

Why British Churches Are Burned While Factories Escape

This is the fifth of a series of articles about conditions in Great Britain and other countries visited by a group of Canadian newspaper editors. It was written for the weekly newspapers of Canada by their special representative on the delegation, Hugh Templin, of the Fergus News-Record.

In a previous story, I told something about the bomb damage in London. The subject of bombing and its results on the people of England is too large to dismiss in a few sentences. It is, or has been, the most important feature of the war since Dunkirk.

London has been seriously bombed. The raids on the city began more than a year ago and continued until April or May, 1941. When daytime bombing became too costly for the Germans, the enemy turned to night bombing, which cannot be so effective in hitting spectacular targets. Since early summer, the night raids on London have stopped. Hitler no longer has the planes to spare; the R.A.F. has command of the air over Britain and around the coast; inland defences are more numerous and better organized. Air raids continue, but they are mostly along the eastern and southern coast.

I think London looked much as I had expected to find it. I did not expect to see such a large area east of St. Paul's Cathedral so thoroughly laid waste. In two other areas, both south of the river, the damage struck me as terrible. It both cases it was little houses by their cores that had suffered, which seemed to me worse than old office buildings or ancient landmarks. That was simply because there must have been so much loss of life: as for the houses themselves, some of them are better gone and the buildings that replace them will improve these districts.

Why Churches are Burned
I have been asked hundreds of questions about bomb damage. Perhaps other readers would like to know a few of the answers.

It is true, for instance, that churches are almost invariably destroyed and important factories escape?

It is true it is so obvious to a Canadian in England that it seems uncanny until one knows the reasons.

In London and other badly bombed cities, it is obvious that most of the damage was done by incendiary bombs. They are small and light. I brought parts of one home with me. It is cylindrical, not over two inches in diameter and about a foot long—something like a fat Roman candle. The head is flat, not pointed like the tip of a high explosive bomb. That is the heavy end. The tail has fins on it to keep the bomb upright as it falls. Dropped from a height of 10,000 feet or so, an incendiary bomb will penetrate through a slate roof or the fender of a car, leaving a small hole. It will not go through a brick wall. The bomb ignites two minutes after it strikes and develops a flame and to have a temperature of about 5,000 degrees. A large bomber might carry thousands of incendiaries and drop them out literally by the ton.

Nowadays, the British know how to fight the incendiary bomb. Volunteer fire watchers are always on the look-out for bombs. They have the simple equipment to render bombs harmless before they can develop heat.

But even, yet, the churches are not safe. The beautiful old buildings, de-

signed by Christopher Wren and other great architects, have slate roofs. Inside the building is another false roof, often of lead. The incendiary goes through the slate but hasn't force enough to penetrate the second roof. Before it can be reached, it has exploded and started a fire. Sometimes, there was an oak ceiling as well. No matter how faithful the watchers at churches might be, it was impossible to rip off the slates and the lead in time to reach the bombs.

It wasn't that churches were deliberately attacked. Everything was attacked. It was simply a matter of the way the churches were built.

Factories Have Really Escaped

The story of the factories and the production of war material is something else again. It is literally true that many of the important ones have never been bombed. I saw a great aero engine factory in the Midlands, built since the war started. It was undoubtedly the finest factory I ever saw. It was built by a large automobile company solely for the production of radial engines of 1,500 h.p. or so. It is several miles from the nearest city. Every precaution has been taken to see that a bomb dropping nearby won't affect the people inside. If one makes a direct hit, a series of blast walls will minimize the damage. But there has never been a direct hit.

Twice I passed the original Hurricane factory. This is an older one and still makes the famous fighting planes which the R. C. A. F. uses. It was pointed out to me by a ferry pilot, who was going to the factory to take a new plane to a fighter station. Above the factory floated a group of barrage balloons, an unusual sight away from the large cities. I would have known it was an important factory. Yet the pilot told me that the Germans had never found it.

It sounds mystifying. Actually, it is simple. The cartoonists love to show a man or building so camouflaged that it looks ludicrous. That is actually what happens. At night, these factories literally cannot be found.

Some of the Bomb Damage

It is impossible to mention many of the buildings that have been damaged, but I might list a few. By this time, the streets have all been repaired, railways are in full operation, and there is little or no sign of bomb damage in the railway stations. The docks, which must have suffered, are in operation again. Barges, drawn by tugs, are continually going up and down the Thames at Westminster. I saw a convoy going out of the mouth of the Thames one day that I visited the East Coast. As I said before, all the bridges over the Thames escaped damage.

