Communiqués by Paul Rowntree
during the first Blitz of WW2 in London
August 1940 to March 1941

Communiqué No.1
St .Bartholomew' s Hospital, E.C. 1.
27th August, 1940.

Dear Parents,
Had the late dinner in the train at 8.p.m. Then went back to my seat. About 20 miles out of London the train lights went out. Everyone assumed there was a raid again in London. The train moved slowly on at about 15 miles an hour, Nobody spoke - there was a calm silence while people wondered what it was we were moving so slowly and surely to meet. AS I feared, some soldiers thought it necessary to sing sentimental songs rather badly in the next carriage. Finally the man opposite me- who had offered me the "Evening Press" earlier in the evening started talking - he seemed to want to. He said that he had travelled during a raid many times in the last war. It turned out that he had lived in St.Albans, had lived near the Blackwater and made a sailing boat there. Later it turned out that he was principal of the Leeds(?) Agricultural College between York and Tadcaster. His job had taken him a lot to Mental Hospitals, Prisons etc. Did I know the Retreat ? He thought an awful lot about it. Now and again we would peep out and see the cone of searchlight beams moving about the sky sometimes over the train. I told him when he asked me, that my father was in the F.A.U. in the last war - and (it turned out) so was he. He went out June 15 1915 and drove ambulances and he knew of Colin. His name was Hudson.
We were approaching London and taking more of an interest in the raid.. We could hear nothing, but suddenly little white dots shone and went out at the top of a searchlight cone.
It was the first "ack-ack" fire he'd seen this war, I'd seen ever. There were also flashes below the skyline of roof tops - bombs he thought. He was going to the Ministry of Agriculture for a meeting next day representing the North of England Counties. I said I hoped he wouldn't get hit there - he seemed amused and perhaps pleased at being thought a military objective.
After a long time we slid slowly into Kings Cross and got out into the lights of the station and said good bye. Everyone was being politely ushered into a shelter. I said I wanted to get to a 1st.aid post (I was feeling a bit guilty at not taking over from Hill earlier). The policeman said he thought the buses were running - they weren't. Nor were we allowed down to the tubes which were running. Some taxis were running but I could find none that would move. There seemed very little really happening so decided to walk. It was a very warm evening.
My footsteps clattered on the pavement along Grays Inn Road. Most doorways seemed to hold a silent man or woman, policemen with tin hats were posted all along the road - they looked at you but said nothing, cheery noises floated out from the entrances to shelters. I seemed to be the only person walking and I began to wonder if I wasn't breaking all the laws. Out of the darkness a stern voice in a uniform said "The all clear hasn't gone yet has it?" I stopped guiltily and explained hurriedly that I wanted to get to the first aid post. He thought I was mad. He turned out to be just a postman who wanted to know if the all clear had gone. The sirens went at 9.30 he said. He thought there had been some bombs out west - Croydon perhaps.
We parted friends after being told to be good.
Along Clerkenwell Road with the blue starlit sky above spattered with hundreds of searchlights and the noise of airplane engines. Along Farringdon Rd. An airplane with attendant beams was floating nearer. For a time by Farringdon Stn. It was rather unpleasant when the searchlights were pointing straight above wondering whether they would decide to drop a bomb or two. Would I run for a suitable doorway or drop undignified with a pack on my back into the gutter. There were no blue lights or shelter signs just there.

The searchlights moved over and no bombs dropped. All the time as I approached Barts everything looked normal and I was pleased to find Barts just the same with two policemen in the gate, What was my name? Would I be sure not to put on a light. Yes all the first aid people had gone out at 9.30. I took rucksack and mac and dropped them in my room returning with respirator and using my fountain pen torch with a hand round the bulb.
Barts itself seemed empty. I asked the policeman if I could get the usual way to Gt. St. Helens First Aid Post, wondering whether it or the route might be in ruins. He seemed surprised and said yes he thought so. Down Little Britain, past the ghost of a bus stopped where no bus has been before. At the Central Telegraph office I wondered if the continuous high pitched hum was a distant all clear siren - how annoying it would be to miss everybody now.

Along Cheapside, passed the Bank and into the archway leading to the first aid post.
Some people were outside the entrance - someone said "I believe it's Rowntree" and I found myself with Hill and Bartlett and some A.F.S. They told me they had been up the last three nights (and that I should have slept in the W. Wing instead of coming along). Hill had been outside Aldersgate station when he heard the screaming bomb falling - he dived into a shelter in the middle of a rugby scrum of 6 policemen. The bomb had dropped about 100 yards away (Whitbreads was safe though).
Three warehouses had caught fire - one of them a wax model factory. The first aid post there only got one case that night- a sprained ankle I believe.
Altogether it was said Barts laid had 3 casualties brought in so far

1) An epileptic.
2) An A.F.S. brought on a stretcher in an ambulance - with a cut finger.
3) An A.F.S who had been knocked out by getting in the stream from a hose.

We stood and watched the searchlights which never seemed to get through the bits of light cloud onto the planes very high above. When overhead we were just outside the doorway where we could reach safety in ten seconds. Later we heard some ack-ack fire, about 6 rounds. Finally our necks tired and we went down to find a stretcher to sleep, where we slept till nearly four. On waking we found a patient had been treated for quite a severe head injury - caused by falling into a shelter - an old lady.
We were invited to sleep the rest of the night, but it seemed best to go back to Barts. I borrowed a medical couch mattress thing and undressed and slept in my sleeping bag till 8.15.
We couldn't quite understand what the Jerries were up to, they didn't (visibly to us) drop any bombs or flares - but they had made themselves a nuisance quite successfully. It was unusual seeing all the buses started again, taking people home at 4 in the morning.

Had out-patients this morning - not many- and E.N.Ts. this afternoon. The official bloke was away so we had a chance at examining patients - though we left the treatment to two housemen who had been roped in. After tea was a lecture - anaesthetic in quality - I found it hard to keep awake. The main thing now seems to be to get as much sleep as possible - in fact I've just this moment had a brain wave - I might take my sleeping bag to the First aid post if we're out again tonight - and I expect we will be - maybe it would be too hot though. When they really start bombing and we have work to do I expect they will not hang around London so long.
Please don't expect such long communiqués in future, or every day (We'll probably get similar raids every day or night)
I did enjoy being at home and I expect I am very much better for it. Will post this and then go to dinner.
Much love, Paul.

Communiqué No.2

Barts, E.C.1
Thurs. 29 Aug. 1940
8.45. p.m.

Please note that communiqués are Consecutive (not a day is missed)

Dear Parents,
The sirens are due to go in the next hour. I have packed sleeping bag, pyjamas, my pillow (a valuable luxury) and "I would be private" ready to bike to the 1st aid post.
I have not slept in my own bed since I have been back. Tuesday night raid started about 9.30 and I hurriedly collected pyjamas and sleeping bag. At the first aid post we found that the Red Cross nurses had been pushed off to sleep. The night before two had fainted when the casualty arrived, after they had been awake doing nothing for 24 hours.
Sleep was encouraged Tuesday night which is a very sensible idea. In fact I seem to go to bed earlier now - soon after the siren goes. Tuesday night we all dossed down on stretchers and camp beds, the others in their ordinary clothes, they will soon learn.
The all clear went in a few hours (12.30) I was only half awake. There was some talk of returning to Barts - but we stayed put - I am told there was a later raid lasting -2-3 hours - I heard nothing of it. I woke later - someone discovered it was ¼ to 9 and we rushed back to get to breakfast before 9, and carry on with the normal day, after shaving after breakfast.
Last night (I had been to the flicks, it was my day off duty) I had just finished dinner at 8.55 pm. and the sirens went before emptying the coffee cup. I went bed hunting. I was at first determined to sleep in my own bed at last, but finally decided on a canvas bunk in the basement of the George V. medical block.
The aeroplanes pass overhead a lot and they might just drop a bomb on the West Wing. Having bagged a bunk it seemed early, so I played an

atrocious game of billiards with Bartlett (who was also off duty). We also had a pint to help us- the Vicarage is itself a shelter (in fact). We finally turned in after looking disappointingly at the sky which was so clear and starry that searchlights seemed insignificant. By the time the other bunk holders had turned in, it may have been twelve. That is the trouble with this sleeping business - people stop you from sleeping early.

We heard some bombs. I slept and I woke sometime or other to hear a German quite loudly - otherwise I slept very well. I read in the papers it was a 7 hour raid. Was up earlier and had bathed and shaved before 9 a.m. ready to meet the day.

It is 9.10 p.m. and no sirens. If they don't go by 9.30 p.m.

I shall be disappointed in Jerrie's punctuality.

Doze in chair.

9.45 No raid. Regret efficiency and fetch up pillows from bicycle. Read and sleep in bed for first time.

Friday 30 August

8.30a.m. Get up. Everybody asking whether there was a raid last night. Everybody slept. Apparently there wasn't one.

Saturday 31August

6. p.m. No letter has arrived to date. Since waking up yesterday after a full night in my own room, I am now writing in the first aid post during the eighth raid since then. Friday mornings S.O.Ps. was interrupted by a wail from the sirens and a cheerful groan from the students. My first daylight raid. It lasted about ½ hour or so, as all the day raids have. I can't quite remember when the second one was - before lunch I think. After tea I was going to the dark room with Tum-Tum Rees. I had got the fireman and keys to open the photography dept. We were walking across the square when the sirens went. Then there was a night one. Bartlett and I wandered up to the Barts roof before 9 p.m. .Night was falling all around. Stars shone from a clear sky above. After 9 p.m. we could just discern a searchlight beam due south.

Soon after we saw a single white flash about a third of the way up from the horizon, soon after we saw flashes on horizon in quick succession from the west, a flash from the N.W. and the siren went. We heard no engines. We descended rapidly in the lift and cycled at leisure to the post where we settled down on canvas beds with mattress, blankets and pillows. The first aid post seemed to wake at 6 p.m. which was irritating. I got up soon after 8 a.m. this morning. (Sat 31st) (the all clear had gone about 4.30 a.m.)

I cycled to Barts in time to shave, have breakfast in time to take a patient at S.O.Ps. at 9.30 a.m. BUT two minutes after I reached Barts, the sirens went. I cycled back conscientiously. I swore. It lasted only a short hour. Breakfast took a long time (due to an angry (?) mental deficient waitress). I shaved rapidly and got up to S.O.Ps. (bleeding) at 9.45.

No patients had arrived. No patients did arrive. The sirens are bad for trade. There is very little sign of air raids.

Only once have I thought I heard a bomb. I haven't seen any damaged buildings yet. I haven't seen a German plane yet. We hear of damage done via various members. The Dr's house has bee damaged. Beckenham received bombs yesterday we hear. Yesterday afternoon Girling Ball rang up from Mill Hill to say a terrific air battle was in progress ahead. It must have been the same one that a student who is here, watched y'day at Friern Barnet. He saw a plane shot down. It is rumoured Dulwich College grounds have been hit. Allardice said that a bomber had been shot down in Hyde Park (only Allardice said this and we were sceptical). Nevertheless when S.O.Ps. were cancelled at 10.15 a.m. Merryfield and I decided to go for a ride. We were going to Lewis's Library to change a book and then on to Hyde Park. We had passed through Bloomsbury and were across Woburn Place when the sirens went and we had to turn back to get to our posts. After the all clear we met and set off again. We reached Lewis's, we cycled along Marylebone Road; down past the old London Office, Marble Arch and into the Park. The weather was superb. Hot sunlight sprinkling through the waving trees. People were sitting out in the usual deck chairs. We passed the Serpentine - people were rowing in bathing shorts. As we hadn't come across an ice cream man (nor the bomb), we had 6d.worth of ice cream of course in the shade at the open air restaurant. We felt it was lunch time and rode back down St James's St., through Admiralty Arch, round Nelson (and his column) and down to the river. By Blackfriars Bridge the sirens went, and we went to our posts hungry. Lunch was at 2.15.

Written Sunday

After tea we had another siren. Usual Saturday visit to the Vicarage. Merryfield was in a Id. sweep.

{1 penny sweep stake – gambling on air raids and siren times}

If the siren went between 10 and 20 minutes past the hour, he would receive 6d. The siren went at 9.50 or so, just after the round was completed.

We got to the post. I changed my plates in an empty shelter and we settled down to a comfortable bed in a more airy part of the lower basement. The all clear went and we went to sleep (after having cold Horlicks at a Milk Bar) There was (apparently) the sixth raid of the day just before midnight.

I was shaving today (Sunday) after breakfast (about 10.30.a.m.) and heard the usual sound of a plane above, and the sirens went before I finished. Some people saw the white cloud following a plane overhead. After lunch was another short warning. We had heard that Stepney had got bombs

including (I think) Stepney Underground Stn. We found a cordon round it but found a way in and were allowed to pass along the road that had received a bomb on the tramlines - they were being mended. The Underground didn't look damaged. There was a lot of glass blown out along the road and there were probably other bombs there (2 or 3 altogether). The only other interest to report is that y'day (Saturday) people in the Barts square at about 5pm actually saw a German plane and also a parachute descending in the direction of Dagenham. Report has it that Hackney Green received bombs (or bomb) last night.
The weather is very perfect now. Most people read a text book during a day raid and more work is therefore being done than usual. Otherwise there is little evidence of war. People are not in any way nervous but they do tend to pick up sirens or an accelerating engine very quickly. Have received no letter- do write.
Much love, Paul.
5.15pm Sunday 1st.Sept,1940

Communiqué No.3

Starting 5:15pm Sunday 1st September
3 September 1940

Dear Parents

Thank you for letters and parcel (which appeared to have been bombed I don't think anything had come over though).

Sunday 1st September 40
Sunday night was the second night slept in my own bed since I had been back. I came to the conclusion that if you reached 10pm without a raid, we would not have to get up. Later this rule has been broken though.

Monday 2nd September 40
I was called at 8. I was contemplating (seriously) getting up, bathing and shaving and having breakfast in comfortable time for outpatients at 9am. I was about to put it into action (yes really) when the siren went at 8:10 and I was still in bed. The result was that after the all clear was a rush, I didn't shave, and I set to O.P.s at 9:45 and was busy until 12 and getting rather hot at bandaging wrists to a certain kind of wrist splint for a septic fingers etc. That afternoon I spent developing a film and 10 plates some of the home portraits were under exposed. A study of a student (vegetarian) looking pensive (highly thoughtful) in pajamas in 1st Aid Post bed came over rather well and in a slow plate too.
I think there was a warning after tea (I forget).
In the evening I was invited to the vicarage and at 10:50 (after the last person in the round had just ordered drinks) the siren went. I escort a locum to our post (he was Tum-Tum) and had to push and slide him on bike the latter part of the way in the very narrow streets and arches (his chain had come off) we settled down rather noisily, I suppose to a comfortable night.
I thought I heard the all clear go (it went at 3) and I also remember thought I was half dreaming. Hearing two bombs drop, apparently quite loudly and Bartlett thought he too (half asleep) had heard two drops. The people on the duty at the door didn't hear anything so we must have been mistaken.

Tuesday, 3rd September 40
Anniversary of the declaration of war. Didn't consider shave necessary before breakfast - shaving in evening will be more convenient I think. It's not worth putting off breakfast for fear the siren will go and the catering coy (whose kitchen is below the roof) Takes about an hour to get a big meal started after all clear - if anything will get our morale down the catering people will.
At 10:30am (when I was hoping to get up to SOPS which start then) I was dressing an AFS who had got hold of a rapidly moving rope. He had got adhesive plaster on a very hairy arm that was holding one of these wrists supports. Being kind hearted and having had plaster myself I was soaking it first with ether water solution which dissolves off the stickiness. The sirens went. I changed soon after to the other method of removing surgical plaster - ripping it off. After bandaging him up and sending him off to be escorted down to the shelter, I reached my bike and set off on the well known route avoiding pedestrians as they are much more thoughtless and careless after that all clear. The route is along a minor road. This afternoon as it was not my week for ENTS, so I get to work cutting up the Windsor and Newton preferred Students Academy block with a razor blade. I have finished it now with the aid of secotine and surgical plaster (for a hinge) and fitted in to plate holder of the enlarger, it holds my vest pocket plates. The plate is held up by a hinged support, the loose end of which is held down by the existing spring support of the original plate holder of the enlarger (if you follow me) it is simple in construction and should be handy to use. The enlarger is at present roped up to the support of a previous (hand made) vertical enlarger in my clinical photography department (extension 210 -not that it works). It is not really satisfactory but I have not got a decent screen yet for horizontal work. One of my fellow workers scooped some very good photos of the fire taken from the hospital roof. I haven't seen then yet but I'm told they were better than any of the press photos.

At 3pm when I was doing at the plate adapter the sirens went. Bartlett and I climbed 7 stories to the top with Dr Collier at the post. It was very hot and hazy with poor visibility. Looking round we could see all the roofs around speckled with people in ones and twos. Mostly with tin hats, and some with special's shelters watching the sky.
We could hear quite plainly and we could each point to the same spot the noise of the aeroplane engine. We could see nothing. We followed the sound with our ears across the sky, shading our eyes trying to adjust our site. Suddenly I saw them. Four fighters flying West in formation. Once caught in our vision in the mist couldn't hide them from us. We assumed they were ours as they wasn't being fired at. Well we'd seen an aeroplane for the first time over London since my communiqués began.
Several people have seen dog fights and planes shot down. I have an ambition to snap a Jerry falling in flames but I don't expect I'll get the chance of realizing it.
Dr Collier told us we'd see enough planes down at his home. It has been damaged by bombs twice. It is on the route to Croydon I believe.
He told us that tonight he was going home and was going to shoot the dog, chloroform the cat, ring the necks of the ducks and remove his family to a spot that was not quite so hot. It must worry him a lot (it is now 10:30pm I shall repair to bed having reached this far in communiqué 3 which you'll agree is very hard working of me. Not that there is much to write about) (I have just eaten my last biscuit)

Wednesday
I think that was a warning in the morning - I have forgotten last night, the bloke next door woke me up having just heard a siren. We dressed he came back to say there had been a 10 minute "raid" and that it was the all clear that had woken him. We undressed and slept the rest of the night peacefully.
I got a patient in SOPS with a lot of old notes. He had got gonorrhea 1895 was passed fit for the Boer War. He was now complaining of passing water through a hole at the root of the penis -as a result of the gonorrhea An unusual cause, the man was an amazing character,oh, and he had a large prostate (on examining P.R.) too.
At lunch Merrifield said he was going to see Arthur Askey in Charlies (Bighearted) Aunt. He wanted me to come to. I managed to get someone to do from 2.30 -5:00 it was then 1.30 so we rushed it and went to the stall. After a while the curtains closed on the screen. The sound went off. Then the lights went up on the stage. After a while a man emerged from the side with a microphone which he placed on the stage and waited for the tall solemn Manager who took a breath and said "ladies and gentlemen" - with dignity "we have received news of an area aid. Anybody wishing too may proceed to the shelters. The performance will be continued and we advise you to stay in this strongly built building.
I thought I'd better go so rushed down from the gallery (after asking if I could get in again) borrowed Merryfield's borrowed bicycle and peddled perspiring in low gear to get Gt. St. Helens. I was there equal first. It was late after the all clear had gone that I realized that a bloke was doing a locum there for me and that I was doing a locum at the old bailey and I should have gone there!
I returned and saw the film through again. I had missed the stage show - a contralto. There was a warning again at night but my locums had returned and slept in the Old Bailey anyhow. I slept in West Wing peacefully.

It is now Saturday
Since the above there is a notice that Dr Harris does not want us to sleep in W Wing between warnings and all clear. I spent my off duty at St Alban's (Which was a change from bombing of London) There was a crazy ball at cell Barnes last night. There was a red warning but it was not stopped. A previous dance at Hill End was stopped by Kimber because of a Purple Warning. I heard a story about Kimber . There was a warning and Kimber went to Hosford who was operating and told him to stop. He did. In that the next theatre Boris (the gynecological man) was operating. They went and told him to stop the operating. Boris refused. He could not stop in the middle of the operating. The anesthetist was then ordered by Kimber to stop administering anesthetic. He did. Boris ordered his house surgeon to remove his gloves and administer anesthetic. He did. It is only an "unconfirmed report" but reliably reported I think. Mrs Wilmot put me up and fed me and would not think of accepting money. There were no patients for S.O. P's this morning. I was to Spences M.O. P.'s
There has been no warnings today (except in the very early hours) I am now sunbathing on a hot couch mattress on the roof. There is not a cloud in the sky, but is terribly hot hazy and the wind is not cooling. I can hear aeroplane engines.
The sirens are liable to go and I should have to put trousers over my swim shorts.
The suit arrived this morning. It looks very nice though different in effect to the pattern. I have only tried the jacket on.
The vicarage is being closed down (to Carius Wilson's delight) because people have not closed it early enough. Seems unlikely now that Harris can save it again this time.
(Written 9:15am Sunday)

Well folks your pet reporter has some hot news. He has seen German Aeroplanes for the first time, he has seen the fire of London.

X X X X X X

Of course I knew something would happen when I was without my camera. It was left in a handbag at their dance somewhere in the dance (A special envoy will travel to Hill End and carry it back to me tomorrow with luck).

I was on the roof under an oppressive sun. -Scorched shy wasn't I ? Well I woke and got up at that 3:30 pm. Dressed and then went with Tum-Tum to casualty where a waitress or kitchen maid had cut her fingers on a cup and a youth had dislocated and fractured his elbow. Then we went to tea at 4.45. We hadn't ordered when the sirens went at last. The catering coy. locked up and we were able to eat a full tea rapidly and then I set off for the post. In the square two people were looking up through a gap between the buildings. There could be seen silver wings curving in the sky among Brown smoke from A.A. fire. We watch and saw a dark coloured formation (of about 30) fly across the scene in the true H.G. Wells's shape of things to come style. I could hear the ach-ach guns but no bombs and regrettably I left the good position and biked off to the post.

At the entrance was the Commandant, her two nephews student and 1 or 2 ARP people looking through the very narrow slit (the width of a one track street) between the two high buildings. We stood there getting very excited. We saw groups of planes lurking and chasing each other in one large open dogfight. Now and then, and in perfect formation would come the German planes about 30 in each (It seemed like 50) passing N.W. and out of our sight. The conservative Dr at Barts said he reckoned there were at least 200 planes altogether. The ach ach fire was bursting all around the planes (except when our fighters were on a GP) it was hard to know what was what, though only one plane was observed to be hit A.A. fire. I have not heard of more. Later we saw the plane slowly coming down and going south from the city under control with white smoke trailing behind it. We hope it wasn't one of our fighters.

Then we could observe planes following each other and wheeling around and down and out of our view. We thought they might be bombing, and the docks were in that direction but we could distinguish no bomb explosion.

Later it was fairly quiet. We still watched and soon above the level of the building we saw an orange brown smoke cloud rise up above 2 miles to the east. The spotter on the roof, who had a very envied view, said there was fires stretching from the Tower Bridge North for about 20 miles (which was exaggeration).

As the all clear went we went back to Bart's and up on to the roofs. We could count six or seven separate sources of smoke which united to form one big thundercloud blue blowing slowly north-east.

The main view was hidden by the high control telegraph offices. Only one seemed dark enough to be oil. I thought one or two may have been gasometers. At one place flames boiled up high enough to be visible.

We had to admire their work and observe that it would mean a good line of beacons for a raid that night in spite of the solid mass of a A.F.S. and fire brigade that had tinkled across London towards it. It was after seven we had been on the roof for half an hour. All the time we could see a nurse adjusting her hair and cap in the front of the glass. We saw the result - a mop of hair in tiny curls - It seemed a waste of time. (Have just had shaven and Bath - will continue. 11am)

During dinner (sat night) our special observer - Ian Hill (Badger) had done a survey. Our other observer (A. R. James) had also investigated - though his report was more of a morale nature.

It appeared most northerly fire (according to Ian Hill) was on docks on the left but below Tower Bridge. The others he thought were either on the right or left bank round the bend. He had counted about one dozen fires.

The main objective was in a cockney (Aryan ?) area and the people were just looking at the fire unperturbed. Moving north you suddenly come into the Whitechapel area where everyone was running in small circles. There was a queue 100 yards long carrying mattresses and blankets outside one station. You can hardly blame them wanting to get away before the night raid - but the Jews seldom seen to panic very easily. In normal times they have been queuing up outside shelters with deck chairs or sleeping things at 8.00 each night - and the shelters don't often till a warning goes -and that's not every night.

After dinner it was getting dark and coming out of the building, the sky to the east was a brighter pink. We ascended the lift with the other trippers. Where the smoke had been coming from was (artistically) a very beautiful view of yellow and orange on a cloud of whitish smoke with the skyline silhouetted clearly. The rest of the sky was a deep blue with the black dots of balloons. The balloons over the fire of London were lit up. People with cameras were taking photos but really it needed colour to catch it accurately. The fires seemed more marked certainly not less.

It was 8:30? and was dark enough for them to come over. The sirens went.

They seemed to be coming over in ones or twos. We could hear a lot of bombs. After a time we got tired and went to bed (at the post of course) and I regret to say that your pets reporter went to sleep and the loud and near bombs failed to wake your PR.

Only one casualty came in through the night. A lacerated forearm not very severe.

The mobile unit was not called out. Barts received three or four patients only. It sounded as if a bomb had fallen behind our post (so I was told) but when we

came back for breakfast there was no shrapnel, no bit of bombs nor a broken window to be seen. Apparently the whole of the East End got it rather badly. Our Jew student was rather worked up about it and this morning he was being rather hearty about everything which is irritating. Nevertheless when the casualty come in he was awake and dealt with it quite well I should think. Apart from that there is no sign of nerves at all, rather of curiosity though if a bomb is heard dropping (they take several seconds), there is no hesitation in shifting into the building at top speed. But of course we haven't experienced much yet, so we can not really say much. More fires were also started in much the same area. It is thought some "delayed actions" were dropped. It is said that Westminster got some. Elephant and Castle Road got some. The more cretinous of the waitresses was in a shelter several hours Friday night before being dug out. She thought she was going to die. She had never said her prayers and wasn't going to start now.
Commandant has said we are going to be given tin hats as quickly as possible (? Months)
If anyone has thought London was in ruins, he will have had more reason to think that now and I had thought of sending a telegram this morning. But haven't become

1. Expense
2. It would have to become a habit or you'd worry
3. You might have think it had been very bad
4. You'd be expecting letter or PC Monday and not before.

