

# Youths arrested for Monday fire

By ANGELA BLACKBURN  
The Champion

Two boys aged 13 and 14 are facing break and enter and arson charges in the wake of a Monday afternoon fire at the abandoned Pigment & Chemical plant on Main Street East.

No one was injured in the blaze that saw police and firefighters close Main Street from Ontario Street to Wilson Drive for nearly two hours.

"We had to close the road because we had our four-inch hose across the road and also in case there were chemicals involved," said Milton Fire Chief Harold Penson.

Although firefighters wore masks while fighting the fire and Ministry of the Environment officials were called to the scene, Chief Penson said no hazardous chemicals were involved.

The abandoned factory is actually a group of buildings located east of Ontario Street, just east of the railroad tracks. Two pumper trucks, an aerial vehicle and rescue vehicle were at the scene.

The fire was called in shortly after 2 p.m. when Town of Milton workers observed the blaze. Witnesses reported seeing several youths leaving the area on foot.

While Halton police Det. Sgt. Ron Welsh confirmed the cause was arson, just what was used to start the fire remains evidentiary information, he said.

Police said it appeared the youths gained entry to the premises through an insecure door.

Chief Penson said three fires had been set inside a newer warehouse building to the rear of the property.

One fire was against the south wall, another burned out a small interior office, and the third was inside a bay area.

Other than the burned out office, no other structural damage resulted. Most of the fire involved paper, cardboard, wood and some books and papers in the various locations, said Chief Penson. No damage estimate was available.

The two youths, arrested after investigation by the Ontario Fire Marshal and the Halton police, will appear in Milton Young Offenders court September 16.

## Tractor-trailer stolen

### Where's the wood?

A tractor-trailer stolen from Milton August 8 was recovered the next day, but its load of lumber remains missing.

The tractor truck, attached to a 48-foot trailer, had been left running outside a Harrop Drive lumber company when it was stolen at 4 p.m., Halton Regional Police said.

It was found at 5 p.m. August 9 abandoned on the eastbound Highway 401 near Whitby without the \$10,000 worth of spruce lumber it carried.

Police are looking for suspects.



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Tired firefighters emerge from the abandoned Pigment & Chemical plant on Main Street after battling the blaze which closed the road for two hours. No toxins were burned, according to officials. Two youths have been charged. See story at left.

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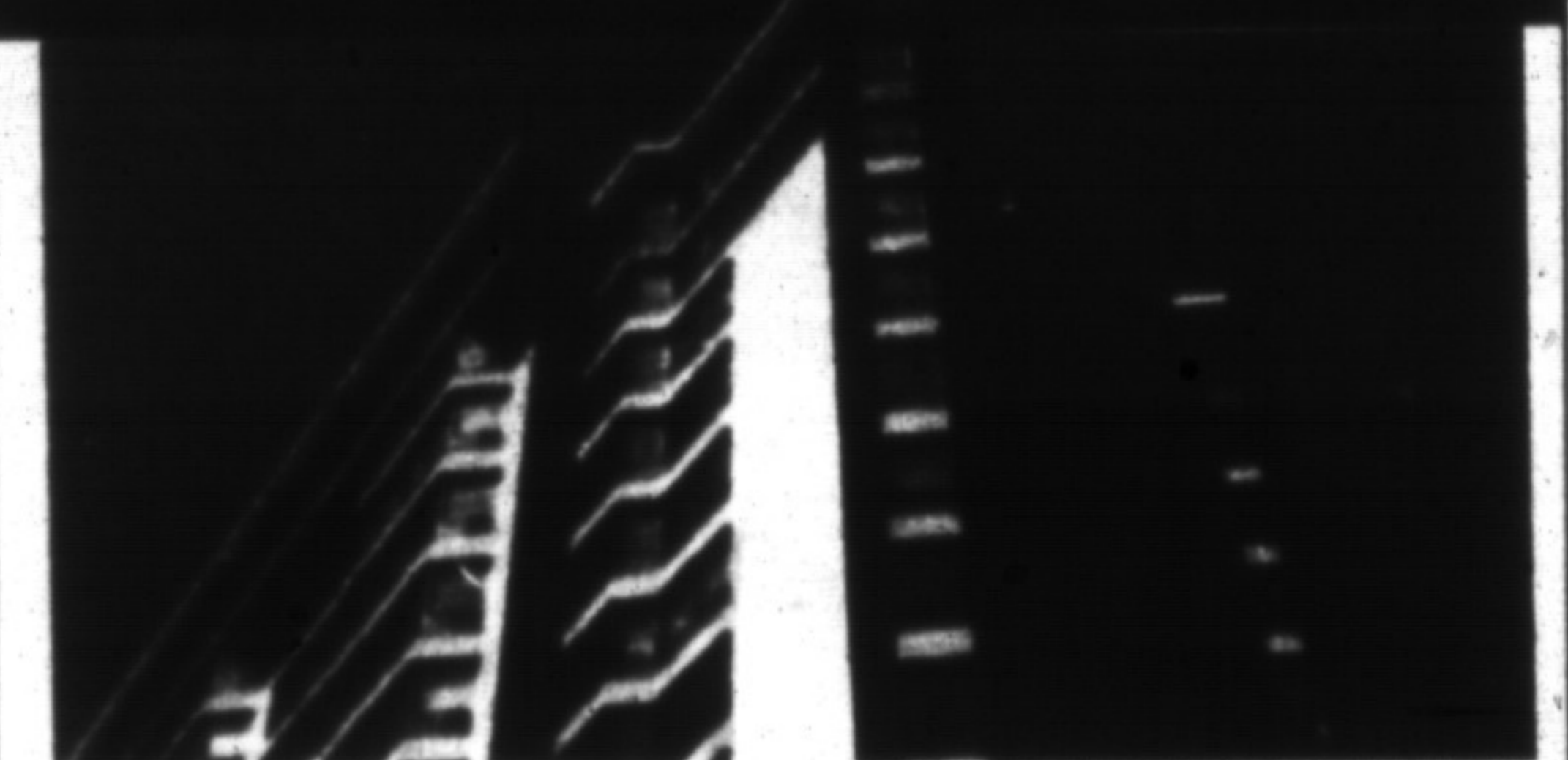
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