city of Wallace itself. The others have struck in neighboring towns.

MISSOULA RESIDENTS ARE MUCH CONCERNED

The close personal and business relations which exist between Missoula and Wallace added to the intensity of the local interest in the news which came from the Coeur d'Alene last night and early this morning. Scores of Missoula people with friends in the stricken city rushed to the Missoula office and lingered there, reading hungrily every line of news which leaked through the fire barrier from the burning district.

W. H. Houston's son, Harvey, is a mining engineer in Wallace and his residence was not far from where Placer creek enters the city.

Frank Simons is heavily interested with his brother, W. A. Simons, in the mining city.

George Frelsheimer has for years conducted an extensive drug business in Wallace.

The forestry service people are concerned about their men who have been on the fighting line for days.

Scores of people with relatives in the doomed city sought information, but all the satisfaction that could be given was contained in the report that trains had taken from the city all who wished to leave.

GOOD SERVICE.

Manager Pavey of the Missoula office of the Bell telegraph rendered valuable service last night and early this morning, which is much appreciated. Until the company's office in Wallace burned, he furnished bulletins and he established connections with Mullan as soon as possible and kept Missoula in touch with the situation in that way. The Missoulian is specially thankful and appreciative of the service.

NEW ENGLAND SWIMMER WINS.

London, Aug. 20.—Miss Elsie Aylroyd, the New England amateur, was the first to pass Hammer Smith bridge, in the swimming match on the Thames through London today. The length of the course is 16 miles. There were 49 starters.

FRIGHTENED PEOPLE FLOCK FROM TAFT

Telephone messages from Taft at 2 o'clock this (Sunday) morning stated that the forest fires had crept down upon the town and that the Northern Pacific was taking the residents of the famous camp down to Saltese. Two trainloads had left by 2 o'clock, at which time the fire had become so serious that it was thought that further wire communication would be impossible. The telephone operator who sent the message said that he had heard that the refugees from Wallace were also being taken to Saltese. The fire was said to be burning close to the tracks, and it was feared that traffic might possibly be seriously delayed.

FLAMES SURROUND THE TOWN OF MULLAN

CHIEF OF POLICE OF MINING CAMP SENDS APEAL FOR FIRE-FIGHTERS.

At 12:30 Mullan called Missoula over the telephone, appealing to the city authorities for men and equipment with which to fight a fire that had surrounded the town on three sides and was threatening its existence. The little mining camp was at that time incoherent with fright. Early in the evening a train had been made up and all of the men who could pile on board had fled to safety. The departure of this train had left the town without a chance of connection with the outer world. Not a car nor an engine was left, and the people who were penned in in the town were terrified beyond expression.

Six miles below, down the narrow canyon, Wallace was a mass of flames, which could be seen at intervals through the shifting smoke that obscured the sky, the hills and even the buildings in town.

Half an hour later The Missoulian managed to connect with Mullan. It was stated then that the fire at Wallace could be plainly seen. The fires, it was said, were on the south and east of town at a common distance of about two and a half miles. The wind at that time was generally from the west, but, affected by the heat in the cañon-like canyon, was shifting and swirling until the direction could not be determined. The wind was high, however, and was sweeping strongly up the canyon.

The water power, it was said, was very low and the fire department had been out all day fighting fires until it was nearly exhausted.

At 1 o'clock a special train, loaded with men and tools, left St. Regis for Mullan.

Reports from Taft at 1:30 brought the news that the fire was sweeping down upon the little camp. Details could not be learned, but it was stated that the telegraph and telephone connections would be severed unless there was a change.

A man was sent out of Mullan on horseback shortly after midnight, headed toward Wallace, with a view to ascertaining the true state of affairs. In two hours he was back, with the statement that so fierce were the flames in the canyon he could not get within two miles of the burning city.

SICK PEOPLE SAVED.

All patients in the two hospitals at Wallace, the Sisters' and the city, were safely removed and placed on the last train that left for Missoula. They will be taken to the Sisters' hospital here as soon as they arrive. Their number is not known. Mullan reports, at 2 o'clock this morning, that the railway bridges—small affairs—between that town and Wallace are all burned and that trains cannot go beyond Mullan.

