

Second East Kildonan Dike

Construction of a new East Kildonan dike, to hold back waters that burst through the original barricade Wednesday night, was begun at sunrise, Thursday.

It is being built on a south-west-erly angle from Leighton to Chelsea avenues, a distance of 11 blocks — two more than the first dike.

The line of high ground, to which the water has not yet penetrated from the 50-foot-gap in the broken barricade, is about one-

third of a mile from the river at Leighton avenue. At the south end of the new barricade, the dike-wall is only yards from the river.

Capt. L. E. Geoffrey, Fort Garry horse, estimated the dike may eventually be extended from Chelsea avenue to link up with a small barrier protecting Bredia drive, 11 blocks south.

At 11 a.m. Thursday there were about 80 men, women, boys and girls helping a handful of army men begin the new dike.

Collapse of the original dike at 8.30 p.m. Wednesday plunged an area of 10 city blocks and 300 homes into four feet of water.

Most of the estimated 1,500 residents of the now flooded area had previously evacuated their homes.

An army of 500 civilian volunteers — men, women and children — left the line in orderly retreat at first signs of the break. Naval rescue squads brought out those who stayed behind.

It was those few — the handful of grimly determined men who stayed behind — who wrote the real story behind the East Kildonan dike break.

In a futile effort to plug the 50-foot gap they formed a human chain, lay on their stomachs on top of the dike, and pitched some 500 sandbags into the breach.

They failed.

Minutes later they were forced to abandon their posts and scramble to safety.

Within a half hour after the dike collapsed, an area flanked by Helmsdale and Leighton avenues was almost a foot under water. An hour later the water had risen from three to six feet.

Last-minute evacuations were made by one of a fleet of four 'ducks' — despatched to the area within 15 minutes after news of the dike's collapse had reached central flood headquarters.

In charge of 'Operation Evacuee' for H.M.C.S. Chippawa was Cmdr. 'Jumbo' Webber, RCN. Lt.-Cmdr. 'Jug' Bird, RCN, commanded 'Peter One' — the amphibious naval 'duck

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