On one of our first days in London, the editors were conducted through the Houses of Parliament by two interesting and humorous guides, Lord Snell, representing the House of Lords, and Sir Patrick Hamon from the House of Commons. They took us even into the basement rooms where Guy Fawkes stored the gunpowder to blow up Parliament centuries ago, and into the underground chapels where Cromwell stabled his horses to show his contempt for the institution of parliament. The chapels are lovely. There is no longer any horse smell.

Here and there, I saw the damage done by bombs. In the great Westminster Hall, where the bodies of the kings lie in state, workmen were repairing a

broad hole in the roof where a bomb came through. Big Ben has almost escaped. One corner of the clock tower and one face were damaged but the clock still goes.

The worst damage is in the House of Commons chamber itself. It simply does not exist any longer. There is no roof, and only a pile of rubble and twisted girders marks the spot where many a great debate has taken place. Yet, strangely enough, the rooms around it are almost untouched.

St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey

It seems impossible that St. Paul's Cathedral should have survived when all the area behind it is bare and dreary. I visited the cathedral and found only one large hole in the roof, made by a high explosive bomb that shattered the altar beneath. Again it was explained that the roof structure supplied the answer. The incendiaries bounced off the great dome and the arched roof. Fireengines and fire fighters are massed all the time in the square in front of the cathedral.

If Westminster Abbey was hit, the damage must have been repaired, although one portion was closed on the Sunday afternoon I visited it.

Fleet street, with most of the daily newspaper offices grouped together, suffered much, yet not one daily paper ever missed a single edition. The editor of one of Lord Beaverbrook's papers told me that £75,000 had been spent to protect the two buildings he owns in that area. I saw the results. The record of the newspapers is remarkable, but no more amazing than the attitude of the people at large. It is said that it was great help to morale when a householder came to his front door after a night of terror, and found both the daily paper and the bottle of milk on the doorstep.

At Buckingham Palace, only one small building has been hit, but the iron fence is being removed to be used to make munitions. Many stores on Oxford and Regent streets have suffered. Tenants in rich apartments in the West End have lost everything they owned just as thoroughly as the poor in the dock areas, though not such a large proportion, perhaps.

It surprised me to find many Londoners still sleeping in air raid shelters after four months of immunity from bombing. I visited the great "Underground" station at Piccadilly Circus twice during my stay. Some 300 people were still sleeping there, but they seemed to be mostly men and women who had been bombed out of their own home and preferred the semi-independence of this life rather than being billeted with strangers.

Coventry Has Suffered Most

It wasn't until I visited Coventry that I realized how bad a concentrated bombing can be. Coventry was (and is) an industrial city about the size of Hamilton, Ontario. Twice the Germans concentrated the full might of their air force on Coventry in an attempt to demonstrate just what they could do. To some extent, they succeeded; but they did not stop production to such an extent as they had hoped and they did not terrify the people. They did not even kill as many as one would expect.

We drove from London to Coventry one fine September morning. The British Council supplied us with cars that had Canadian ensigns on the radiators. I admired the beautiful English countryside and wondered at the patience of the British farmers, cutting their second crop of hay in fields dotted with plane traps.

Coventry's city hall remains almost untouched on the border of acres of ruins. The car in which I was riding was the last to drive up to the door. A curious crowd mostly women with market baskets, had gathered. As I stepped out, I heard someone ask: "Who are they?" I answered: "Canadians." The nearest woman with a basket over her arm responded, to my surprise, with, "God bless Canada!"

Later, I understood. Mayor Mosley welcomed us in a room which had a model tank, symbols of greater production. Mrs. Pearl Hyde, head of the Women's Voluntary Services told me that many people of Coventry were clothed in Canadian garments, and they had been fed for days from fleets of mobile canteens, donated to cities around by various Canadian war funds. Canada ranks high in the estimation of Coventry.

A few minutes later, I stood amid the rubble in the ruins of Coventry Cathedral. On one side stood Mrs. Hyde and on the other, Captain S. A. Heter, Chief of Police. Both, I learned later, are members of the Order of the British Empire because of heroic services performed.

