

Logs Still Smoldering in Paper Mill Yards

long yards of the Inland Empire Paper company at Millwood still smoldered today as an aftermath of a fire which burned more than 8,000,000 board feet of logs and destroyed two buildings Saturday.

Damage was estimated at \$400,000 by Dean H. Banta, paper company general manager. He said the loss was substantially covered by insurance.

Exact cause of the fire has not been determined, Banta said. Cinders from a small steam locomotive, used in switching operations, and owned by the paper company, may have caused one of the fires, he said.

As workers from the mill con-

tinued to play water over the log yard today, crews were relaying the mill's spur track that was buckled and burned Saturday.

Banta said the paper mill, untouched by the flames, was in full operation today and there will be no shutdown.

The burned logs represented a three and one-half months' supply for the mill, but Banta said additional supplies are available.

Whether the pulp warehouse on Empire will be replaced has not been determined, he said. The large building on Empire, south of the main mill, burst into flames late Saturday afternoon. Origin of this fire has not been determined, Banta said.

Airman 2/c Charles Leaper, one of 250 Fairchild airmen who vol-

unteered to assist in fighting the blaze, was overcome by gasses while helping to fight the warehouse fire and was taken to Sacred Heart hospital. He has been released and now is back at the base.

Telegraph Poles Burn

The fire destroyed 100 telegraph poles, owned by the Spokane International railroad, and a small storage building on railroad property south of the Millwood depot. Railroad officials said some ties were damaged along their branch line serving the Ideal Cement plant at Irvin.

The paper mill tracks that were damaged also run to Irvin, where connection is made with the Northern Pacific, Banta said.

The fire broke out shortly after noon Saturday a few blocks east of Argonne. Fanned by a strong wind, it moved swiftly through the mill yard that extends for almost two miles along the south river shore.

Hundreds helped to fight the flames, many of them working for 12 hours or more at the fire scene. In addition to all but one Spokane Valley fire company, men and fire fighting equipment were dispatched from the naval supply depot, Geiger field, Fairchild air force base, and the state forestry department.

Late in the afternoon, Spokane firemen from station 12 were sent to the fire, remaining there until 4:25 yesterday morning.

Both city and county civil defense firemen and auxiliary police responded. Deputy sheriffs worked both as fire fighters and on traffic control.

Sheriff William J. Reilly said thousands of spectators blocked roadways and made it difficult for some emergency equipment and volunteer firemen to reach the scene.

Banta said his organization was deeply appreciative of the assistance given by the regular fire fighting organizations and the hundreds of volunteers in bringing the blaze under control and protecting other property. He also thanked those who aided in traffic control.

Banta commended the Millwood Soroptomist club members and other Valley women who set up an emergency dining room for the fire fighters in the Masonic

temple. They distributed hundreds of sandwiches, cakes and pies. Groups of women also carried coffee, doughnuts and water into the log yard for the firemen, he said.

Volunteers Get Praise

Chief Lawrence Schucker of the Valley fire department praised volunteers for their work.

"Our department," Chief Schucker said, "has no working agreement with Millwood. We went in to help them with permission of our commissioners. All of our off-duty men also were there."

He said at least 100 or more spot fires broke out Saturday afternoon and evening, some of them on the north side of the river.

"We were fortunate that the wind was blowing easterly, or the town of Millwood might be in ashes," he said. "If we had not stopped it when we did, the fire could easily have spread into Idaho."

MILLWOOD EYES COST OF BLAZE

The Millwood city council will meet tonight to consider whether it has any financial obligations to fire departments which sent equipment Saturday to the fire in the yards of the Inland Empire Paper company.

"We are extremely grateful to everyone who came to our aid," Mayor Allen W. Daugherty said. "We know that it would have been impossible to handle the situation without the outside help."

He said the proposal made several weeks ago for Millwood to become a part of the Valley fire district has not been abandoned.

Daugherty said Millwood is proud of its volunteer department and the council has made a definite effort continually to improve it.

"It is a smooth functioning volunteer organization," the mayor said. "Our study may indicate that a full-time professional fire department or consolidation with the Valley district will be to our advantage."

CD Firemen Win Good Experience at Millwood Fire

Fourteen city civil defense firemen gained invaluable practical fire-emergency experience Saturday and yesterday morning in helping fight the Millwood fire, City CD Fire Coordinator Joseph W. Kelly said today.

The men spent 125 man-hours at the fire, and furnished a pumper which spread at least 500,000 gallons of water from the Spokane river on the blaze.

Two of the volunteers, CITY CD Fire Chief Arthur A. Ashley and CD Battalion Chief Joseph Cunningham worked 18 hours without a break, he said.

Also at the scene were 45 city civil defense police, who with sheriff's officers, sheriff's posse members and members of the sheriff's auxiliary aided in controlling traffic which swarmed to the area.

At least 50 county civil defense firemen also aided in battling the blaze.

The experience gave the CD firemen a "good workout under actual emergency fire conditions," Kelly said.

City CD Chief Clyde H. Friend said the fire gave an "example of how civil defence forces can aid the community in cases other than actual enemy attack." Had the wind changed direction during the fire, an extremely dangerous situation could have developed, he said.