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16. *Salazar* by Franco Nogueira, op. cit., p. 567.
17. Richard Kidston Law (1901-1983). Youngest son of the Prime Minister Bonar Law. Conservative M.P. (1931-1954). Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office (1941-43), Minister of State (1943-45), Minister of Education (1945). Created Baron Coleraine (1954).
18. FO 371/49497.
19. Reference to Timor. Timor was occupied by the Japanese and Portugal was keen to be militarily involved in its liberation.
20. FO 371/49497.
21. FO 371/49474Z5712.
22. *Idem, Idem.*
23. FO 371/49474Z6032.

INTRODUCTION

Douglas Rawes was educated in England, then trained as an architect in London until the outbreak of WW2 in 1939, when he joined the Royal Air Force, but was only called to commence his training early in 1941. During this waiting period he was asked to join the St. Paul's Watch, a group of architects and others associated with that profession who had volunteered to assist the regular Cathedral staff in guarding the structure and details of that famous great building.

The following article is an extract from a letter written to his mother in Lisbon.

FIRE AT SAINT PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

by Douglas Rawes, D.F.C.

While sitting on my bed in one of the barrel vaults in St. Paul's Cathedral listening to the news with Canons Alexander and Henderson, the sirens sounded. It was the 30th of December, 1940. The news finished, Henderson and I were about to leave for dinner when the gunfire grew heavy so we decided to wait until it became quieter.

I was standing alone in the Practice Room when Leese came running in and told me that the message had come from the north west lookout that the raiders were dropping either flares or incendiaries. We heard somebody shouting that incendiaries had fallen in the south gardens, so Leese ran off and I pulled on my overalls, belt, goggles and gas mask and ran up the main staircase to Advance Headquarters; there I found Canon Cockin, the Dean and Smith. Leese came out of the Surveyors office, said that it was on fire and that he wanted more water. Somehow I found a bucket of water in my hand so I hurried into the office to find that Garwood

Some of the regular Cathedral Staff: Leese, Smith, Garwood, Allen, Jeans, Wiggins, Green.

had dealt with the bomb and the fire was out.

Next I remember finding myself in the roof space above the choir with a policeman and there I saw an incendiary bomb spluttering on the bricks. For a second my mind went blank and I couldn't remember where any of the equipment was at all. Then it all became clear and I found a sand container and shovel and threw sand onto the bomb and put it out and in looking up I could see a patch of sky through a hole in the roof made by the bomb. On returning to A. H-Q. I was sent on a patrol upstairs. I had just completed one circuit when I noticed an incendiary in the south east pocket. Running to the telephone I came across Allen and told him what I had seen and then reported the news to A. H-Q. Allen told me to follow him and we went down a staircase and through the Oak Room into the roof space below the pocket. The bomb was lying on an oak beam, flames were flickering along the wood in both directions so we ran to the nearest hydrant. I grabbed a branch and a length of hose but on finding that it didn't quite reach the fire, yelled for another length. Allen brought it along, joined it up and then hurried back to turn on the water. I screwed on the branch and got it into what I thought was the most favourable position and shouted 'water on'. Nothing happened but I could hear Allen saying something and then he appeared saying that the hydrant was out of order. He told me to go onto the roof, fix up from a high pressure hydrant and pour the water onto the fire from above.

On reaching the roof I came across Leese and told him what had happened. He connected the hydrant while I fetched another length and joined it up while somebody else took the other end. The order came through for water and Leese turned on the tap but only a trickle came from the branch; the High Pressure had failed as well. I found myself back at A. H-Q and soon somebody came running down the stairs shouting that the firemen had said the east roof was on fire. Three of us jumped up and went off to inspect only to find that there was nothing wrong with the roof at all.

On our return we found that the Trophy Room roof was alight so I rushed off there but on my way out met Leese who told me that it was being attended to but that my help was needed with another fire on the roof of the nave. I climbed into the roof space through a trap door and found Jeans and another of the staff struggling with a stirrup pump. I took on the pumping while the staff man brought along fresh buckets of water.