Major Christie, of St. John, N. B., moved through the rubble with the Provost of the Cathedral and laid on an improvised altar a wreath which the editors had brought from London. My eyes were moist and I thought the Chief wiped away a tear. Two days later, Prime Minister Churchill visited Coventry and asked about the wreath. He thought it a splendid idea and the next day, two more arrived to place be-

Mulock

The annual Christmas entertainment was held in the Baptist church on Monday evening, Dec. 22, and was greeted by a full house. Rev. C. Saunders was chairman. The beginners and tiny tots were very pleasing in their various numbers. The programme consisted of dialogues, exercises, recitations, pantomimes, choruses, musical numbers and carols by the pupils. The closing number, which is most worthy of mention was a sacred sketch, entitled, "The Tired Little Shepherd" presented by a number of senior boys. At the close of the program the superintendent distributed gifts to the various classes. There was candy for all the children present.

Miss Margaret Lunney of Toronto was a Christmas guest of Rev and Mrs. Saunders and family.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard McCallum, and daughters, Jean and Mary of Aberdeen spent Sunday at the home of Mrs. Fulton, Miss Jean remaining over for the holiday.

Messrs. Kenneth and Lloyd McCuaig of Toronto spent Christmas at their home here.

Mr. Robert McDuffy and Mrs. Catherine McDuffy, Collingwood, Mr. and Mrs. John Wilkison and daughters, Jean and Irene and Mr. Clarence McCausland of Heathcote, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Hastie, Elmwood, were Christmas visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Doug. Hastie.

Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Adlam of Callander spent the holiday with Mr. William Adlam and family; they also entertained to Christmas dinner, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Adlam, Miss Ada Reay, Mr. Alfred Redford and daughter, Miss Eva Redford of town.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kaufmann and sons, Alvin and Kenneth, Hanover, visited Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Doug. Hastie.

Pte. George Porter and Veteran Guardman Philip McDonald were home for the week-end.

Mr. and Mrs. David Lamb and son, Roy, of Aberdeen visited Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Fred Torry.

side our own, one from Winston Churchill, the other from Mrs. Churchill. The buildings in the heart of Coventry are literally wiped out, in two great raids, one in November, 1940, and the other in April. 74,000 houses out of a total of 91,000 in Coventry were damaged. "It was a beautiful moonlight night," said Mayor Mesley, "the most beautiful I think I ever saw in my life."

A visit to Coventry now is depressing. Here, it would seem, the German Luftwaffe really succeeded.

But they didn't, even though they sent over 600 planes to bomb 11 1/2 hours in the moonlight and even though they had immense luck, for the large water main was broken by high explosives and three lucky shots hit the canal bank and drained away the secondary water supply.

The buildings which made up the business section are gone, and so are many of the houses. The hospital and the Cathedral and the Roman Catholic church are but shells. But amazingly enough, only 1246 persons were killed in both raids, and I saw with my own eyes the war factories going again at full speed.

That afternoon, before we left to visit a bomber station, a dainty young lady served tea to a dozen editors. I asked if she lived in Coventry during the raids. She did. She wasn't in a shelter either. It was her turn that night to be on Air Raid Patrol. She travelled through those streets with flames and death all around and the sky full of enemies. She was terrified, she admitted, but she never thought of taking shelter. Anyway, she had no home to go to that night; one of the first bombs got it.

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Miss Mary MacIntyre, Toronto, spent the Christmas week-end with her parents.

Mr. and Mrs. M. A. Vasey and children were Christmas visitors with Mrs. Vasey's parents at Kenilworth.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Livingstone and Shirley spent Christmas with Mrs. Aldred, Durham.

Mr. and Mrs. W. Schildroth, Toronto, visited over the week-end with relatives.

Mr. and Mrs. A. D. MacIntyre and Bobby spent Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Aitchison, Williamsford.

Miss M. B. Morrison, Owen Sound, Messrs. Clark Morrison, Kirkland Lake and John Morrison, Oshawa, were Christmas visitors with their mother, brother and sister.

Mr. William Smith spent Christmas with his daughter, Mrs. C. H. Browne of Chesley, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Smith and Mary Elizabeth were Christmas visitors with Mr. and Mrs. L. McLean Rocky Saugeen.

Poplar Hill

Those who ate Christmas dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Stewart and Arthur were Mr. and Mrs. C. Erskine and daughter, Markdale, and Mr. and Mrs. D. Lawrence and daughter, Eileen and Mr. and Mrs. George Stewart.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Lawrence spent Christmas day with the Smallman family.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles McAlister and daughter, Mary Elizabeth, spent Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. B. Morlock and family in Holstein.

