

2 FIREMEN DIE IN RESCUE BID FOR FAMILY

Prince Georges Men
Drown In Flooded
Sligo Creek

By DAVID FRIEDMAN
[Sun Staff Correspondent]

Takoma Park, Md., Aug. 10—Two Prince Georges county volunteer firemen drowned early today as they tried to rescue a Virginia couple and their 3-year-old son, who were in danger of being swept from a bridge into a swollen stream.

The couple, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Knowles, of Woodbridge, Va., who were holding on to the rails of a New Hampshire avenue bridge while waist high in water, were rescued unharmed by other firemen.

Plunged Off Edge

They had escaped from their station wagon seconds before it plunged off the edge of the road into Sligo Creek.

The drownings were the most serious consequence of a series of thunderstorms which swept through Maryland late yesterday and early today causing accidents and flood damage in scattered parts of the state. The brunt of the storm apparently was felt in the northern part of Prince Georges county and the adjoining areas of Montgomery and Anne Arundel counties.

The Weather Bureau at Friendship Airport said that it had recorded 2.18 inches of rainfall by the time the rain stopped at 7:30 A.M. However, State Police said that less than an inch of rain fell in the Prince Georges county area.

The dead firemen, both members of the Chillum-Adelphi Volunteer Fire Department, were Robert Harmon, 23, who died at Washington Sanitarium and hospital here at 1:40 A.M.; and Robert Hobstetter, 31, of 1208 Madrox lane, Bowie, who was pronounced dead at the hospital at 3 A.M.

Swept Into Creek

Witnesses said the two firemen, who had ropes tied around their waists, were swept off their feet and were sucked into the creek. Mr. Harmon was recovered almost immediately and died at the hospital. But, Mr. Nobstetter's body was not found until a half hour later a block and a half south of the bridge.

Colin Turner, 18, of Takoma Park, who had tried to help the couple, was also swept into the creek with the firemen, but he grabbed a log and managed to climb back to safety.

Mr. Knowles, who was interviewed late this morning while he was watching his car being hauled up from where flood waters had wedged it between a telephone pole and a wall, said the incident happened shortly before midnight.

He said he was eastbound on Sligo Creek parkway toward
(Continued, Page C 6, Col. 6)