

# DROUGHT, WIND INCREASE FIRE DANGER

## Dust Storm Covers Central Part of Wisconsin

### COOLER WEATHER PREDICTED; NO RAIN FORECAST

#### Dust Clouds Hamper Motor Traffic in State; Force Plane Down

Milwaukee, May 10.—Clouds of dust, blown in from the Dakota prairies and intensified in the parched western section of Wisconsin, filled the air throughout the state today after a one-day heat wave.

A terrific dust storm was reported in the west central part of the state last night. Huge dust clouds swirled over La Crosse, Neillsville, Chippewa Falls, Wausau and Hudson. Motor traffic was hampered and two Northwest Airways planes were grounded at Hager City in Pierce county.

**Soots Into Homes**  
The dust clouds reached other sections of the state today and the fine particles seeped into homes and business places.

Scattered trace of rain early today in the northwest and south-west sections of the state brought little or no relief.

Much cooler weather prevailed today after the mercury soared to above 80 degrees yesterday. There was no prospect of rain in the forecast of the weather bureau which said fair tonight and Friday and continued cool Friday.

**Warmest Day**  
The warmest May day on records was reported in several cities yesterday. It was 96 at Racine, 94 at Sheboygan, 93 at Milwaukee, and 91 at Neenah.

One death was attributed to the heat: George W. Sargent, 62, a retired Ripon business man, died of a heart ailment aggravated by the heat. He collapsed while working around his home in 90-degree heat.

**MIDWEST HIT BY DROUGHT**  
(Copyright, 1934, by United Press)  
Kansas City, Mo., May 10.—The Midwest, its usually fertile acres dusty and brown, today was in the grip of the worst drought in a generation.

A United Press survey of agricultural conditions and crop prospects from the Great Lakes to the Gulf and west to the Rockies, revealed conditions of almost unparalleled devastation from the unrelenting drought and natural menaces of drought and parasites.

Fields of winter wheat, their yield already reduced by months of moisture deficiency, parch in heat ranging from 90 to 100 degrees. Corn crops, just being planted, likely will fall unless rain comes soon. Alfalfa, hit by the drought, is being attacked by aphids.

**50 Per Cent Normal**  
The wheat crop now appears to be little more than 50 per cent of normal, or under \$99,000,000 bushels, and unless there is rain soon it will be less.

Dust storms have added to the damage. For weeks high winds swept from the north and west and the earth, powder dry, was carried away, leaving roofs exposed and dying. So severe have been the dust storms and drought in Nebraska that the state relief director predicted the state's relief bill would be raised more than \$250,000 monthly.

St. Paul today was engulfed in one of the worst dust storms of the year. The airport last night reported visibility at a half mile. Dust blew in huge fog-like clouds from the Dakotas. It was predicted the storm will engulf half of Wisconsin.

**Dust Storms**  
 Fargo, N. D., also reported a dust storm today. Dust clouds between 1,000 and 1,500 feet high moved over the town.

How far general downpours over the large area would go to reviving crops is problematical. J. E. Jarrell, in charge of the agricultural development department of the Santa Fe railroad, commented reports and said:

"The country from the Great Lakes in a southeasterly direction to the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific ocean is in the throes of a drought which in severity has had few equals. East Texas is the only area which has sufficient moisture. Central Oklahoma is getting along pretty well. The rest of the country described is rapidly approaching the suffering stage. However, more weather and crop specialists with whom I have talked say crops generally can be held out without more rain until May 15. But unless rain, and lots of it, arrives before then a general crop failure is forecast."

The southwestern part of Kansas, the greatest wheat producing state, could be called the great American desert. A United Press correspondent reported:

**Wheat Fields Brown**  
"Wheat fields are brown and lifeless, a sure sign of small yields. There were no crops in this section last year due to drought, high winds and continuous dust storms. The same conditions still apply. The territory embracing thousands of acres will not produce enough wheat this year to seed any of the counties embraced with normal acreage."

