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OIL DISASTER AT AVONMOUTH

Britain's biggest peace-time oil fire sweeps the 850-acre oil-tank farm at Royal Edward Dock, Avonmouth. With hoses and sprinklers playing on nearby undamaged tanks to prevent them exploding in the enormous heat, firemen from every county in the south-west - including some from London - go into action with foam pumps to confine the terrifying flames to one area. With massed pumps they're driving the fire slowly back. Already a quarter-million gallons of foam have been used. A crack naval foam squad from Portsmouth and soldiers from Taunton are in it, too. There's no way to put out the fierce blaze. It's got to burn itself out and with a fresh wind playing tricks, each moment bristles with deadly peril for every man in action.

Exhausted, staggering firefighters - these are sailors - snatch short rest periods whilst others take their place in the fighting-line.

Glimbing over a tangled maze of hoses, firemen check the state of the battle. The disaster started when a so-far-unexplained explosion set fire to a full tank. Within moments others nearby were exploding. In the inferno two men are missing and thirty-five others injured by exploding tanks, as many million gallons of petrol go up into a frightening column of fire and smoke visible for a hundred miles around.