

Story Of How Man Learned To Make Fire

INTERESTING STORY RELATED BY FIRE DEPT.

There's Danger Unless Both
Man And Matches Use
Their Heads

The Fire Stick

It is not known just when man first learned to make fire by friction, but it may have been that while dragging the carcass of some wild animal over stony ground, the hide was rubbed hard enough to singe the hair upon it and man was thus supplied with a hint he was quick to seize. At any rate he eventually learned that by rubbing he could produce fire and so developed the fire-drill, which consisted of a pointed stick held vertically and spun rapidly in a depression in a piece of soft wood placed flat upon the ground.

The spinning motion was produced by means of a strand or gut, or wire, attached to a bow and looped around the vertical stick, which was revolved by drawing the bow back and forth. A block of wood held in one hand on top of the fire stick kept it in an upright position. There were several varieties of the fire-drill but all were similar. The friction produced by the rapidly turning stick developed heat and fire at the point of contact. Tinder, or punk, was then ignited and blown upon until it set fire to leaves, litter, or other combustible material kept at hand for kindling purposes.

Flint and Steel

Then came the flint-and-steel, one being struck against the other, the sparks falling upon tinder in the form of flax tow. In the olden days every household possessed one or more tinder boxes containing these implements for making fire.

The idea was adopted for the flint-lock musket and pistol, the spark generated by the hammer in striking against a piece of flint igniting the powder in the "pan" and discharging the load in the barrel—if all went well.

The First Match

After this, in 1827 to be exact, an English druggist named John Walker, evolved the first practical friction matches, which were known as "Congreves." With every box was provided a folded piece of "glass-paper." In order to ignite one of these matches it was necessary to draw it quickly through folds of the paper pressed firmly against the head of the match.

Another variety of match called the "Promethean," so named because of the myth concerning Prometheus, had a thin glass bulb at one end and breaking this produced the fire. These ingenious matches were better than the fire stick and the flint-and-steel but they were far from satisfactory. There was such great need of a sure-fire, easily ignited match, that inventors went on experimenting until they hit upon the sulphur-phosphorus combination, which eventually developed into the present types of so called "safety" and double tipped "strike-anywhere" matches with which we are all familiar.

The malodorous nature of the sulphur match, which sizzled for several seconds before it burst into flame, naturally terminated



Destruction Of Forests By Fire Increases The Lumber Shortage

To check the oncoming obliteration of our standing timber only two methods are available: Fire prevention and reforestation, for in addition to the destruction caused by fire, millions of acres of timber are cut each year.

The forestry bureau of the federal government and the departments of many states are endeavoring to stem this tide of destruction, as are the owners of some of the private tracts of timber. Every patriotic person in America will aid them. It should be clear to all that a forest fire is a tragedy and that in preventing it we are not only safeguarding the present but protecting the future.

Forest fires are often caused by campers or careless smokers, although in many cases brush and

its popularity as soon as the modern match appeared on the market.

No Match Is Safe

Needless to say, no match is safe from the standpoint of the fire hazard. Besides the possibility of staying lighted after it is discarded, the head may fly off when struck or ignition may occur by some means other than its normal use. Matches having sturdy sticks—the better made strike-anywhere and strike-on-the-box types—are safest from the flying head hazard. The strike-on-the-box type—including the paper book match—has less hazard of accidental ignition by being stepped on, or by abrasion in grinders, or other machinery.

Matches Start Fires

So many fires started by matches are due to the carelessness of smokers that the Actuarial Bureau of the National Board of Fire Underwriters combined the hazards under the twin designation, "Matches-Smoking," and today it leads all other causes in its responsibility for fire destruction, with a total annual charge against it approximating the huge sum of \$30,000,000. Matches never should be scattered about, nor should they be carried loose in the pockets.

They are likely to be dropped out of clothing and if they are of the strike-anywhere type may be ignited by being crushed under foot, and thus start a fire. In the natural course of events matches will continue to be used in increasing numbers. They will always be dangerous unless people become careful in using them. It has been stated that there are no safety rules more important than those applying to matches and the record of fire losses indicates that this is a moderate statement of fact. The matter has been succinctly phrased in the following: "Matches do not think with their heads. When you use them your head has to do all of the thinking. Do the thinking! Put them out!"



