

Blaze under the Arches...

Thirty-Six firemen and officers fought for more than an hour to control a fire raging - underneath the arches at Canal Wharf, Sheffield, last night.

A communications centre using field-type radio equipment was set up to help the fire-fighting team.

The fire involved slab and granulated cork, located 120 feet inside a long, narrow arch stretching to Furnival Road: and was burning for a distance of about 190 feet through stacked cork.

Fire officers manning one end of the radio equipment outside the arches were given progress reports from firemen wearing breathing apparatus and tackling the fire inside.

Explosion

Soon after the fire turnout, Station Officer Booth and two of his crew went inside the smoke-filled arch with breathing apparatus. Minutes later an explosion and a series of cracks were heard outside.

The inner section of the roof had collapsed inside, falling over the burning cork, but missing the three men who were pressed against the wall.

Two other firemen with breathing apparatus were sent in as a rescue party to bring out their colleagues, but the three were unhurt.

While this was being done, a control point was set up for all the breathing apparatus men to check in and out of while they were using the tunnel. At one stage 14 firemen were equipped with breathing apparatus.



Donning breathing apparatus, firemen line up to tackle the blaze.
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Said a senior fire officer today: "The collapse of part of the roofing material on to the fire meant that a large amount of debris had to be moved before water could be directed on the fire."

Just inside the entrance to the arch firemen had to climb the down a metal ladder to the floor about eight feet below the entrance level.

On this and a long way inside was stacked the burning cork.

Throughout the operation, intense heat funnelled out of the entrance from the lower level

and at one stage the ladder became almost red-hot. The fire was. practically out after about an hour and a half but firemen remained at the premises for about four hours.

Efforts were being made later today to trace the owner of the cork. The arch is rented from British Railways.

Driver Puts out Van Fire

After a Dronfield man noticed a fire under the bonnet of his van last night, he drove the vehicle out of the carport, smothered the blaze and then removed the battery.

When Dronfield and Chesterfield firemen arrived on the scene, Mr. K. L. Battersby, of Gosforth Crescent, had got the fire under control.