In northwestern Missouri, one of

### Costigan Plan For Stock Bill Before Senate

Washington, May 10.—(AP)—The senate hoped to vote today on the Costigan amendment to the stock market control bill which would lodge administration of the act in the federal trade commission instead of a new commission created by the bill.

The ability of leaders to defeat proposals that all margin trading be eliminated indicated the Costigan amendment would be rejected. Senator Duncan U. Fletcher, Democrat, Florida, author of the senate bill, urged a vote against the change.

The house bill provides that the trade commission shall administer the act so that action in the senate will not be a final conclusion. Conference later to settle the difference in the two bills.

The only certainty that showed through the difference was that the securities act, now administered by the trade commission, would be administered by the same body that controls the stock exchanges.

As regards the securities act, pending amendments would liberalize the act to meet criticisms that it is stifling recovery because of the heavy penalties it imposes on possible unwitting violators.

Fletcher has offered amendments which would liberalize the act as far as the administration deems it safe but other amendments, going farther, are also up for consideration. An attempt doubtless will be made to substitute these for the Fletcher amendment.

Regard of what happens it is expected that both acts ultimately will be lodged in the same body.

Fletcher personally favors that the dispute over administration go to conference and predictions were that he would succeed in this when the vote is taken. Efforts to alter the bill in the first serious test, failed by a vote of 48 to 30.

### SHAWANO YOUTH PLACES IN FORENSIC MEET AT TOPEKA

Topeka, Kan., May 10.—Three Oklahoma high school teams and one team from Elgin, Ill., today entered the semi-final round of the national high school forensic tournament here.

The competitors remaining in the contest for the national championship were Elgin, Norman, Okla., and Classen and Central high schools of Oklahoma City.

Harvey Schaffner, Glassport, Pa., won the original oratory championship. Edward Nervig, Canton, S. D., was second; Walter Smith, Shawano, Wis., third; Phil Simon, Oklahoma City, Classen, Okla.; Robert Cline, Dayton, O., fifth, and Julia Pittsford, Granite City, Ill., sixth.

Other final results: Extempore speaking: Newton Margulies, Rapid City, S. D., first; Hickman Addison, Sioux City, Iowa, second; Gordon Dupes, Okemore, Wis., third; David Goldberg, Bakersfield, Calif., fourth; William Musser, Jr., Enid, Okla., fifth; Edward Schoelandt, Hutchinson, Kan., sixth.

**Dramatic declamation:** Donald Swanson, Webster City, Iowa, first; Frances Tiegler, Pittsburgh, Pa., second; Heart, second; Muriel Merritt, Wellington, N. J., third.

### Wife Ill, Husband Asks for Divorce, Refused by Judge

Milwaukee, May 10.—(AP)—A marriage annulment asked by Eugene Skubal on the grounds that his wife is a victim of tuberculosis, had been refused by Judge Sullivan in October. The condition was refused by Circuit Judge Daniel W. Sullivan late yesterday.

Judge Sullivan held that the defendant committed no fraud upon the plaintiff. In dismissing the case he remarked that the only reason Skubal brought the action was because his wife was not recuperating fast enough to suit him.

Mr. Skubal is a sister of William Graef whose murder in October 1927 has never been solved. Lillian Graef failed to return from a date which her sister had arranged for her with a man known only as "Jack." A month later her body was found under a viaduct. She had been beaten and strangled.

The most fertile spots in the state, there has been but 2.75 inches of rain while the normal precipitation is 7.26 inches.

J. D. Ledlie, Polk county, Iowa, farmer, who operates an 800-acre farm, pictured the situation from a farmer's point of view: "Our clover just sort of withered away. Fall wheat in the bottom lands is turning yellow and rapidly is drying up."

Governor Albert G. Schmedeman, of Wisconsin, sought to forestall statewide cooperation to forestall "what may become the most dangerous forest fire hazard in Wisconsin's history."