Strikes me I've written rather a lot but as it is exclusive (and I think you should keep the fact strictly is yourself they are probably of value) it might make interesting reading one day if you keep the communiqués. I'm not writing any other diary. Please say when letters reach you.
Look after yourselves much love Paul.
8. 9. 1940. 12.00 midnight Sunday

Communiqué No.4
Barts 1
E.C.I.
10th September 40.
Dear Parents,
Hope you got the vulgar P.C. I have seen very little of the papers but quite a few hospitals have been hit and you would naturally think of the hospital.
Rain temporarily stopped the heat wave on Sunday morning 8 Sept. 40. Since then we have had quite a few showers and some cooler weather. Probably the explosions have had something to do with it. We have raids fairly regularly now - 'Before most meals and whenever I go to do photography. There was one on Sunday soon after I sent the last letter and nothing much happened. In the afternoon I set up the enlarger and got down to printing. After supper I went back to continue. The sirens went. As before I didn't hurry. I took some out of the hypo and put them, in water.
I collected sleeping things and set out along the well known route.. Aeroplanes were overhead and bangs were going pretty rapidly. Then they got pretty loud and I thought I ought to do something. There was no blue light to show a shelter. The street was deserted.
A louder banging. I turned into a side street. As I got off the bike I heard the loud whistle coming down - quite loud it sounded as if it was going to land near, (it sounded the same to people a mile away) . I leant the bike against the wall and thought well I suppose the thing one does is to lie flat, it seems rather silly though. There was no explosion. I thought I'd better get on until I came to a shelter, wait there until they'd passed on. It was silly to be all brave and cycle on to the post, there was no hurry. A warden came hurrying, across the street a little worked up and hurriedly suggested I should go to his post. We went to the building where the warden he was relieving said he should have been on time. He didn't seem in a hurry to get away though. Things became quiet after a while and I went on. I made a mental memorandum that I wouldn't be quite so unhurried, .when the sirens went in the evening. We pretty soon get adapted to varying tempos.
That evening the phone rang as a result of observations from the spotter on the roof. "A delayed action bomb has fallen in St. Mary's Axe, (nearest street) and is smoking". No one noticed if it went off.
At about 3 next morning I was woken by bombs and they sounded shatteringly near. After one the Commandant came through to see if we were alright - it sounded like a direct one. I lay in bed - silence. Then a droning of engines getting nearer. After impatiently waiting came a quick succession of explosions, about three or four, then the droning died down to be followed by a droning getting louder and so on for several times. At times the bombs cracked out followed by glass falling and we in our deep shelter were rocked as if someone had shaken the bed rapidly a few times. On coming out for breakfast, out of all the facade of glass windows, only one here was cracked, we had no casualties through the night. That has been the hottest night. We had to come back a different way to breakfast, because of the comparative nearness and because of the fullness of press reports I thought I should send one of the P.C's I had done.
Last night and tonight (Tuesday the 10th) have been pretty quiet. The route between here and Barts has changed a bit. -You turn left, fork right and turn sharp right at the bomb crater (20 feet deep.) turn left and straight on past the

fire on the left, sharp left, sharp right, sharp left and you're there. Cheapside is closed. Holborn by Chancery lane. Buildings are down to ground level (I expect you have seen the photos) A lot of stations are out of action, St Pancras, Liverpool Str, has been hit, Victoria, Waterloo I'm not sure. Thomas' City Rd. (maternity) Mary's and other hospitals (Stepney?) have received bombs.
The streets that you can get along seem quite pre-war in the amount
in the day time. It is surprising, when you stop to think what damage has been done, how everybody takes it for granted almost. People tell stories how they took some photos to be developed or when they collected them the shop wasn't there or took the book back to the library, and that was bombed.
We had a case in this afternoon who had fainted six hours after concrete had fallen on his helmet. We found he hadn't had a meal for 24 hours and had been working for three days. He was a demolition 'bloke'. We have had incredibly few cases - I suppose London and Guy's have had more.
It is generally considered that the H.Es. that have been dropping are 1000 lbs.
I heard tonight more about our place. I am in bed in one of the shelters by the post (2 floors down) they cost 20 – 30 thousand pounds to build. I thought they were super strong rooms but apparently it was all done 18 months before the war, after the crisis. It is littered with strong doors, shovels, pickaxes, oxy acetylene lamps, about 3 brand new air conditioning motors. The firm is half German. One of the A.R.P. blokes had worked for them in an identical building in Berlin. I suppose that is why they were more prepared than most. The directors are a sticky lot and not very co-operative or helpful in a lot of minor ways.
Most of Bart's patients have been sent off today in ambulances to St. Albans (& Friern) Our patients have gone back to the early war arrangement of going down to the casualty basement (instead of under the glass roof). It sort of seems an unnecessary change, but I suppose it is wise. I know of no more bombs in the day time. If they were there would be a lot of casualties - as it is I cannot understand from neighbouring damage how there have been so few, because there are a lot of wardens and police and watchmen at night. The police are very good at cordoning off a damaged area and moving traffic a different way, without being too strict or officious at all. The A.F.S. are being appreciated now. They used to be rather laughed at - why I don't know. They have an unenviable job now. The fires have been considerably worse than any of the peace time big fires. Today looking from the roof at Bart's you can see no evidence of damage at all. All the fires are I think under control, in fact I think they are out.
I hope this letter won't depress you as to the state of London, If it does I have failed in describing it. It is so hard to describe the damage that has been done to buildings and the amazing ordinariness of everyday -life. You might expect people to be talking of nothing else but the bombs. Students talk as much shop as ever. Women after the warnings sound hold their men back while they look at dresses in shop windows, (this afternoon even bus drivers don't know where they are going). Bus conductors find it hard to punch tickets to a place they don't know they will pass. Nobody minds. People are if anything better tempered. Perhaps everyone has suddenly become unconsciously adapted to the changes.
I know I would not wish to be any where else but London now.
I give up trying to explain how "ordinary" life in London seems and go to
Wednesday 11 Sept. 40.
No casualties in post last night, we all slept till 10 to 10 and missed a proper breakfast. Some people heard the nearest bomb they have heard - probably in Aldersgate.
A corner of Smithfield was hit by a bomb last night. The porters at Barts refused to be spotters on the roof at Barts - the result being that; students there are volunteering to take over.
Jim Merryfield is on tonight 12 - 2. He had said he wanted more excitement.
We have had quite a few warnings today - once with only 15 minutes between. Gresham Str. - the way we come in the daytime is full of traffic, parked cars and pedestrians. Going back after the last raid the entire student personnel of this post made a formation 2 abreast and charged the crowd. Even so the formation got rather split up. Finally we did a victory circle round the fountain.
Tonight after supper (& after listening to Churchills speech) we went for a drink. As the Vicarage is closed we went to the White Hart (just opposite Out Patients entrance)
It is interesting that all the Jewish students show signs of jitteriness - although if you did not know them you would not notice anything. Perhaps they have more imagination than the rest of us. Perhaps they realise more accurately what is happening.
When the siren finally went at about 9 tonight we hurriedly swallowed the M and B. I walked to the bike -and sped along Gresham Str. at a glorious rate. Soon after we could hear detonations not very near.
Everybody seems to be thinking that we shall receive some dirt and some casualties tonight, whether it is because the raids are beginning to have slight effect or whether Churchill's speech has filled people with slight apprehension, I cannot tell.
One of the A.R.P. blokes has been going round seeing that the picks shovels and hammers are in the shelters and checking over the oxyacetylene apparatus - but nobody really thinks we shall need them.

Thursday 12 Sept. 40.
The students are rather irritated that many of the part time nurses and personnel come and sleep at the post just to get a comfortable night - and they have the beds and mattresses we would normally have. Actually we sleep quite well (in fact very well indeed) in stretchers and umpteen blankets. At the beginning of the war students in city 1st Aid Posts were paid £3 a week. Now we are just kept (and meals in catering Coy are often a fight lasting an hour) and we get blame for everything - and incidentally quite wrongly (no there have been no pregnancies yet - not likely). For instance while I was at home some students went on the roof. A curtain caught fire and the students were blamed. They proved that they were not even on that staircase. The firemen of the offices (not A.R.P.- blamed them and said that they themselves never smoked in the building. Just then another one strolled by with a lighted cigarette in his mouth. I don't quite know why I should be championing the case of students like this. We retain (especially at our post) our usual great independence (everyone else including the doctor has to sign on and off). They know they have no real pull over any of us and I expect that is why we get blamed for things. We get on very well with the 1st Aid people (especially the Commandant) but there is some rift between 1st Aid post and the representatives of the uncooperative directors, firemen, doorkeepers, etc. Not that it worries us mu ch.
You could hear very little last night in the post so we went upstairs for a smoke.
I only heard one bomb but the ach-ach fire was pretty terrific. I imagine they were putting up curtains of H.E. and not waiting to single out a plane in the searchlight beams.
It is reported that H.M.S. Cossack was below Tower -Bridge and firing all last night. It is also reported and witnessed that A.A. Guns on lorries were in action last night, It is rumoured that naval 6ins guns were mounted on lorries and taking part in the fun. Gresham Str. was police blocked and we had to make a detour round an unexploded bomb. A bomb (not the heaviest) fell on the brick wall at the back of the nurses home. The wall is flat and a crater 8ft. - - 10ft deep burst a water main and flooded the nurses basement with 2ft of water. They were sleeping there too.- they moved.
Nurses sleeping there said the bang was not so loud as the one on Smithfield 300 yards away.
It is funny but very few of the windows above the crater are broken. These bombs are not the daisy cutter type at all but the piercing type exploding upwards, Lying flat is therefore of real value if caught.
Thankyou for the letter and the multifaced nurse that I got this morning. I am sorry the snap of C. looks skull like.
The lit side of the face is greatly underprinted and shows little of-the detail present in the negative. It is a very contrasty negative. I was interested that you appeared to be rather worried about London. I suppose it is only natural in spite of my Communiqués. If, however this state of things continues I shall have to change my letters from a really candid picture to everyday happenings spattered liberally with reports of all the worst happenings, to a cheering letter mentioning only the events likely to ease worry and keep a horried silence on destruction. That's a threat. Personally I should hate writing like that. Please realise that these letters are completely freely written with no unconscious or conscious censorship on my part. Please realise this. If you begin to feel you can't take it, tell me and I'll stop them and I'll send P.C's. saying 'in the pink' and nothing else.
You see the situation as it appears to us here isn't in the least depressing (and we're not kidding ourselves) and I suppose it is hard for us to realise that it might be worrying to people further away. I am all out to notice the first signs of nerves or jitteriness, far from minimising them, because I am interested in that side of it and in fact emphasise it.
Trying to look on London impersonally is as you would, I am amazed at the lack of real damage to life living or people's minds. Will go to eat.
You may think that I am writing these long letters because I am slightly worked up and want to work it out. It would be a natural thing to think but it is quite untrue. I like writing and it seems a heaven sent opportunity to record an interesting time to people away from it, Though I must say that the newspapers are far from being blacked out and are pretty good competitors.
The students working in Barts at nights have been appreciated by the governors and they are to get 10/- each for giving unstinted service in evacuating the basement of the nurses home.
This afternoon Merryfield and I were going to see "Convoy" and "Rebecca" at the Dominion but they would not let us out of the Tottenham Court Road tube because it was cordoned off above ground around an unexploded bomb. We were irritated because there was no indication of this at all at Chancery Lane station, We went to a news flick at Leicester Square. They had a news flick of the Saturday fire and general destruction. It was so terrific as full of destruction as any news flick I have seen that before we knew what we were doing we were feeling, glad we were not in London. It gave the impression that half London was flat or in flames, which is not of course anything like the truth, as I hope you realise by now. Another warning this afternoon. Very little bangs (A.A.) Everyone pleased with last nights barrage.
Must post and then eat.
Much Love,
I2/9/40. Paul.

P. S Friday 13 Sept. 40.
Haven't a stamp and didn't post last night. I was 'going out of the back gate when the sirens went. The now famous barrage started soon after I reached the post. Before going to bed I went upstairs to listen to the barrage which is nice and loud. Soon it stopped for about ½ hour. An A.R.P. 1st Aid post bloke who takes over from the door-keeper when the sirens go was obviously rather jittery. He was a little man and his main fear seemed to be that a big burley burglar would come in and he would be the only one to stop him. Doors would suddenly swing in and there didn't seem any wind. There is supposed to be a Gt. St. Helens ghost.

Commandant saw what she thought was a female housekeeper with a light on a high floor weeks ago. There is no housekeeper. Two police men came in last night, (one carrying a hatchet) saying the 1st Aid Post had rung to say a light was showing on the 5th floor.
It must have been control who rung up. Apparently a light had been visible before. It is quite a likely place to get a fifth columnist: the ½ German firm has quite a few Dutch named people who speak English, etc., I haven't quite got the hang of the business side of the place.
It was rumoured that a man was flashing a torch from under a coat on his arm on? London Bridge and was stabbed by the Home Guard with a bayonet.
Some others came up and we told cheerful stories of what a Polish airman had done to a German pilot who wore a ribbon for bombing Warsaw etc.,etc., and other horrific tales to keep his spirit up. I was latish to bed after that.
The warning was on when it was time to get up in the morning so we gladly just didn't' get up. Office workers coming down to the shelters were rather perturbed at our method of being alert. You mentioned pleased that we were getting some sleep.
We are getting our normal sleep or rather more than our normal sleep in actual fact. I get to sleep quickly and only once have I been awake before getting up time (Pause while I listen to Langden Davies giving a talk on the value of sleep;

No, - we sleep very well indeed. Any lack of beds or mattresses doesn't effect sleep on blankets piled in a stretcher, even so it is nice to be luxurious. As a result of conversations six super soft -mattresses have arrived for the students' private use.
The wireless news said "there had not been sufficient tin hats to completely equip emergency hospital staffs". Utter bunkum - Barts has had none given to them, we are still waiting for ours, with shrapnel or rather H.E. barrages about they would be welcome. They are on the way we are told. One or two Students have bought ones - but you cannot buy then now. I have not heard shell casings falling yet, I've only seen a few collected pieces - very jagged indeed.
There was a lot of running about 10-2. I had just bought a 1/- lunch at the canteen at the 1st Aid post when the all clear went and I had another cold meal. Canteen provided extremely good ham and pickles and bread and lemonade. Very nice but not very filling.
This afternoon two loudish explosions went off soon after each other. We first thought them D.As. but they were close together and we heard a plane above thick clouds. I believe they were in the Strand near Somerset House. The alert went after and before I had got my cup of tea. I ate the cake, made a sandwich of the bread, butter and jam and got tea at the post.
I would have posted this tonight but after washing and shaving and doing my toenail the sirens went. It is cold and wet nowadays so I put my mac on before racing to the post. The sky was clear and moonlit and silent.
I believe the guns started after I got here - but you don't hear them with people playing cards, drinking tea, washing up, reading, making mosaic curtains (a student) and chatting - and the wireless which happens now to be on.
Living the comfortable and safe life that I do. I don't realise the difficulties of travel. Not having to move far and having a bicycle (which is far the best transport) one doesn't notice the people who sometimes queue for buses after the all clear or search for a station that is working. Living in a bombed suburb and then having to travel long distances to work cannot be pleasant. But I don't really know. I haven't talked to anyone who does this sort of thing. The students don't seem worried by it. But on reflection there must be people who are having a hell of a time. But you would not notice it in the London streets. I notice Gamages have been closing at 4 o'clock out of consideration for their staff. All other shops I know have normal times though.
Now to really represent the life and spirit of London I should be living in the slums of the East End among normal mothers with children instead of carefree students and people with definite jobs to do and that below ground.
Personally I shouldn't mind if life was 'a bit more exciting but perhaps you wouldn't think so.
I expect we shall see life(and death) soon enough yet.
It is just lively enough now not to be boring. I don't suppose it is so pleasant for people who have friends or acquaintances who have been killed or injured.
That is Saturday 14th September 40
A quiet night (no casualties as usual). Barrage was loud but not so concentrated before going to bed. After that I don' t know what happened, if anything.
Will really try and post this now.
Much Love, PAUL. (9am Sat.).

Communiqué No.5
Barts EC 1 15/9/40

Dear parents
The usual life continues on breakfast on a Saturday morning (14 September) we heard that a barrage balloon had descended and had been nestling against the Henry VIII gate and the nurses home during the night. It was not there when I looked later in the day. There were no patients in SOPs. Last night (or evening) consisted of purples and whites and one or two red warnings changing every few minutes. During a white we found the nearest bomb. The young curate (from the nearby church - a wet) was sleeping in our shelter that night so we had to keep our barrage of jokes earlier. The slump in jokes that are new to me has disappeared due I suppose to meeting new consultants.
A heavy bomb was dropped on Gamages in Cheapside during the night. Although the women heard it I have not yet met a man at Barts or at the post who heard it. Gresham St. is spread with little bits of glass that have avoided the cleaners brush. More windows were broken than by any previous bomb. Streets a quarter of a mile away were littered with glass. I have not been to see the damage. Tum Tum Rees was in the entrance to the shelter near Trafalgar Square at 12:15 today (Sunday) quarter of an hour after alert. He saw a huge, attack by fighters. It was hit and fell following by black smoke. Two bailed out and parachuted down. Then the bombs exploded while it was high up and the plane fell in bits, the wings, twisting over, taking the longest to fall. The crowd was cheering with enthusiasm and tried to rush through the gap in the barbed wire of Admiralty Arch. Some parts landed at the bus station outside Victoria station. Another bomber was also shot down and seen by another student. One parachutist was drifting the towards the city. With my usual luck I saw nothing of this.
I have heard that a bomb has fallen in Bryanston Square but not near the office.

One hears that work shelters are choc a block some with four times the capacity with people seeking sleep at night . One student has just returned along the Central London Line and each platform was lined with people sleeping with their heads to the walls 2 ft apart leaving room to walk between their feet and the trains. They were mostly Jews - He thought probably from the East End. Apparently the ban on underground as shelters has at least been partly raised officially.
I have not heard any more near bombs for a week, I haven't seen any bits of shrapnel in the street. We are realizing that we are sitting (or sleeping) very pretty. We have not got our battle bowlers yet but I think somebody is rushing them through.

I can hear bangs of the barrage. A few minutes ago (while I was writing) I heard louder ones (bombs) and the lights have dimmed down and up once or twice.
The girls have gone to bed.

Dr Collier and Commandant are sleeping separately from us (and each other of course) by partitions. The one nurse who has to be up all night is popping about silently. She made us some tea a short while ago. She looks relatively pale faced, but is full of life. She doesn't seem to get much sleep during the day. So everything is very peaceful and quiet, with the alarm clock on the wireless filling the room with its almost hypnotic ticking.
The game of bridge has quickly broken up and some of the students have stalked off to bed carrying stretchers to C2 - our shelter. I will go up to listen to the night upstairs, where the man is on duty to receive cases at the door and then settle down to bed.
Dr Collier has just started to snore. My pipe has gone out in my mouth. I have found a tobacco that I really like. Rothmans Everest curly cut (1/4 1/2). It was very fresh and so on this peaceful scene of ours I will lay down my stumpy Woolworth pencil.

11:20pm Sunday, 15 September 1940

Going upstairs I began to hear anti aircraft barrage running across the sky. An aeroplane engine is droning slowly away from us. I am seated on the stairs on the ground floor. The guns are going off rapidly and continuously -sometimes 4 a second. It is said that planes have been going towards Westminster and also they have been diving. They think one plane has been exploded. Everyone is pleased and amazed at the 165 (later 185) planes that were bought down today.

The continuous noise of the planes and the continuous noise of gunfire are moving away.
Outside the white stone building is lit up by a bright moonlight sky veiled thinly by light clouds. After a heated argument on the base of a bomb dropping (and the speed it is traveling forwards when it reaches the ground) the boys descended to the quiet of the shelter and they go noisily to bed among merry quips sprinkled with swear words.
Good night.

Monday
I heard an awful story from an ARP bloke. A brick shelter was filled with people so that they could just move about standing up. Not many had gas masks. A bomb dropped and injured no one but the air was filled with rubble and dust. Some idiot shouted gas.
40 people were killed in the stampede. (I cannot of course vouch for it and the man wasn't there). The days are now very wet and because of the rain and because of the sirens we've slept most of the day at the post. This afternoon the alert was at 3 ½ hours and we missed anything to eat at tea - the first meal I've missed as a result of sirens.
There is very little teaching at Barts. There were no lectures anyway and SOPs and MOPs lack patients. I have been reading quiet a lot reclining in a deckchair in the post.
I went to Dirty Dicks today, it is a very odd pub and looks it.
[Dirty Dicks exists today at 202 Bishopsgate, City of London, EC2M 4NR.
Beer was 4 pennies]
Downstairs (where all is only 4d) hanging curious parched rabbits and swordfish swords covered with the dust just below the ceiling. It has the air of an old time smugglers den. The floor is covered with sawdust. Old theatre bills and a whole variety of antiques and junk litter the place. Apparently it has a lot of prostitutes in it at night. The only evidence of them was notices requesting unaccompanied ladies to not to remain longer than was required to drink (end of quote by Dirty Dick) (the exact wording was neater). The siren went while we were there. I was with a student who was going to be a vicar once. Then he took up seriously the art of a wine merchant - reading the art too. He had seen lots of high up people and had been into the private room of the director of the Bank of England on business etc. He could not stand the son of the businessman with whom he would become a partner and took up Medicine. He has lived and worked in the distressed East End and thinks that marvelous. The clergy there just aren't able to be wet. One Famous one runs and serves in a pub. A siren has gone while I was bathing, but tonight I had just put the shaving cream on my face. I shaved quickly and had one cut with the new blade. By the time I set out the barrage was in full blast. It wasn't directly overhead but near so I didn't stop on route. It has been going solidly since. Some bombs have been dropped and one whistling one has dropped near without exploding. Everyone is thrilled by the removal of the ton bomb by St Paul's.

Tuesday, 17 September 1940
Thank you for your letter and for M and S letter which was very interesting.
[Michael and Sybil letter from South Africa]
Went to the flicks today. It had been blowing 2-3 gales today.
This afternoon rang up Teddy and asked him if I might collect football boots (his) and oilskins from Ossulton Way. He is now living with Banger. I went up by trolley bus and saw the evidence of only three bombs in the way. The last was a small one in Falloden Way causing the buses to drive up Ossulton Way, which is convenient. It had landed in the middle of the road - more of the shop windows were broken. The warning came and went while I was there. Going by the bus to Highgate, I thought the conductor was being a very cheery. After a time when he said something I realized that it must be because he thought the raid was still on.
Oldish women queuing into a tube station tended to be irritable when pushed by others. But otherwise people are very tolerant. The girls of London seem more attractive or more numerous then usual.
When I entered Highgate Archway tube at 7:20 tonight I saw the crowds camping there with my own eyes. They were everywhere even at the slopes beside the escalators. Every station I went through (except Chancery Lane) were almost full - but leaving plenty of room to move. Except for St Paul's I did not notice Jews in large proportions. They were quite quietly settling by down on their bits of rugs as if they were on a picnic. They consisted mostly of women and children, older women, young women, many young children and here and there a son or a husband. Really it is rather a sad sight that leaves you feeling sick or resentful - I don't quite know why. They certainly are not the broken frightened people you would expect to find there.
The barrage started at 8:15 tonight and it has been going very hard indeed. The full moon is giving a dazzling light through a clear sky with only small puffs of cloud. By the way I have got the extra bit on my own civilian duty respirator. My one that always hangs at the door has always had one. I have been meaning to pack suits and other valuables in a suitcase and part them in the basement. It would be irritating to get them hit and Barts is about due to receive a bomb somewhere -judging by the number of other ones hit. We have been amused by the newspaper writings on the hospitals and nurses carrying on their work of mercy and stepping over rubble passing from ward to ward still carrying on and a photo showing surgeon pushing a bed among the wreckage. -Hardly a surgeon I think. One flowery article ended up by saying that they (hospital staff) deserve a lot. Well they would probably be pleased with a tin hat or so.

Wednesday, 18 September 1940
I am sorry I haven't posted this letter yet. I have been meaning to but before I have found someone with a pen and finished off the letter a siren seems to go. By the way thank you for the stamps. The 8th warning today went at 8 o'clock (the record so far) the ones that went before midday I could ignore without a

twinge of conscience as I was off duty. We had an hours SOPs this morning with one very interesting case. The sirens stop it. Girling Ball is going to talk to us on Monday on the possibility of evacuation of the main body of students and the teaching.
There are rather mixed feelings about Dr Collier and his methods of treatment. If we are allowed to do any stitching or other treatment we get no say as how it should be done and we don't usually agree with his ideas completely. We are also treating septic cases down here. We are, I believe, meant to give first aid only - the patients are meant to be sent to their panel doctor or outpatients.

There is no real asepsis here or even kaolin or sodium sulphate for suppuration yet we are treating septic cases who will probably spread infection to otherwise clear wounds. I've seen to be a lot of strange ORP nurses in the post tonight – none of them lovely -most of them ill tempered -they all knit.
I don't really know what they are expected to do. It doesn't take them long to clean the place out. They haven't been let near the patients we have had yet - luckily (We've had about 20 cases altogether) what they will be like to work with if there is a rush -God knows. The old hens have now been shooed off to roost.