ALTITUDE RECORD REACHED IN ENGLAND

London, Aug. 20.—The stamp of scientific approval was placed today on the world's altitude record for aeroplanes, 6,752 feet, established by J. Armstrong Drexel, the American aviator, when the Key observatory, after testing the barograph carried by Mr. Drexel issued a certificate of its accuracy and correctness of the figures.

The flight was accomplished on the evening of August 11, when Mr. Drexel ascended from Lanark, Scotland, passed far above the clouds and after two hours steady climbing descended near Cobbinshaw Loch, 12 miles from Lanark. He suffered severely from cold at the highest altitude.

FLAMES ENVELOP WALLACE CAUSING PEOPLE TO FLEE TO THE NEARBY CITIES

Placer Creek on South Side, Where Blazes Have Been Threatening for Three Weeks, Is Scene of Sudden Conflagration and Now the Entire City Is Doomed.

Prosperous Young City of Idaho Is Almost Completely Wiped Out by Fires From Surrounding Forests, Practically Only One Building Left In the Town—Loss May Reach a Million Dollars—Smoke Is Terrifying—Other Cities in Danger.

At 3 o'clock this (Sunday) morning the fire situation west and north of Missoula is in the most serious phase that it has assumed since the forest fires became threatening. Wallace is believed to be destroyed; there has been no communication directly with the city since 11 o'clock.

Mullan is threatened and at 2 o'clock it was reported that it would be burning in 20 hours unless relief comes. Taft is entirely surrounded by fire, which is within 100 yards of the nearest building and advancing rapidly; the telephone operator sent this message at 3 o'clock and fled.

Libby is reported to be surrounded by fire and its existence menaced, though this report is not confirmed. In the Stillwater district, in Flathead county, settlers are fleeing in charge of forest rangers.

In Flathead county a camp of fire-fighters has been destroyed and it is feared that the men have perished.

The loss at Wallace may reach a million dollars.

Wallace has fallen at last, a victim of the forest fires that have hedged it about with fire and smoke for the past week. This morning, unless an act of Providence intervened, only the ashes and smoldering embers mark the place where yesterday morning stood the most beautiful city in the Coeur d'Alenes.

The loss of life, if there was any, could not be learned. Only the most meager reports reached Missoula. All they fears had been entertained as to the safety of the town and the Oregon Railroad & Navigation company and the Northern Pacific had boxcars and specials standing in the yards since morning. In view of this fact it is thought that the loss of life was small.

Reports were received in Missoula until 1 o'clock (Sunday). At 8 o'clock everything was reported safe and the fire fairly quiet and no danger was anticipated for the night at least. At 10 o'clock came the startling word that the fire, creeping through the pall of smoke, had overwhelmed the east end of town and was rapidly burning its way through toward the heart of the city. Fires were reported at that time to be raging in a score of places and the entire town was fighting to quell the flames.

FIRE-FIGHTERS DIE IN FLAMES

REPORTS FROM KALISPELL STATE THAT THIRTY MEN ARE MISSING.

Kalispell, Aug. 21.—(Special).—Two camps of fire-fighters are reported burned this morning near Kalispell. Word was received from the camp this morning to the effect that 30 men and a number of horses were unaccounted for. Supervisor Haines expressed hope that the men were safe, but stated tonight that the two camps, including bedding and provisions, were entirely consumed. Provisions were ordered rushed from Whitefish to a point near the camp.

Five companies of the Fourteenth infantry from American Lake arrived at Olney, Stryker, Glacier park and the Flathead forest today. Mr. Haines will leave tonight to guide the detachments to their places.

Spokane is sending by express an equipment of tools, of which the local supply has been exhausted. Several camps are almost without any tools. Railway and forest officials declare that nothing can be done without the aid of heavy rains. Dense smoke hangs over this whole district.

Three new fires on the Blackfoot forest today broke out at various points, one at the north end of Whitefish lake. New crews were sought to fight this fire, but none could be secured. Some 40 or 50 men have been dispatched by train and wagon to various camps where the fires are worst. Settlers in the Stillwater district have been forced to flee and are said to have been taken out by the rangers.

An hour later came the last brief words, telling of a city overcome by fire at night and without hope of winning the fight. People were then flocking to the trains and were being hurried from Wallace to places of safety in Wardner and Kellogg.

