

Loss \$250,000 as fire levels Sturgeon Falls mill

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STURGEON FALLS—Damage in a fire that levelled the main mill of Goulard Lumber (1962) Ltd. here Thursday night was estimated at over \$250,000. Owner Romeo Goulard said the mill would be rebuilt.

There is confusion about the origin of the fire.

Yvon Quesnel of Hwy. 17 said he saw a bolt of lightning strike the mill while driving by.

But welder Marcel Roy said he was doing some work in

the mill when the fire started. "There was a small fire where I was welding so I got a hose to put it out and when I came back into the building I was forced back."

ON ALERT

Firefighters from Springer township and Sturgeon Falls were supported by the Verner Fire Department, and the North Bay Fire Department stood by on alert under the mutual fire aid system.

About 80 men are employed by Goulard Lumber at the mill located on the Sturgeon River. Mr. Goulard said there

were 4,000 logs in the river, representing some four million board feet of lumber and this was still to be cut.

The mill has been in operation since 1957, when Goulard's moved operations from Stinson, five miles from Markstay, west of Warren. The mill cuts a harvest of trees logged north of River Valley and much of the operation depends on river driving.

WHISTLE BLOWS

Springer firemen quickly set up pumps at the river which runs by the mill and played hoses on several nearby build-

ings to keep the blaze from spreading. As the fire progressed it set off a whistle in the steam plant of the mill.

The whistle continued to blow for several hours as firemen fought to keep the fire under control. A large stack was toppled into the main fire because of fear that it would fall into the large crowd at the blaze.

The Springer and Sturgeon fire trucks pumped thousands of gallons of water on the fire and nearly a half mile of hose was laid out in addition to

several auxiliary pumps pressed into use.

Several people spotted the fire at nearly the same time. An Ontario Provincial Police constable on patrol in the area also spotted the fire and turned in the alarm as did a watchman living on the grounds at the lumber company.

Goulard was hit by fire several years ago that destroyed another smaller mill located on the river bank.

The loss is covered by insurance and no plans have been announced on rebuilding of the mill.

