

Curfew for Monteith - whistle from Industrial Farm - 1957.

Sept. 1957 - new chimney put in section foreman's house.

Monteith Bridge

Bridge at Monteith burned at 5 P.M. Good Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup> 1958.

# Fire Destroys Bridge Damage Is \$130,000

Bridge burned  
Good Friday  
April 4  
1957

MATHESON (Staff) — Fire destroyed a \$130,000 bridge spanning the Driftwood river at Monteith last night. Ontario Provincial Police from Iroquois Falls and Matheson diverted traffic around the section Highway 11 from Matheson to Porquis.

Police say the bridge collapsed within 15 minutes after the fire was reported. Flames engulfed the wooden structure, fed by creosote on the pilings. Smoke could be seen at Matheson 13 miles away where citizens said they could smell the fire.

A 14-year-old boy, David Bell, of Monteith reported the fire. He said he was at the ONR station where his father is agent when he noticed the flaming bridge 500 feet away. He tele-

phoned the operator at Monteith who reported the fire to police and fire departments at Matheson and Ansonville. The Iroquois Falls high school student said he was repairing his bicycle when he saw the blaze at about 5.30 p.m.

Firemen from Ansonville sped to the scene. They were ineffective against the roaring blaze. In minutes the creosote wood was swept by fire. Three seven-ton steel beams supporting the middle of the bridge were pushed over by the force of river water thawed by the heat.

The collapse which followed was spectacular. Eye-witnesses say sparks shot high into the air followed by dense clouds of smoke. Latest reports indicated the remainder of the structure is still smoldering.

The bridge was 260 feet long and 30 feet high. It was about 20 feet above the water of the Driftwood river. The structure was built four years ago by a construction company from Matheson. It consisted mostly of wood supported by heavy steel beams. An ONR bridge running paral-

lel to it was untouched. An inspector from the railway company visited the scene yesterday.

Traffic was detoured by two routes. Heavy vehicles were directed through the "Y" on highway 67 to Porquis. Smaller vehicles were sent from Matheson to Shillington and across to Monteith.

OPP Constables Bill Goad, of Matheson and J. A. Murdock of Iroquois Falls, directed traffic around the section of highway served by the burned out bridge. Department of Highways officials took over at 9 p.m.

Police believe children smoking under the bridge may have caused the fire. But the cause has not been definitely established.

Hydro wires passing over the bridge were badly scorched and are near collapse. Police say they will have to be replaced.

Department of Highways officials at Matheson said today they will erect a footbridge at Monteith to replace the burned bridge. This is to provide a way for children to get to school, the officials said. They said the ONR bridge would be hazardous for children to cross.

Bridge open Aug 10  
1953. Burned 1958

## High Water Weakens Bridge At Monteith

MONTEITH (Special) — High water in the Driftwood River has caused a backwash from the Driftwood Dam, which in turn has caused a weakening of the piles supporting the Railway Bridge at Monteith.

Since Thursday a "slow order" has been in effect on all Ontario Northland trains crossing the bridge. A crew and work train arrived in town Saturday night. It is expected that twenty car loads of rocks will be used in the repair work which will take approximately a week to complete.

Near Industrial Farm