One of the last men to stick at his post was W. R. Samuelson, plant chief of the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone company. At 11 o'clock he reported to headquarters in Missoula that the fire was, then raging over all the eastern side of town and was at that time within 15 feet of the building in which he worked. That was his last word and with a statement that he would try to cut in lower down, he left, in the face of the flames.

The operator for the Western Union was sending a special to The Missoulian when the flames parted this way. He had sent only a few words telling of the buildings then on fire when the operator at Missoula lost him and whether he had fled before the flames or whether the fire had burned his office could not be learned.

The Last Report.

The Northern Pacific wire was the last to hold and at 10:30 the following bulletin was received in the local division offices.

"Every hill around town is a mass of flames and the whole place looks like a death trap. No connections can be had with outside towns. Men, women and children are hysterical in streets and leave by every possible conveyance and route. Trains are being made up of boxcars. Entire east side of town in flames, including the new Westral building, Times building, Michigan hotel, the old and new O. R. & N. depots, Pacific and Coeur d'Alene hotels and many others.

Attempts are being made to stem the tide of flames by using dynamite. Passenger coaches and scene at depot is wild but comparatively orderly so far. No deaths reported but confusion is such that no accurate information is available or obtainable.

"All electric lights are out and all telephone wires are down. Sunner brewery and many neighboring houses and places of business are burned. St. Elmo hotel, Oettinger's store, Turner music store are in flames. The Shoshone county courthouse and Samuels hotel are thought to be doomed. Flames are now threatening the Wallace fire station."

Spokane Report.

Spokane, Aug. 20.—The Spokesman-Review's Wallace correspondent says: Driven by a heavy gale the forest fires that have surrounded Wallace for weeks swept over the tops of the hills tonight and crept down the slopes into the east end of the town. Twenty or 20 small dwellings on the hillsides burst into flames about 9 o'clock, and the blaze caught a few minutes later in the wooden warehouses and hotels east of Seventh street. Every available man in town, working under orders from Mayor Walter Hanson, under the glare of flames on the surrounding hills on the pall of smoke overhead, at 11 o'clock were seeking to hold the damage east of Seventh street.

Rough estimates of the loss at that hour were placed from \$300,000 to \$500,000. The largest loss was in the warehouse of the Coeur d'Alene Hardware company, which supplies mining materials to a large tributary territory, placed at \$150,000. The plant of the Sunset Brewing company, valued at \$80,000, was also burning. The Oregon Railroad & Navigation company's depot, recently completed at a cost of \$5,000, was burned, as was also the old wooden depot.

Courthouse Still Stands.

At 11 o'clock the only building east of Seventh street still standing was the Shoshone county courthouse. A district approximately five blocks long

REFUGEES ARE DUE IN MISSOULA AT 7 A. M.

There will be 200 refugees from Wallace, Mullan and Taft in Missoula probably at 7 o'clock this morning; they are on a special train that left Saltese at 2:30 o'clock this morning. In the number are 20 patients from the Wallace hospitals. The sick people will be taken care of at the Sisters' hospital; Missoula will do all she can for the relief of the others.

and five blocks wide was in flames, but the danger of its spreading abated.

The Pacific hotel, the Coeur d'Alene lodging house, both two-story frame buildings, were among the first to go. Early in the afternoon, when it was first realized that the danger was imminent, the nearest blazes were those up Placer creek, which were controlled by the two companies of negro troops from Fort George Wright, and one on the hills across the Coeur d'Alene river toward Wallace. The blaze on Placer creek leaped the trenches and backfired spaces and began burning down the west side of Placer creek canyon, where the flume carrying the city water supply runs.

Smoke Very Dense.

The pall of smoke overhanging the town was so dense that the electric lights were turned on at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. As soon as dusk fell the flames on every side turned the smoky sky a dull red.

At 6 o'clock Mayor Walter Hanson ordered every available man out to backfire up the hillsides around the town, threatening imprisonment for all who refused.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon the demand of the people for trains to leave the town became so great that both the Oregon Railroad & Navigation company and the Northern Pacific made up special trains, which left at sundown, bearing hundreds of women and children and their valuables.