### SMOKE DAMAGE IN TWO STORES; CANARIES DIE

#### Birds Numbering 125 Suffocate in Cages and Nests

##### This Morning

Fire originating from the motor of an electric refrigerating plant in the basement of the Adams drug store at 304 Main street caused extensive damage early this morning there and in the adjoining clothing store of Ed. Razner. The loss included more than 125 singing canaries belonging to the drug company, which suffocated in their cages.

John A. Roska, one of the proprietors of the drug store, who occupied second floor quarters, was awakened shortly after 5 a. m. by dense smoke which filled the building. He called a policeman and after a hasty inspection firemen were summoned.

**Damage From Smoke**  
Fire, which ruined the motor of the refrigerating plant, spread along the ceiling and joists in the basement, which were charred, and the resulting smoke and fumes filled the interior of the building and seeped through the wall into the Razner store. While there was no fire in the clothing store, the stock of merchandise was damaged by smoke.

Cases were expelled from the soda fountain and blackened the fixtures in the drug store, while some merchandise in the drug store was damaged by smoke. The window in Roska's room was open and it is believed this saved him from being suffocated.

**Birds Die in Nests**  
The canaries which were suffocated were in cages in the drug store and on the second floor. The firm raises canaries and many baby birds, recently hatched, died in their nests. Mother birds were found dead on the nests, with wings outspread, protecting their young. One bird that was suffocated was a blue gray nightingale valued at \$75. A pair of rare birds, imported cinnamon brown rollers, and their three baby birds, were among others which suffocated. The loss of the birds alone was estimated at \$250. The cages were a pathetic sight this morning. Dead birds were in every cage and only about a dozen birds survived. These included tiny baby birds not yet feathered out. In one of the cages in the drug store one canary died with its head in the water cup. The drug store, in addition to selling birds locally, is the dealer for a large bird company and makes shipments from here.

The damage in the two stores, from smoke had not been estimated this morning but Mr. Razner reported that his stock of merchandise was heavily damaged. The building housing the drug store, which was damaged in the basement by the fire, is owned by Mrs. Dan Corlett.

**Fire in Soo Car**  
Stevens Point firemen put out half a dozen other fires in the last 24 hours. A midnight blaze broke out in a box car of the repair department in the Soo Line yards and firemen had to do considerable chopping to reach the blaze.

The car, on the ground, was used to house barrels of paint and also for office quarters. The fire spread from underneath the car, burning into the sills and walls. It is believed it originated from sparks from a locomotive.

**Gas Pump Explosion**  
A gasoline pump at the Delzell service station, 1221 Main street, was damaged at 7:45 o'clock Wednesday night by an explosion and fire. Arthur Spindler, the attendant in charge, had hung up the hose after servicing a car with gasoline, and when the electric switch was shut off a spark ignited fumes in the upper part of the pump. The explosion blew out the globe on top of the pump and the glass covering the dials. Firemen put out the blaze with chemicals.

**Other Local Fires**  
Sparks from a smoke stack on the Olsen sawmill near North First street ignited an outbuilding on the premises Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock. Sparks reported by the fire chief as also originating from the stack, caused two fires at the Point Service garage on North First street. The first, at 11:29 a. m. Wednesday, ignited rubbish outside, and the second, at 6:50 o'clock this morning set fire to the roof on the garage and boards on the roof. Firemen made a run at 4:49 o'clock Wednesday afternoon to the home of Mrs. Anna Sprague, 427 Dixon street, where the wind scattered embers from a bonfire.

Firemen were called this noon to the west end of Harding avenue where fire started anew in woods already burned over. A city crew was called out to relieve the firemen and finish the job, permitting the firemen to return to their stations.

**HEAD OF OGPU DIES**  
Moscow, May 10.—(AP)—Viacheslav Menzhinsky, head of the OGPU, or Soviet political police, died today.

