

Man's Life for Cat Disturbs Coroner

FIREMAN COLIN HILL, aged 39, married, of Vincent Road, Sheffield, who fell to his death from a tree while rescuing a cat, was described by Mr. H. J. Reynolds, Chief Fire Officer, at the inquest yesterday, as "a man of great courage, with a high sense of duty."

Recording a verdict of "Accidental death," the coroner, Mr. A. P. Lockwood, said that the question of how far a man could go with such an object should be carefully examined "in the light of this fatality."

We as a nation are supposed to be animal lovers, but only a most extremist view could contemplate with equanimity that the man could lose his life in this way," he added.

Own Discretion

Leading Fireman Arnold, of Norton sub-station of , Sheffield Fire Brigade, in charge of the party of four, including himself and Hill, which went to Albert Road in response to a phone call, said that Hill was under no obligation to go beyond the limits of the 35ft. ladder, but would use a has own discretion.

From where Arnold had been standing he could not assess the risks Hill was taking. To reach the cat Hill had had to climb four or five feet from the top of the ladder.

When he regained the top of the ladder with the cat, Hill had fallen backwards, appearing, to strike his head on a thick bough 15ft from the ground.

Saw No Danger

Arnold said that it he had thought there was, any danger he would have stopped the operation or gone up the tree himself. They had been using the longest ladder at the station. A 50ft. ladder would have been impossible to use in this case.

Sympathy with the widow and family was expressed on behalf of the City Council and the Fire Brigade.