Thursday, 19 September 1940
No casualties last night. In bed and before going to sleep we heard about 3 near bombs but no shaking. I believe they landed in Houndsditch or Shoreditch or somewhere.
Days are all coldish now with occasional long lasting drizzles. People seem to be developing throats and colds in the post. Will post this at last.
No sirens yet today

Much love Paul
10:45am 19th of September 1940

Communiqué No. 6

Barts EC. 1.
20 September 1940

Dear Parents

Thank you very much for the registered which I got this afternoon /Friday. I wasn't really very worried you can take "it", even so I thought a ultimatum might do you said! Answers to letter
Why did you send the £1 - it was to go towards the camera . (that isn't really an answer) Even so you will not find the £1 returned in this letter. !
1. 6 students are on duty at a time. There are eight altogether. Two go off from midday to midday. The following night those two are on call. One is first call, the other second call alternatively. It is our arrangement so that if one or two casualties came in, only one person (or persons 2, are woken during the night). Nearly every night now one is called.
2. No there is not a warden's post at the same place. There is a control room, which no one has seen. Office watchman or fireman are spotters on the roof (except when bombers are overhead when they get out of the way) There is someone at the main entrance – a first aid ARP man during a raid. Then there are the office super shelters (where we slept at night) and the first aid post itself in which sleep Dr Collier and Commandant (suitably separated). Nowadays there is a night nurse on duty. All these places are linked by phone to control each other and I believe the post (first aid) has an outside phone (which connects with the ARP centre and through which red's and whites and purples and yellows emerge.) The man at the door rings when a casualty arrives.
3. Dr Collier is a Guys man whose home is in the country. He works during the day in the city and comes to the post on a warning or at night to sleep. When we was away evacuating his family, we were in charge of cases.
A (slightly abnormal) student - he was stage manager of the plays whether we liked it or not elects bits of stuff from all his bits of stuff, shapes that round hundreds of hexagonal shaped cards (old DS tickets) and sews them together to make "mosaic curtains" -see?
4. Pat did say about Dennis. I don't remember details but he was all right then and had not been bombed recently.
5. I think I said in the last Comm (Which crossed with you letter) that Teddy, fed up with living alone, was living with his father at his house. Probably quite a good thing really. Letters would take longer reaching him. Yours wasn't at Ossulton Way when I went on Tuesday.

Thursday, 19 September 1940 (10:45 AM)

It was raining like cats and dogs (mostly dogs) all afternoon. I proudly lead a tour to see "my department". The studio (yes that's the official name) had its floor just flooded with water which was dripping from the plaster ceiling. I thought it might be just natural, but we decided to have a look at the roof as a shower of shrapnel had made holes in much of the glass roofing to OP's etc. We found the cause, hole in the lead roofing caused by one of the incendiary bombs falling on the hospital. It had been extinguished earlier by scornful students. They put it in a bucket of water and successfully after it had been spotted (by students). The water drained from the roof through onto the plaster ceiling which was otherwise intact. After such a direct challenge from Hitler I have decided to fight the war to the bitter end.
During the afternoon a plane, machine-gun fire, and two bombs were heard but no siren went and though it was rumoured that one at Kings was sounded. I arrived at the post one minute before the night siren sounded. Nothing special at night -barrage, some bombs, no casualties - complete sleep. (There were no sirens during the day at all).

Friday, 20 September 1940

There was a siren in the morning, but you wouldn't see much change in the public or the traffic. Today I cycled past St Pancras and saw the crater just by the goods station there. The buildings are bent inwards. The comparatively small crater is in the road but traffic is not stopped. The effects of blast are amazing and spread all around –a long way. All the windows of the office building opposite are smashed and the frames knocked silly. Merrifield said that a woman was half a mile away (maybe a 1/4) on one side of a bar and found herself at the other side after the big bang. It was caused by a land mine dropped by parachute on a clear moonlight night. A warden told him that the AA people could have exploded it in midair but that they hadn't received permission.
Friday night was uneventful as far as I can remember. In the afternoon I successfully broke into the Charterhouse College cloakroom through an unlocked window and unlocked my old locker there. I retrieved my squash racket (and ball), my cut throat, and some rugger boots (which I've had adapted and which fitted me comfortably). That being so I arranged to play rugger next day.

Saturday, 21 September 1940
No SOPS.
Travelled down to Hill End for the trial match - the first game of the new season. After changing we appeared slowly in groups onto the playing field ringed round with groups of nurses sitting in group's, sisters, a few of the staff and most obvious of all, because of their cat calls, remarks, cheering and general heckling, a crowd of blue uniformed convalescent soldiers. Once the game got underway there were amazingly quiet - they probably didn't understand most of the game. There were more than two teams full. We played four quarters of about 15 minutes each with changing round in between. I played all the time. The people quietly sitting around were hot, we were swimming and straining in sweat.
I enjoyed it and felt pretty good after it - through by the evening I had to souse an approaching headache with aspirin etc.
We had the usual after rugger evening in the pub and rather than have to walk home from St Pancreas I managed to get a bed at the shack where the students live in at Cell Barnes. [in St Alban's]. They were a noisy, practical joking amusing gang and I didn't get to sleep until relatively early. I just had a huge breakfast and came back in time for today's duty.
I was paying excess on a day return ticket, at St Alban's when a train full of children passed through station going northwards. Some of them gave a cheer as they went by. It may perhaps have been the effect of a slight hangover, but I felt an amazing sudden wave of physical pleasure (well it's weird to explain) at seeing the children from London. It was very surprising.
The youngish matter of fact ticket collector murmured to the world at large "wish I could get at him - the old bustard, I'd make him pay for all this".
I was interested in the bomb damage by the railway towards St Pancreas. There were about four that I saw - everyone had fallen where it could do the minimum possible damage - one had fallen on a wall between canal and goods yard.
The roof of St Pancreas might have made rather a good picture. With sunlight outside lighting up the end wall of windows, the crowds below were lit here and there by numerous stationary spotlights coming from shrapnel holes in the blacked out glass roof.
The trolley buses carry on now along varying routes sometimes using their batteries and frequently having their sticks maneuvered by cheering people with long poles.

This afternoon I lay in my room on my bed. At 4:15 PM the all clear woke me up (the alert had gone at 2:45). I had failed in my duty.
Another warning went after tea and tonight's waming started at 7:10 (or 19:10)

but I had finished dinner. When winter draws on there seems to be more competition between siren and dinner.

Tomorrow Billy Ball is to talk to us and ask our opinion (as if that would make my difference) on evacuation of the hospital (partial or almost complete) and the continuation of teaching. No one knows what's in the air. For myself I would rather stay and be kept and be in at the kill rather than more when move clinical material is not at all a certainty.
I feel that either things will quieten down and the outpatients department will fill up again (we wouldn't get OP's elsewhere) or else things would get worse with the possibility of daylight bombings in the city when we should be of use.
The position of the ordinary student is different - they feel a duty to rapid qualification and at the moment they get little sleep, less security and practically no teaching.

I am on first call tonight. The barrage is only vaguely audible here and we have had no work to do.

Monday, 22 September 1940 9 PM
The King is speaking again (on a recording) for the second time tonight. At the National Anthem some ready fools started standing up and we all followed (cursing) so as not to hurt feelings. I suppose they'll go through the necessary ceremony again. As I have written the above the light have dimmed down twice to quarter strength, flickered for a time and came up light again. The three of us students have agreed to a sit down strike. (Unnecessary-they didn't play G. S. the King). The lights were turned on in our shelter at about three this morning and Dr Collier was seeking student with knowledge of gynecology. One of the locums went and made his diagnosis. Dr Collier had suggested moving the pregnant woman, who had walked into the shelter, to friends but she were to Barts in the end, by ambulance during the raid. A whistling bomb sounded as the ambulance waited at Barts for the stretcher bearers and the woman struggled walking in herself. A flourishing boy was born in the ward half an hour later. (The student had thought two hours).
The lights in our building failed so our special shelter dynamo worked by a diesel motor was started. It works the seven anti-gas air conditioning plants to the shelter and all the lights. (All the lights are all right now).

Girling Ball addressed us this afternoon. It is difficult to make a commentary so soon. After it, most people considered it 95% hot air. He didn't seem to have anything difficult to say. He seemed more concerned that Barts should stand as Barts (Colonel Blimp for Barts attitude). It was a typical politician's speech George Binns (the efficient canoeist and camper) struck home when he asked Ball whether he considered it was better to be taught by Barts teachers with few patients or other teachers with a lot of patients. Put that way he was unable to answer. Some Cambridge students wanted to go to a Cambridge hospital (where there was not a lot of patients) - but if they did they would lose their Barts studentship. The ordinary students are fed up with the lack of patients and teaching at Barts, but Ball seemed to consider they had the jitters (which is an amazing suggestion) partially as he said he hadn't. I should think that he has (in spite of living at Mill Hill).
The students who would have come up to do SOPs from Hill End will not do so. There is a possibility that most students would be evacuated and billeted to Hill End and Friern and possibly the Royal Northern. Most students do not think that that means much availability material and would rather be apprenticed or allocated to LCC or provincial hospital (which Ball would not consider). There was an official suggestion that the City first aid post would no longer receive our assistance but that has since been changed I believe. It was, I think, thoughts by Harris that there would not be sufficient people willing to man them. The situation is obviously doubtful. There were very few out patients last week (304?) But they may well increase. At any rate nothing definite has been arranged and it's not likely to be for another week when events may have changed. Roonie James (of the students union) is very good and I think it will all settle out okay. So you see the whole thing was as indefinite as this has led you to think.
All we first aiders want is to carry on being kept, get as much "out patient" experience as possible (and probable) at Barts -and of course we should like tin hats.
My mind is sterile tonight -I have push the pen. As you probably guessed I've lost my fountain pen. The sleeves of my new pyjamas have concertinaed up to my elbows. And that's about the end of the conversation for tonight.
The truth is that I haven't really made up for the sleep lost at the weekend and also that there seem to have been more chatter and noise than usual tonight.
There is a game on Wed (at Hill End) and as its my day off I shall probably play -I think it is a good idea to get exercise and a change of air and interest. I have been put down as reserve for the Barts "A" match at Chislehurst on Sat. (Will have a bus to take us down)

Any questions? Any subjects of life in London that you would like me to bring into the spotlight. It is getting hard to know what to talk about without repeating. Life is much the same. Perhaps it is even rather boring. Perhaps I will go to bed.

The usual quiet uneventful night. The barrage was going as usual I suppose. The warning has gone again this morning before we got back to breakfast. Two of us are staying while the rest nodle off. The stop watch arrived yesterday and seems to be absolutely okay. (Except that it is set 1/5 sec behind zero -which matters little.) How much did it cost? Thank you for getting "Rose Window". Will send p.o. next time

Much love Paul.

Communiqué No.7
Barts,
E.C.1
24.Sept.1940

Dear Parents,
After conscientiously posting the letter on the way to breakfast I get news just afterwards. We were turned away from Gresham Street this morning which was full of glass and has a small deep crater. Coming into Barts I passed people as usual without them saying anything. I left my bike in the West Wing and walked in the square to go round the corner of the West Wing on the way to breakfast. On turning the corner I saw the unexpected sight. It is hard to remember what it all looked before the bomb fell there. It has knocked down a lot of the old college lecture theatres and completely blocked the passage between O.Ps. and the square. It is a very old part of the building and, except where one huge girder supports a high wall, it has all fallen pretty easily. The bomb luckily missed the West Wing - where students were sleeping in the basement and it missed the catering coy. - in fact it fell between. And, of course, it missed the wards. No one was injured. If they had been I expect it would have been different, but nobody has expressed annoyance. It was our turn anyway and it chose a good place to fall; but in spite of the considerable damage and expense it will cause, it is just another change in environment. It means a longer walk to meals. One of the ARP students was between the West Wing and the bombed building when it dropped. He and others threw themselves against the wall and were uninjured. Some of the windows at the back of the West Wing were broken, but mine are untouched. I have seen a lot of glass with wire netting incorporated in it, both at the Hospital and in Gresham Street. It stands blast extremely well. Except for very small bits which come away, the panes remain "whole" (though completely broken) the pieces held together by the wire. The bomb cannot have been a very big one (perhaps 500 lbs? some say 250 lbs. maybe less). Several people thought they heard one bomb drop without exploding.

Extra hot (?) News.
It has been reported from a reliable source (via Black) that it was a land mine which was dropped on Hill End Hospital last night. It can hardly have been unintentional or aimed at any other military objective. I understand it fell between two wards and that three people were injured by flying glass. It is feared that Kimber was untouched. The Hospital windows are particularly well protected against flying glass, otherwise I should imagine glass would have done more damage - knowing how a mine breaks windows.
I shall be playing rugger there tomorrow so will see it.

We thought the bomb at Barts would effect the question of evacuation, but the mine at Hill End (which presumably was aimed, whereas the Barts one may have been meant for may more (strategically important places) will effect it still more.
A dirty little tramp of a man was seen photographing the Barts wreckage this morning from the square. He was very nearly bundled off with violence - but it was Sir Harold Gillies and his "Compass" camera.
A whole gang of students and porters have just been lifting and pushing a Wolsley over a low wall from behind the West Wing under my window. It belongs to one of the staff, and the normal way out is blocked.
Tum Tum has just acquired a banjo. His playing consists of singing tunefully in harmony and strumming the same chord all the time.
Much love,
Paul.

Communiqué No.8
Barts, E.C.1
26 Sept 40

Dear Parents
The Barts Bomb, Comm.7, was full of destruction which was news (and incidentally news of value to Germany – they presumably wanted to hit the GPO and CTO)
The result was that the teaching was left and the letter. On Monday Philps the keen eye man gave a lecture to 6 of us and it was good too.

Tues 24 Sept 40 (cont.)
We had the usual ENTs but down in the casualty basement and it was the best one we've had yet, which isn't saying very much but it is a good sign. Only one was an air raid case – perforated ear drum 9 ft from a bomb.

Wed 25 September
At breakfast Evans (who runs the rugger) said that an ambulance was going to Hill End in a quarter of an hour. Rushed breakfast and collected rugger things (which hadn't been unpacked) and a razor.
We set out from London, 10 patients, mostly air raid cases (1 cancer), 6 students, a driver and an nurse. Soon the sirens went. The Green Line bus bumped along – the patients at the back springing up and down on their stretchers.
After a while, the chubby baby faced nurse with glasses came beaming round to cheer the patients with lively empty conversation. A young fat policemen contentedly and lazily (like Alan) pretended to be asleep and so avoided the nurse's bright conversation and her grinning face thrust near.
She lifted a woman patient up to see the countryside – she had never been out of London before and life was seeming strange.
We arrived and the patients were wheeled into the reception Hall to be sorted. We went to look at some patients. One ward was the home of the occupants of the "Shack" (of Mr Barkers) who had been warded for observation and possible cordite poisoning.
The rumours I had heard about Hill End were inaccurate – it received nothing. A land mine fell 50 yards from the Shack (I mean 50 yrds – it looked like 20) its parachute had not opened and it had made a crater about 30 feet across and 20 deep. Bits of stone were thrown ½ a mile away.
A lot of the windows in the wards near the hole in the earth were broken. Patches of tiles were removed for some distance and the Shack was battered about. Three patients (mental deficients) were injured by flying glass – one fairly severely. The students had found themselves instinctively under their beds. They were pretty shocked and said that another bomb near them would upset them (this was 24 hrs later). They looked pretty good. At Hill End one ½ inch fibre board black out and anti blast window shutter was split right across.
The landmine was dropped by a bomber that was caught by the searchlights and shot down – nobody thought it intentional. Hill End seems to be on the bombers route to or from London.
The game of rugger didn't materialise. We messed about, someone called it training and finally played 5 a side which wasn't as good as a proper game.
Saw Pinocchio again and stayed the night in one of the beds used by the students on night duty. Before going to bed we sat drinking tea from a night nurse during the air raid – they were wearing tin hats. I got a whole hunk of bread and cheese and a huge breakfast next morning.
I only ate one egg, they all had two. (We hardly ever see them at Barts)
There was just about as much firing there as in London and though very few bombs have been dropped (more in St Alban's) the planes pass over continuously.
The cancer case died at 10.20.

Thursday 26 Sept.
I did some shopping and saw a lot of damage in London some of it in the last few days.
You have seen photos of the worst damage in the newspapers but seeing it all at once quite impressed me.
I passed Ilfords in Holborn and saw that they were packing up the remains of their stock after a fire and bomb at the back of the building. It is the only place that I can get my plates.
There was a nicely spoken pleasant man at the entrance (not the usual crowd). He looked around seeking some HP2 vest pocket plates. Then he went into the building and brought back a packet of fine grain slow backed pan plates which he presented me with the compliment's of Ilford Ltd. He said the plate dept. of the Ilford works had been hit.
There was a large crater in Tottenham Court Road and quite a lot of Oxford St shops had been hit or gutted out. In spite of this there were the usual Oxford St crowd to look at dresses in windows un-separated by glass. Big stores that looked wrecked had notices saying "All Departments Open" and they were carrying on in what space was left as if nothing had happened. (I'm afraid that sound rather like journalism)
I was very pleased to find that the "Hog in Pound" was unaffected. It served up a simply wonderful rump steak. I was howled down when I described its juice, its redness, its taste as your teeth sunk in, by the other students struggling with the catering coy's liver.
I had heard that a bomb had fallen through onto people sleeping in the Ticket Hall at Marble Arch – but they must have been just underground in a subway leading to the hall.
Tonight the Vicarage opened again under stricter management.

Friday 27 Sept 40
I am writing this on Sunday and I've an awful lot to catch up on and there's a raid on.
The new plans for Barts students were unfolded today.
As far as they effect me it means this – (planes overhead – continue [to write this communiqué] on mortuary slab in W.W. basement – using the slab as a desk not as a last resting place.) – I shall stay at the first aid post for 3 months. Half the students there, are leaving and 4 more are coming – probably Perkins Allardice and Story among them.
Another new arrangement is that when the alert goes during the day only one

student goes to the post. The others have to be in Barts (where they can continue working) and if they are wanted they can be called by phone. Everyone sleeps at the post at night. The one off day in four still holds.
The only criticism is that the large number of casualties would be at daytime – but we'd soon know about that without needing a telephone call.
It means that ("all clear") we can settle down to work, bathing, developing and sundry other little things without the thought of being uprooted and sent flying to our post by ever warning.
The general scheme is that no students will come from Hill End to do S.O.P.s. All the students now doing S.O.P.s that would do M.O.P.s in Oct. will stay at Barts with about ½ the people now doing M.O.P.s etc. So very roughly $^{1}/_{3}$ – ½ the people now here will go to Friern to do special subjects etc.etc. There are, I believe, a good selection of teaching cases at Friern evacuated from other hospitals.
You letter arrive today at peacetime rate.
The press cutting is interesting. I am sorry Harry has gone to his "permanent deep shelter" – but he didn't like war so I suppose his death is classed as "relief". I am afraid I can't answer "my poor old parent" about relieving nature underground. There is talk about providing sanitary arrangements (Elsans I suppose) but I haven't seen. Nor have I detected the presence of nature relieved in abnormal sites. I expect they go upstairs to the station w.c.'s when other noises (outside) are quiet or perhaps the L.P.T.B. come round with P. and S. buckets.
Yes I would like my scarf now and the blue shirt.
On Friday afternoon we saw something of the air attack (when 130 were shot down). I didn't have to go to the post. Some people saw two planes shot down. There weren't many over but the barrage was going all out for a time for the first time during the day.

Sat 28 Sept 40
In the morning as Ilfords were hit I went round to pick up the V.P.plates. I got two super XX (which have been stopped). They had 4 spools but it seemed rather selfish to collect them perhaps unnecessarily - I have 8 unused spools – ready for emergencies. I am hoping to carry on with plates. I got another dozen HP2 backed but the newest find was a packet of F.P.I. (Fine Grain Pan with a speed equal to the old H.P.2 (twice the speed of Verichrome) – most fine grain pans are slower than verichrome.
I have only one left but if you come across Ilford FPI plates (4 ½ x 6 cm) preferably backed please snaffle them up. Also any HP2 plates (backed) – I don't think you will though.
I feel that even if I am unable to print or even develop plates or films that they would keep and be very interesting (perhaps) later –after the war.
In the afternoon I got a lift down to Sudbury to play for the A. the bloke took us off the direct route to see damage in suburban areas. Complete houses, here and there were down leaving the next door ones still up. Two cars were completely bent up in front of one house. One house had a crater in the garden – but it had all been repaired and put back like new there were apparently few deaths. At one roundabout on important roads a bomb (or bombs??) had missed all the roads and made craters in the middle of the roundabout. The craters had been sandbagged and roofed and are now shelters.
One gas works (near a hospital and a school) had received fire bombs and later high explosives. A car was standing but it had been put out of action. Apparently 6 roof watchers were killed.
The rugger pitch was fairly hard but not so hard as the bits of shrapnel we picked off it. We were playing the wasps. It was our first match and was quite an enjoyable game but their scrum were better but not completely so. I played wing forward which I like very much but have a lot to learn. It is a semi ¾ position and has lots of possibilities. We were beaten 29-0. we discovered afterwards that we were playing the Wasps 1st XV not their A team.
I think it unlikely that I shall be a regular member of the A. We will have a practice game on Wed – real this time. Chislehurst is impractical – it is "full of shrapnel and German bombers" and is more difficult to get to. They are hoping to use Mill Hill or perhaps Friern as the home ground.
Coming back 6.30 – 7.00 on the tube the stations were just as chock full as they could possible be allowing for people to lie or sit down and for passengers to pass. There were a P.C. or more to each station to see fair play.
Epidemics would spread rapidly – except that there is quite a draught of air through the stations.
Although the people are crowded in most of all platforms, if they were spread out evenly over the space taken by the lines they would not seem so crowded. The tubes are probably not as unhealthy as most people imagine.

Sunday 29 Sept 40
A quiet day with little done.
Just before writing this comm.. in ink, I found a telephone message from Joan Winn – she had phoned yesterday. So I have just rung up Gt Barnard St. Joan was not there. Knowing how depressed Mrs Winn could be, I asked without enthusiasm to speak to her. I knew Guildford St and all that area had got it bad.
She was amazing – she was quite cheery. She asked after you two and was glad you were safe in York. She had not had a letter from M and S for 3 weeks – had I heard from them – she did hope they were alright. I was rather amused and suggested they were more likely to be worrying about her.

Of course I didn't know what she was doing now so that she told me she was working at Frascati's [restaurant] getting paid well, not a hard job, with plenty of good food. It was something to do with the fruit.
I asked about the bombing in Bloomsbury – yes, she had been in a private shelter (she described laughingly how it had been used to grow mushrooms – but they had cleaned then out now). Yes, a bomb had fallen (she described where – it sounded about 50 yards or so as far as I can remember) but it had "only shaken them" (and that only physically I gathered).
She had been at Frascati's when the big bomb had gone off in Tottenham Ct Road near the Dominion Cinema (mentioned earlier in the letter).
She said how they all thought it was coming for them. They got a terrific blast and they found themselves all covered with dirt so that they looked like niggers so that they all laughed……
Then the siren went at identical times at both ends of the wire. We felt rather awkwardly that we ought to stop using the phone. She said how nice it was to hear my voice and so after arranging that Joan would ring when she was up next Sunday we rang off. I was amazed as I walked back and began impatiently writing the Comm. up to date.
You can tell Sybil that apart from the danger of her mother being actually hit, she is alright.
We have heard good rumours that Friern Hospital was hit last night. It seems that about 6 looney patients were killed and about 3 nurses (not Barts) killed or seriously injured and likely to die.
P.S.
Mrs Winn also said in the call that she had been sleeping at Frascati's but they've stopped doing evening meals now so she is off in the afternoon.
So last night she slept in an unused part of Chancery Lane Station. She said it was not crowded there and that it could take four times the number of people. She had slept well last night. Normally she didn't sleep at all – but snatched a few hours during the day (all quite cheery) I gathered all was not well with Joan.
At dinner tonight people who were in "Barts in Herts" the great Hill End Xmas show were talking over the squabbles and fights and successes they had last year. They then talked of a show for this year which would probably be a mobile affair that might go on an ARP tour. It seems that we are chock full of talent and probably too much. It doesn't look as if there will be any nurses in it this time. – not that they could act (that is to say the ones who were in B in H. So perhaps I may worm my way as a "female" part and recapture my former glamorous years.

Much Love Paul 8pm Sun 29 Sept 40

Communiqué No.9
Barts, E.C.1
30 Sept,1940
Horrific. Adults Only.

Dear Parents,
Monday 30 Sept.
Tuesday 1 Oct.
It is impossible to write of "life on the London front" as episodes from day to day - unless I wrote down when each siren or all clear goes. That would be boring, and anyhow I've forgotten.
Life has settled down to a regular unexciting routine.
The siren goes fairly often during the day. Aeroplanes can be heard, and sometimes seen, but it is very rare to hear a bomb drop. In the last sentence two bombs have just been dropped very near (Leadenhall St.?) and shaken the floor with two loud crumps. People away from the wireless could hear the whistles as they fell, from down in the 1st.Aid Post. (9.15pm)
Also during the day, you may hear delayed action bombs go off, quite loudly but never near.
Then of course there is the after dinner siren - and that means something. A few minutes after that goes (or sometimes before) the barrage starts tuning up. It doesn't seem to go at any regular hour, but somehow I seem to time it almost instinctively. Without knowing the time I have twice just entered the post when the siren started. Another time it has gone when I was on the way, and again when I was just collecting my bicycle. Tonight I was half way there when it started. You seem to cultivate a sixth sense in the dark as well as a sharp eye to detect pedestrians (who always prefer the road to the pavement). Coming through the archway to night I thought I should tinkle my bell and soon after came upon a pedestrian moving out of the way. Perhaps it is understandable that in war time we should develop our more primitive talents.
The street lighting is very helpful - it is enough to see where you are going. Often we cycle to the post after the barrage has started, because we've not had enough warning, perhaps (though seldom) because we have been drinking, or because of shaving etc. You can tell if it is too hot and sometimes we wait a bit, but usually the ride is uneventful, except for bangs and flashes round about.
I have yet to hear shrapnel falling - and I have yet to get my tin hat- actually we've almost forgotten about them because they don't seem so necessary now.
Until those bombs, which have just fallen now (there may have been a D?A? among them (no)) there have been no bombs near here or Barts, since the ones I wrote about previously. Tottenham Court Road has been the nearest recently.

