

# FIRE LOSSES NEARLY \$900,000

## Fire Marshall Reports 449 Fires Occurred During Year

"By a Dominion Proclamation, the week of October 5th to 11th has been proclaimed Fire Prevention Week." Provincial Fire Marshall Earl MacLeod said yesterday.

He went on to quote the words of Governor-General Vincent Massey that "it is an imperative reminder of the control of fire and its hazards."

Figures released from the Fire Marshall's office showed that nearly 900,000 in fire losses was suffered in the province last year in 449 fires. The total loss in Charlottetown in 174 fires was in the vicinity of \$413,000.

Mr. MacLeod went on to say that during the current year, several large fires have reached considerable losses both in Charlottetown and Summerside along with several rural blazes.

### MARKET BUILDING

The city's largest financial and sentimental loss was the Old Market Building that burned to the ground on April 29th. One of the city's most famous landmarks, it housed the offices of the I.M.T. and its bus terminal, the P.E.I. Travel Bureau, Rook's Meat Market, public market stalls, M. Peters Egg Grading Station, bowling alleys, the City Fish Market and the old Empire Theatre.

Other major fire losses included the old Post office Building (\$1,000) on January 4th and the P.L. Morris Feed Mill on Lower Queen Street (\$30,000) on May 2nd.

### IN SUMMERSIDE

Summerside also had its fire hazards including the total destruction of the Brace MacKay Departmental Store on February 6th, causing an estimated loss of \$200,000. Loss to the MacArthur Building on Water Street amounted to approximately \$50,000.

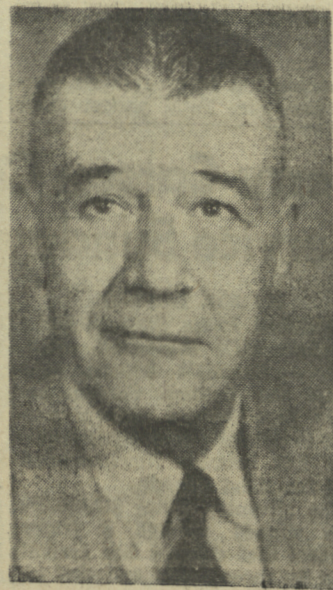
Other major fire losses in the Island's western metropolis include Foley's Drug Store (\$28,000); the J. and S. Variety Store (\$23,000); Wellington Co-Op (\$18,000) and Arsenault and Gaudet's (\$8,200).

The major rural fire occurred at Fredericton on May 30th when a lumber mill owned by Melville Herbert Weeks suffered a financial loss of \$26,482. Eight days prior to this, John Andrew MacEachern of York Point lost three barns and his home, valued at \$11,400.

### NO CASUALTIES

Fire Marshall MacLeod said that although fire losses on the Island were fairly heavy in 1957, "we are pleased to report that there were no casualties resulting from these fires."

Fire Prevention Week, which is being proclaimed in hundreds of other communities across Canada, will find fire officials making an inspection of stores, warehouses and places of assembly. Owners have been asked to co-operate during this period.



EARL MACLEOD

An appeal has been registered from the Fire Marshall's office, asking all local Fire Chiefs, volunteer fire fighters and the public in general, to try, in every possible way, to help free the communities where we live of the ravages of fire.

### Nobody Wins When It's Fire

Fire, which directly and indirectly robs the national economy of upwards of a billion dollars annually, also exacts a staggering amount in the cost of protective services for citizens.

Estimated annual cost of municipal and provincial fire fighting operations — \$50 millions. The capital cost of their equipment, buildings etc., is of the order of \$250 millions.

Also to be reckoned is the cost of fire insurance. In 1957 Canadians paid out \$169 millions for insured protection. They got back \$129 millions for their losses. These losses far exceeded the cash recovered. Provincial and federal property losses alone accounted for \$137.4 millions. Additionally there were untold numbers of petty or so-called "scorch" and other uninsured, unreported losses.

Nobody wins by fire.

### You Set Your Insurance Rate

In 1957 Canadians paid \$169 millions for their fire insurance, got back \$129 millions for their losses.

Their fire insurance premiums in 1957 cost them only \$8.6 millions over what they paid in 1956 for protection. But in 1957 they ran up paid losses \$27 millions greater than in 1956.