FIRES ON ROOFS

There was once an elderly woman who attended church regularly, but who was seen always to bow when Satan's name was mentioned. When asked why she did so she replied, "Being polite costs me nothing—and you never can tell what may happen." That is the way with fire—It is never possible to tell about it—when it will break out or how long a hazard will remain quiescent. The sleeping danger awakens without warning and usually at a most inconvenient time.

The National Board of Fire Underwriters, in their report on fire causes, reports that "sparks on roofs" take an annual toll of over \$10,000,000, which indicates how widely inflammable materials are

grass fires started by farmers to clear acreage for tilling have spread to wooded areas.

While in the woods or fields or on roads adjacent to timberlands, one should be careful never to drop matches, lighted cigarettes, pipe tobacco, or anything holding a spark or flame. Such firebrands should be put out by stamping them well into the soil or should be disposed of by some other safe means. Open fires should never be built in the woods or near-by fields when they are dry and never against a tree, alive or dead, or against a log. Stones or open soil areas are reasonably safe as surfaces upon which to build camp-fires if the fires are watched. When leaving a camp-fire it should be thoroughly drenched with water or smothered with sand or soil.

If you should happen to encounter a small fire in a forest put it out yourself or send a call to the fire warden, if help is not available nearby. Fire always travels before the wind and it is best to try to fight its advance, which may sometimes be accomplished by digging a trench across its path. Sand or soil will help smother it and beating will occasionally suffice, but for the timber blaze water is the best extinguishing agent.

E. BURCH,
Fire Inspector.

BLOCKING GAB

Hello, Operator Sheppard, this is Blocking calling to give you the latest.

Our girls reported a fine time at the President's ball. We believe in helping the crippled as well as having a good time.

Does Lucille H. still have her voice? It's a wonder after going out on so many bond rallies.

If anyone passes through our department I guess they think this is a radio shop with all stations on at once. A woman's tongue should last a lifetime but I'm afraid there are going to be some blockers left speechless in their old days.

Has Edith W. ever got any Irish roses from Ireland?

We had two of our blockers back to see us last week, Jessie Lancer and Lucille M.

Sylvia Smith seemed to be in smiles last week. Her husband was up from Ft. Jackson.

Irene Mc. is taking another trip down Florida way. She must have some little moron spied down there.

Lulu C. must have a travelling heart. It's now in Sheppard Field, Texas.

We are glad to have one of our old blockers with us, Margaret L. Looks at if Ruth would get tired eating oranges. Does Reid buy them by the dozen or bushel?

Frances P. thinks she will like to sleep downstairs better than upstairs. She has recently gotten an apartment in the Patterson home.

Estelle, how did you like the Moore General Hospital band? I saw you were all ears and eyes for music. You have it there, for they really had a grand program Saturday.

Lost, one man, four feet and 24 inches tall, two brown eyes, dark hair. When last seen was dressed in blue and in the Blocking Department or Hand Booklet. Will answer to name of Elmer or Brown Eyes. If anyone sees him, send him to the Blockers in care of Olin Irene and Reba.

used as roof coverings. They also report that, in Alabama, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, North Carolina and South Carolina a poor grade of wooden shingles one year made this hazard responsible for the greatest amount of destruction due to a contributing cause. In these states soft coal is widely employed and since certain types of soft coal give off considerable soot, glowing particles of which often fly out of chimney tops, many fires on combustible roofs occur from this cause.

Poor grades of wooden roofs when subjected to changing weather conditions and alternate wetting and drying, eventually become like tinder, ready to ignite from a chance spark. Their fuzzy surface retains embers which would roll off a pitched roof of smoother material. Such roofs have been called "stepping stones for the fire demon," since they have been responsible for the spread of numerous conflagrations, or sweeping fires. You who are planning to build a home in the "post war era," should well consider the most suitable type of roofing. The Ecusta fire department will gladly advise as to the grades of roofing material as tested by the National Fire Protection Association. Feel free to come to us at any time.