### Emergency Fire Prevention Proclamation

Due to the extreme drought conditions existing at the present time, all fires of any kind not expressly necessary for cooking, heating, commercial or manufacturing purposes, are hereby prohibited in the City of Stevens Point until such time as the present emergency shall pass.

Persons using tobaccos are required to deposit all pipe ashes, cigarette and cigar butts and match sticks in fireproof containers or carry them until a place of safe deposit is reached.

PETER WALRAVEN,  
City Manager

### DENIES WRIT FOR \$60,000 Loss REDUCTION IN INSULL'S BOND

#### Former Utilities Czar's Attorney Fails in Plan to Gain His Release

Chicago, May 10.—(AP)—Judge Will M. Sparks of the United States circuit court of appeals today denied a writ of habeas corpus to reduce the \$200,000 bond demanded for release of Samuel Insull from the county jail.

Judge Sparks in denying the writ and ordering that the 74-year-old fallen utility monarch remain in the jail until his friends obtain the \$200,000 bail said:

"I do not want to make this court of appeals attractive for such petitions."

Insull, sitting in a wheel chair in the hospital ward at the jail, heard the news of his court defeat philosophically.

**Nothing to Say**  
"I haven't anything to say now," he said, puffing on a long black cigar and showing no trace of emotion.

"I guess I'll be here for a while," Judge Sparks, who consented to hear the habeas corpus petition today after Insull's attorney, Floyd E. Thompson, had gone on a "shopping tour" of the federal court chambers, said the aged prisoner was entitled to no action by the court of appeals until he had exhausted the possibilities of the lower courts.

Thompson argued that the one-time multimillionaire's friends could raise bond of only \$51,000—\$1,000 on the two federal indictments and \$50,000 to cover two state indictments charging embezzlement. Insull, confined to the hospital ward of the county jail, was not in court.

By agreement with United States Marshal H. C. Laubenhimer, Thompson and the prisoner's son, Samuel Insull, Jr., arranged to have him remain in the jail because of his weakened physical condition.

Thompson and young Insull hurried from the courtroom and discussed with family and business friends the matter of bond.

The defense lawyer refused to say whether he believed the \$200,000 bond could be obtained during the day or whether he contemplated further legal maneuverings.

"He is now up to Mr. Insull to determine what he will do," Thompson said. "He must determine whether he wants to keep up the fight or resign himself to confinement in jail."

Young Insull hurried to the jail to inform his father of Judge Sparks' decision and Thompson said he would have "no statement of any kind" until after the conference of father and son.

### Seek Missing Records In Workhouse Probe

Milwaukee, May 10.—(AP)—A search was underway at the house of correction today for missing records which are believed to contain the names of inmates permitted to leave the work house under guard.

Meanwhile, the county civil service commission which is trying 15 workhouse employees on charges of graft and other irregularities, adjourned its hearing until tomorrow.

The missing records are expected to show whether inmates were said to be carousing at liquor parties in a downtown hotel.

The commission yesterday spent the day at the institution interviewing inmates and visiting scenes described in earlier testimony. Several prisoners formerly prominent in public life were encountered. Alfred Kay, former president of the Milwaukee commercial bank, was seen in the chair factory painting stripes on chairs.

### \$60,000 Loss Is Caused by Rapids Fire

Damage estimated at \$60,000 was caused by a fire at Wisconsin Rapids Wednesday night which started in the S. & S. Clothing company's plant and swept over two other buildings and into the Green Bay & Western railroad yards.

Equipment and 1,000 suits burned in the clothing plant, which was operated by William Sonnenschein and Samuel Seigel, were valued at \$35,000. The building, owned by Fred Roenius, was valued at \$18,000.

The fire started outside of the clothing plant at about 9:45 o'clock and was discovered by William Hallock, night watchman at the plant. Fanned by a brisk west wind, it spread to the W. G. Smith Coal and Wood company and to a three-story frame building owned by William Martin. Damage to the Martin building was estimated at \$3,000 and to the fuel company's building, \$2,000.