Marquarson and Leese were on the roof trying to tear up the lead as the bomb had worked its way between the lead and the rafters and the boarding. Jeans told me he wanted an axe so I went off to fetch one from A. H-Q.

Trying to get out on the roof by the trap door I found it too heavy to lift so I had to go via the Parsonage and the Whispering Gallery. With the axe we were able to hack away at the timbers and after about a half hour of squirting water from below into the hole, and the two men above pouring the water on to us, we got the fire completely under control.

During this time the Germans were machine gunning us. On my way to wash I passed through the Trophy Room aisle and saw that the hole in the roof was fairly big. Allen decided that for the time being we could return to the mess room and keep six people on patrol.

The crypt was crowded with people taking shelter having previously been sheltering in offices which were now blazing. One of the Canons' wives handed me a tin of biscuits and somebody else offered me a cup of tea. More and more refugees kept pouring in through the doors. They were of every category imaginable, some smartly dressed and carrying attaché cases, while the majority struggled with bundles wrapped in blankets, sheets or rugs. Many of the women had shawls over their heads. There were groups of people everywhere sitting or standing, some looking hopelessly bewildered, others quite calm and stoical about it all. In the mason's shop I saw a couple sitting on a block of masonry eating off a tin plate and feeding their fox terrier. One woman was almost hidden behind a huge pile of stone and seemed completely enveloped in a rug.

At 11.30 p.m. Wiggins, Green and I went aloft again. Wiggins was posted on the ladder of the Choir Roof to watch the sparks which were landing on the temporary roofing while Green and I walked round the colonnade. Later I joined Wiggins and Green disappeared inside. As the "all clear" had sounded shortly after we came up we could gaze on the astonishing site without the previous prospect of being blown to pieces. I saw Green come out of one of the doorways, clamber onto the choir roof and start beating at the sparks with a hassock, so Wiggins and I joined him.

It was like sitting in the midst of an electric snowstorm, the wind swept over us in fierce gusts and the burning cinders flurried around. Lea-

ning over the paparet the heat from the buildings on fire was so intense that I had to shield my face with my hands. Later when in the gardens I saw that the heat had split some of the pilasters on the eastern apse and lumps of Portland stone were lying on the ground. The smell of burning wood and material was stifling and I felt as if I was suffering from acute "pins and needles" in all the exposed parts of my body as the sparks settled on my flesh and burnt for a second before dying out. With the hassock I beat away the larger pieces of burning paper and cinders before they could settle on my clothing. At 1.30 a.m. we were relieved by the next shift.

By this time the people in the crypt were lying wrapped up like mummies just anywhere on the floor. The silence was only broken by faint whispers and the 'swish' of deep breathing. A canary suddenly started to chirp, the noise greatly magnified down there and sounding quite startling. My eyes were burning and both of them had some fragments in them so I went to the doctor and obtained an eye glass and eyewash. I washed them out and obtained great relief. I couldn't sit down doing nothing so I went outside into the gardens. People were crowding round the entrance watching the firemen fighting the inferno. The fire engines were inside the gates and the noise of the pumps combined with the shouted instructions and whistle blowing was quite deafening.

I walked to the east and through showers of sparks mixed with spray from hoses. From below the conflagration looked equally fantastic. Walls of buildings appeared as though built of solid flame and sketched in black one could see jets of water coming from the numerous hoses. Firemen on ladders or perched perilously on sills and parapets were pouring hundreds of gallons of water into the building.

On my return to the mess room, steaming cups of tea were awaiting us. Four of us went upstairs again at 3.30 a.m. but this time we had no need to go outside as the Cathedral was no longer in danger. We patrolled until 5.30 a.m. When we were relieved, on reaching the crypt I was able to lie down and get some sleep. Three of us, including myself had been on the 'go' for eleven hours and the only casualty I ever heard of amongst the staff and volunteers was a strained thigh suffered by one of the staff when he fell over a desk in the Surveyor's office.