Today, being the beginning of another three months, we are in a period of transition. Four people have left and four new people have come into the post:-
E.S.Perkins -mother joining father in N.W.England.
Ismay - from Jo'burg. New photographer.
Jimmy Knott - Plays music & jazz on piano.
Hewitt - Quiet, tallish, pleasant,
the remaining ones are:-
D.Bartlett- Our new chief ("Pal") rot him.
Phillipps -"A Nigger & a gentleman"-tells Englishmen how to be English.
Graham Stack - Also a child mentally-Stage manager & mosaic curtains.- & myself (of course).
At the hospital too we have changed. Today we started doing M.O.P's down in the basement in the rifle range, and this afternoon we did "childrens" through two warnings, in the safety of the surgery basement.
Allardice has the room next to mine. He and Storey and Merryfield are at Aldermanbury first aid post - they're welcome.
J.F.Pearce (who was Mause at 77 Victoria Street) is also now in the West Wing.
We also do skins,V.D. and I believe psychotherapy. As no one else is doing S.0.P's we have the run of the surgery O.P dressings and minor ops. as well as the look in on the E.N.Ts. eyes, orthopaedics, etc.
They aren't running in the previous manner but if we peck about you can usually find a lot to learn.
Yesterday afternoon I found a surgery ward round (there are about four wards almost full of S.& M. patients). Naunton Morgan was talking about gastric & duodenal ulcers perforating. There were two cases in the ward. During the talk, a perforated gastric was brought into the ward and then we went to the theatre to see a strangulated hernia about to be operated on. Before I had only heard of such things.
Tomorrow there is a practice game at Hill End, and at midday Harris is to talk to us on the teaching under the new conditions. In the best Gram Swing or Priestley manner - Good Night.
2 Oct.40. (Early morning 1.15.)
The building has been hit. We were all asleep. We all woke to hear the bang. There was very little shaking. There was a noise of roofs and glass falling. Ismay jumped out of bed - but couldn't see anything from the doorway but dust. Everybody started talking excitedly, not a note of fear, but excited.
We're off to untrap a man
2.15 a.m. Back to bed. War has come to Gt. St. Helens. Story in morning.
Written 40 hours later.
After we were woken by the bomb we started talking.
Then Dr.Collier came in and asked the two students on call to dress and go to the post to be ready for casualties.
Then I started writing the reactions of the students on the spot but I was interrupted and was only able to scribble down - we're off to untrap a man.

Now read on.
It was roughly five minutes after the bomb had dropped and I was writing when Dr.Collier again came in with another man. There was an atmosphere of seriousness when he (the man) explained that the building had been hit and a man had been trapped and would we come and help to get him out.
Before he had finished speaking we were up and pulling clothes on over our pyjamas. We set off, following one of the office firemen in uniform. There wasn't much talking. The trapped man was a roof watcher, his legs were visible sticking out and he was talking, that was all. -
We climbed up and up in file, the doctor following me, shining our torches on the stairs and lighting up scruntching glass. The man in front said nothing but "keep your torches down - most of the windows have gone".
On we climbed up nine floors. No one felt like singing or joking but just climbed up steadily wondering what we should see. We reached the top floor and trampling across bits of wall and ceiling we reached the bottom of a small flight of iron steps that lead onto the roof.
We came out into the open. The stars were shining, a wind was blowing and we could hear aeroplanes overhead and a searchlight lit the sky two miles away. The raid was still on. We could see the fire now across on another part of the building. The fire was burning out a room on the top floor and the one beneath. The firemen had already damped it down but it was still blazing.
We walked round the bend in the roof towards the fire passing the word down the line whenever we came to some steps up or a step down. We joined the group of firemen.
They were talking to Jock and told him that the Doctor had arrived.
Then we joined in and helped get him out. We could see his two legs sticking up at 45 degrees with his toes uppermost. His face and body were hidden by a huge slab of concrete (roughly 6ft. square and 18 inches deep)
The man with the torch was directing operations. I went to a scaffold pole that they had already wedged under a corner of the slab and prepared myself to put my whole weight on it. One of the men on it warned me not to press hard as the pole might break. These men impressed me as very good indeed - I think they were either the office firemen or probably A.F.S. The official rescue party didn't arrive until after we'd finished.
We levered a bit, a man pulled on the legs, another man held him. The man with the torch and the other men encouraged jock to help as they strained to get

him out. It looked an impossible job. Another man said his clothes had got caught. People said cut it. Eventually after about five minutes they had got him right out. They rushed to lift him and the doctor went to him. He cannot have been taking the weight of the block which seemed to have prevented him falling backwards and down. (It was dark except for the torches and it is difficult to be sure of all the details) He was not obviously maimed. The doctor went down as Jock was carried down supported on two men's shoulders.

But there were two roof watchers and people began to ask whether "Mutty" was downstairs or had he been up there as well. We began to look around. Very soon some one shone a light on the upturned gaze of Mutty. His face looked flat and seemed to match the dust and sand bags which lay on his legs and body.

He did not make any movement and someone said in a matter of fact way- "He's done for".

They thought of sending for the doctor. Then someone suggested that one of the students could make sure he was dead. I must confess that I didn't jump at the suggestion. Hewitt walked forward from the circle of men and held a torch over his mouth to see if his breath fogged the shining metal. He also felt for his heart. I followed and had a look. He had a knock through his frontal bone just above the eyes and death must have been instantaneous.

We left him and went down. The firemen carried on with the fire that had been blowing smoke onto us. I nearly lost myself going back in the building which was now dripping.

Down in the first aid post Jock was being treated. Commandant was flapping about fidgeting round him. Collier was treating his abrasions. Jock seemed able to move freely although a shoulder wars painful. He wasn't stripped for examination but given morphine and A.T.S. and a cigarette. Later in the night he was taken to Barts.

We felt we were just standing around and merely being in the way, so we went to bed, an hour after the bomb. we had been on the roof about ¼ hour.

Later two other casualties were given first aid, one a fireman who had a stitch put in his lip.

Mutty was brought down from the roof and layed in the garage underground.

The whole business wasn't exactly nice- but I'm glad I didn't miss it.

We fidgeted and turned and got to sleep in half an hour.

Wednesday 2 October.

Talk from Harris about teaching and clinical material.

As there were no people doing S.O.Ps. and although patients were in a short time there was a rapid turnover and a chance to examine acute cases (which we could not see in peace time with the large number of students). There are now 70 students at Barts (about 50 living in).

This and the slower running of trains made me late for rugger. I played about hour, as wing three quarter, in a rag game - and even touched down.

Saw "Pinocchio" yet again with a party. Getting to know the film fairly well now.

Thursday 3 October.

At night we slept in the same shelter as the 1st.Aid A.R.P. people. Phillips and Ismay rather snobbish about it. Actually I didn't sleep so well because they work two hour shifts at the door and the light they leave on was by my bed.

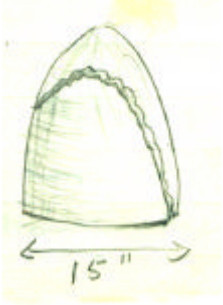
Friday 4 October.

We had asked Collier and he took us onto the roof to see the wreckage from different angles. The scene of a moonlight kiss, though recognisable, doesn't look the same in broad daylight. A picture doesn't look just the same as just a photo and although the impressions I got on seeing it at night were sometimes inaccurate, it was interesting and enlightening to see the empty stage this morning. It is useful to have a "photographic" record as well as a "picture".

It was very evident that Jock had been saved by a miracle of circumstances. The block was supported by loose lead (?) water piping. Below him was an almost certain fall to ground level. The block prevented him from falling. The block itself did not seem so big. It was about 4 ft. by 5ft and was the thickness of a layer of bricks surfaced on either side by concrete (or is it cement)

The scaffold pole belonged to builders who had been painting the building. At night we had all thought that what we had been standing on was as firm as a rock. That was the biggest calculation that daylight changed. The opinion of most people (but not architects) was that if we had seen how unsafe it was we would not have ventured by the edge of the building.

I am not so sure that it is so unsafe, There were no sand bags near Mutty (merely broken brick dust etc.). The look out post, a reinforced bell shelter surrounded by sandbags, was untouched. It doesn't give good visibility and they were standing outside. Apparently they did not hear the bomb.



The nose cap of the bomb was found in halves on either side of the building. It isn't easy to lift half of it. People think it is a 500 kilo bomb (½ ton)

From the amount of damage that has been done you wouldn't think it was so big, but it is a new ferro-concrete building. My own hunch was that it was combined with a fire bomb (oil or incendiary) and therefore less explosive. I don't see how else the fire was started. It is inconceivable that a second incendiary bomb fell in the same place at the same time. I don't know if an H.E can start a fire in a building.

The steel framework has stood up to it all.

Thank you very much for the letter and scarf and shirt which arrived to day. Your bit about Miss Steele made me absolutely wild. It is really treason. Quite apart from the fact that she shouldn't talk about such things officially - that is relatively unimportant - but for a person of position (who people would believe as having inside knowledge) to give out completely false information is just super fifth column work whether conscious or not. I have felt like writing a snorter to Miss Steele but obviously I can't, but dammit I ought to know what Barts looks like and if she will pay the £50 fine, I'll get photos to prove it. Sorry- but it is rather disheartening to know how rumours can spread. I expect though you were glad to get these communiqués. If you get a chance you might give Miss Steele a swift kick on her flannel parts- not that it would effect her usefulness much. Her news of Thomas's too is of course all wrong. I believe that two of the seven blocks have been hit- but you needn't tell her that (it's useful information) but you can say definitely that she is wrong.

So please don't believe any other rumours that you may hear about London. In a very few "generations" of conversation they are inaccurate and it only makes it more difficult to find what it was that started the rumour. Unless the person you question has first hand experience, you should ignore all other evidence of authenticity as valueless and merely wait to confirm it later.

As you know I have written of all the interesting rumours that have reached me - they are of some value if valued in correct proportion, but as you know some of them have proved either untrue (land mine at Hill End) or (which is worse) slightly true and very misleading.

We started skins this morning with Roxburgh who is good. At lunch to day we received a most amazing letter from Girling Ball. Everyone is just astounded at the blatant waste of paper and the pompous trumpet blowing of the one Barts person who seems to have the jitters and who I expect will be a Lord or a Bart at the end of the war.

Yes I had noticed the lunch time ballet and have been thinking of going. I remember seeing E.R.Cook's letter. I vaguely remember him as being a sixth form bright minded seedy bodied boy with glasses. I believe he was appointed prefect (possibly head) after I left of course. (Sorry I see he says he's head prefect in his letter- I'd forgotten) He was more of a classics person than an O.T.C. enthusiast I should imagine. I didn't realize he was quite so bad as his letter shows.

I personally think that it is the most emotional type of women who stick it better than the more "sensible" type when it comes to the actual point. The imaginative people worry a lot before hand, but are more prepared for it when it happens and do whatever there is to do. But I have not had much experience to strengthen this solemn opinion.

I am on duty at the post now, the warning went soon after lunch (12.30) and the all clear hasn't gone yet (tea time). Although I am missing my tea, I have not missed clinical experience. A man was brought in on a stretcher in deep coma, able to speak but not intelligently. He was a diabetic having quite a large dose of insulin. He was suffering from too much insulin in relation to the amount of food he had had. He had not eaten his lunch which was in his bag. We made him sip down strong sugar solution and he was quite cheery when someone relieved me for tea. I got more chance of studying him and his pulse etc. as there were no highly efficient Barts nurses to discourage.

The raid is still on. I've had tea and will post this on the way back to the post. (Enclosed cutting and Ball's letter). There is a longer newspaper story of "our bomb" in. the Evening News- I will get a copy or copy it, so that you can compare it. All clear going.

5.30pm 4th.Oct.

Much love, Paul

P.S. Here is quote by London Evening News Wed Oct.2nd. 1940, occupying 3½ inches of column in the news of bombed London. It is two paragraphs of a double column story of heroism etc. It is quite inaccurate as to the Doctor and two helpers. There were about 4-6 firemen who did it all.

Beginning of Quote –

CENTRAL LONDON.

On the roof of a six storey office building in CENTRAL LONDON a doctor and two helpers worked early to day to rescue a man who had been trapped by wreckage caused by a high explosive bomb.

The bomb crashed near a well in the centre of the building. On the roof were two staff watchers, one of whom an elderly man named Griffiths was killed instantly. The other was trapped under about a ton of debris. The doctor at a first aid post on the ground floor (not true, P.R.) heard the explosion and said "We must see about those spotters"

"HIS DUTY"

With two other men he went to the roof. There was danger of further collapse of wreckage at any moment, but the three worked feverishly (insult P.R.) on the edge of the six floor drop to free the trapped man. (It was only next morning that they realised the danger of further collapse. P.R.) Eventually they drew him to safety and he was taken to hospital.

Mr.Griffiths, who had been on the firm's fire fighting staff for ten years, was keeping watch for incendiary bombs.

A friend stated-"The old fellow insisted on doing the work. He considered that it was his duty."

End of quote by E.N. Alert has gone again.

M.L. P.

Barts EC 1
6 Oct 1940

Communiqué No.10

Saturday 5 Oct 40
I took a patient in MOPs – one of the many peptic ulcers. He had had pains for ten years – they got worse last January (he said time were worrying them). Then again it got worse three weeks ago when the blitzkrieg started. He was an engineer at day and doing wardens duty at night and getting little sleep. After Spence had finished my patient, the siren called me away to the post.
The A lost against De Haviland. Coming back from Edgware at 6.30 I passed the sheltering crowds in all the stations.
If you come and spend a day in London walking about and seeing all the inordinate damage and seeing Londoners during the alert and the all clear (I doubt if you'd tell the difference) then you would think the damage although great by peacetime standards, yet smaller then you had imagined from the news and the gossip.
People who have visited London have been less impressed than I by the damage visible in every other big street in the bombed areas. Somehow damage to property leaves you fairly cold.
But it is impossible to pass through stations filled with Londoners without being rather moved. It seems to mean more than any other evidence of air raids.
It is difficult to know why because what would impress and possibly surprise you still more is the cheerfulness and ease of these underground communities.
At dinner time the platforms were filled with cheerful chattering reminiscent of a cheery indoor swimming bath or holiday crowd.
Although there are officials, policemen, porters and women porters (who always chat to the male porters) I have yet to see one of them ordering, telling or even asking the people to do anything. They and the travellers that they impede, have infinite patience and good tempers. Bossy officials would have and golden chance of bossing people here but no one does (and it is not necessary).
Groups of people chat to their neighbours, a baby crying is an event to catch everyone's attention. Children playing or children fast asleep under the feet of passengers are common sights. No, the people look happy enough but they are not in their own homes.
Fights cannot be unknown but I've never yet seen anyone arguing or even forming groups to complain about politics. I think the only hint of ill feeling is against young able bodied men.
You see a bore chatting on to a group of people but not one of the family group shows boredom or irritation.
I saw the first underground newspaper seller. I have also seen fibre sentry huts marked "Men" or "Women" but not enough.
When I came out at St Paul's into the darkness, there was the sound of anti aircraft fire thundering and flashing above. It is just like an enormous thunderstorm, but without the rain.
A man had heard shrapnel falling in the road but I wanted my dinner and stepped out into the dark empty street far removed from the bright tubes below. It seemed better to keep close to the walls. Passing by the GPO I heard (for the first time) the pretty tinkling of shrapnel falling, one or two bits fell lightly it seemed and bounced once in the road others hit the roofs sounding like bits of glass.
I sheltered alone in a doorway of the Post Office and waited two minutes for the storm to pass before going underground and along to the dining room in Barts.

I thought that I would have liked a tin hat, but the chances of being hit by a piece of shrapnel without previous warning are smaller than the chances of your trousers falling off in the street. It does not come down as a shower but 5 pieces might fall on the area the size of a rugger pitch in half a minute.
After dinner the barrage was still roaring and I did not risk the slight chance of being hit by shrapnel on my off duty – not that I would do when on duty actually. Not being able easily to borrow a tin hat, I waited. After ten minutes absolute silence reigned and I was able to cycle to the post in perfect peace.
The illustrated London News this week is very good and contains excellent photos of typical underground scenes.

Sunday 6 Oct 40
At 11 O'clock I went along to 16 Gt Ormond and Joan arrives as I was still at the door. She ordered me to give her the usual Wynn kiss on the cheek.
[Joan Wynn was the sister of Paul's brother's, wife Sybil.]

Mrs Wynn was still in bed where she had slept the last two nights. She had some binoculars on the dressing table and she said she could watch dog fights from the bed. There had been another bomb near Frascati's and as they had to black over the roof which was all glass, and generally clear up the place which would take a week to a month she was on holiday.
She wasn't going to look for another job because she didn't think she would get a better one.
[Frascati was an Italian Restaurant in London]

She had got a standing invitation to visit a friend in the country but she didn't think would go. Dorothy, who is nearly completely cured and who is rigidly carrying on with treatment, had begged her to go and stay with them this winter but she did not feel at home in the country. She had got friends around her and although it would be nice with Dorothy she couldn't really feel quite the same as being in her own place.
The woman who runs 16 Great Ormond St, looks upon her as her last friend. She is of German birth and won't go to a public shelter because she is so sensitive about it. She is torn between two loyalties and when she hears the German "boys" coming over she says she keeping wishing they would go away before they get hurt. She was born in Germany but spent most of her life in Bloomsbury. Mrs Wynn said that people in shelters did complain about the "bloody foreigners" (refugees) but she thought it was silly of Mrs Hawarth when everybody in the neighbourhood had known her.
Joan was cheerier that she usually was and just full of talk. She looked quite smart in her uniform – she had specially made the skirt herself. I had not seen them since the "Athlone Castle" and Joan laughed to think of what she would have said if someone had told her she would be in the King's Uniform.

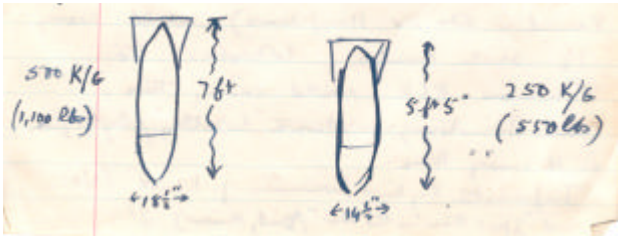
The reference to the Athlone Castle is to Michael and Sybil's departure to South Africa in August 1939, just before war was declared.

She is doing all the messing for the other girls at Reigate and enjoying the work. She shares a room with quite an intelligent dress designer who has lost her fiancée in the war. The other girls are apparently quite pretty but rather gormless. Joan is rather the life and soul and is jealously envied for the way she manages to get away with "pranks". They all go out in bundles, man hunting and get given drinks freely by all the men. She had been to three dances in the week and had been out with a different man each night.
She is apparently engaged to a London Irish (or is it Scottish) but I don't know if Mrs Wynn knows. We had assumed they were engaged when she was still after John whom she say, she hasn't forgotten yet. He is a plain man, a stockbroker but he's now in hospital and she had a difficult time tracing where he had got to. He has motored from Hertfordshire several times just to have dinner with her. (These are of course vital secrets).
She has also being playing Hitler's mother in camp concerts. From April for some time she was just near Aldershott and often was taken to the "Victoria" to drink in the "Officers and Cadets" bar. When she had meals, she had not gone through the lounge, even so, it seemed rather amazing you didn't run into her. It was at a time when she hadn't been writing to you or knew where you were.

[Mary at this time may have been visiting Colin, on training, at Aldershott, and will have stayed at the Victoria Hotel.]
There were both very cheery (in case, they write because I think I wasn't) I had a stomach ache after a late night.
Mrs Wynn had received a letter from Sybil and this really did cause them worry.
It was more because of what she didn't write and because there was no usual joke that Mrs Wynn was so sure that Sybil was not "herself" and was worried about something.
I worked it out. It had been written a week after the blitzkrieg when they would have received only wireless and newspaper news about air raids. It might have been that, I had to point out.
Joan is going on leave to Dorothy soon and would like to stay the night at Stonegate if she can. She will be writing to you.

Monday 7th Oct 1940
Another student felt the need of a tin hat (strongly) for the first time. A piece of shrapnel fell (he says) within four feet of him. He was rather a fool to be out in it actually, but even so I think we should chance them. There is a shortage. Collier is making renewed efforts and in writing this time and I think we should get them soon now.
The funeral of "Mutty" was held today. One or two of the ARP (as opposed to student ARPs) went to it and Collier had hurriedly got some flowers for which we have contributed a few pennies in spite of his discouragement.
Collier and Commandant were "on heat" tonight. She had pinched his handkerchief and he was fighting for it. We were all very amused to hear the sounds of the chase and to see her flushed excited face. This afternoon I went to the flicks. Twice the manager apologetically went through the ceremony of announcing the raid. "Ladies and Gentlemen of audience they're here again" and advised people to stay. Nobody went.
I saw "Saloon Bar" with Gordon Harker, Anna Konstan and Elizabeth Allen. The story is nothing much but all the central characters are very good. Most of the action takes place in the saloon bar and the film is treated in the manner of a French film.
With it was a film called Fear and ---- (some persons name) . It was not an M of I film, [Ministry of Information] it was very much better. It traces fear from childhood and ends with wartime. The moral points to parents – the treatment of children's fears. I don't know whether the point is explained very well but the photography and direction is extraordinarily good. [The film was Fear and Peter Brown – a Central Council for Health Education Film] It is well worth seeing.

Tum Tum recognised the school scenes of Dulwich where they were filming two months ago.
There was also an American domestic comedy which amused us (Pop pays All) which isn't worth going to see.
I was looking at the Illustrated London News which gives information about the bombs.



If as I was told our bomb was 15" diameter (measured from nose cap which is the same diameter) then it was a ¼ ton bomb, but if as Collier has since said and he's been dealing with the experts, it was 18" then it was a half tonner (as I previously wrote)
It looked more to me like a 18" but I haven't measured it yet. It is probably 1½ inches thick which would be about right as far as I can remember.
To continue these technicalities, a Junkers 87 K would carry one such bomb (ton) and Dornier 215 (Flying Pencil – like our Hampdens) would carry 1 ½ such bombs. Whereas the Junkers 86 K could carry two. Our Armstrong-Whitworth "Whitley" could carry three.
Information by kind permission of "ILN" (1/0) and "spot then in the air" (Daily Mirror) 3rd.

Tuesday 8 Oct 1940
This morning we all got up very early (soon after seven) I changed into my suit to test its cash value and went collecting for the second Hospital's Day of the Year. I developed, for most people, a more subtle psychological approach, (which was also less tiring).
Making sure that they could see me in time to get their money out, instead of looking hopefully or accosting each in turn, which rather makes them try and get past successfully without paying up.
I give them an all seeing rather soulful look, so that even if they pretended to look for enemy planes they could see by my slight cynical sorrowful smile that their little evasions did not convince me in the least.
After a time, I was looking so pitiful and was so conscious pricking that quite a few with flowers seemed to be dying to get another. This psychological accosting, with no attempt to ask them, is of course highly skilled and is to be varied with individual cases. I got far more than usual, a lot of pennies, but quite a lot of silver, so that in the end no more coins would go in the tin. (PS I collected £4-1-10)
I heard later that everybody else had done as well. There were fewer collectors and as there were two raids people took more of a vested interest in hospitals.
A bomb hit a bus in Grays Inn Road. There were 4 B.I.D.s at Barts and several (14) casualties. The most severe of which had one leg amputated and the other fractured. Apparently the collectors near, cashed in from the startled spectators.
1 leg taken off, 1 arm taken off, 1 eye out, 2 abdominal wounds, cuts and fractures – and I did not see them. The man whose arm was amputated walked to the hospital himself and his hand was hanging from his elbow by skin and nothing else. He had no tourniquets – the arteries must have contracted up spontaneously.
The barrage started about seven. After about 1½ pints at the Vicarage I set out alone to the post. (I'm afraid, you will think I drink a lot, if you judge from the number of times I mention beer – actually I don't.)
The moon is getting bigger and there is very little cloud nowadays. So that when I set out (after hearing some bombs drop) I could see the track of a plane across the moon.
I could also see a glow from a big fire somewhere in the south. The blitz has started again.
Well to keep this commentary quite honest, I didn't particularly like it. I was by myself, my imagination was more flowery and less reasonable, I hadn't a tin hat and also I had had some beer. As I was cycling I could hear the barrage clapping loudly above, there were some searchlight beams, pointing pretty well above and you could hear the plane droning, very clearly and it is the drone, without the noise of bombs that have actually dropped as well as the possibility now of shrapnel (which however you would get a warning of) that made me feel uncomfortable and unreasonable.
Actually I think tiredness that makes you most liable to this. I was wondering whether to slow up – go to a doorway or find a shelter but decided it better to step on it rather than prolong the uncertainty. I heard a swish – swish – swish – swish landmine but no bang. I did not feel any acute fright (such as you get when a mouse runs out) nor did I feel any fear that you would normally admit to a friend even discussing it pretty frankly but I did feel the beginnings of thoughts and apprehensions starting to go unreasonable.
[At can be stated that even later in life Paul was unreasonably terrified of mice]

But the most interesting thing of all which convinced me that I must be being slightly upset, was the feeling, on walking downstairs to the post, of my legs starting (uncontrollable) as if they might fail to support me.