The Oregon Railroad & Navigation train pulled down the Coeur d'Alene valley to Osborne, out of all possible danger, while the Northern Pacific train proceeded toward Missoula. Others who did not wait for the trains or who desired to carry more of their household goods than they could take by that means, secured every available vehicle or started on foot toward Osborne.

HELENA MAN FALLS HEIR TO A HALF MILLION

Helena, Aug. 20.—Dr. W. Wymond Miller, son of Dr. C. B. Miller of this city, has fallen heir to an estate valued at half a million dollars. The lucky doctor lived in Helena for a number of years practicing his profession, but for several years has been living in Washington state. About two weeks ago his aunt, Mrs. Jane A. Wymond Gibson, died in Lawrenceburg, Ind., leaving an estate valued at about \$1,000,000. Copies of the will, which have been received here, show Mrs. Gibson left about \$100,000 to relatives and charitable institutions, and the remainder of the estate is divided equally between the testator's sister and Dr. Miller.

MISSOULA HURRIES ASSISTANCE

NORTHERN PACIFIC AND CITY, AIDED BY C. H. McLEOD EQUIP A RELIEF TRAIN.

At 2:30 o'clock this morning a special train left the Northern Pacific station consisting of six outfit cars and a regular road crew of 60 men with all the equipment in the nature of buckets, axes, water bags, saws, etc., which might be needed in fighting fires, the most of the equipment having been gathered together by Mayor Andrew Logan, assisted by Associate Forester Silcox, C. H. McLeod having opened up the Missoula Mercantile company's store for anything that was needed. Besides the outfit cars there were three coaches and a caboose in the train. Trainmaster Hagerty and Yardmaster Plafahen of the Northern Pacific were in charge of the train and left here determined to get it as far as possible towards Wallace in the shortest practicable time. Assistance will be rendered wherever most needed and more help will follow if found necessary after the trip is made. Mayor Logan and a Missoulian reporter accompanied the train.

ST. LOUIS NOW OVER A HALF MILLION

Washington, Aug. 20.—The population of St. Louis is 687,925, an increase of 111,791, or 19.4 per cent, as compared with 575,238 in 1909.

RAILWAY BRIDGES IN THE PATH OF FIRE

At 2 o'clock this morning it is learned that three of the high trestles on the Milwaukee this side of Avery have been reached by the forest fires and that train No. 6 will not be able to proceed. These are in the St. Joe district, and from the fact that the fire is reported to have reached this section, it seems it is spreading in two directions. It was from the north fork of the St. Joe that the fire worked its way up State creek and over the crest to Placer creek on its dreadful way to Wallace. The information that reaches here this (Sunday) morning is still very meager, but it is enough to warrant the statement that the fires are beyond all human control.

OREGON IS VERY UNEASY OVER SITUATION

CASCADE FOREST RESERVES ARE IN GREAT DANGER AND FEARS ARE EXPRESSED.

Portland, Ore., Aug. 20.—The forest fires which are devastating various parts of the northwest are more threatening tonight than at any previous time this year. Except in the Colville country in Washington and the Willamette valley in northeastern Oregon, where the flames are believed to be under control, the situation is most discouraging.

In Oregon the most serious situation is that part of the Cascades of the forest reserve that lies between Klamath Falls and Medford. Two great fires are raging in this district, one in the vicinity of Mount McLaughlin (Mount Pitt) and the other on Ashland creek. The latter is threatening light plants of Ashland. Fear is expressed for the safety of the town itself, but this danger probably is exaggerated.

Combating these fires the forest service and private timber interests have about 500 men in the field and 250 regular soldiers are on their way from American Lake, Wash. The forest service in Portland has asked for information from the San Francisco officials of the service as to whether regular troops in California are so located as to be available in fighting the southern Oregon fires.

Troops Are En Route.

Helena, Aug. 20.—Companies E and F, Fourteenth infantry, arrived here at 6:30 o'clock tonight and stopped just long enough to load all the fire-fighting material available at Fort Harrison, including mules, horses and wagons. The troops are en route to fight forest fires in the vicinity of Lake McDonald, in the Glacier national forest.

Fort Harrison is now without any field equipment whatever. Company H stopped at Bonner and will be used in the same service. Telegraphing from St. Paul, Major-General Hodges informed the commandant at Fort Harrison that these were the last troops available in Dakota and Montana for fire-fighting service.

