



*On November 9 Pisgah National Forest Officials closed the area because of the extreme danger of forest fires. On November 21, after the long sought-for rains came, was reopened again.*



*Tower rangers, in addition to carrying out their regular duties as spotters of forest fires, prepare their own meals. Here George Brown begins preparing his supper of eggs, potatoes and beans.*

mostly at night, Army Military Police calls can be picked up.

Even the weather sometimes helps keep the ranger's tower life from being monotonous. Early one morning this fall George found the tower almost completely coated with a thick layer of ice. The stairsteps looked like a series of sliding boards. One step couldn't be distinguished from the other, the ice was so thick. Needless to say, it took quite a few hours of chopping with an axe to clear the steps and the walkway around the top of the tower.

George Brown's day begins at 5:00 A. M. He gets up, cooks breakfast, washes the dishes, replenishes his water supply, and brings in the day's and night's firewood. He keeps a fire going in the stove constantly, for during the winter months at a mile-high altitude it's always cold—and especially so at night. Very seldom does the temperature fail to drop below the freezing point after the sun goes down.

After the morning's chores are done, the watch for forest fires begins. All day long and even up until as late as midnight, he is on the lookout for the first signs of a fire in the forest. Every hour he is on duty he must check in, either by radio or by telephone, with the Pisgah District Ranger Station.

In spite of the exceptionally dry period between October 10 and November 20, forest fires in the Pisgah District have numbered only eight thus far. And all eight, due to prompt spotting and quick action on the part of the rangers, destroyed less than 90 acres of timberland.

During, and for a few days following, a rain sufficient to eliminate the fire danger, George leaves the tower to return to Brevard and his home. When the forest fire danger point is again reached, he will return to the tower on Frying Pan Mountain, with a new supply of food, and begin another tour of firewatching.

(Continued on page 32)