Now having written this I am terribly afraid that you will think ah! At last his morale is going he is in a state of nerves, the war is having its effect. – Well I am not and nor is there any cause for the slightest worry on your part. But not wanting to be at all dishonest in my reactions, I have rather exaggerated them.
I can say however that as a result, I suppose, of some tiredness and continued destruction, by myself I don't think that I am quite so completely carefree or scornful of everything as before.
I also feel that it is unwise now that the blitz is starting again, to make a habit of cycling through the barrage as that seems to be rather courting the possibility of a bit of shrapnel – or even a bomb, not that that is really at all likely – but it is, I think, a possibility.
Well there you are – honest scientific introspection without any hesitation that it might worry you.

Wednesday 9 Oct 40
Maxwell took MOP's for my first time. He is quite a pleasant man, fair and not tall, but he talks like Ralph [Ralph Thorp, an architect uncle] which seems all wrong.
Again the barrage went before we had finished dinner. I don't think I would ever miss any dinner because of the siren.
There were quite a lot of bombs during the night but I was not wakened until 6.00am when I heard about 5 incendiaries making louder bangs as each fell. We did not think they had hit the building.

Thurday 10 Oct 40
Coming out of the post into Leadenhall Street in the miserable wetness of an October morning, it was a warming sight to see a large 6ft. flame burning quietly from a gas main in a crater, 150 yards to the left. The direct route back was barred by another similar "brazier" with people round staring.
During the night the Mobile Unit from Unilever House went out to Fetters Lane where a semi-surface shelter was hit. They got out two patients which were treated – 30 were killed.
There are several surface shelters near a mainline Southern Station. The station was out of use but did not seem damaged except for a layer of glass on the ground. One of the surface shelters was "flat" – it did not seem as if anyone had been inside. Although, of course, they are some shelter and provide companionship, these shelters are no better for sleeping in than a house. I know I would rather sleep in my own comfortable bed and I can understand well why people have gone to the tubes – where they do get real sleep – and although they can be quite cheery without any sleep at night, it is bound to tell.
Geffrey Bourne (the physician – and artist) thinks that the only reason why the government were against deep shelters was because the labour party were for them.
It is of course of the utmost importance that people doing work of value to the war (and most is) should not expect anything more than the minimum safety; it is quite different when their wives and children are facing the same or greater danger at the same time. No one wants to go down in a deep shelter and do nothing (none of the ordinary public that is) but the government couldn't get away from the idea that deep shelters meant "safety first" and no carrying on with business.
I saw a busy bus stop at about six today. People were queuing up. The buses were nearly full and would stop to take one or two shepherded on by L.P.T.B officials. Taxis coasted hopefully by but no one stopped them.
One after another a car would stop and people would lean out to hear where the driver was going. Often the L.P.T.B. man would enquire and call out the destination so that people in the queue who were going there could bundle in there. Then another car would draw up. The taxis went by.

Friday 11 Oct 40
A quiet night last night. I had got down to the post before the siren. Had a riotous game of ping pong – half the post rushing around the table picking up and dropping the bat and trying to hit the ball.
There was a slight fog on the river today which made everything extraordinarily picturesque and even hid "ARANDORA STAR" paint in huge letters on the South Bank.
Although, especially at the rush hour people queue for buses and the trams already full, the river buses which everyone welcomed in the press, run with only about six passengers and they are probably sightseers. You can travel from Westminster to Woolwich and back for 9d.
There are some very beautiful bits of camouflage in London. Although covered with painted canvas some of them you can pass and think they are something quite different. Most of them a spy would recognise but I suppose that does not really matter.
Your letter and the ties arrived on Wednesday evening. I like the ties very much indeed especially the fancy one (rather like one of Mike's) which suits the suit. Thank you very much for sending them. I haven't bought any shirts yet but should before the purchase tax. I think the plain blue Vantellas we looked at are rather too hackneyed and civil servant.

Saturday 12 Oct 40
One patient in MOPs today – suffering from diarrhoea 10 –15 times a day, a solder.
I was going to play rugger but the 1st XV match was cancelled so some of us were replaced from the A.
This afternoon I was on duty at the post. After a raid, Commandant went to lunch and as Collier was away for the day I was the only medico in charge – but nothing came in.
Collier this morning managed to collect 8 tin hats from White – the Dr. in charge of the city posts who had rung him up specially to say we had some. The A.R.P. people here are a bit bitter that they haven't been given any and the nurses who travel either "backwards" or forward every morning (and sometimes on buses during raids) think that they should have some too. But we don't really feel bad about our brains being considered a more valuable military objective. Mine fits perfectly and they all look very chic and rather exclusive being a light blue grey.
I was rather surprised to find a role of lavatory paper different from the usual plain hospital sheets. On it were written mottoes intended I suppose to encourage our "morale" ("Moral Re-armament" please copy). They were

1. "Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today"
2. "If at first you don't succeed Try Try Again !"
3. "May your efforts never be denied"
4. "Whatever you do at home do here, we want you to feel at home."
5. "It is better to have tried and failed than never to have tried at all"
6. "DON'T WORRY" Everything will come alright in the end"
7.

I heard a recording of a talk after the six o'clock news by a Yorkshireman in London I wonder if you heard it.
He had based his ideas of London on newspapers and news photos (where the greatest destruction is the greatest news) and when he came up to London to see it for himself although he saw all the worst damage as well as what had amazed him and what he couldn't stop talking about (to the surprise of Londoners) was how very normal everything was. He saw the damage which is fairly extensive now, but it was a fraction of what he had expected but what had really impressed him was how much of London there was still undamaged and how normal life was. I wonder if you heard it - because it is what I have tried to say myself. Living here all the time, one forgets that side of it until you are reminded by newcomers to London. It remains the same all the time and most of our interest goes rather to new damage (when there is any) because it is new. But really, the important side of life in London is taken for granted and forgotten.
The last two nights have been very quiet. Last night the all clear went at 1 o'clock. There was no fog or mist last night either. The night before some of the suburbs were bombed.

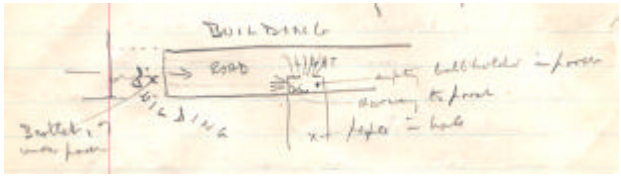
It is now Tuesday as I write and it has seemed rather an effort to keep up to date. Without the long waits at the post at each raid, every day and with the ping-pong and more chatting and discussions among the present crowd who are not so quiet and dignified as we were the last 3 months – There seems to be less time with nothing to do but be inspired and write.
Our original route to the post is now cleared again and some of the alternative ways we had been using are blocked. The moon is full, the nights are clear and raids are almost reaching the original tempo.

Sunday 13 Oct 40
After lunch I was wandering about, proudly wearing my new hat and looking, I imagined, like a news commentator in the front line! Suddenly there was a single and loud report. Kennedy (a permanent student who was in charge of the West Wing) started getting away excited and hurried us down below the West Wing. As he wouldn't go first and as he didn't seem happy in the open, I went down. He thought it was a bomb. Later someone said it was a bomb in the Balls Pond Road – though how they knew so soon, was not clear. Another student was reported to have seen a landmine shot in mid air – but I found no one who had heard this from him.
We lay reclining on the beds down in basement and soon visitors from the wards started trooping in. This shelter, where the 20 Barts students and the housemen sleep is like a wine vault with whitewashed arches. It has supporting girders and below the roof run whitewashed insulated hot water pipes. The ward visitors didn't seem able to easily relax or sit down on the forms, until it was suggested and I suppose they didn't like leaving their relatives in the ward. We on the other hand were resting easily on the beds and making ourselves as comfortable as we liked. They seemed a bit surprised seeing us so at home.
Then the wireless was put on and we listened to a gardening talk. After that the London Symphony Orchestra played lively overture, inspired by the Hebrides. The wireless was a good one and the symphonies came through very well. The students lay back or sat up quiet and still. The unusual setting would havemade rather a good film scene.After the all clear I rushed to catch the firemen who had been on the roof and got him to open the clinical photography (Art Studio INC.) dept.

He was sure the very loud report was the single warning shot the barrage fires, but this time, they had used a big naval gun from a destroyer in the river. So I had been right. He was in the navy in the last war and the Boer War. I got down to a batch of developing as I hadn't done any since the small incendiary fell on the studio roof.

The barrage had started before the end of dinner Bartlett and I chatted on merrily, then I took plates out of the wash and we defaecated in comfort. By the time we set out it was later than usual. As we approached the entrance to the post we could see that a plane was overhead in approximate line with the narrow street by the bursting of ach-ach shells.

I was in front and as I came under the archway 30 yards from the post, I saw 4-6 flashes of brilliant light on the roadway and building at the entrance. Bartlett saw two. We couldn't understand it. It dawned on me that it was coming from the entrance and Bartlett distinctly remembers it coming through the window at the side of the post.



The light was very bright indeed and as if from a bulb and roughly was on a second, off a second, and so on.

It stopped and we waited. Then I jumped on the pedal and rushed down to the entrance. Inside was the old doorkeeper who was relieved on an air raid warning by the first aid men. He said good evening and seemed slightly (but distinctly) embarrassed. He shone a torch (not bright) to show us the steps.

Bartlett mentioned the light to the people chatting in the hall and they assumed that he was lighting his pipe. We were not convinced. We have told Collier and I don't think he's done much. We have tested it, before a raid, with a torch which doesn't give the same result. There is an empty bulb holder which, if it is not alive, is at least on the same fuse as the black out bulb. Although the man is short, we can reach the holder and a bulb, put in and out of there, would not be seen by the men in the hall and would, it appears, produce the effect we saw. But the bright light would not easily be seen by aircraft, but the light shining from the windows up and along the narrow street might be visible and might even point a direction. We have not tested to see if a pipe being light and flaring up would account for it and it might well. The man has been with the firm for many years, we don't know if he has been to the firm's offices in Germany, he talks to the directors as if they know him well. He drinks often, his wife has gone off with another man and he is very bitter, he has done extra jobs and extra hours for the directors. Lights have been seen from the building before and the police have been in when a light was visible from one of the upper storeys at night. He was extremely agitated when we were treating jock after he was trapped on the roof. This doesn't necessarily mean a guilty conscience of course but he is far more wrought up than the others I noted then. The street outside the entrance is out of the way and not often seen by policemen. I doubt if the roof watchers would see the light (as they are over the parapet) but anyway they usually come down when flames are overhead and go up every so often and this doorkeeper would know their movements.

So we don't quite know what to make of it. It is just possible that he could be a fifth columnist, it could all fit in. But it may be nothing. But we students have taken it on ourselves to keep quiet and to keep our eyes open and maybe take watches to see if it happens again. Please don't chat about this to anyone else.

It is difficult nowadays to understand the concern over this type of event but in wartime one light out of place was seen as a serious issue. It is reminiscent of a similar event reported from Hammersmith Terrace by the Rowntree family during World War 1.

Monday 14 Oct 40

Did some more developing today. At night Hewitt and I were going later to snoop. When the barrage started hotter than usual he did not see keen to go then (he is 32). The others also were waiting as it was rather hot. So to fill in time we went to the "Vicarage". There we saw the unusual sight of two old bulky Barts sisters drinking half pints of beer imperturbably in their uniform.

I am afraid the camera probably wobbled. We waited a bit longer and as most of us had not gone down earlier, we gave up our snooping idea.

The moon was very bright and we could see the glow of fires which light a balloon above.

I followed Hewitt and Bartlett and we saw from Aldersgate St a gas main burning brilliantly in the roadway by St. Paul's (St Paul's Graveyard ?). There were other less visible fires on buildings all around.

Pedalling at full speed in bottom gear I couldn't reach up with the 2 figures in the front, their tin hat reflecting the full moon as they sped along the moonlight streets.

Our tin hats differ from others in that they have three little holes in the brim in front of the straps on either side. They (intentionally or not) produce a whistling by the ears in any wind. Personally I prefer to hear freely and have filled them with durafix.

[Durafix was an cellulose acetate based glue, good for most jobs, particularly mending china.]

Perkins had been home and he produced 8 cigars which had been presented to his father who doesn't smoke. We created a mild sensation and a considerable atmosphere as we all smoked them.
Perkins had to get out of bed, as we were going to sleep, to a case of shock (but with a BP of 160). [BP usually drops below the normal of 140 with shock]. A woman who had been under some debris. She came from "Spillers" shelter. We have had several cases from there. We (or Collier) seem to have built up quite a 1st Aid Practice – none of the other posts get anything like the number of cases or the variety.
We had a miscarriage on a previous night (did I mention it ?).

Tuesday 15 Oct 40
Nothing on or near Barts in spite of gas beacon. I did casualty outpatients this morning. I put 2 stitches in a man's finger. He said it was the first time he had had any stitches. I refrained from mentioning it was the first time I had done any. (He may have guessed).
This afternoon I went to the flicks with Merryfield (He is Jim now as we all use Christian names since the war). He, Dennis (Bartlett) and I have the same day off. We saw "Foreign Correspondent" which is a good film, worth seeing. It is an adventure thing but is full of very amusing little bits. Joel McCrea in the end broadcasts from the BBC during and amazing studio air raid. It is a very impressive finish however and made one want to send help to Londoners at once. I think most of the audiences feel a little embarrassed when Bombed London comes onto the screen – especially when the commentator's usually impressive "blah" falls on knowing unbelieving ears.
This film should bring the USA into the war sooner.
It is "Slotty's" (Perkins) 21st birthday today and I eat his superb birthday cake (like a wedding cake) and drank his sherry and beer. I haven't done anything in return.
We have heard a few bombs tonight (incendiaries I think) but it is not as hot as last night. Mike Phillips was doing a locum and was spotting from the Barts roof last night when it was "hot" . He saw Molotov Breadbaskets and fires. He is rather subdued and untalkative this evening. The others are going off to sleep. He is reading until I turn off the light.
I am hoping to get a holiday soon. I may get a locum from Sat 2nd November – Would this be alright.
I am sorry I have been such a time with this letter – I have been meaning to make up a parcel.

Wednesday 16th Oct 40
Last night was the hottest night we have had round us. As we cycled back to breakfast this morning, the route was lined with heaps of broken glass.
At 2.30 am this morning we were woken by a series of explosions and waves of aeroplane engines. But things had been happening since midnight. The 1st Aider on the door heard about a dozen (or more) landmines explode in their characteristic drawn out manner and without a previous whistling. The firemen watching on the roof saw a landmine dropping on it parachute and they moved rapidly. It fell on a nearby police station (¼ mile away) and didn't explode. The policemen came to one of our air shelters.
Another was caught by its parachute on the same building near Jim Merryfields parents flat where he was staying the night and where an Indian student has a flat. The place was cleared and they've been going for the fuses. I heard of yet another that didn't explode.
One did explode on a building near our route and on the opposite side of a military objective which did not seem damaged sufficiently to put it out of action.
Even so none of the other posts received casualties, though I think Barts must have done.
We had four and three of us had to get up and treats cuts with flying glass. They were caught by bomb blasts while in a building treating a fire. The most severe case had a cut ear lobe (1/2") and a skin cut (2") behind the ear.
Mine had a bruise and a small flap of skin cut from his eye lid. Collier didn't consider a stitch necessary – (I am glad as he wasn't a very good patient). The eye was washed after examination then a pad applied and I bandaged it up and then the Commandant bandaged it up (I know a bit more about eye bandaging now.)
Even though we lost only an hours sleep we all seemed rather shagged this morning.
This afternoon we are busy evacuating patients – a lot of them from the Royal Free I believe.
I am afraid there are stories of looting by people in the A.R.P. The only direct stories I have heard of this sort of thing was from a student at Barts detailed off to identify BID's (Brought in Dead) from their possessions. They are brought in an ambulance with an attendant. Then a Barts porter laid out the body and emptied the pocket contents. The student was not informed until about ½ hours after the body came in. He found about 8/6 in silver in the pockets. The body went off to the city mortuary or something.
Later relatives came up enquiring about the money. There was not even the silver in the pockets but they were certain there had been £20 in notes in a pocket book. They were quite reasonable and weren't demanding it nor did

they suspect the student. He was quite convinced they were speaking the truth and that they were certain he had the money as they know how much he had been paid and paid out etc. They allowed for cost of petrol and oil and this tallied with the receipt which the student had found. But it will be impossible to trace who had taken it. Unless there is some more watertight scheme, there is going to be unhappiness and ill feeling. Valuables might be put in a bag at once and go to a central depot.
I have two journals, I will send them or bring them later.
Sorry I've been such a time
Much Love
Paul
2pm Wed 16th Oct 40

Found on a scrap of paper
I am afraid that Sunday 6 Oct. – Mon 7 Oct - all about seeing Joan ans Mrs Winn are mislaid or have I sent them out of order - (came with No. 11 but inserted after page 8 of 10) - I can definitely get a locum Nov 2nd – 18th travelling those days Love Paul Wed 16 Oct

Communiqué No.11
Barts E.C.1.
18 Oct 40

Dear Parents

Thank you for the letter which arrived today./ Friday.
I hope you have the 10th comm. by now. I saw the YMC had been hit by the Tottenham Court Rd bomb. I am sorry about the Lowerdale boy. He is the first person that I have known to be injured by air raids. Thank you for quoting M's letter I am glad he has a boat lucky devil. He seems to be the only one of the family to be working hard in this war. But perhaps salvage or graves are very strong – you don't say.

Wed 16 Oct 40
Wednesday was one of the very quiet nights. In spite of this a B.I.D. came into the post at about 6 am. Being the first at the post it was all very secret and shrouded in mystery (none of the nurses were allowed to come into the same room.) As far as I could make out in spite of the sacred hush hush it was a woman with heart failure from shock.

Thursday 17 Oct 40
I had heard from another student that you could go from Westminster to Woolwich and back for 9d. he said that they were very particular about cameras and that the docks consisted of masses of flat wreckage. As he had been, I was prepared and interested at the chance of seeing just how badly the docks had been demolished after the many and big raids. I was rather surprised that the public were allowed to see it all – which only goes to show how misleading even first hand information is. (later and sorry, it wasn't 1st hand the student had been told 2nd hand).
We started of from Westminster Pier in one of the small pleasure boats (late Dunkirk) and steamed slowly against the tide.
The bus conductor in bus uniform came up and clicked the return ticket cheerily and never even asked about cameras. I had mine with me but of course had no intention of using it.
The sun came through the gloomy clouds as we approached Billingsgate Pier (there was a mine near Tower Bridge Pier) and we changed into a waiting tug which except for the conductor and us passengers was just an ordinary tug.
A man and a woman sat in the stern over the tiller. The tug was far faster than the first boat and we surged forward overtaking and re-overtaking a patrolling naval vessel with a machine gun as we stopped beside landing stages on either side of the river. We passed through miles of dockland and never did we see the stretches of waste dock that I was expecting. There was of course some damage but it seemed terribly little. You had to look for it. In one place there was a complete line of warehouses that were wrecked. That was the worst I saw. Otherwise there were individual buildings wrecked or gutted by fire but most of the shore was line after line of normal dockland.
Haw Haw had said that the Port of London was closed and I wonder if that was true as it seemed quite possible but at one point I happened to count up.

Haw Haw refers to Lord Haw-Haw, a nickname applied to World War II-era broadcaster William Joyce, remembered for his pro-German propaganda broadcasts that opened with *"Germany calling, Germany calling"*, spoken in an affected upper-class English accent.

Actually in sight were four large ocean going cargo ships going down to the sea on the hide tide, and four barges sailing down. There may have been more. I didn't bother to get up and see if any were hidden by the funnel and bridge.
The only difference there seemed to be was that there were not so many tugs pulling barges (but the tide may have been wrong).
In the rough water a wave landed on the skirt of a woman sitting in the stern. I laughed.
At some of the landing stages were ambulance ships (the larger pleasure boats).

The tide had changed when I came back on a different tug. There was an air raid at Woolwich and I heard something (incendiary) drop fairly near but I didn't see. I was rather disappointed.
One of the locals didn't hear it and rushed me verbally into a shelter. I hadn't seen inside one before. I saw a group of 8 planes flying southward in formation and two fighters banking and diving at each other. I thought I might have seen a really air raid. I have never seen a bomb explode yet or a bomber coming down in flames – but I was disappointed.
The journey though billed as two hours took little more than an hour. I recommend the trip as the best propaganda for tired morale. I was amazed. Although by peace time standards the damage was considerable, by war time standards it seemed almost insignificant. And seeing all the ships and barges and tugs and water and the sailing barges again – it was like a holiday. I enjoyed the trip very much and I think the other sightseers did too.
It was a quiet night. Bartlett received reliable first hand information that two Drs at Thomas's (which has received more than one bomb) had been arrested as fifth columnists. They had flashing car headlights outside in the street and had said something was wrong with the magneto or something. This is highly confidential and was not supposed to have been passed on by Bartlett to me – so please don't tell anyone.
What appears to be rather a fanciful rumour has been widespread and has reached me from two sources. It is that Charlie Kunz was due to broadcast one night and they apologised officially that he was unable to take part. The next morning it was announced in the papers that a prominent dance band leader had been arrested for fifth column activities. The rumour is that Charlie Kunz was sending messages by playing the piano in a certain way. Well it could be true but I don't believe it yet.

Friday 18 Oct 40
The raids nowadays seem to be less common and keep to the rush hours at morning middle and evening but they are not really regular.
The nurses and the ARP people of the Ports have got tin hats like ours now.
The usual strays and children. Franklin look rather a twerp but is very sound. He is very hot against purgatives for children at all – only make sure the stools are soft by regulating food and liquid paraffin. There was a very typical case. The mother had bad bowels herself and didn't want her infant to be the same. Due to a misunderstanding of the principles and by misjudgements on training (the child played with a dolls house and was allowed to do her pooh anywhere (eg by the wireless) the child was getting a powder every other day which in fact contained calamine which causes constipation anyhow. There were two such cases.
Then there was a youngish girl who had been suffering from asthma attacks. Franklin (when the mother was not there) explained that most asthma was present in an unhappy love atmosphere. The mother and father were separated and the daughter was all the mother had left and so suffered. After the daughter being in hospital and after long chats the mother realized that she could exist with out her daughter and that her daughter would be better with less attention from her.
We interrupt this news service to give you the hottest news.

8.30 Sat 19th Oct 40
A bomb (ail) has started a small fire in the 6th and 7th floor – they didn't discover it on the first inspection in spite of the fire indicators. People have been rather going in small circles. One of the useless bunch of women (nurses) apparently nearly fainted. There has been a long procession of them to the ladies lav. on the 1st floor, a wonderful sight.
We thought the building had been hit by a smallish bomb and we got our tin hats and scarves and went through into the main part of the floor to await orders. Then we sere told it had landed in the street at the back. Now official news from Collier is that an ail bomb pierced the roof by a lift shaft which leads down by this room. It started fires on the 6th and 7th floor which were soon put out. One of the men got irritated with a desk which wasn't really in the way and he chucked it out if the window smashing an incredible amount of glass on the way down.

Friday Cont.
Bartlett and I came down latish as the guns started and waited ¾ hour under the archway with the entrance in view. In spite of planes coming over we did not see any recurrence of the light at the door. Then we got board and went in.

Saturday 19th Oct 40
We had four patients in MOP's – a good morning. Two were suffering from temporary weakness of a hand due to pressure, while sleeping on a nerve in the armpit.
In the afternoon we travelled by bus to Sidcup to play rugger. I was struck by the damage to southern London which was fairly evenly spread. Most streets had one building demolished leaving the rest standing. About half the houses had some broken windows. Several churches and one or two schools were hit and one military objective, a railway station. Blocks of flat stand up well. Only one street had glass in the gutters signifying a recent raid.