Four hundred railroad ties and two old box cars belonging to the Green Bay & Western railroad were destroyed at a loss of \$700. The fire was brought under control shortly before midnight but was still burning today. Port Edwards and Nicoosa fire departments joined forces with the Wisconsin Rapids department in battling the flames.

The clothing plant employed 140 persons who, running at full capacity and had been employing about 100 persons prior to the fire.

### SINGLER ADMITS CARRYING GUN IN CAR DURING STRIKE

La Crosse, Wis., May 10.—(AP)—An admission that he habitually carried a pistol in his automobile was given by Walter M. Singler, Milk Pool and farm strike leader, in his \$100,000 libel suit which is in progress here today.

Singler is suing Joseph D. Beck, commissioner of agriculture, and the Milwaukee Journal company, charging that he was libeled by Beck's inference that he was a racketeer and Chicago gangster in a speech over the company's radio station, WTMM, during the May, 1933, milk strike.

"I knew they were after me," Singler testified, vaguely identifying his pursuers as sleuths working in two-hour shifts.

He said he would have used the weapon to defend himself and admitted publicly declaring that if an attempt were made to seize him in the dark, his gun would "go off."

"Officers had plenty of time to arrest me in the daytime," he explained.

The milk strike leader denied ever being present at a meeting at which four Chicago men were reported to have offered their services as bombers to destroy the Eorden plant at Neke, La Crosse.

He assured the court that if such an offer had been made in his presence, the men would have been surrendered to authorities.

A picket line pass which Singler admitted writing for Arthur Thompson, Shawano county poor farm superintendent, during the February, 1933, milk strike was introduced as an exhibit by Herbert H. Thomas, attorney for Beck. Thomas indicated he would use it to show that Singler assumed an illegal authority over public highways in that strike.

### WEATHER FORECAST

Generally fair tonight and Friday; much cooler tonight; continued cool Friday.

### STATE LEGION COMMANDER IS RALLY SPEAKER

#### John J. Burkhard of Monroe Forcefully Defends Veterans' Program

In a fighting speech which upheld the high purposes of the American Legion's program of veterans' legislation, John J. Burkhard of Monroe, Legion commander for the department of Wisconsin, furnished the climax to a rally of Portage county ex-service men at the Stevens Point armory Wednesday evening.

Commander Burkhard—now in his forty-second year and postmaster at Monroe since April 1, 1925, was critically injured while in military service in France and, although enjoying normal health, will be a cripple the rest of his life. He is a forceful speaker with a most unusual faculty of impressing his hearers with his deep sincerity.

**Not "Treasury Raiders"**  
World war veterans are not "treasury raiders," Commander Burkhard vehemently declared. Criticism of the Legion for its support of the independent offices supply bill, recently enacted by congress over President Roosevelt's veto, is largely the result of misunderstanding, he added. The benefits of this bill are not, as the public has been led to believe, principally to World war veterans. Of the total amount appropriated by the bill, less than 16 per cent will go to World war veterans. A larger share will go to Spanish-American war veterans and a still larger share to some 802,000 postoffice workers and others on the payroll of the federal government. Less than 10 per cent of the members of the American Legion are receiving federal compensation. Commander Burkhard explained in emphasizing the point that the Legion has never pursued a selfish course, but has striven to obtain justice for veterans of all our wars.

The Legion, in its present program of legislation, is seeking to protect the disabled veterans, the dependent children of veterans and the widows of veterans. This program, he pointed out, conforms to the purposes for which the American Legion was founded at the close of the World war.

**Crisis on Education**  
Commander Burkhard, in conclusion, touched briefly upon what he termed the crisis in education, precipitated by the slashing of budgets for school operation and maintenance. He told of the many schools that have been closed, whose children have been curtailed, of the children that are being denied the privileges of proper education and of the sharp reduction in teachers' salaries. He called upon the Legion to help correct these conditions, but coupled it with a warning that the teachers in our schools must be real Americans and teach Americanism and good citizenship. "We want no communists among our school teachers," he declared with emphasis.

