



—Globe and Mail

Firemen battle unsuccessfully to save house at 119 Dowling Ave. that was swept by fire last night, leaving 13 people homeless. The building, which had been divided into flats, was gutted. No one was injured in the blaze.

Parkdale apartment house gutted; mystery baby rescued from blaze

Police last night puzzled over the identity of a baby rescued from a burning house as they fed her and washed her amid the stark facilities of a police station.

The baby girl, believed to be about a year old, was passed to a neighbor by a resident of the house who collapsed as he handed over the child.

The house was one of the oldest in the area, a rambling rooming house near King Street West and Dowling Avenue.

"I just can't stand to see a baby that dirty," Policewoman Evelyn Coleman said as she sluiced down the squalling infant.

Police said last night they were unable to locate the mother of three of the children rescued from the burning house.

One of them, William Mancuso, 4, was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital for treatment. Two other persons were injured in the fire: Harvey Martel, 35, and Harry Frost, 42, both were treated for smoke inhalation.

Police said they did not know the whereabouts of Doris Mancuso, mother of three children who lived on the first floor of the old brick rooming house.

Mrs. John Legay, a third-floor tenant, said she and her husband were watching television in the apartment they had occupied for six years when they heard screaming from the floor below.

"We assumed at first someone was fighting on the first floor," she said.

Then they smelled smoke and tried to descend the stairs with their daughter Connie, 4, but were turned back by smoke and flames. They took refuge on a porch.

"I was ready to jump with Connie in my arms when the firemen put up a ladder," Mrs. Legay said.

The Legays had searched in vain for their wirehaired fox terrier, Smokey. They discovered that firemen had found him.

Margaret Littlechild, 20, who lives next door at 117 Dowling Ave., said a man left the burning building shouting: "Take the baby."

Mrs. Littlechild took the baby from the man's arms, and he collapsed on the front porch of the burning building. She and her husband, Fred,

kept the child until the fire was under control, then passed her to police. They did not know the name of the parents.

A policeman took the child and drove to the police sta-

tion while a Globe and Mail reporter carried the child on his lap.

The baby appeared very pale, and at the police station refused milk, orange juice, or any other food. She was turned

over to the Metro Children's Aid Society for care until the parents could be located.

The occupants on the second floor of the building, Ernst Benthack and Paul Brock, had been celebrating Mr. Benthack's birthday. Both are West German immigrants.

They said they lost everything in the fire but a \$1,000 camera. All their money and clothes were destroyed. They escaped by climbing out through a window.

The Legays lost everything, including Mrs. Legay's new fur coat.

Mr. Martel was a visitor with the Frosts. The Mancuso children apparently had been left with the Frosts for the evening.

Firemen said a cigaret butt dropped into a garbage container may have set off the fire. Loss was estimated at \$17,000.



—Globe and Mail

Policewoman Geraldine Rogers takes care of unidentified baby at Mavety Street station after the girl was rescued from blazing house by man who collapsed.