

PT40

Harrow Observer

mc

Price 18p

Friday, May 20, 1983

ternity
uality for
in Douai

he Stones fans at the Douai stadium are (extreme right) the Mayor of Douai, M. Jacques Vernier, and the Mayor of Harrow, Cllr Bobbie Feakins. See page three.



Mystery blaze soon followed by a thunderbolt

Inferno street



● Robert Tosler, who had a narrow escape

TWO houses in the same road were badly damaged in separate fires — one after it was struck by a thunderbolt.

The lightning struck a bungalow in South Hill Avenue, South Harrow, during Monday's freak rain storm. It hit the building with such ferocity that it knocked a hole in the wall and started a fierce blaze in the roof.

Ten-year-old Robert Tosler was crossing a railway bridge when the bolt flashed past him and crashed into the bungalow a few yards away. His mother Mrs Anne Tosler, who lives opposite the bungalow, said: "I saw the most tremendous bolt of lightning strike the house and I saw something fall.

"I phoned the fire service and ran across the road to see if there was anyone in. What

By Lydia Roberts and Terry Payne

surprised me was the short time it took for so much damage to be caused."

Firemen used a es to smash their way into the bungalow and donned breathing apparatus to fight the blaze. The occupiers of the house, Vi and Jack Shersby, are both in their seventies. They were shopping when the fires started. "If I had been there the shock would probably have killed me," said Mr Shersby.

Three days earlier, on Friday, another house in South Hill Avenue was virtually destroyed by fire.

Firemen battled for more than an hour to extinguish the flames. Mrs Anne Carter, of Northolt Road, told how an elderly woman ran screaming from a neighbouring house.

Crying

"She thought the flames would spread. She was terribly distressed and just stood there, panicking and crying. No-one soothed her and the firemen were busy containing the fire," she said.

Within minutes, firemen from Harrow, Wembley and Northolt stations reached the fire. Some used breathing apparatus.

One firemen said: "It was a hell of a fire. The flames were quite high. Commuters from the nearby trains rushed out to see it."

The house was empty when fire started. Firemen are uncertain how it was started, but police say there are no suspicious circumstances.



● Fireman tackle Friday's blaze in South Hill Avenue, South Harrow. Picture: Peter Wilson

INCIDENT on 16th MAY.

MRS TOSLER

(interviewed by MC 22/5/83)

Looked out of her front room window because she was worried about her 10-yr-old son Robert being caught in the sudden downpour of rain on his way home from school.

As she sighted him on the nearby railway bridge she noticed a BLUE-GREY, SPHERICAL object fly past him at great speed. It travelled horizontally, colliding with a bungalow directly opposite her house. Upon striking the bung. it sent ~~the~~ MULTI-COLOURED flashes ("blue, green, red ... oh, ~~the~~ lots of colours") across the road.

MR TOSLER

(22/5/83)

First heard of ball lightning in a recent TV program about Nikola Tesla. Remarked on similarity of names. Does not know the origin of his own name but says "There is only one Tosler family in England".

ROBERT TOSLER

(not available 22/5/83, interviewed 28/6/83)

Object was BEACH-BALL SIZE, slightly ELLIPSOIDAL ("rugby-ball shape"), too bright to determine colour. Travelled at double-decker bus height. Saw no coloured flashes.