

Whoops! A Fire Station Opening to Remember

By David France

The official opening of Sheffield's new £103,000 Ringinglow fire station yesterday left firemen with red faces after a series of mishaps.

And right from the start the event got off on the wrong foot when Ald., Albert Richardson, chairman of the Fire Brigade Committee, departed from an arranged timetable and upset the programme.

Then:

- A fireman was trapped, dangling 50 feet above the ground.
- A 71 - year old onlooker was drenched to the skin.
- A fireman burned his hand.

It was intended that the Lord Mayor, Ald., Mrs Martha Strafford, should plant a tree on the lawns in front of the attractive stone - built station after speeches and an unveiling ceremony in the main hail, but bemused fire officers made rapid changes when Ald., Richardson invited her, instead, to plant the tree first.

Impressed

After the opening the crowds of onlookers - including children from neighbouring schools - stood impressed as the firemen went to work on a mock rescue from the station tower.

Then came mishap No 1

Fireman Philip Mitchell launched himself into mid-air on the end of a rope; 50 feet up - only to find the ropes tangled, jamming the winch. He stayed there dangling in the wind until another appliance was brought in to get him down.

Bath



"Do you need a towel?" Mr Arthur Kendall is asked after being drenched by three water cannons.

This was followed by mishap No 2:

"Clear the way" called a fireman using a loud - hailer, " we are going to use water."

And so the crowd - now; swelled to about 200 - drifted across to another corner of the square., Whoosh went three water canons — only to drench 71 year old Mr Arthur Kendall of Laverdene Road, Totley, who hadn't been quite so smart in stepping off.



Sub Officer Geoffrey Waters plunges a flaming torch into a petrol-soaked wreck — and burns his hand.

Mishap No 3 was no joke for Sub Officer Geoffrey Waters, who was burned on the hand when a petrol soaked car wreck exploded in flames as he threw in a flaming torch.