

The alarm received at the Barnstaple Police Station, and Inspector W C Johnson, P C Newbury and P C Searle (Bishops Tawton) were early on the scene. A bank of helpers was immediately got together and before the arrival of the Brigade, much of the furniture in the house had been saved, Mr S Symons and his son of Week Farm were prominent among the helpers.

When the Brigade arrived about half a mile of hose was found necessary to get an adequate supply of water, and a large pond and three wells were pumped completely dry. The fire was confined to the dwelling house, and the actual finishing off, was completed by use of buckets of water. At one point a large barn caught fire, but this was saved without any damage.

During the process of attempting to salvage some large articles of furniture, a portion of a burning ceiling fell, and firemen J Shaddick and Percy Hunt received injuries by burning. Neither were seriously hurt however, and first aid was promptly rendered by Inspector Johnson and P C Newbury.

The farm is rather remote and was partly thatched and partly tiled, being closely surrounded by the usual farm buildings. All the livestock in the surrounding shed was taken to places of safety almost immediately following the outbreak, and all was saved.

The farmhouse itself was gutted.

June 1936.

There will be very real regret in North Devon at the announcement that Sir Basil Peto Bt. is vacating Tawstock Court near Barnstaple next year.

Sir Basil took Tawstock Court which is the home of the Wrey family in August 1917, when he intended retiring from Parliamentary work. He was then Member for Devises, but did not seek re-election in 1918.

Within a few weeks of the 1922 election, when the prospective candidate for the North West Devon Division, Prof W A S Hewins, withdrew to contest a South Wales seat, and there being no time to find another candidate for the Barnstaple Division Mr Peto, as he was then, placed his services at the disposal of the party in North West Devon.

His offer to stand was welcomed and there followed a lightening campaign in which Mr Peto, was returned as the first conservative member for the Barnstaple Division for over twenty years. From then, until his retirement at the last General Election, Sir Basil represented North West Devon continuously with the exception of a break of about twelve months. He received his baronetcy in the New Year Honours of 1927.

Sir Basil's departure from North Devon will entail a break other than political, for during the whole of his residence at Tawstock Court he has taken keen interest in local and North Devon Affairs.