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Blaze Halts Steelworks

Morning Telegraph Reporter

More than 30 firemen fought for several hours yesterday to put out a blaze in the yard of a Sheffield steelworks.

Early estimates of the damage caused by the fire - Which was still smouldering late last night - suggested that more than £60,000 worth of stock may have been destroyed, in addition to losses caused by water damage and hold-ups in production

The fire started in the yard of ferro-alloy steel manufacturers R G Holland and Company, where a considerable quantity of titanium metal turnings was stored.

A senior fire service officer said last night it might have been caused by sparks from a workman's oxy-acetylene burner. The firm's managing director, Mr Brian Wright, said an inquiry would be held today into how the fire started.

The fire brigade was called to the works, in Sussex Street, at 4 pm and police sealed off all the roads surrounding the site, including Effingham Road, which was; closed to buses for a time during the rush hour.

'Fierce'

Flames leapt 60 feet into the air and quickly spread to the neighbouring premises of Swift Levick and Sons.

The firm's joint managing director, Mr Lewis Bradley, said the fire had done at least £10,000 worth of damage in the steel warehouse, and it would halt steel production for the rest of the week.

Mr Wright said about £50,000 worth of stock was involved. In addition to the fire damage, water running, from the hoses to Swift Levick's warehouse may have damaged large stocks of non-stainless steels.

Five appliances were used to bring the fire under control, and they had to draw water from the nearby canal.

The fire brigade spokesman said: "These titanium turnings burn fiercely once they are ignited, and we had to be careful how we used water because of the possibility of explosion."