Stan Hewitt (of the first) saw one of the two bombers hit. The siren went. Soon after there was the first bang from a gun, then and explosion as the plane got a direct hit and fell in smoke and pieces.
We played on the ground of the R.A.P.C. and had a big audience of soldiers and A.T.S., officers and ladies and the C.O. himself. It was a very nice ground with a grandstand. Their ordinary changing place was damaged by a landmine which also completely destroyed four houses – so we had cold showers instead.
They said it was the best game they'd had and certainly we enjoyed it very much indeed. The first half was very fast indeed. There were some very nice manoeuvres on both sides but particularly by Allardice who became the idol of the crowd by scoring two magnificent tries. With two of their men, we were one short in the first half but our scrum was taller and heavier than theirs. Merryfield played very well and a new clinical student consistently kicked very well. They scored one try but won.
It is said that our ground at Chislehurst has been hit (by a mine ?). The abortion of a grandstand which was first put up with so much fuss and money is down. We hitchhiked back though actually it cost us more in the end.
I was tired before the game – by the evening I had a stiff neck and a headache. One of our men put his knee out. On of theirs injured his collar bone. Allardice injured his forearm which is now splinted.
The night was fairly quiet but several incendiaries and bread baskets fell. We got our hit (as I have written). We do not really suspect the doorman but we took the trouble to chat to him and we found out where he was when the ail bomb fell.
I have come to the conclusion that the older people (men and women) seem to be more effected by bombs and air raids. People (and those who have been thro' the last war as well) aren't exactly nervous openly but they worry much more. You may say that they know better what can happen but actually I think "we younger ones" have a better sense of proportion and rather than being "devil may care" and scornful of the danger, we know and recognise only real danger.
I suppose marriage and a worried wife make people feel more responsible and we (apart from parents who are not quite the same – being not so dependant on us) are free of all that.
When you feel that someone else is really worried that you might get injured, their worry far exceeds you own.
Your worry is based on things happening at the time, whereas theirs is based on possibility and last longer.
Although it is nice to think that some people would be sorry if you were injured or killed, it is far more comfortable to be independent and free. I suppose that is how our fighter pilots manage to do their work better than older people would.
I am convinced too that loss of sleep and tiredness are the parents of worry fear and "defeatism".
Then when you reach the end of life you worry even less than we do. Old people don't calculate the possibility of danger but merely disregard it. They sleep on top floors at night.;
As we were going to bed there was another explosion and the lights dimmed down to a red filament and went out. They were on again five minutes later. We slept all night (as usual)

Sunday 20th Oct 40
I heard that the Great Hall at Charterhouse had caught fire after an incendiary last night.
I went and saw it from the outside. The roof had gone leaving a charred wooden skeleton of supports.
Some of the big window was broken, but the slender pinnacles still pointed upwards and none of the stone or brickwork had been displaced.
There have been five small raids today – presumably reconnaissance. There was a dog fight traced in the sky as I went after dinner on the third alert. There was little gunfire and no bombs. I came back to tea after the fifth.
I think I can hear a plane so there may be another soon. I am on duty this afternoon.
Coming back from Charterhouse I was overtaken by a group of men and women (from the flats). Their cheery conversation was of the difficulty of water shortage. One could not iron her washing because the electricity was off. Many people have to fetch from the tap, some have to get it from lorries. Our cold water has reappeared in the taps and we have our usual baths again. But to hear the everyday conversation of your housewife in London, if you didn't know English, you wouldn't guess they were talking of difficulties. I noticed today a new phase of city life – a new form of Sunday outing. Normally the city on a Sunday is dead and deserted but today, walking about the streets or driving round in family cars were fathers proudly showing to their family and relatives the damaged buildings which they had seen during the week.
It is nearly 6.30, the siren hasn't gone so I will post this and have dinner.
Thanks you for the P.C.
Much love Paul
PS I've had a bill for the fourth instalment (£54-12)
PPS I've finished my book of stamps!

Communiqué No.12
E.C.1
22 Oct 40

Dear Parents
Thank you very much for the letter which again crossed with mine.
Perhaps you had better book me for teeth. I may not be able to get until Monday but I hope to find someone else to do the weekend.
Thank you too for the lamp holder idea- we hadn't thought of anything like that. We should be able to do the holder without him knowing.
I take exception to your remarks about "shell shock" – it is discouraging to find the lay mind making facetious suggestions about subtle practical psychology.

Sunday 20 Oct 40
Sunday night was the worst night I have had. I took hours getting to sleep.
The ARP men have been moved out of the shelters (one of the directors wants one all to himself) and now sleep in the 1st aid post. We have made another move. The main trouble was a light shining in the passage outside. There the lift would keep going up and down with a clank at each floor. I got up and turned off the hall lamp and tried again. I found it on again and after getting hotter and hotter with irritation I turned it off and throw off a blanket.
I got hotter and still wasn't asleep and got up turned off the light again and took the light bulb out of the other one. Soon I met the ARP men who had to get up in shifts during the night and said they wanted the light. So we put up a screen and I somehow got to sleep.

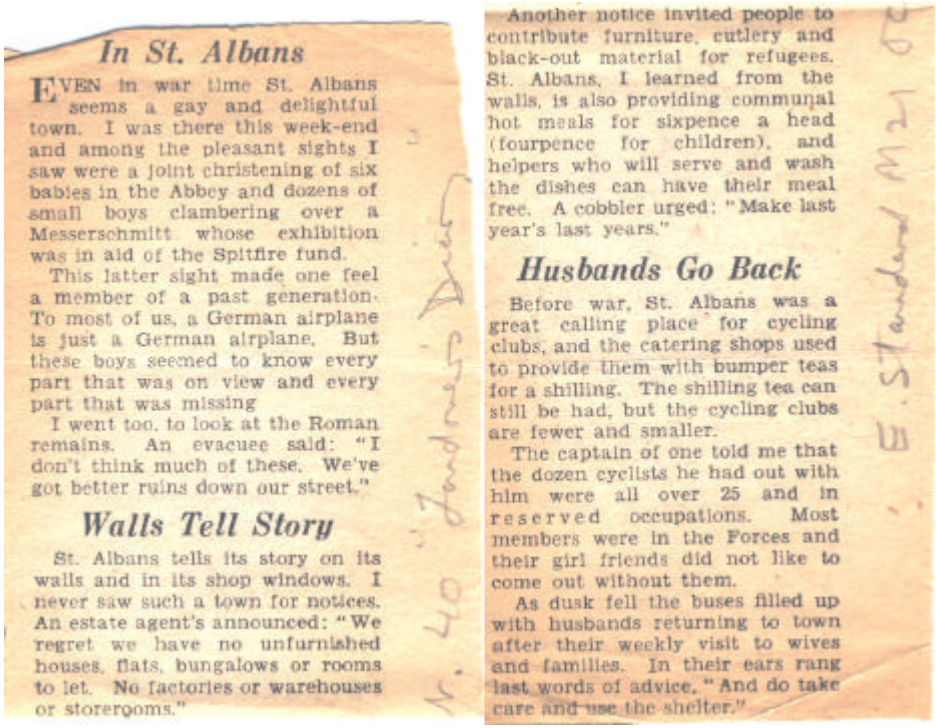
Monday 21 Oct 40
Today I went and bought a shirt. I finally came to Horne's and saw one in the window. There wasn't a nice one at 8/6 so got the best I could find (the right size) at 10/6. I think it was worth it. They hadn't a really suitable selection though.
I nearly made a record for Mike's birthday but couldn't think what to say so decided to do it later.
There were low clouds and I was at Marble Arch when the sirens went.
The A.A. battery showed little activity but a man leisurely taking the waterproofs off the guns. Then the sound of an aeroplane – rather different – like a motor bicycle, but although we all stared we could see nothing. Then somebody shouted and pointed and nearly overhead we could see a German bomber wheeling out below the clouds. It was the first time so near or so clearly. It didn't drop anything or shoot. I suppose it was on reconnaissance . the boys on the guns were now pedalling furiously with their hands but the plane went over them (below balloon height ?) and by the time they could get the gun round, it was too far away and they didn't hit.
Then they started firing now and again into the clouds and the guns followed round invisible planes waiting for a chance.
I looked up my little book and recognised the plane easily as a Junkers 88 (perhaps a J 88K) – a smallish fast bomber and reconnaissance machine with a crew of 3 and 3 machine guns. Has 2 x 1,100 h.p. Juno motors and a range of 1300 miles and a speed of 300 mph.

(By k.p.of 'Spot Them in the Air!" "Daily Mirror" price 3d at all newsagents)
it certainly didn't look very small and had a queer shape of wings.

Walking across the park I saw many craters of bombs, wasted – except that some trees were damaged.
In a glade, 100 yards the other side of a rope were a group of soldiers casually digging under a small tarpaulin near a lorry with red mudguards. There was a notice on the rope "unexploded Bomb".
In another leafy glade parked round the base of a tree, with a light rope keeping you 30 yards away was a quaint rather rusty collection, I should like to have gone nearer. They were an assortment of about a dozen landmines and high powered bombs with their fuses removed.
At night I found a note in my bed warning me that I would be murdered during the night. It had a poem and was signed by three nommes des plumes.
I moved my bed and let Bartlett sleep there and with much laughter we thought a series of booby traps and warning signals as defence against attack during the night.
They consisted mostly of balancing dustbin lids, lengths of string and, the piece de resistance a battery of decontamination roses cunningly aimed so that on the password "piss off" Hewitt could turn on the concealed taps and start a barrage of water jets.
The all clear went earlier than usual and I suppose the leading light of the A.R.P. men didn't get up – anyway they didn't attack.
Nor did Collier come in and start defence working. They had a plan which I haven't discovered yet but which I expect they will try tonight – and they have seen all our defences. So you see how much work we have to do. Incidentally I slept very well.
I think the only worry of us students during raids is that the west wing with our belongings will get hit and there is no reason why it hasn't been hit already. We feel it is just about due to get something.

Tuesday 22 Oct 40
This morning London was like the London of old. Just to show how little it had changed we had a real fog in the morning. There have been clouds all day, but tonight is clear as usual.
Harris took "children's" and we saw a pitiful twisted girl who could reach the back of her wrists with her fingers. She had a particularly good mother, I thought. We saw a case in the wards which Harris thought was a T.B. Meningitis but which was excluded by laboratory tests. So Harris thinks she might be a rare case of "Anxiety State" in a child. She had been in a shelter which had a fire and another in which there was a bad case of hysteria.
He thinks the child may have experienced more than she could bear. She was restless, groaning with pains varying in situation daily. But she still has a few constant signs of meningitis and Harris is not sure.
Lectures have started again today in the Morbid Histology Lab. The staircase up looks out on Barts wreckage through doorways and the room itself is normal except for fibre sheeting where some windows used to be.
The night was unusually quiet. The all clear went at 11.00 (23.00). Then there was a warning again at about 1 for only half an hour. The sky was completely clear over London at that time.
With everyone going to bed and getting up at different times I did not sleep so long as we used to. We loose about an hour at either end – even so that means about 7 ½ hours.

Wednesday 23 Oct 40
No cases in MOP's this morning – a lecture by the chief Ass. (Burrough's) instead.
I am usually impressed by Lejeunes' criticisms, but like the other more serious critics she seems over impressed by a historical film of the important subject whether the film (as a film) is good or not.
She gave "Edison the Man" a very good write up and I dragged Jim Merryfield along to see it – rather than a blood and thunder film.
Spencer Tracy was quite good but the film depended for its success on little human humorous touches which were forced and you could see all the time just what was going to happen next.
In his last speech as an old man (which is very well played) Jim was beginning to get impressed when a woman in the aisle shouted that she wanted a seat further back. The audience came out of the trance, laugh and fidgeted again.
The afternoon was not without interest. There were two warnings (the above are here again). During the all clear there was an explosion and the whole cinema shuddered. The effect on the audience was surprising. They didn't do anything, they didn't even say anything to each other, they just noticed it and concentrated (if you ever do concentrate during a film) on the screen.
The main thing I wanted to see was the M of I short by the G.P.O. film unit that is being shown in America as "London can take it". It has received extraordinary good notices as the best documentary since "The River". They have cut out a little from the USA version. There is no siren in the English version which is called "Britian can take it" – as a gesture to the other bombed towns.
The commentary is by an American commentator with just rather a tired voice. The film is extra ordinarily good and very impressive because of its directness and simplicity. The picture is art because it is a picture (by several artists I suppose). It is very short and you should certainly see it even if it does make London grimmer than it really seems.
I thought my bed seemed deranged and fond about a dozen tintacks in it half way down – so returned them – I think to the wrong person actually not that it made much difference.
We found a nurses uniform and cap and persuaded Hewitt to dress up and walk about the men's room showing a red light. But they seemed to be mostly asleep and nothing happened. Hewitt who is tall and saddish faced looked superb showing a long hairy leg.
Again it was a very quiet night. I slept round the other side and slept well.
I think I will almost certainly manage to get back by the Saturday evening (before dinner I hope Nov 2nd)
The cutting about St. Alban's amused us. The last paragraph gave rise to comments against those students who travel back frequently to St. Alban's for no apparent reason. I of course was free from comment.
Much love
Paul 10.30 24 Oct 40



In St. Albans

EVEN in war time St. Albans seems a gay and delightful town. I was there this week-end and among the pleasant sights I saw were a joint christening of six babies in the Abbey and dozens of small boys clambering over a Messerschmitt whose exhibition was in aid of the Spitfire fund.

This latter sight made one feel a member of a past generation. To most of us, a German airplane is just a German airplane. But these boys seemed to know every part that was on view and every part that was missing

I went too, to look at the Roman remains. An evacuee said: "I don't think much of these. We've got better ruins down our street."

Walls Tell Story

St. Albans tells its story on its walls and in its shop windows. I never saw such a town for notices. An estate agent's announced: "We regret we have no unfurnished houses, flats, bungalows or rooms to let. No factories or warehouses or storerooms."

Another notice invited people to contribute furniture, cutlery and black-out material for refugees. St. Albans, I learned from the walls, is also providing communal hot meals for sixpence a head (fourpence for children), and helpers who will serve and wash the dishes can have their meal free. A cobbler urged: "Make last year's last years."

Husbands Go Back

Before war, St. Albans was a great calling place for cycling clubs, and the catering shops used to provide them with bumper teas for a shilling. The shilling tea can still be had, but the cycling clubs are fewer and smaller.

The captain of one told me that the dozen cyclists he had out with him were all over 25 and in reserved occupations. Most members were in the Forces and their girl friends did not like to come out without them.

As dusk fell the buses filled up with husbands returning to town after their weekly visit to wives and families. In their ears rang last words of advice. "And do take care and use the shelter."

Communiqué No.13
Barts EC1
25 Oct 40

Dear Parents
Visibility remains good but weather is cold – so much so that if you haven't a coat you can't really go outside without a pullover.

Thursday 24 Oct 40 (cont)
I went to Strauss' psychology this afternoon for the first time. It was a very good afternoon, their were about 8 patients and we finished at 8pm. If only I knew more about types etc it would have been very instructive. I don't think any case was the result of air raids – just the usual things.

Friday 25 Oct 40
On going to "skins" in the medical block I was mildly surprised to see a small evening newspaper van stopped where the ambulances stopped.

Barts had one severe air raid casualty today – but perhaps I'd better begin at the beginning. I heard the story after skins while having lunch with Picton. He is in our bunch, was at Finchley and Hill End. He is a smallish tubby mild sort of person. He was cycling as usually to Barts and at 10 this morning he was on the south side of the river passing under a railway bridge.
Five seconds later he could not have passed under the bridge. Three bombs dropped, the third (only slightly) damaging the bridge blowing over trams behind him, blowing out glass in front of him and blowing him a little faster forward.
At the same distance from the bomb as he was, he saw a man with all his lower jaw sheered away with his tongue hanging out. He was bleeding and making a pool of blood but not spurting. He was obviously still conscious and was groaning with pain. He had be hit by a bomb splinter.
There were some first aid people about but this man was too much for them so they went and messed about with minor cases – Picton, saying that he was a medical student, prevented them from doing too much to some of these later on.
So Picton and a man were left with this man. A decent Fleet Street van driver offered to drive the man to hospital but when he saw what the man looked like he said no, he wasn't going to take him. Picton persuaded him, "yes he was" and they huddled him into the little van. He reached hospital within ten minutes of the bomb, instead of bleeding to death.
Picton cycled on to the hospital. He said it was an unpleasant business and that he wouldn't feel quite so casual about day ride, but even knowing him well he didn't show one sign of being the slightest upset or worked up. But he was rather annoyed that his smart suit had blood over it.
Barts has been working hard on the case. He went to the resuscitation room and he's being watch by many physicians and surgeons. This afternoon they operated on him. They made a sling of grisle under his tongue. More than that I do not know. He may died yet I suppose – personally I should have thought pleasant death the best thing. Picton may get regret having saved his life –but he could hardly have left the man dying in pain on the pavement – as the first aid people were doing.
Two (perhaps more) people were killed under the bridge and trains (which were empty but for the drivers and conductor)
There have been long lasting raids today, one from 12 – 4, but except for one or two bombs this afternoon I don't think an others have been dropped. (I haven't heard any at all)
Tonight compared with previous nights is noisier but not "hot" yet.

Saturday 26 Oct 40
There was quite a lot of firing last night (fairly hot). Picton's bomb was the news of the day's raid - it appears to have been the most severe of the London "incidents".

Page 2
Sat 26 Oct 40

THE TIMES

CROWDED TRAMCARS WRECKED

DAY ATTACKS ON LONDON

Three persons were killed and a number seriously injured yesterday when bombs were dropped on five crowded tramcars drawn up in a busy London street. It was one of several daylight raids on the capital during which 12 of the raiders were shot down.

The tramcars were close together in line near traffic signals. One was crushed like a concertina; the windows and woodwork of the others were blown out and the roadway was strewn with broken seats. The driver of one of the cars, a conductor, and a woman passenger were killed, and a number of persons were seriously injured.

The windows of omnibuses were shattered by the blast, and pedestrians were injured by flying fragments. A building in the same area, consisting of a shop with flats above, was demolished, and one body was found in the wreckage. People on the scene behaved with pluck and calmness, and scores ran to help the injured. A.R.P. workers and breakdown gangs were quickly at work clearing the wreckage.

A passenger said "We were travelling northwards when there were three terrific explosions. The windows of the omnibus were shattered, and the inside was filled with black fumes. Although splinters flew all around, neither I nor a woman, the only other passenger on the lower deck, was injured. The conductor was injured on the head by glass."

BOMBING FROM 2,000FT

There have been long alerts today again and they have the trick of sounding the warning within a minute of the all clear. People forget if there is meant to be raid on or not and go by whatever they can hear or see for themselves – which is of more value anyway.
The warnings during the day seem to be useless. The spotter system is of value and that is being developed for bus drivers now, but people are far better left on their own anyhow so that it works out alright. The warnings are taken as being of "academic" interest only.
In a small town or near a single military objective which was pretty obviously going to be the target the warning system would be of real value.
But when enemy planes can drone incessantly for hours over the city the size of London and do very little damage people just don't think it worth getting out of their bath, stopping their work or disorganising their day.
If the raid were short and sharp then people would take notice but the nuisance tactics don't have that effect.

This afternoon I helped carry down the tops and legs of the large heavy tables from the old hall. The fire had been cause by one of about 8 incendiary bombs – it had caught in a place they couldn't reach. The floor of the hall was an inch deep in charred woodwork and bits and the plaster from the ceilings of the rooms below covered all the floors and desks after the flood of water from the A.F.S.
We could not see any damage to the floor but it may be charred in one corner. The tables were ok. Harris was working with us.
He showed us two unfired incendiary bombs. They are cylindrical in shape about 2 feet long and 3 inches diameter with fuse at one end and the other end blank. They are made of aluminium or magnesium. One was dated 1936 and the other 1937. the were beautifully made. Apparently the newer ones are more cheaply made. They said you could get very near them (2 feet) when alight and were easily put out but of course you can miss them or they may land where they can't be reached. There was a water shortage and the pressure of the building hydrants wasn't enough to reach the roof – which as a result became an inferno before the firemen arrived. There were a lot of fires that night (80 in one area of allocation) and they were all treated separately and stopped spreading which is really pretty good. They think it was from a Molotoff bread basket – they heard it falling.
I think I am getting tired and really need a holiday. We are more cooped up now at the post and there is not enough room for the varying tastes. I find I am getting very irritated by some of the students – but then they're very irritating. Some of them have lights on very late and they wake up early and talk pseudo highbrow nonsense – which is too much in the morning. The thin partitioning of the posts gives the illusion of many rooms. If we were in one big room everyone would have to live much the same. The partitions in fact are quite inadequate against sound, light or draughts. In the next war I hope scientifically minded designers will realize the value of soundproofing in the first aid posts – to say nothing of the value of asepsis too.
Bartlett went on holiday to replace the low in Lowestoft. I believe I am nominally in charge of us students while he is away. Three of us (Perkins, Hewitt and I) slept in the duty room thus getting a quiet night again.
My first job as liaison officer was to relay to Ismay (who had requested the air conditioning) Commandants explanation why it could not be turned on when Collier was away. He is terribly fussy and inadaptable and irritates the

Commandant and nurses who have nicknamed him "slow motion" which is extremely apt.
Confession – I have been christened "the camel" – they can't always be accurate.
Commandant has the deplorable habit of discussing people behind their backs to the nurses and us. We have a dug out of a Dr. as a locum to replace Collier who is away this weekend. She [Commandant] dislikes him as much as she adores Collier and distrusts his old fashioned tendency to put iodine on all wounds and sprains and pains. We think Collier's (and her) methods of treating septic (and not yet septic) cases are deplorable and as out of date as the old Dr.
Commandant told us how she had tried to treat a septic case of Collier's rather than let this old locum because she knew all about how to treat his boils as he had been coming to the post with his boils for six months. We remained polite.

Sunday 27 Oct 40
A quiet day in spite of air raid warnings. And fairly cold. While walking saw a lot of damage that was new to me. Near one important but undamaged ministry were two craters in the road causing no other damage. The traffic went by.
There was also a lot of bomb damage on buildings near another equally important ministry which still stood.
Holborn had still more damaged buildings (there was a huge mobile crane resting in the ruins of one place) and being Sunday the street was empty and dead. But as a sign of the weekdays, buildings just next door to others wrecked level to the ground had notices "business as usual".
It has been cold and wintry today, with a wind in the evening to make you seek shelter. Nowadays the evening siren goes at 6.30 or 7.45 so that we never finish dinner before the raid – but we've got our hats, there's no hurry mostly (as tonight) there is not any gunfire.

Monday 28 Oct 40
Thank you very much for the letter and cutting. It arrived as I was about to go to the post the third time this afternoon. On the way I passed a double decked bus from Leeds. Several have come from the provinces to aid the greater bus traffic.
In what way might I have considered the article phooey – I don't think it is just quite so rare in Hill End as the article might lead you to think. But was neuroses even to mild degrees is (as far as I know) very rare.
And the bit about work and being with people as resisting war neuroses I agree with.
I'm interested in your remarks about age and agitation. I'm not sure though that I recovered easily from late dances !
I should not be surprised if the Dr. who advised the cockney mother to take her child from London was Dr. Franklin – he is always telling mothers that it is no place for children – even so he does not approve of badly suited grandparents etc. being in charge of the children. Bombed London is preferable to over strict foster parents.

Girl in the shelter
"Hey ! Take your hand away –
no, not you, the man on the other side!"
We have been appalled at the methods and administration of surgical treatment at this post but as we can't argue about them in front of a patient we have felt in a bad position to improve maters. Tonight Dugggie Ismay started treating a boil in the modern way as taught but all our surgeons (who particularly teach against the medication and squeezing of Collier).
He had to ask Collier for something which he had. So Collier came over to see the case who was one of the post ARP men. Collier didn't agree with Duggie's treatment so we all got up one by one from our books and standing in a semicircle round the patient we very politely poured shit on Collier from a dizzy height (to use a medical expression). He was obviously rattled though seemingly unconvinced by this barrage of discussion on the treatment of boils. Nevertheless (on Duggie's risk and responsibility) he allowed the standard modern treatment to be carried out.

We've just had a bit of a comic pantomime. A little tough who had walked into some sandbags and didn't like the look of the strapping on his face accompanied by a tall lanky fair haired hysterical W.R. policeman and a stocky fat Irish policeman – all chatting and back chatting in a genuine cockney comedy. You wouldn't have believed it if it had been on a stage.
Altogether it has been quiet a good evening
To bed – actually it will be awfully nice to sleep in a real bed again after all these weeks. I'm looking forward to my holiday away from " the centre of the forefront of the battle".

Tuesday 29 Oct 40
One of the demolition workmen was in today while I was on duty. He had a small cut which Commandant treated after she and Collier had probed it, pressed it and prodded it about with tweezers instead of washing it under the tap. Oh yes they also put ether on it to make sure it didn't heal quickly. His

money went into the guy's hospital collecting box (which Collier has no right to have here in my opinion – it is not a voluntary first aid post)
But a fortnight ago some more concrete had fallen on a finger which had hurt since then. He had been working and hadn't had any treatment.
I diagnosed it (correctly) as a fracture of the middle phalanx of the rt forefinger and Collier either didn't know or agreed so he was sent to Barts as "fracture" and the X ray confirmed it. The funny part was that he was a Yorkshireman from York and was thrilled when we discovered. The reason why he hadn't had his finger seen before was because thought that nowadays people shown carry on with their work. It has been splinted so that he can still wield his hammer.
Saw a Hull bus today. Our treatment of boils seems to be catching on. Last nights ARP patient has bought Dugie Ismay a tie which we have not been able to put into the Guy's collecting box so he's keeping it.
A M.D. nurse was brought to us by Commandant to have a boil treated our way – we took the chance to emphasising that on no account should she squeeze it or press it.
Time marches on.
I'm afraid these letters have descended to pages of "shop" but there's little other news.
A plane was up overhead tonight as we cycled down. Many search lights pierced the crystal night sky as we sped to our post. There is little firing and no bombs – which was all to the good with us below. Even so buses and taxis were also running normally.

Wed 30 Oct 40
3 patients in MOP's this morning. At the rate we are going, I shall be lucky if I take 3 patients in MOP's during 3 months. The physicians manage to fill up the morning with extensive chatter on each case.
It is evening and I am sitting with Sangal (a very nice and cultured Indian who is doing a locum for Bartlett) in our "smoke room".
The post itself is very stuffy and we're not allowed to smoke during a raid so we sit at the bottom of the stairs where we make ourselves extremely comfortable and at ease with the world. The other people can't get over it and every time anyone passes and sees us they invariably think us mad and make rude remarks asking if we couldn't find a more draughty spot.
At dinner tonight for no reason at all (except male intuition) I announced it would be "howl" tonight. Well, there have been one or two bombs near enough to shake the place tonight and two casualties came in covered in soot (a chimney had been hit) and suffering from shock and also minor injuries. They were treated by the usual methods. They were forced to have a "nice cup of tea" and made to sit up.
Then while shivering (in spite of two hot water bottles and one blanket – but they were too busy to notice the shivering) they subjected the soot covered woman to rubbing by wet towels so that she was shaken backwards and forwards for a quarter of an hour while her legs and arms and face were cleaned. Her body was allowed to remain dirty. Incidentally the two nurses giving the "shock therapy" realised it was all wrong to clean her then but they had their orders from Commandant and they had to lift the patient up again while they dripped water down her neck. In the end both patients got bromide and spent a comfortable night at the post. If only we cold lock Collier and Commandant in the office (they'd be useful for signing forms) we could train all these nurses and make the place quite reasonable (quite apart from the lack of sterilized dressings)
I think there is a train at about midday which should arrive by tea time ! I shall try and catch that but you had really better "expect me when you see me"
I've got permission from Harris etc etc
Much love Paul 31 Oct 40

Communiqué No.14
Barts, E.C.1
This Communiqué was sent after Paul's return from York

It is while he is in York that Paul gives us a strong inkling of his feelings towards Gwen, his wife to be.
The first of three letters from Paul to Gwen was written on the 4th November 1940 from Stonegate, York where Paul was having a short break until the 18th November. This letter, as with the other two of the 9th and the 15th , was written in a very caring style and Paul himself remarks on aspects of their sentimentality, however reference is made to the fact that Gwen was expecting to be contacted by Kenneth on about the 18th or 19th November. Kenneth was the person that she was engaged to despite the fact that she was still only nineteen.
In the third letter Paul delights in using a little wind up on Gwen, when he refers to sleeping in Nadine's bed, then explained that she and her husband were sleeping elsewhere. Nadine was obviously special to the family and there is a photograph of her wedding in 1939.