Percentage-wise, the 1957 loss ratio (losses against premiums) was 76.28. In 1956 it was 63.58.

### TOLD BY A FIRE CHIEF

To a former Canadian, Rev. T. Alfred Fleming, now retired at 84 in Cleveland, Ohio, but one time resident of Owen Sound, Ontario, goes much personal credit for the "steam" behind the effort's establishment. A 1909 fire in an Ohio school, killing 173 children because a janitor forgot to keep an exit unlocked, gave Mr. Fleming the germ of the idea.

### Too Much Stress On Pure Science

VANCOUVER (CP) — British and North American universities place too much stress on turning out people with qualifications for a job, says Dr. Bruno Snell, Greek professor at the University of Hamburg, Germany.

Dr. Snell, a member of the International Association of Universities, said German and other continental universities placed too much stress on pure science research.

"It would be good for each to exchange ideas and place a bit more emphasis on the other's strong point," he said.

Dr. Snell said he was convinced the Russians were confining their research work in too narrow a limit. The scientist must have broad and general ideas and these can be gained only from a broad general education.

"By concentrating within too narrow a limit, the Russian's imaginative abilities may be endangered," he said.

### A Boy And His Frog, A Match And His Mother

Perhaps it wasn't much of a fire, in a three-room shack on the back of a lot. But it had gained headway and we couldn't enter until we had "knocked down" the blaze.

As we brought the hose into play, I noticed a girl (aged perhaps 12) and four younger children. All, except the youngest, a boy of about 5, were screaming, "Mother is in there."

When finally we could enter, we found the body and tenderly wrapped it up.

I asked the girl, "Are those your brothers and sisters?"

"Yes," she said. "And the boy who's so quiet?"

"He doesn't speak or hear," she said.

"Do you know what started the fire?"

"Yes," she said, pointing to

the boy, "he lost his pet frog under the bed and lit a match to find it. That was what Mamma always did when she lost something under the bed."

In my many years of public service, I have had to deal with varied tragedies of fire. This one sticks in my memory as the greatest lesson in fire prevention. The deaf mute boy learned by watching others. His own mother gave him the example of how to handle fire by using a match to look for something in a dangerous place. Now the bed clothes had caught fire.

And five children were left motherless and homeless.

I tell the story in the hope that others will remember always to be good examples, especially to children.

## Fire Research Building Opens

OTTAWA (CP)—The National Research Council Friday opened a \$1,000,000 fire research building to enable scientists to find new methods to reduce Canada's

heavy loss of life and property from fires.

The building, dedicated to the "advancement of knowledge in fire prevention and protection,"

was officially opened by Dr. F. M. Lea, director of building research in the United Kingdom.

The new fire research laboratory is the only one of its kind in Canada. It compares with large installations for fire research in Britain and the United States.

The building is equipped with modern apparatus to permit the NRC building research division to make a new attack on fire causes and prevention.

Fires in Canada in 1957 killed 636 persons and caused property damage of \$132,000,000. This compared with 601 deaths and \$107,000,000 in property damage in 1956 and 243 deaths and \$22,000,000 in damage in 1940.

The main feature of the research equipment is a huge 40-foot high furnace room. It is equipped with two special furnaces for testing fire resistance and other properties of walls, ceilings and floors.

Walls measuring 12 by 12 feet and floors measuring 12 by 15 feet can be tested. They are lifted into place in the furnaces with a 30-ton crane.

The building also includes laboratories for small-scale experiments and a special room in which models of buildings can be burned. Other facilities will enable research on fire-fighting apparatus.

Information collected in the fire research program will be made available to fire-fighting officials in technical papers. The data also will be used in the next revision of the federal building code in 1960.

Implementation of any recommendations made by the council as a result of its research will be the responsibility of provincial and municipal authorities. The federal government has no authority to enforce council recommendations since fire protection, except in the armed forces and federal lands and buildings, falls under provincial jurisdiction.

### Portable Oil Space Heater Hazardous

If you use a portable oil space heater in your home, remember that it represents a definite fire hazard. It should be set absolutely level and should not be carried around from room to room while burning. Changes in draft are liable to cause explosion. Canada's fire services hope that just as soon as you can you will dispense with it in favor of a more permanent type of heating unit.

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