TYNER THANKS COURT FOR LIGHT SENTENCE

Helena, Aug. 20.—John Tyner, convicted in the federal court of using the mails to defraud eastern merchants, was sentenced today by Judge Rasch to pay a fine of \$150 and serve four months in jail. Tyner evidently expected a more severe sentence, because he thanked the court for its leniency.

STARVATION HIS CURE FOR CATARRH TROUBLE

Denver, Aug. 20.—Rowland Miller, a young student of this city, has not tasted food for 46 days. Water he drinks in great quantities. He purposed to eat nothing for 10 days more, suffering from catarrh and being too poor, he says, to obtain professional medical attention. Miller decided to fast himself into health. He came to Colorado a year ago from Wisconsin, in the hope of bettering his physical condition.

The young man weighed 118 pounds at the beginning of his treatment and up to now has lost 46 pounds. He was quite strong and able to be about until a few days ago.

LOCAL SITUATION SHOWS SMALL CHANGE

MISSOULA FORESTRY FORCES HAVE BEEN BUSY IN ROUTINE DUTIES.

The Wallace sensation was the only important feature of an otherwise quiet day in forestry circles. There were no new developments in the situation aside from the continuation of the steady fight against the flames in practically every forest in District No. 2.

Three companies of soldiers arrived in town early yesterday morning and were at once dispatched to patrol work in the more affected section. Two companies from the First Battalion of the Fourteenth infantry were sent to Borax on a special train over the Northern Pacific and the other, from the second battalion of the same regiment, was sent to Helena, whence it will probably go to Great Falls and on to Shelby, the National Glacier park and the Flathead national forest. The fire at Borax is not serious, having been entirely "sawed up" by digging fire trenches all around it. The main thing now is to keep the fire well patrolled and prevent the flames from jumping the ditches.

At Shelby, along the Great Northern, and in the Glacier park the fires are pretty serious and the soldiers were badly needed there.

Three more companies from the camp at American Lake are following today's arrivals. These men will probably be met with orders to detain at Spokane and go on to the Blackfoot forest over the Great Northern. The arrival of these soldiers from the instruction camp simplifies the situation immensely for a new and larger force of trained men was needed to supply patrols in places where hired laborers proved inefficient.

New Fires.

Supervisor Kinney reported a new fire on Moutaine creek, a tributary to the Big Blackfoot about half-way between Missoula and Ovando. Mr. Kinney will get pack horses from Ovando for use in fighting this blaze.

The Belmont creek fire was reported as serious yesterday, but is decidedly better today. There is also a bad blaze on the South Fork of the Flathead.

Rangers have reported sighting a fire in the Nez Perce forest from the Montana-Idaho divide. Word was sent yesterday to Grangeville and men will probably be sent out from there to fight this blaze.

It was reported last night that a fire had broken out near Smead, a little station on the Northern Pacific just west of Thompson Falls, and was doing considerable damage. The fire is burning so close to the track that traffic over the line has been stopped. The fire is not on the Rocky mountain division and no details as to its extent or probability of its extinction can be secured.

BIG FIRE ALSO RAGES IN CALIFORNIA TOWN

Reno, Nev., Aug. 20.—The town of Loyalton this afternoon is in grave danger of being wiped out by a forest fire which started in the mountains about six miles distant from the town yesterday morning and has spread until it is within one mile of the place. The wind is spreading the fire rapidly toward the town and the entire populace consisting of several hundred people and all the lumbermen and laborers from the surrounding lumber camps are fighting the flames. Sparks and cinders are reported to be falling in the town and an urgent telephone message from Loyalton late this afternoon, asking for assistance, was to the effect that the town seemed doomed. The situation is made more grave by the fact that the heavy timber extends to the very edge of the town. Millions of feet of lumber, as well as the residences of several hundred people and many business houses are harassed.

LOCAL LODGE MEMBERS TO MEET THE TRAIN

All members of lodges of any of the fraternal orders are asked to be at the Northern Pacific station at 7 o'clock this morning to assist in ministering to the wants of 200 refugees from the fires in the Coeur d'Alenes. A. J. BREITENSTEIN, Secretary Chamber of Commerce.