

Boy's Calmness Saves Three in Blaze

Because 14-year-old Barry Higginbottom kept his head when fire swept through a Sheffield house today, three people escaped, almost unhurt.

Barry, his sister, Mrs Ruth Woodward aged 26, and her daughter, Loraine, aged five, were all asleep at their home in Newent Lane, Crookes, when neighbours passing saw smoke and flames in the downstairs rooms.

Driven Back

Awakened by their knocking, Barry tried to get downstairs, but was driven back by smoke and flames. He went into the front bedroom roused his sister and Loraine and guided them through the smoke to the back bedroom.

Then he climbed through the window and down the fall-pipe to the backyard. Mrs. Woodward put Loraine on the window sill and climbed onto it herself.

Thrown on to Rug

Meanwhile one of the neighbours, Mr. Bert Priestley had rushed into the backyard to try to get in the house.

His wife, Constance, followed carrying with her the kitchen rug, which she, Barry and Mr. Priestley held out. Mrs. Woodward threw Loraine on to this and then jumped from the window herself.

Mr Woodward sustained an arm injury and burns to the hands and face, and Loraine had a head injury. Both were taken to the Royal Hospital. Barry was unhurt.

Pet Dies

The family's pet dog perished in the flames which destroyed all the contents of the downstairs rooms.

Divisional Officer C. Eyre, of Sheffield Fire Brigade, who was in charge of the unit which extinguished the flames, told "The Star" that but for Barry's coolness the three might have been seriously injured.

Mrs. Woodward's husband Douglas left the house for work about half-an-hour before the fire was discovered, and his father-in-law, Mr. J. Higginbotham, who also lives in the house, was at work at the time.