Dear Parents
Thank you for the letter and Ration Book. I found licence and spotting book in another pocket of my jacket after I sent the postcard sorry you have been troubled.

Monday 18 Nov 1940

Monday left a great impression which I'm afraid is rapidly fading in my memory.
Nevertheless although it have been rapidly eclipsed as I have slipped back into normal routine again, I think it is interesting.

? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

The oldish well spoken sailor in the train and the signaller wearing last war medals hardly spoke at all, all the way to London.
In the silence we read and dozed and the train passed into fog through which you could see for a hundred yards.
As you know in the previous letters I have tried to impress you with the "normality" of London life. This may sound an incongruous way of describe it; sleeping in shelters may not seem "normal" but somehow it is. Wrecked buildings may not sound normal and yet they do not prevent life remaining normal. I think the houses pulled down in say York seen much more wasted than in London. Slum clearance is more complete and does not leave perfectly good houses (and windows) nest door.
As you know I have listened to the radio news of London as you have done with the difference that I have been in London recently and should have known how to translate wireless news into one person's experience.
I felt really as if I was returning to the "front line" with its heroic fighters walking cheerfully about the wreckage (as the newspapers would like you to believe).
I wondered with apprehension what new wreckage was likely to be added to the long list of buildings I knew already to be hit (forgetting in an endeavour not to underestimate, the incredible large list of places that haven't even a broken window.
As the train moved on to London we could see for a quarter of a mile but it became darker. I searched the passing houses for a wrecked one to herald my return to London and I became a bit impatient before I, at last, saw one. We had been told that the train would stop at Finsbury Park but was going on to King's Cross.
By then the sky was heavy and yellow with a solid rain cloud. Carriages and trucks moved in silhouette against the unnatural stormy light.
We peered apprehensively through the rainy windows at London in the middle of a storm and the train at last drew into King's Cross.
We moved in slow procession through the train till we reached the platform and passed through the group of blank waiting faces at the collector's gate.
And then it happened.
There was a policemen griming and waving goodbye to a woman who'd lost her way. Everywhere people were smiling and happy, instead of wearing the brave resignation of good morale under fire.
There were some tired faces among the Londoners as I passed, there were some young men wearing Salvation Army uniform (without looking self conscious) but mostly there were just ordinary people walking through rain sodden London looking content as if conscious that they knew what to do and that they were doing it and that there seemed no point or no need in wondering or worrying about the future.
I was back in London and it seemed like being "home" again and by now I was singing aloud.
I boarded a trolley bus out of the teaming rain and passed along Grays Inn Road. I peered from the window to see anything new. But instead I saw the usual shops, the tobacconists, the cake shops, the little tea room with people having tea. I began to suspect that the owners of these little luxury shops did not read their papers and they did not seem to realize they were targets of the modern civilized hell that we had feared and avoided for the months of expectation and crises when people's spirits were at their lowest.
The bus turned to Holborn and there on the corner, to convince me that London was not after all mad or ignorant of the blitzkrieg, was a neat newly painted wooden hut to give people information on how they should travel back to their homes through the ever shifting channels of London's transport.
Instead of the greater damage that I had expected I (who had been here only a fortnight before) was really amazed at how little damage there was. Here I was seeing street after street without even a broken window. It seemed (although this was impossible) that there was considerable less damage than before.
This because in the receptive air of York, my impressions and memories had run away from the truth, so that even I began to believe that London was far worse than it is.
I know now that as far as personal feelings are concerned I am far happier being in London then being away from it and wondering and imagining what was happening to it. That was something I did not realize before; but I do now.
I feel sorry now for you two. I am afraid I can do little in these letters to help that. As a matter of fact I consider you in York to be in equal danger (such as it is) to me in London and this, though you may not believe me is quite serious.

Note:
York was badly bombed in April 1942 and Mary, Paul's mother, was in the middle of it.

As a mater of fact, my impression that London was even less damaged may not have been completely a result of bad memory. Damage I had known was all tidied up and not replaced by new. As I approached Barts a bombed building was boarded lightly round so that it seemed like an ancient ruined wall.
It was still drizzling as I turned the corner to see "St Bartholomew's Hospital" and below in fiery colours "Help Urgently Needed" were it had been for as long as I can remember.
I turned in the gate with "Staff Entrance Only" chalked crudely on the stonework and passed into the hospital. It was 3.15.
I went to the lecture at 3.30 and many people greeted me and made rude remarks that they hadn't seen me for months. I asked about the blitz that had flared up again while I was away. They seemed surprised – it had been very quiet. Yes, they admitted that they had heard that Friday was the worst raid on London but they hadn't noticed it. It must have been in the suburbs they said.
After the lecture I had tea. The captain of the "A" came up and persuaded me to run the Ex "A", the main reason being that he couldn't find anyone else mug enough to do it and as he was due for exams he didn't want to run two teams. He is at Friern. The sec. of the 1st is at Hill End so I will be the Barts sec. I have to find fixtures too. However badly I run it, it doesn't matter because I can resign but only if I can find someone to take my place – which will be a threat enough to any critic.
After tea I went and eat my lunch in my room.
And so, after supper I cycled down to the post but without the usual accompaniment of drones, guns and bombs which seemed all wrong.
Commandant and others took great delight in telling me all about the scarf Gwen had been making and which was now finished (Gwen herself had said nothing about it in her letters)
It was they all assured me very soft and warm which I though was as it should be.
And so I returned to my stretcher in London after the rest and the luxury of a bed and "broncho" and so ended a remarkable day.

Tuesday 19 November 40
Lectures are going at full steam.
From 10.30 – 12. I attended MOP's (though it was not my day) 12 –1 lecture on Pharmacy
1.30 – 3.30 Children (Harris)
3.30 – 4.15 Lecture
Then tea.

Gwen was on duty at the post at night and presented me with the scarf which she had hoped would be a surprise. It is extremely nice. It was 6 foot by 10 inches double thickness (with PR on it)
She presented a bill in which the last item is 9/3½ (including the needle). She has said she will do me a blue one for when I go in the Navy – I hope she remembers

Wednesday 20 Nov 40
London is changing with the seasons. The trees in the square are bare of leaves which no longer lie on the tarmac.
Everywhere drifts of sand are being dug away and new sandbags put in their place. Most uncovered bags had been sprayed after being laid but they have rotted in the middle of the piles.
I have been wearing your sweater but soon found that London was much too warm and close. The streets are mostly wet and there is often sunshine. Women walk about the streets without coats.

Thursday 21st November 40

I am well and truly sunk in the old routine and from now on letters, instead of being accurate accounts of London life will be instead the petty little grumbles and grouses.
The really important aspects and the really interesting sides of London today will be taken for granted and forgotten.
The man who controls the London sirens has a perverted sense of humour – though he carries it out well.
At 11.45 today the alarm sounded, I left MOP's and cycled to the post. I entered the building but before I reached the post the "all clear" sounded. I cycled back to Barts and entered the gates but before I reached the West Wing the "alert" sounded. I cycled to the post and settled down to glance through a weekly. Before I had turned over half the pages the "all clear" went and I cycled back and had lunch. (thereby forgetting a lecture) There was no sign of a raid at all.
I don't know how I forgot but we had a visit from the Bishop of Kensington last night. The first I knew of it was when one of the ARP men warned me that we should not swear loudly. He had just been covering a large cupboard sign "Women First Aid Treatment" with a towel so as to leave the message "Women First" on the bishops stretcher. He was quite a nice old man and chatted pleasantly to us all. He asked as he left in the morning as we lay in bed whether we had been dreaming of doing operations. We replied dreamily – no we hadn't been dreaming of surgical operations.

Friday 22 Nov 40

Saturday 23 Nov 40

I played rugger today in the "A" (the Ex "A" game was cancelled). Both the 1st and the "A" were playing London Hospital at the Crooked Billet in N. Walthamstow.

I had heard first hand that this area had got it pretty badly and I was amazed (I always seem to be amazed) to find how little it had been touched – less it seems than most parts of London. It would be very bad luck indeed if the Jowett has been hit.

Both teams beat London Hospital decisively. The only try their 1st scored was while the guns were firing at a bomber which some thought dropped a whistler – one of their men ran through whilst everyone else was standing and looking at the sky. The same happened in our game except the man tripped up and failed to score. In spite of the unusual Barts double victory, it doesn't seem to have been put in the paper.

After tea I was busy copying down names and positions and teams for next Saturday, and it was late before I left so that I would not have had anytime to call on the Bradleys. I will write.

Note:
For interest, it is worth mentioning the Gwen's cousin, Elsie lived in Walthamstow and there is archive material about the war damage to the area in WW2

After supper Merryfield and I retired to the Vicarage intending not to stay long. There was singing and much attempts at harmony. There was an incredible variety of students and houseman sitting round and one strumming a banjo.

There were quite a lot of songs new to me – some incredibly funny, by funnies men.

There is in Barts records a reference to the St Bartholomew's Vicarage Club

Sunday 24 Nov 40

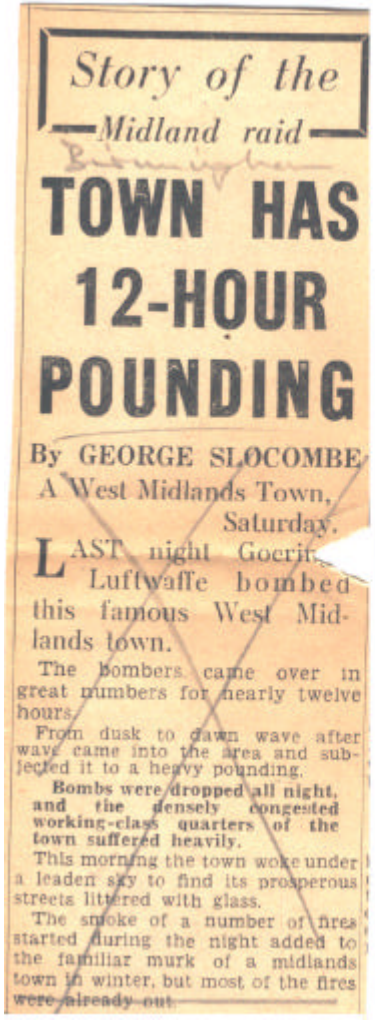
A quiet day. Peter Story and I with Merryfield played with two little tanks that belched sparks from their gun turrets. This evening for the first time since I have been back has been more normal.

It was absolutely clear as usual and the guns were firing away at a single plane. But even so it was nothing like the "good old days" At breakfast time his morning after the M.O. had left Commandant woke Bartlett to go to the tube shelter where he diagnosed a case of bronchitis (with possible pneumonia) in a man with a temp of 113 F. he lived in a Salvation Army place and it was only with difficulty that the police removed him by ambulance to Barts. They said he was on private property and could either walk or be carried. Commandant promised to go with him to Barts where they promised he would be able to leave if he insisted. He stayed as he was too weak to argue. Commandant was surprised to learn that you couldn't compel anyone to enter hospital.

The "all clear" went about 9 pm but we didn't risk going back to Barts – though it remained all clear throughout the night. There is chat in the papers about improved A.A. defences which may have something to do with it and also it was a good night for searchlights.

Thought cuttings might interest you

Paul 2pm 25 Nov 40



Story of the
Midland raid

TOWN HAS 12-HOUR POUNDING

By GEORGE SLOCOMBE
A West Midlands Town, Saturday.

LAST night Goering's Luftwaffe bombed this famous West Midlands town.

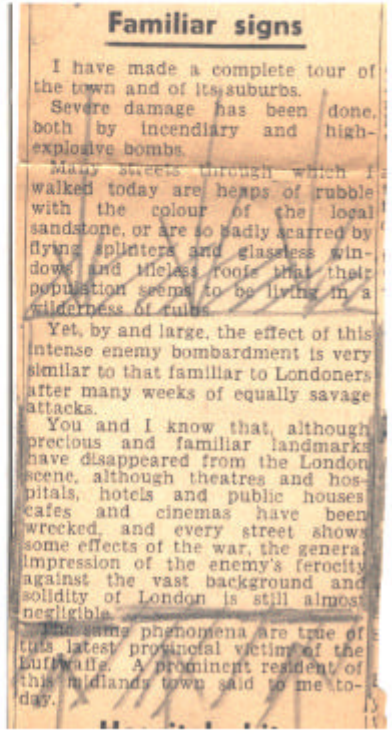
The bombers came over in great numbers for nearly twelve hours.

From dusk to dawn wave after wave came into the area and subjected it to a heavy pounding.

Bombs were dropped all night, and the densely congested working-class quarters of the town suffered heavily.

This morning the town woke under a leaden sky to find its prosperous streets littered with glass.

The smoke of a number of fires started during the night added to the familiar murk of a midlands town in winter, but most of the fires were already out.



Familiar signs

I have made a complete tour of the town and of its suburbs.

Severe damage has been done, both by incendiary and high-explosive bombs.

Many streets through which I walked today are heaps of rubble with the colour of the local sandstone, or are so badly scarred by flying splinters and glassless windows and tileless roofs that their population seems to be living in a wilderness of ruins.

Yet, by and large, the effect of this intense enemy bombardment is very similar to that familiar to Londoners after many weeks of equally savage attacks.

You and I know that, although precious and familiar landmarks have disappeared from the London scene, although theatres and hospitals, hotels and public houses, cafes and cinemas have been wrecked, and every street shows some effects of the war, the general impression of the enemy's ferocity against the vast background and solidity of London is still almost negligible.

The same phenomena are true of this latest provincial victim of the Luftwaffe. A prominent resident of this midlands town said to me to-day.

THE SUNDAY EXPRESS, LONDON, NOVEMBER 24, 1940.

SITTING ON THE FENCE

By Nathaniel Gubbins

THE Sparrow's Nest had been blown off its branch by the blast of a bomb. The Sparrow's Wife sat on the ruins, tears rolling down her beak.

"Hullo, misery," shouted The Sparrow, alighting beside her, "is that all you can do in an emergency?"

"What do you expect me to do?" asked his wife.

"Keep your chin up for one thing," said The Sparrow, "and for another bustle around and build a new nest."

"I thought that was a man's job," said his wife.

"Well, that's where you're wrong, as usual," said The Sparrow. "Women are doing men's jobs in war time, and a very good idea, too. It keeps them from moping and whining about their own troubles."

"I'm sure I don't mope more than anybody else," said his wife.

"You probably only look worse," said The Sparrow.

"And if I built another nest it would probably only be blown down again," said his wife, fresh tears rolling down her beak.

"There's nothing like looking on the bright side," said The Sparrow.

"I'm sure I try," said his wife, "but you can't go on being cheerful."

"I'd like to know when you started," said The Sparrow.

"Well, why can't we go to a safe area?" asked his wife. "We could fly to Westmorland in a few days. Other sparrows are doing it."

"I'm no quitter," said The Sparrow.

"It's all very well for you," said his wife, "drinking all day. You don't know what's going on."

"Drinking's better than blubbering," said The Sparrow, "and why can't you snap out of it and take a drink too?"

"At that awful Tree Tops Club," said his wife.

"What's wrong with the club?" asked The Sparrow.

"Those terrible people," said his wife.

"They probably think you're pretty terrible anyway," said The Sparrow, "talking about nothing but bombs and how you felt when the last one dropped."

"There goes the siren again," said his wife, trembling.

"Oh, shut up," said The Sparrow.

"That's the fourth today," said his wife.

"If you sit around snivelling and counting alerts," said The Sparrow, "you'll go crazy."

"And a lot you'd care," said his wife. "I don't suppose you care where I'm sleeping tonight."

"I certainly don't," said The Sparrow.

"Well, if it's any interest to you," said his wife, "that nice Mr. Robin has offered me temporary shelter in his nest."

"And how long is that not-so-nice Mrs. Robin going to stand for that?" asked The Sparrow.

"Till you build another home," said his wife.

"If you're staying with the Robins we won't need one," said The Sparrow.

"Where are you sleeping?" asked his wife.

"At that awful club," said The Sparrow "or perhaps in London."

"In London?" said his wife. "It's terrible living in London."

"Not so terrible as living with you," shouted The Sparrow, as he flew away.

Letter from Mr. Lucifer

My dear Mr. Gubbins,

SAFE in the Southern Seas aboard my yacht Satanic I have been thinking a lot about you in the air raids with all those disturbing noises going on. And sometimes when she is sipping one of her delicious cocktails as we steam slowly through the placid, moonlit water the widow has often remarked, "I wonder how that poor dear Mr. Gubbins is getting on?"

We both regret your decision to see the thing through instead of having a good time with us, and as a result of your discomforts we feel that you may now be in the mood to help us stop the war.

This may sound odd coming from me, as you have doubtless formed the opinion that I started the war.

Of course, you are quite correct. I did start it, but I am afraid that if it goes on too long the world, or what is left of it, may become a better place. This, as you might imagine, [illegible] to myself at all, because if people lived as they are accustomed to live, unselfishly, without a thought for the morrow except a blind faith in the continued provision of all that is necessary for their sustenance, that would be the end of greed and the worship of money and the desire to be better off than your neighbour.

In such a world I would have no place, because you can't tempt a man who wants nothing and is without any ambition except to be charitable and to behave towards others as he would like them to behave towards him.

And since it appears that one can only improve through being jolted out of one's complacency by extreme and prolonged suffering, I fear that if the war goes on for years the survivors will build a new world which will be completely hopeless from my point of view.

Therefore, I would like to see it end now before people have suffered too much. Before it is too late I would like to get back to the old world of usury, profit making, and callous indifference to the fate of those who are either not clever or cunning enough to earn a living in it—the world as we have known it, my dear Mr. Gubbins, in which leaders of the Christian faith can preach charity and live luxuriously in palaces among the slums.

As you have [illegible] rather well of late [illegible] of such a world [illegible] can rely on your help to end the war as quickly as possible by giving the idea the utmost publicity in your column. My dear friend Adolf will help from the other side.

We are going in to dinner now—seven courses, I think it is, as there is no rationing here. The unfrocked bishop who is our guest is sitting in your rightful place—on the left of the widow. He has really been rather naughty—a quart of champagne a day and his hands quite red from the widow's strippers.

Hoping you are safe and well,
Yours ever,
Nephy.

Awful Child wants to know

"WHAT are we doing for Christmas?"

"*It all depends.*"

"Depends on what?"

"*On what we can do.*"

"Shall we have a turkey?"

"*Maybe.*"

"Well, if we can't have a turkey shall we have roast beef?"

"*Probably not.*"

"Why?"

"*Because there won't be enough meat coupons.*"

"What sort of pudding shall we have?"

"*Plain milky rice.*"

"Plain milky rice on Christmas day?"

"*You can have fainted if you prefer mince.*"

"What about mince pies?"

"*My previous remark about the shortage also applies to mince pies.*"

"Shall we have dates?"

"*Maybe.*"

"And almonds and raisins?"

"*Very doubtful.*"

"Figs?"

"*Probably not.*"

"Nuts?"

"*Are we going through a whole Christmas dinner we can't have?*"

"What about Boxing Day?"

"*The same, only cold.*"

"Cold milky rice pudding?"

"*You needn't go into unpleasant details.*"

"Perhaps we could have the rice pudding thick instead of milky?"

"*I thought you preferred it thin.*"

"Well, if you're going to put sixpences in it . . ."

"*What sixpences?*"

"The sixpences you would have put in the Christmas pudding if we had a Christmas pudding."

"*I see.*"

"So if you did it would be better to have a stiff rice pudding, because if you put sixpences into a milky one they would all lie at the bottom."

"*I have no intention of putting sixpences into a rice pudding, stiff or milky.*"

"What are you going to do, then? Save the money?"

"*I don't know.*"

"Because if you're not going to have the money and you don't want to put it in a rice pudding, I wouldn't mind having my sixpence now."

"*You wouldn't?*"

"Not a bit."

"*That's very kind of you.*"

"Is it?"

"*It certainly is.*"

"Thank you. Good-bye."

"*Good-bye.*"

Diary of a Worm

HOME GUARD worm says he is sorry he can't keep wife company in blitz as he is going to attend machine-gun lecture. Home Guard worm explains proudly that he has to learn how to take machine-gun to pieces and put it back blindfolded.

Oh, so this is just another excuse to leave wife alone in air raids, is it? Ever since war started worm has found some way of leaving wife to face bombs by herself.

If there is any truth in worm's story, which wife doubts, worm will be about as clever with machine-gun as he is with rifle, making fool of himself on range and shaming wife before neighbours whose husbands are crack shots or at least somebodies in Home Guard and not mere common privates. And as for taking machine-gun to pieces and putting it together again blindfolded, all wife knows is that worm can't put new washer on tap with both eyes open.

One of these nights, when worm is pretending to play with guns but is really out with nifty Home Guard worms showing off in uniform and spending money which should go into bank to pay for baby worm's education, worm will come home to find house heap of ruins and wife unprotected in shelter. As it is, shelter half full of water, but instead of pumping water out to save wife and baby worm from pneumonia, worm has to go off in the evening to fiddling with firearms.

Thanks to worm's extravagance and inability to earn little more than office boy's wages, wife's cheap ramshackle shelter not fit for pigs to live in, whereas gas manager's wife lives in luxury shelter with electric light and heat, radio, proper beds, and dug into bank where water can't reach it.

Of course, wife never expected luxury shelter from poverty-stricken worm, but at least she expected little forethought, and never realised that even worm would leave her to drown like rat in trap.

Shamed worm picks up rifle and goes out into night.

Communiqué No.15
Barts, E.C.1
29 Nov,1940

Dear Parents,

Sun 24 Nov – F 29 Nov 40
The main feature of this week was the return of the raids (with A.A. fire and searchlights into clear skies.) but virtually no bombs. – and rugger fixtures. Several nights have been more normal, with planes (light ones) overhead, searchlights moving round the starlit sky and the anti-aircraft barrage which is working like the good old days.
But the main feature of this week has been my existence at one end of a telephone wire. I have made over 30 calls and the people I've wanted are rarely at the other phone. On Monday I was given a provisional Extra "A" team (provisional because most of those there would play would be taken to replace absentees from the other teams).
There were no fixtures arranged so I set to, to try and get a team and a ground for Saturday. By Tuesday I'd got a fixture for the Saturday after, against Harrow School 2nd and a fixture for the week after that – but it was not until Midday today (Friday) that I'd got a fixture and ground fixed up and someone at Hill End to arrange for teas and a referee.
There are advantages "Bert" in the pathology lab is an invaluable liaison officer between the three secretaries each in charge of a team from all the hospitals.
But the first and "A" already have a fixture list.
It is colder again now and I wear my pullover and scarf.
I have seen some surface shelters – they are cold, damp shit on the wall at the end and the cement floor covered with piss round the tins with inadequate lids at the other end. For the most part they are never used at night.
The air in the tube towards midnight is quite fresh and in spite of the bright lights for travellers who pick their tiptoe way through the narrow parts; twos and threes share mattresses, blanket and pillows in an orderly and very peaceful array. There are little first aid posts in most stations.
This afternoon (Friday) I was on duty and we had a man with alcoholic coma perhaps on top of something else. Afterwards I visited the first aid post in the Liverpool Street Station. You turn left along the Central London line platform, the rails stop and you step through a netting doorway where shelter marshals and policemen stand (to check tickets) and at once you enter (as if in a Christmas toy shop) a grotto, a long earthy bestraggled cave. As to pass along this fairy land with witches and elves clustered along the sides (it was afternoon) you see ahead the little white cottage. And though you look in vain for the smoke rising from the chimney, you wonder if the seven dwarfs are in residence. The door opens and a Red Cross nurse emerges without (strangely enough) jarring the illusion.
To add to the "immortal" scene is a musty atmosphere which is always there, (in contrast to the freshness of the tubes where the trains run). In the hot dusty air many insects and flies and pink eyes midges. The dwarfs house as you've guessed is the first aid post or surgery. It contains a long table with a cold water tap and a sink which drains into a bucket. Bottles and cupboards contain antiseptic gargles, cough mixtures, analgesics, M&B 693, some drugs provided by the government, many provided by the doctor.
The doctor (a N.Z. man and a friend of Collier and nicknamed the "Angel" by the nurses which is appropriate in spite of his appearance) has also provided his own instruments.
There is a patient lavatory behind a curtain at one end. Benches and comfortable chairs and an electric fan at the other end. Round two fly papers buzz the midges and in the case book are 20 – 40 cases a day, several of them "bites" treated with calamine, as well as coughs, earaches, sore throats, cuts, bronchitis and rare pneumonias.
Two nurses were siting there (the younger one - Gwen – in charge) they had nothing to do but knit.
The elder one plump and very kind hearted pressed tea and sugar on me (I was protesting suitably but not too much)
Then before tea was finished patients began to dribble in and I became "Dr". One girl (who protested that her age was 12½ and not 12) had a bite treated by calamine. She was accompanied by a younger girl who had cut her leg with a saw but would not let me see it – she didn't want it treated. Eventually she let the younger nurse see it and put on Euflorine (which does not sting) – she was very good with patients and especially children. A policeman wanted a gargle. He had rather a tendency to hang around the post (one of the nurses had been caught flirting and was not allowed to go again) – I shoved a spatula into his mouth.
Another girl brought a finger to be dressed. A mother brought in an infant who had earache. He was patient and listless as he had his ear and mouth and neck examined. He would see the Dr. at his surgery in the evening at 7 o'clock.
Once people had come to the post they seemed to enjoy coming again, but they seemed to have an instinctive fear of first entering the door of the little white house.