Visitors with Mr. and Mrs. W. Picken were Miss Maud Cuff of Toronto, Mrs. Dewar and Mr. Ashley of Southampton.

Christmas visitors with Mr. James Petty and Miss Florence were: Piper D. Robertson and Mrs. Robertson, of Owen Sound, Mr. and Mrs. H. Brigham and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Wilbert Petty of Dundalk, Mr. and Mrs. Carman Wilson and Mr. Elgin Petty of Toronto.

Mr. and Mrs. James Picken spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. D. Lawrence and Ileen.

A euchre party was held at the home of Mr. J. Petty Friday evening.

The Young Women's Auxiliary of Knox church, Normanby, meet this Friday, January 2, at the home of Mrs. J. Marchall.

Visitors with Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Marshall Christmas Day were: Mr. and Mrs. Leith and daughter of Priceville, Mr. and Mrs. C. Bates and baby of Shelburne, Mr. and Mrs. Hillis of Hanover and Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Marshall of Toronto.

Mr. Elgin Petty and Mr. Wilfred Marshall returned to Toronto Sunday.

Visitors with Mr. and Mrs. D. Marshall and Mr. and Mrs. Howard Marshall were: Mr. and Mrs. A. Aberdell and family of Flesherton, Mr. and Mrs. I. Ferguson and family of Egremont, and Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Dyer, Christmas Day.

It will pay you to advertise in The Chronicle.

Robb

Mr. Ross McDougall went to Guelph on Monday to attend a short course at the O.A.C.

Visitors attending family gatherings in the neighbourhood on Christmas Day were Mr. and Mrs. Lorne Gilstorf and Grant and Mrs. Rice, Mount Forest, Mr. and Mrs. William Aldcorn, Riverside, Mr. and Mrs. Wes. Rae and family, Woodland, Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Woods, Hamilton, Mr. Morley Hunter, Misses Bernice McMartin and Lorene Rae, Toronto at Mr. Bert Hunter's.

Misses Gertie, Vivian and Beatrice Klein, Guelph, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Padfield, Hamilton; Mr. and Mrs. Austin Tott, Fort Erie; Mr. and Mrs. George Robb and Alvin, Fairbairn at Mr. James Klein's.

Mr. and Mrs. John McBride, Sligo Road and Mrs. Ethel McDougall at Mr. Joseph McEachern's.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Mather, Laura and Harry, Holstein, Mr. Bert Mather, Toronto and Mr. Fred Mather, Hamilton at Mr. James Mather's.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Ferguson and family of North Egremont and Miss Marguerite McEachern, Toronto at Mrs. Edith McEachern's.

Mr. Lloyd Orchard, Trenton, Miss Ella Orchard, Toronto, and a friend from Guelph, Mrs. John Orchard, Mount Forest, at Mr. William Orchard's.

Those attending Christmas gatherings out of the neighborhood were Mr. and Mrs. William Lamont and family at Mr. Sam Peckover's, Mount Forest.

Mr. and Mrs. William McDougall and family at Mr. Hazel Ross's, Mount Forest.

Mr. and Mrs. William Orchard are spending a few days this week in Toronto.

Mr. Randall Lamont, Oshawa, and Miss Esther Lamont, Mount Forest, spent the holiday and week-end at their home here.

Mr. Cliff Rogers, Orangeville, spent the week-end at Mr. Bert Hunter's.

Mr. and Mrs. Burt Ferguson and family attended the reception held in honour of Mr. and Mrs. Art Haas at the home of the bride's parents in Holstein on Christmas night.

Miss Bessie McDougall visited on Monday at Mr. Alf Arnott's, Egerton.

DROMORE Y. P. S.

The meeting of the Dromore Young People's Society was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Findlay Clark on Dec. 15. The meeting opened with hymn 165 Joy to the World followed by the Lord's Prayer in unison. The scripture lesson was read by Mrs. Russell Taylor. A quiz on Job was conducted by Florence Patterson. Hymn 168, While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night was sung and topic on Job was taken by Mrs. Young. The offering was taken and the meeting closed with hymn 179, followed by the benediction.

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ham Women's Institute will be held
at the home of Miss Margaret
on Monday, January 5. Shower
les for Camp Borden.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
Red Cross Society will be held Tuesday
afternoon, Jan. 6, at 2:30 o'clock
Queen street work rooms, when
report of the year's work will be
and officers elected for the coming
year. All interested in Red Cross
—men or women—are urged
quested to attend this meeting.