

GB 2441

Fire in Oxford Street

23rd May 1956

~~A mystery explosion, followed by a~~

A mystery explosion, followed by belching flames that rapidly engulfed a gown shop and the workrooms above - brought the terror of fire to crowded Oxford Street.

The Fire Brigade went quickly into action - anxious to prevent the blaze spreading to neighbouring buildings. Meanwhile, the traffic hold-up completely disorganised rush-hour ~~tax~~ services ~~at the scene~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~area~~ ~~surrounding~~ ~~the~~ ~~shop~~.

Trapped by the blaze, four women employees jumped from a second floor ~~in~~ balcony ~~and~~ ~~fell~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~ground~~ ~~below~~ ~~and~~ ~~one~~ ~~of~~ ~~them~~ ~~was~~ ~~killed~~ ~~and~~ ~~two~~ ~~others~~ ~~were~~ ~~seriously~~ ~~injured~~.

The fire (described by Brigade Officers as one of the worst in the West End since the war) was ~~finally~~ finally ~~extinguished~~ ^{EXTINGUISHED} - although the building was completely gutted..