

coat and vest hanging on tree on first day of fire. Hunted all afternoon, but can't find them.

"July 3rd.—Found where I left coat and vest. Fire had been there, too. Nothing left but ranger badge and buttons. Last month's pay check in pocket. Rode over cross mountain to cattle round-up. Helped the boys brand calves. Stayed with round-up outfit all night.

"July 4th.—Met sheriff on trail. Hunted all day for two men with bunch of stolen horses. Caught them at old sawmill on Deer Creek. Sheriff and thieves stopped all night with me at station.

"July 5th. Sunday.—Did month's washing. Wrote up fire reports and mended wire fence around horse pasture where cattle broke it down."

Finding the fire in the old slashing too much for him, the ranger hunted up a sheep herder at a near-by camp and sent him for help. Then, knowing that every delay of a minute in the start meant hours in the end, he went to work alone.

For several hours he worked away, cutting a trail through the slashings and old tree tops with his hatchet, raking back the leaves and ground cover with his fire rake, making a trail about three feet wide, across which he hoped the fire would not jump. His main object was to keep it out of a group of fine timber some distance up the mountainside, and as he started his trail some distance back from the fire, he made good progress. At length another ranger, who had seen the smoke from his station, appeared on the scene, and later several more, and many citizens hired for the purpose joined them.

All day and all night they fought the fire from every point of vantage. Back-fires were built, trails were raked, trenches dug, and the fire whipped out where possible with green pine boughs or wet sacks. The acrid, pitchy smoke filled their eyes till they could hardly see. Their blackened faces were cut and crossed with little canons washed in the smut by tears from their weeping eyes. Their hands were smeared with pitch from the fresh-cut pine boughs, and the soles of their boots were burned by the hot ground.

Down into deep, dark canons they fought the line of fire, feeding ceaselessly upon the leaves and pine-needles. The deer and other wild things fled from them into the thick smoke, which hung over everything like a pall. Through thickets of manzanita and other underbrush, up the almost precipitous sides of the canons, the fire went by leaps and bounds. They chopped huge logs which lay across their trail, and rolled them back from the fire lines.

Once, far back across a deep gash, up which they had struggled, fighting the fire inch by inch and step by step, they looked back and saw where it had broken out again, threatening to get round behind them. Wearily two of the rangers retraced their steps down the rough sides of the

canon, over logs and rocks, stopping at the bottom long enough to lie down flat in the little mountain stream that came tumbling down to wet their clothing and cool their burning feet.

They whipped the fire out again, and then the two tramped back along the dead fire-line to make sure that it was not getting across their lines somewhere else.

"Say, Bill," asked one, "how would a big heaping dish of ice-cream go just about now?"

"Hush, you idiot!" snapped his companion.

"Just think, we were down in Portland a month ago this very night, and left half a plate full of the good stuff when we had supper."

"Wish I had those leavings right now," said Bill hungrily.

At daylight, fifty men were scattered about the fire, tired, sleepy and hungry. The supervisor drifted along the line with a packhorse loaded with two "kyars" full of canned tomatoes, crackers, and other easily handled eatables, for men must eat, no matter what the fire does.

He stopped long enough to throw a couple of cans of tomatoes and a package or two of crackers to the two rangers. Telling them to eat and rest a little, and then come on down the line to a spring where camp had been established, and coffee and more food prepared for the fighters, he hurried on his way round the fire to the others, equally tired and hungry. To open the cans and refresh themselves with their contents was not a long operation for the two men. Then, under the shade of a huge pine, they dropped on the ground and slept.

Two hours later another mounted man waked the sleeping rangers, and they tramped off to the spring. There, under a great tree, camp had been pitched, and a hearty breakfast of canned beans, bacon, strong coffee, and such camp fare, put them in shape for another twenty-four hours' work. Refreshed and rested, they struck off towards the fire-lines to renew the fight.

For three days and nights these men kept up the warfare. The supervisor in charge of the fires was a veteran in the service, who had fought fire all over the Western mountains. On the brushy sides of the San Bernardinos in Southern California, amid the volcanic peaks of the San Francisco range in Arizona, in the parks of Colorado's mountains, he had measured lances with the fire-fiend and beaten him. With an intimate knowledge of the country over which the fire was raging, knowing every trail, road and creek, he planned his battles like a general.

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The financial stringency is only now beginning to reflect itself on the building trade (says the *Christchurch Press*), and so far journeymen carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers, plumbers, and painters have been kept fairly well employed, and the plumbers and plasterers are, generally speaking, earning more than Arbitration Court award wages.