Commander Burkhard extended the greetings of the department of Wisconsin, with its more than 25,000 members, to the assembled Legionnaires. After he had finished his address he was presented with a wine set by Commander Ferdinand A. Hirzy on behalf of the Stevens Point post.

Mr. Burkhard was accompanied here by William Seimling of Milwaukee, state Legion finance officer, who was introduced at the rally.

**Hirzy Presides**  
Commander Hirzy was the presiding officer at the rally, which was opened and closed with the impressive Legion ritualistic ceremonies. At the opening the assembled veterans stood in silence in darkness for 20 seconds, while "taps" were sounded in tribute to the deceased comrades.

George C. Alex, chairman of the educational committee of the local post, reported on the activities this committee is sponsoring, and John A. Meleski told of programs the post is producing over the local radio station.

L. M. Adams of Almond, vice-district commander, reported on the membership of all posts in the district except Portage county. The report for Portage county was presented by Harry B. Pomeroy of Amherst and showed that this county now has a total Legion enrollment 138 per cent of that in 1933.

A rising vote of thanks was extended the Wisconsin Rapids drum corps, which led a parade of Legionnaires in the business district prior to the meeting at the armory. After the rally was closed an informal program of entertainment was carried out and a lunch was served.

### Fires Sweep Over Ranches, Peril Homes

Large crews of men battled marsh fires in the Bancroft section Wednesday night and today, on a mile-wide front, attempting to check the further spread of the flames and save farm property in the neighborhood.

The fires originated from embers carried by the wind during a fire Wednesday noon which destroyed the Harry Richtmyre home three and one-half miles west of Bancroft. The property is owned by the Montana Investment company of Minneapolis and insurance of \$600 was carried on the dwelling, which was valued at \$1,500. The fire originated from the chimney while Mrs. Richtmyre was baking bread in the kitchen, ignited the roof and destroyed the two-story dwelling.

When the marsh was ignited the blaze quickly spread out of control and 50 to 100 men worked all night. The fire swept over 40 acres on the Ben McIntee ranch, where the buildings were saved by plowing, which turned the blaze back. The blaze also swept over 40 acres on the Joe Dubke ranch and ignited 40 acres on the Squire Ostrander ranch, where the tenants, the Mike Smith family, moved out at 1 o'clock this morning. The Smiths moved to the William Ellis home at Bancroft.

A tractor and grader were procured. At Almond when the flames continued to spread and ditch digging was resorted to in efforts to get the blaze under control. Along the North Western railroad track, in the path of the flames, ties, fence posts and telegraph poles burned over a distance of half a mile.

The fire fighting continued today, with crews relieving other men who had worked all night.

### REPORT CITES NEED FOR COMMODITY EXCHANGE MEASURE

Washington, May 10.—(AP)—Action this session on the commodity exchange regulation bill is necessary to prevent speculators from transferring their activities from stock markets to the commodity markets, the house agricultural committee warned in a report today.

The report recommending passage of the administration bill said that in view of approaching enactment of the Fletcher-Rayburn stock market control bill "it became doubly important to pass this bill, otherwise the professional speculator may transfer his activities from the securities markets to the commodity markets with possibly disastrous results to producers of commodities."

"It is even conceivable," warned the committee, "that certain interests not in sympathy with the agricultural program will, through short selling and undercover dealing in the speculative market, endeavor to defeat and destroy it."

The bill, favorably reported last week, amends the grain futures act, to provide control by a federal commission over commodity future exchange and by regulating short selling and speculation and by licensing commodity merchants.

**BANS SMOKING IN NATIONAL FORESTS**  
Milwaukee, May 10.—(AP)—An order prohibiting camp fires and smoking in national forests, similar to an order issued by Governor A. G. Schmedeman regarding state forests, was issued today by Earl W. Tinker, federal regional forester.

