County Engineer Held For Arson; Confesses To Firing School Here

Guard Unit Leaves For Camp Sunday

Company H, Hillsboro's National Guard unit, will leave here next Sunday, July 11, for two weeks of training at Camp Perry, joining with other elements of the 147th Infantry of the 37th Infantry Division for the encampment.

Two men, Sergeant 1st James M. Hart and Pvt. Charles E. Barren, were scheduled to leave Thursday as an advance detail of the local unit.

Three officers and approximately 25 enlisted men are planning to go.

Caniff Set To Receive Honor

Ohioana Library Group To Give Career Award

Milton Caniff, one of Hillsboro's famous sons, is to receive another signal honor, this time from the Martha Kinsey Ohioana Library Association.

Caniff, native strip artist who was born here, will receive Ohioana Career Award from the library group at its annual meeting in Columbus this fall.

Part of the award came to Milton Vialet Morgan, county chairman, on Monday.

Resignation Requested By Commission

Philip Partridge, county engineer, confessed to authorities about midnight Tuesday that he had set the fire at the Lincola elementary school here Monday. Prosecutor Richard L. Davis prevailed.

Partridge, following the confession and subsequent questioning, was given a preliminary hearing before Justice of the Peace David Boothby about 1:45 A.M. Wednesday and held for grand jury action on a charge of arson. Bond was set at $1,000. A property bond was provided and Partridge was released.

In a statement at noon Thursday, county commissioners said that Partridge was asked to resign but up to that time, he had not done so. Partridge was hired by the county Engineer's office.

Charles W. Summers, Jr., chairman of the board of commissioners, said that if the engineer did not voluntarily resign, formal action would be initiated against him.

Meanwhile, his bond as a county official has been lifted by a bonding firm at commission's request. Summers officially stated that "as far as we are concerned, we will not okay any bills from the county engineer's office until he is removed." Any agreements made by Partridge from now on will not be recognized, Summers added.

The engineer is bonded as a county official for $1,000.

Partridge conferred with the commissioners later Wednesday in the presence of members of the police department.

The meeting lasted about two hours, and the two men talked over the matter of the school fire. Partridge reportedly told commissioners that he felt he had been wrong as county engineer.

Partridge is a reserve major in the Army and chief of the police department.

The meeting of city council and during the session, he drew Police Chief Walter Reiffert aside and told him that he had started the fire at the school. The chief, stunned by the confession, called the county prosecutor at his home.

The GROUPE were taken to the office of the county prosecutor where they met with the district attorney and conference, admitting the act.

Dats said Partridge was apprised of the consequences of the confession.