

RAIN ENDS FIRES RAGING IN BRUSH IN SUFFOLK AREAS

Firemen From Nassau County
Called to Save Wauwepex
Boy Scout Camp.

Riverhead, April 30.—Firemen all over Suffolk County welcomed the heavy showers which early today drowned out the last of the brush and forest fires they had been fighting for days to conquer, but which would persist in springing up time after time. The unusually dry weather for this season of the year has made the brush which covers vast areas in Suffolk County ready fuel for the fires which started up in so many areas.

Camp Wauwepex, the Nassau County Boy Scout camp near Wading River, was surrounded by 400 acres of blackened stubs today as a result of a raging forest fire which yesterday threatened to destroy the entire reservation.

More than 500 volunteer fire fighters, including the crews of five engines from Freeport, Hempstead and Rockville Centre battled the blaze, the worst of 13 forest and brush fires on two 20-mile fronts in Suffolk County.

Wooden Platforms Ruined

Twelve wooden platforms, used for tent floors in the camp, were destroyed and the line of fire halted only 25 feet from the principal buildings. The firefighters, many of whom had come 50 miles, set backfires, dug trenches, ploughed fields and strung hose lines a quarter of a mile long.

The 11 other fires in Suffolk County extended on a line from Riverhead diagonally across Long Island to Port Jefferson and back to Eastport, on the south shore. While some of them were of slight proportions, there was the danger that they would join fronts.

One of the fires burned over approximately 500 acres between the Middle Island State hwy. and the Wading River-Port Jefferson State hwy.

Blaze Started Saturday

The Wading River blaze started Saturday night. Bert Grace, director of the Scout camp, went to bed late Sunday night after having led a battle against the flames by 41 Scouts from Great Neck, Hempstead, and Freeport. He sent the volunteers home, thinking the flames were beaten. He looked from his window yesterday, however, and saw flames 30 feet high among the pine trees only a third of a mile away.

Grace sent his family to a position of safety and sent out calls for help. Clarence E. Darr, district forest ranger, led a gang of CCK workers from Selden and 400 more men appeared from CCC camps at Yaphank and Camp Upton. Although volunteer firemen and apparatus were called from Nassau County, the Riverhead fire fighters only 10 miles away, were not notified of the fire.

Scouts Help Fight Fire

Eighty Scouts from Nassau County joined the force battling the blaze, which menaced seven log cabins, two mess halls, a craft shop, a library and the camp hospital. Scouts removed everything portable from the buildings when it appeared certain they would be destroyed.

At Coram, seven summer cottages were reported destroyed by a fierce fire. At Battling Hollow, the Suffolk County Scout Camp was endangered. Another fire burned within 100 feet of the East Manor schoolhouse and the pupils were dismissed for the day.

At Rocky Point 50 acres were burned, and six acres were charred at Hill Manor. The fire burned over two acres at East Patchogue and two fires burned over four and two and a half acres at Centre Islip.