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Remembering the Pleasant Bay Fire Mary Fraser, Pleasant Bay: I was the telephone operator. That was my job. I remember that morning that the superintendent from Ingonish came, and he had the longest telegram. The telegraph office was down the road about a mile from here. So he brought me this up. I sent that off for him, telling about the fire. He asked me, "Mrs. Fraser," he said, "would you be willing to stay as long as you can?" "Yes," I said, "I'll stay as long as anybody else stays around here." So he went off. There was an old priest in Cheticamp at the time, Father LeBlanc, he was calling me every half hour--"How is the fire now, Mrs. Fraser? Oh well be careful now," he'd say, "and don't stay too long." I said, "No, I'll be safe enough." Then it was the R.C. M.P. that came that day. And he asked me if I'd stay, and I said, "Yes." So then we had our lunch, and I had washed the dishes, and the R.C.M.P. came running up the hill again. He said, "You'd better get ready now, because it's getting too close"--that was around 1 o'clock in the afternoon. So we got ready. We had two cabins down in the field there, so we took a lot of stuff down here--we were sure our house would burn, anyway. And we left. That was the last day, anyway. It was on a Monday. See, on the Friday before, the fire flew up out of the river and we could see it right up there, going by--there was this pink light that the fire cast--and we thought we were safe. But of course, it was still smouldering. Saturday, everything was fine. I mean, it was a nice quiet day, and we thought we were all right. Of course, we went to church on Sunday down here. Sunday evening, I saw a lot of the cars from after church come up to the mountain there to see the fire--it seemed to be burning pretty bad then--they were up to watch this fire. In the morning everybody knew that it couldn't miss us. There were people in all kinds of trucks and cars. They were calling people to come to fight the fire, and there was a bunch out here that Monday morning, way up on top of the mountain there, fighting the fire. And they pretty near got caught up there--young men--some of them weren't, but most of them were from up here. They were carrying the water up there on their backs--such a job. And I remember when we were going up the mountain here, leaving in the car, just after we passed the bridge here, the park superintendent met us. We said, "Looks pretty bad," He said, "Yes." He said, "We're going to try and save your house-- you have such a lovely home down here." But before he got back down, the house was gone. But we had gone to Cheticamp then; we stopped at Mary Bourgeois' there. She had been calling us and calling us to come and stay with them--they knew we were going to have to leave here. So we went up there. Mr. Bourgeois, he had been down here that afternoon. When he got home, he wouldn't come in the house at all, because he hated to come in and tell us that our house was gone,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15 The fire scene above is Bald Mountain burning, an aerial photograph taken in August, 1947, by Ambrose MacNeil of Sydney Mines. The photo used here is from the newspaper, copied by Mr. MacNeil.