Tinker said that smoking would be banned entirely, and that camp fires may be built in certain protected areas only after a permit is obtained from the local forest ranger.

Although light rains in the forest fire area were of little aid, it was believed that most fire in the state were under control today.

Hundreds of farmers, citizens and high school students joined forces late yesterday to battle a fire in Baxter's Hollow, near Baraboo. The flames for a time threatened to consume everything in their path.

After a change of wind and an all-night fight by volunteers it was checked and today was believed under control.

A similar fire in Grant county broke out at about the same time. The entire population of the towns of Livingston, Platteville and Monfort turned out and concentrated their forces on a menacing fire that threatened to wipe out the village of Livingston. The fire was brought under control after two residences were destroyed and several others had caught fire.

### SAND STORMS SWEEP COUNTY, DARKEN SKIES

#### Alarming Conditions in City and County Result from Lack of Rain

Fire hazards increased alarmingly in Portage county in the past 24 hours as high winds and high temperatures combined to form unusual weather conditions and central Wisconsin failed to get a drop of rain.

With many fire runs made in the area and a menacing fire sweeping over marsh land near Bancroft, the situation was regarded as extremely grave, and public warnings were being issued against the starting of fires of any kind out of doors. In Stevens Point City Manager Peter Walraven issued an emergency fire prevention proclamation, which appears elsewhere in today's Journal.

**Dust Storms Darken Skies**  
Dust and sand storms swept over central Wisconsin Wednesday and today, darkening the sky at times.

**STOCKS OF GOODS ARE DUST COATED**  
Housewives are not the only persons having their troubles because of the sand storms, which increased in intensity today. Stevens Point storekeepers report that the dust is being swept into their places of business, coating shelves and merchandise on display. In a number of food stores the proprietors removed food from display counters, finding it impossible to keep them clean there.

and driving clouds of sand and dirt over the country. The dirt was blown into homes, leaving a coating on everything, and housewives who had completed their spring housecleaning found that it will be necessary to do the job all over again.

The high winds, high temperature and dry conditions caused an alarming fire hazard. The temperature climbed to a maximum of 88 degrees Wednesday afternoon as hot winds swept out of the southwest. The mercury dropped last night to a minimum of 56.

**This section has had only one-tenth of an inch of rain in the past month and underbrush, slashings and timber areas in Portage county are in constant danger of becoming ignited. The last rain of any consequence was one-tenth of an inch on April 18. Before that time was precipitation of .18 of an inch in a snow storm on April 10, a month ago today. The precipitation on those dates did little more than wet down the surface, and the moisture has entirely disappeared in recent weeks. Last year in May rain fell on 17 days and the total precipitation was 6.70 inches. The wet May weather was followed by a summer of drought and heat.**

**Drifts Like Snow**  
Such quantities of sand were carried by the gale on Wednesday that roadside ditches became filled as the sand drifted in like snow. Strong winds came up again Wednesday night and this morning the sun was obscured by the dust and sand in the air. At times it appeared as though the sky had clouded over, but such was not the case, the illusion being caused by the clouds of dust and dirt that had collected and were being whirled about in the sky.

Old time residents reported today that the action had never before experienced such extreme weather conditions in May. While dust storms have swept over western states in recent weeks, and quantities of dust were carried here during the last April snow storm, Portage county, up to this week, escaped the sand storm conditions now prevailing.

Appeal is being made to motorists that they refrain from throwing cigarette and cigar ends from cars in country districts. It is pointed out that a single spark can easily start a fire that will destroy farm property and everything out of doors.

**Fires at Rapids, Mosinee**  
Neighborhood communities are reporting similar fire hazards. Fire at Wisconsin Rapids Wednesday night destroyed three buildings at a loss of \$9,000. Fires at Mosinee Wednesday caused an alarming condition and the fire department there was in communication with the Stevens Point fire department, reporting that help from outside might be needed. It was reported that several homes were on fire. No