

80 firemen beat Pendennis Castle dockside blaze

ON THE EVENING of May 27 a fire broke out in *Pendennis Castle* at Southampton and caused damage to some first-class cabins. Fourteen cabins were gutted and were out of action for the next voyage scheduled to start on June 7. The fire broke out in an area of the ship in which conversion work was taking place but, at the time of writing, the exact cause had not been established.

The fire was successfully contained by the company's fire organisation, aided by Southampton and Hampshire Fire Brigades. About 80 firemen tackled the blaze from the shore and a tug was alongside to cool the ship's plates, which were glowing with heat. A great deal of water settled in the bilges, causing the ship to list towards the quayside. The fire-fighters on board could be kept for only about 10 minutes at a time before being relieved, because of the intense heat.

All damage caused to passenger accommodation by smoke and water has been successfully and quickly repaired. All concerned have worked like beavers to get the ship ready and they have our greatest admiration for a job well done.



Fire in Pendennis Castle turns passenger cabins into an inferno. The stark effects of flames and smoke can be seen in the picture above, as senior fire officers survey the damage while the last of the fire is dealt with

Below: The scene on the dockside as the fire still sent billows of smoke through the ship. Fire-fighters with breathing apparatus wait their turn to tackle the blaze. They worked ten-minute reliefs because of the heat and smoke

[Pictures: Southern Echo, Southampton]

RNLI NOTES

The RNLI life-boat station at Teesmouth and the inshore rescue station at Hartlepool are to be associated to form the Tees Bay stations.

Coxswain John King of Bridlington has been awarded the RNLI bronze medal for gallantry for what is described in the official report as a "long, frustrating and hazardous service". The service, when the coaster *Maria F* was dragging on to a lee shore near Bridlington concluded with the rescue of a woman cook from the vessel.

Coxswain George Jappy of Buckie station has also been awarded the bronze medal for the rescue of six people from a fishing boat.

The RNLI is now running the biggest deficit—£400,000—in its history, and the cost of operating the service increases year by year. These disturbing facts are contained in the introduction to this year's edition of "The Story of the Life-boat", recently published. The book is available, price 3s. post free, from RNLI at 42 Grosvenor Gardens, S.W.1.