Liverpool Street Station was about 200 metres from the Great St.Helen's Post where Paul stayed and worked at night.

Saturday 30 Nov 40

The train in which I went to St Albans arrived ¾ hour late and the army and my boys were changing.

I discovered that the sec. of the 1st XV who lived a Hill End and who had promised to arrange ref. and tea etc. had casually asked one of the team at midday to see about it.

So before the game we hurriedly got someone to phone up a café and after another rush around we managed to get two referees – one had his leg in a plaster and stood on one touch line and another was recovering from a operation of a knee cartilage – he stood on the other touch line with the whistle. Neither could walk.

One of our ¾ 's didn't turn up but we got started.

They had about 5 officers in their team which was from a territorial regiment.

Their captain, a forward was a first class player and was our main worry.

In the set scrum we heeled the ball usually but in the loose they were liable to break through. Also we were short of a ¾ and another crocked his shoulder and couldn't tackle (although he tried) .

We discovered though that our forward rushes were effective as their defence and especially their back was weak.

They scored two tries but failed to convert them.

Someone suggested that all that was really needed for us to score was some encouragement so I started to lead the forwards with gusto.

So effective were my shouts that it drew one of the nurses to the touch line where she stood alone – waiting.

We then started to do better and one of our men went through to a brilliant try.

Then our back drop a goal and we were leading 7-6. finally we scored two more tries and they one. None were converted.

Afterwards began the difficult task of collecting the 1/6 from each of the team to pay for the visitors. Many (although they had not to travel at all) were very peeved at the idea. There were only two of us who went to the café to entertain the troops, the other being Ismay (also at Barts).

Luckily the café turned to served up a really good tea which pleased the army very much.

We retired to the pub but the officers had a kitty to pay for four rounds and only let us buy one round. Then one of the men came up to say that he would like to buy a round – but it was time to go. They wanted another game but it would have to be in the next fortnight that was not possible.

So I returned to Barts victorious and 15/- out of pocket and rather fed up with the Hill End students (who wanted more of the games there).

The 1st XV drew against Guys and the "A"'s game was cancelled.

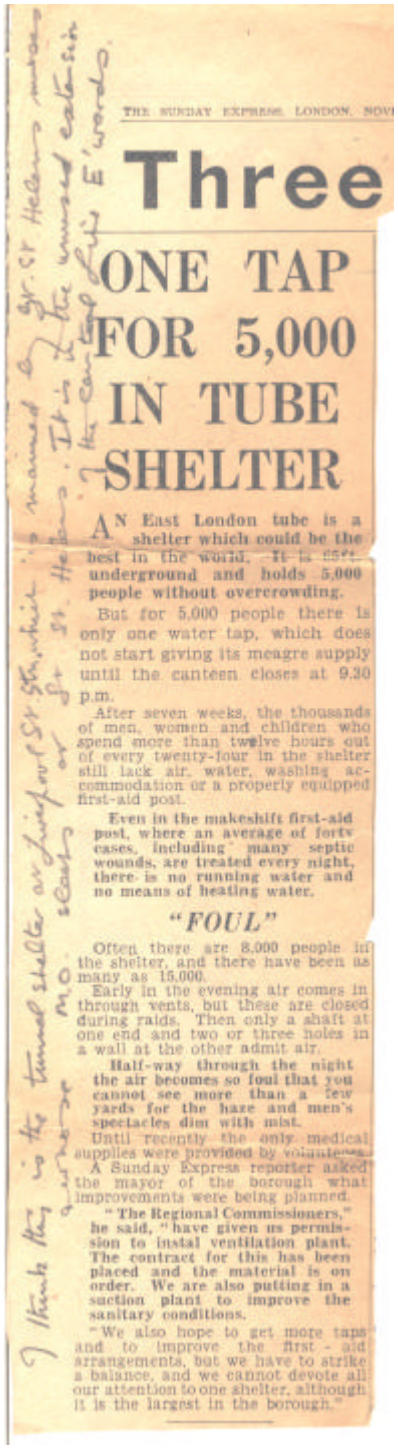
I've just been listening to the postscript by Lord Elton in which he marvels at the amazing "normality" (his own words) of towns that have had severe raids and of England as a whole. I am rather jealous that he should say the same things that I have thought and have tried to write about in previous communiqués at the same time it is encouraging that other people should really think the same and that it is not faulty observation or calculation on my part. He said a lot more, all of which I thought appropriate.

I have sometimes read newspaper reports of recent raids in London which people away from London must lap up in their thirst for news and have been very struck with the complete difference to personal experience. I don't mean of course that the press actually exaggerate damage and hardships or that the news is untrue but the incident or wreckage is spread over such a large area and the readers fill in their own pictures of the effects that they get a very exaggerated impression. And of course people talking or telling a story, rely (as the papers do) on the sensational features.

The papers say that the raid on Friday was much greater than previous ones on London – that is true but even so it was very small compared with even the original raids. And up till Friday although we've had siren, we've virtually had no raids at all.

Don't fall into the natural and human error (which is often a good fault) that the wireless news says less than actually happens.

Fairly often now we sleep at Barts – and could do more. The all clear has gone



THE SUNDAY EXPRESS, LONDON, NOV

Three

ONE TAP FOR 5,000 IN TUBE SHELTER

AN East London tube is a shelter which could be the best in the world. It is 65ft. underground and holds 5,000 people without overcrowding.

But for 5,000 people there is only one water tap, which does not start giving its meagre supply until the canteen closes at 9.30 p.m.

After seven weeks, the thousands of men, women and children who spend more than twelve hours out of every twenty-four in the shelter still lack air, water, washing accommodation or a properly equipped first-aid post.

Even in the makeshift first-aid post, where an average of forty cases, including many septic wounds, are treated every night, there is no running water and no means of heating water.

"FOUL"

Often there are 8,000 people in the shelter, and there have been as many as 15,000.

Early in the evening air comes in through vents, but these are closed during raids. Then only a shaft at one end and two or three holes in a wall at the other admit air.

Half-way through the night the air becomes so foul that you cannot see more than a few yards for the haze and men's spectacles dim with mist.

Until recently the only medical supplies were provided by volunteers.

A Sunday Express reporter asked the mayor of the borough what improvements were being planned.

"The Regional Commissioners," he said, "have given us permission to instal ventilation plant. The contract for this has been placed and the material is on order. We are also putting in a suction plant to improve the sanitary conditions.

"We also hope to get more taps and to improve the first - aid arrangements, but we have to strike a balance, and we cannot devote all our attention to one shelter, although it is the largest in the borough."

again tonight, but we're too lazy to go back when there is a chance that we might have to come back.
Well, the all clear has been on for about 2 hours but even as I wrote the alert has been reported from the door – then the message from ARP control and the "Stavilles Stag Party" has gone off the air.
The ballot for going to Friern didn't materialize. Instead the people who are not now living in will go and most of the others who weren't due to go are staying at their posts. There will be two changes here. I'm not trying to change to the hospital. Arrangements are in hand for us taking it in turn to assist the N.Z. Dr. at his evening surgery in the Liverpool St. tube. I'm hoping they will allocate us to other shelters but there is no sign of that happening.
So I am going to Friern in April - and take conjoint surgery probably in June.
Enclosed is shelter magazine – it might interest you.
I have the new shoes (and the washing) – have the shoes been paid for.
Much love Paul
PS I'll give you 2/6 for your old Blackbird if you are buying another – I do want a pen.

Communiqué No.16
Barts, E.C.1
30 Sept,1940

Dear Parents,

Thank you for the letter. No Barts hasn't been in a flap. There are about 4 wards in use and medical patients stay in Barts a week (average) whereas the surgical cases are mostly rush to Hill End or Friern.
I am sorry to hear about the grapes – I didn't realise they'd been stopped. I will try to do something about the Jowett. And have noted your remarks etc.

Monday 2 Dec 40
My camera had its big test today. But I'll tell you the whole story as a example of harmonious team work by "experts"
On Monday midday Peter Tweedy told me that Morgan (the rectal surgeon) wanted a photo of one of his cases, a rare type of cancer – a hypertrophic epithelioma of the anus. But Tweedy's camera although larger only focused to 3'8'' whereas mine went to 18" and used plates so he asked if he could use mine.
At 4.30 we collected an op. theatre spotlight and went to "Harvey" (where incidentally we saw Perkins isolated with flu).
We had also a standard lamp (to soften the shadows) – we arranged the screens and got the patient to come along. He was up and dressed and spent his time avoiding sitting down. He was what is called a "character" and was a fine looking old man. His cancer was slow growing but inoperable. It was the first time he'd been in hospital and was terribly touch that everyone was so nice and friendly to him.
Footnote:
Two years ago the patient complained of piles to his doctor who didn't examine him but gave him some medicine (in case it needs explaining, the piles were actually lobes of his cancer)

Another amateur – Birch – also assisted and after the lighting was arranged I was left to focus and set the camers at 18'' point blank f3.5 1/5sec on HP2 back plates.
Then Birch suggested another view and I took two of that at 18'' f5.6 ½ sec (to get a larger range of focus)
This all took time of course and the man was good as gold and very patient.
Then Tweedy – not to be outdone and because he too had not done clinical photography before took several on his film camera.
The man was very proud of this attention and wanted a copy of the photos – we said yes – hoping that one at least of them would come out.
After dinner Tum Tum Rees joined the team and in Tweedy's room we settled down to develop first one plate – then the other two a bit longer (30 mins) as the extra fine developer had cooled (Johnsons). We examined the plates with bated breath and ill concealed excitement – at first we were disappointed but after carefully washing and wiping patterns of powder off the plates we went into ecstasies over the scrotal hairs that we could see.
The plates were washed under water for ten minutes while we relaxed to buy some lovely warm beef mince pies from the travelling trolley in the casualty basement – I eat two and some coffee 5 ½ d and we returned.
One by one we dipped the plates in 50% alcohol solution and then into pure alcohol 95%. When they came out they dried in two minutes and the emulsion was hardened at the same time.
Then Tum Tum came into his own and with his super lantern projector he threw the image across the room onto a frame hanging from screws on the wall. Once again we danced in ecstasy as we saw the enlarged picture. We all carefully composed the picture to get he true artistic value from what is usually treated so "photographically".
After test strips we (or they as I was sitting back by now) found that 1 second's exposure was sufficient in "plastika" paper appeared the first almost life size enlargement. We gaped to see the minute veins shown in the skin and for artistic merit we knew it couldn't be beaten – those artistic curves leading from just a suggestion of the scrotum brought out to the full the epithelioma in all its glory

and lobulations.
Even so we found that the direct view had very nice lighting effects. Before they were all fixed Tweedy had poured the hypo by mistake into the developer (in a tea pot) and we searched the hospital for some hypo which we got with the aid of another student.
We hawked the prints round to admiring and amazed students (and they thought they were good too) and by midnight the enlargements were resting in their washing bath .

I was not present at the end of the story. Tweedy trimmed the dried enlargements and showed them to Morgan on a ward round the next day. He was very pleased with both the views and would like to have smaller copied for a book he was writing.
And so I feel my camera has proved itself at last.

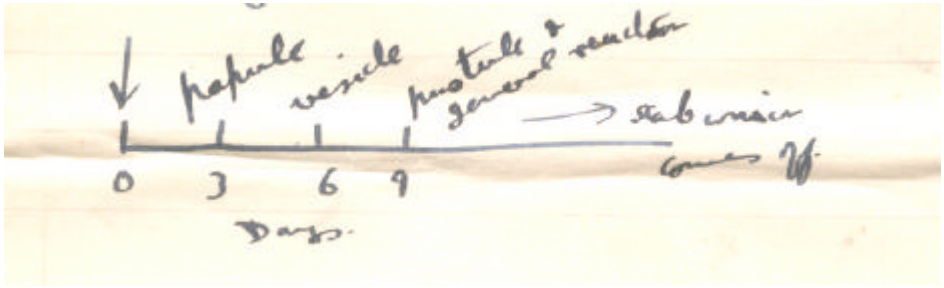
Tuesday 3 Dec 40
We have now an arrangement with the shelter doctor that the one on duty if he wishes will be welcome at the evening surgery. I went down with him a 7.15. Actually it as quite a small evening but I did get a chance to use my electric nasal speculum. There were a lot of bites but not so severe ones as usual. He was trying to use the ephedrine on the American theory that it was an allergic reaction. Looking over his shoulder was Prof. MacPhee who had been sent by the ministry of health to study mosquitoes infestation. He is an upright, shy, tall looking very likeable sort of man. He is from the Hospital for Tropical Diseases and has spent a lot of his life getting bitten in different parts of the world. Dr. was very brisk (but not rude) to some people who had come in again and again for medicine when they could go to their own doctor. But he was absolutely fair to them all. He was very kind to a German (Austrian) girl who suffered from giddy fits due to fear of the traffic and living in a shelter. She hardly knew a word of English.
We had tea and walked along one tunnel and back along the other. We saw side by side the only two taps (for drinking water only). The lighting was very bad, the only places light enough to read were the lavatories which had electric bulbs strung over them. Most of the tunnel was light by hurricane lamps.
He stopped and sharply told a boy in almost complete darkness that he would lose his eyes in a week if he continued to read.
He shined his torch at all the children he could see and would ask the parents if they were alright if they looked ill – then walked on if they said yes.
Here and there all along the route between the feet people would recognise him out "good evening Dr". One said "look at all the little pansy faces" and pointed to five fair curly haired pretty looking children sleeping side by side in the gloomy stench.
Another complained about the mosquitoes and Dr. said she should be in the tropics and she would know what it was like. This amused her a lot and she was still laughing and repeated what he'd said as we walked on in a solemn procession of two.
Beneath the wet iron rings circling the tube a man playing a big accordion while two girls danced shyly in trousers.
The little refugee smiled very brightly on seeing her friend the Dr. again.
And so we went on from one smell to another running the gauntlet of staring faces looking from either wall. They all seemed pleased to see the doctor however whom they treated with some reverence. Hung up along parts of the tunnel in a gallant but very pathetic attempt to brighten their home were paper Xmas decorations; while a man was finding a place to hang the bunch of mistletoe.
The Dr. noticed a little baby who was very ill with a cough and vomiting. He was surprised the mother didn't realise she (the baby) was ill enough to see a Dr. and he persuaded her to bring the child along to the post (otherwise he explained he would be called out in the middle of the night).
The baby had a temp of 102.6 F and vomited on the floor.
We passed out into the tube station which seemed like a Barts ward in comparison to a slum bedroom. People however seem to prefer the "tunnel" where they can leave their belongings all day and where they can stay all day as some of them do.
I think the tunnel is the most depressing part of the war I have seen, and yet – as everyone will agree – with very few exceptions indeed, the temper and cheeriness of people is marvellous and constant, considerate and kind.
Although it was a warm evening it seemed cold out in the night air where the guns were bursting away now and again. We went into a pub and each gulped down a pint of mild and bitter (which the Dr. paid for).

Collier was in a temper because Phillips and Ismay had not come down yet. If they didn't come by 11.00 he would report it. Then he extended it to 11.30. Stack rang up and they arrived just in time and settled down to a lively discussion.
Collier is again trying to get a room for us in the building where we can work (as a result I think of Phillips complete rudeness to him – Phillips is book for the fountain)

Thursday 5th December
I have received the Oakham cheque and also a letter from Starky saying he will put my application before the next school committee in January and will let me

know the result then. He goes on to say that he cannot hold out any hope as all of the several similar requests in the last few years have been refused mainly because of limited resources.

Did I tell you I was doing my vaccination course of 6 lectures (as requested by Govt.) but which Harris is making as short as possible ¼ hour or less. I have been vaccinated – a ¼ inch scratch with a needle last Monday which has taken and is running to schedule, which is



Thank you again for the nice long letter.
Much love Paul
2pm 7h 5 Dec 40

Communiqué No.17
Barts, E.C.1
Mon 9 Dec ,1940

Dear Parents,

I don't think I told you that my sports coat had arrived. It is better tailored as well as being better material. The pockets are roomier and mainly because they bulge inwards they don't look full.
I wore it first last Friday 6 Dec 40
I had "skins" that morning and when I arrived in the ground floor medical Path. Lab. everyone else was there. I can only describe the impression it made as a sensation. People all around were admiring it – people on the other side of the room put aside their concentrated attention on the patient's skin and cheered and made signs – of admiration. So that even I, in my nonchalant glamour could not hide blushes of pleasure at such a reception.
Perhaps it is because they noticed a contrast to my previous appearance.

Saturday 7 Dec 40
Most of the team arrived safely at Harrow on the Hill. This was after last minute searchings for stop gaps, our best players being raked in at the last moment.
We saw all the usual school boy faces wearing their shallow boaters. We were greeted by 15 six formers who each took a man back to their house to change. But four six formers were without mates. We got three substitutes and two more of the team arrived so we started with 2 subs. , the other two of the team arriving at half time. We had expected them to be in good training and they were, but they were quite impressed with us too – perhaps because we had taken the precaution before the game of explaining why we hard working medics were less fit than them.
We started at great speed and with cheering school boys. Our scrum was stronger except when their scrum half put the ball in crooked (which was always).
Their wing three quarter ran like the wind and had a habit of running straight across the field. They had a tiny stand off who Merryfield soon realised was a menace, he just dodged and ran through.
After the first quarter our forwards could not stick the pace and their wing ran through to a centre try which they converted. Our forward rushes were effective however and I picked up and put down the first try.
In the second half we played two short while the late arrivals changed and they slopped through another try which they did not convert. We realized we were up against it and unless we went all out we would lose so we played to win or nothing.
By the last quarter the forwards found themselves again and fought again in a pack. We managed to keep up our attack until we got another try to make it 8-6 to them.
The threes were playing very well (Kingdom, friend of the other Pat especially well – he has played in the first).
They and Picton at back were tackling and passing well.
We found we hadn't tired ourselves too much and so we tended to take the ball at the line outs instead of passing back and after a brilliant play by both sides we scored again and took the lead at 9-8.
It is nice to play a school team and it was an extremely good(and fairly clean) game.
Both sides were exhausted as they wandered up the hill and later met for a terrific tea with fish and chips, sweet as well as the usual cakes.
The schoolboys were very pleasant and polite and no different from the usual public school people.
Their numbers dropped to half after the London blitz. They have had incendiaries on their buildings but their grounds have patched up craters.

And so we returned very tired but victorious. The 1st lost gallantly to Aldershot Command (9-11) – the A again had no game.

Sunday 8 Dec 40
After days and nights without even a warning, the raid started early on Sunday night.
I had a date for a rum and lime at Piccadilly Circus and on coming out into the night saw Eros light up in a brilliant flare of light.
At the top of Lower Regent Street little figures were running about with shovels around a very bright incendiary bomb which thought it was a jumping cracker and started exploding about. The Jerries didn't seem to bother to bomb the light.
Then as we (the students) went to bed (in the post) the raid developed into a proper blitz. Again and again the door would rattle, again and again the foundations of the building would shake, again and again we thought something had hit the building but we didn't (or I didn't when awake) hear any very loud bangs.
The barrage, although very heavy at times, didn't seem so intensive as the original blitz and I couldn't hear any big naval guns. I have heard, though, that the guns were fully active in south London.
We had two casualties in the post which I didn't see. One had an incendiary fin in his leg – the other a piece of F.B. in his eye. Barts had about 15 cases to treat some serious I believe. There was at least one B.I.D. – shrapnel in the heart. Another (casualty not BID) had shrapnel in his lower chest missing his lung. Another had a leg shot off – which I am told was not a pleasant sight.
One of our posts had two B.I.D.s one a fireman to the building. They also had a terrific explosion but couldn't find the damage. They think a land mine exploded in the air just near.
There were quite a lot of fires started. One student passing some distance away in a bus thought that the Houses of Parliament caught fire but (particularly as no one else had heard the same) he is not at all sure.
We are rather surprised to see not damage – not even to windows round our post, in fact I have seen no new damage yet. I have heard that Gross and two other shops in Lower Bridge Road just off Ludgate Circus have been wrecked. I have heard that the P.L.A. buildings have been hit or fired or something, but I recalling haven't had a chance to find out just what damage has been done. My impression is that they were out for incendiaries rather than the not so successful H.E.
I was rather surprised when the doors were shaking last night, I felt none of the usual stomach sensations and (with all modesty) was rather indifferent – or perhaps I was thinking of other things.
As far as I am concerned I just slept my usual sleep in my new bed and haven't seen any injured or wreckage which I'm afraid is rather a bore for you.
Incidentally Barts did not receive any injury at all in spite of "5 hospitals being hit".
The general opinion is that the raid is the greatest we've had since the first few days of the blitz.
During breakfast an Alsatian dog wandered in, wandered round and lay down.
At lunch I could indistinctly see 17 Balls Pond Road on his collar. He seemed shaky, got up and wandered out. No one knows how or why he was there.

Monday 9 Dec 40
Although, like last night, the weather is ideal for bombing, there has been no siren all day (up till now 10 o'clock.)
London is lit brightly by the 2/3 moon and there are thin patches of cloud which do not mask the brightest stars and which the Germans would like.
It's midnight and no siren. I have been chatting all the time with Dick Gutteridge, one of the ARP men who with his father and twin brother is a big name in the spotting world as trainer. We (or mostly he) have been chatting away about people he has dealt with – he was with Ben Ford in Germany, in film with Victor MacGage and many others and he had allsorts of stories to tell.
He had an Autograph Book for his son with all the famous boxers. One who'd shot his lover when he found her phoning another boyfriend. When we had to stop big boxing – they tried to defend him on "punch Drunkenness but he was lying. Many of his young pupils in this book had lost legs, arms, yes, or lives in Dunkirk. An Italian had sunk in the torpedoed liner full of German and Italian aliens.
He told me of a very finally built Dr.'s son who had terrific guts and would have earned lots of big money, but he knew that at 30 he would be as good as dead as he wasn't "wicked" in the way and would become punch drunk.
He persuaded him to go back to doctoring (as he wasn't born a boxer) and he needed a lot of persuading.
Gutteridge says he is terribly afraid of doctors if he has to see them about himself (and especially if they are wearing white coats).
Oh there's lots more of great interest but there's not the time to write.
He had seen Jock Fingleton, the watcher on the roof who had been in Hill End. He said that the nurses were "angels" They had a raid on there.

9am Tues 10 Dec 40
No raid all night. I suppose the Jerries are only planning to keep London in shelters each night and so get ill

Much Love Paul

Communiqué No.18
Barts, E.C.1
12 Dec 1940

Dear Parents,
Thanks you very much for the pen. It is very nice to have one that works decently.
Answers
There did not seem any point on doing stereoscopic photo – a plain photo showed the characters (which very very obvious although rare) and anyhow the book will not have other stereoscopic photos. Uncle Berties work was more detailed and 3 dimensional and specialised. Also Morgan did not ask for a stereoscopic.

Uncle Bertie would have been Albert Alexander Gray of Glasgow who lived for a while at 5 Hammersmith Terrace, a few doors away from Colin Rowntree's father Frederick Rowntree.

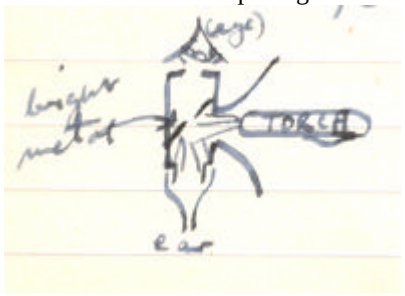
The only other reason we didn't was because we did not think of it.
Everyone is as emphatic in liking the N.Z. Dr. (as they are of despising Collier's surgery) both as a Dr. and as a man.
He is not perfect as a Dr. but is not small minded and is usually ready to learn. He is never on guard against what we students (or anybody) might think of him – in other words he is real.
He went to Guy's and played in the 1st rugger and tennis until he dislocated the outer end of his collar bone when he took up hockey. He comes from Auckland and didn't really know Napier(his name is Shallom (phonetically)

Napier is where Sam Begg Pauls Grandfather came from.

Re Joan Platts
"I'm sure I don't know" (which ends that).
I have just read your PS again and having just bought a new battery to fit the gas lighter, I read that it is a new top that you want. You'd better have it as it will not, I think be of much use to me unless I can adapt it for something. It's the burner you want isn't it (not a whole new top)

Mon 9th Dec 40 and Tues 10th Dec
No raids at night.

Wed 11th Dec 40
There was a siren and one or perhaps two planes came over and the guns widdled a bit of ach-ach once (or perhaps twice) during the night.
No one heard any bombs, so it was nothing "to write home about"
I attended "surgery" in the tunnel, which is now thick with Xmas hangings. One man had a gramophone pick-up and wireless to brighten the people I suppose, except they played dreary records – I thought.
There was a very small attendance (perhaps 20) with a large %age of foreign accents. The more interesting was a lump of cotton wool in a blubbering child's ear. With the aid of my electric auroscope, Shallom was able to remove it (his own auroscope would not allow the passage of an instrument).



There was also a woman pickle worker who has got acid ? into scratches which festered and a Billingsgate porter with a draining cellulites of the hand after cutting himself on a fish box.
We annoyed the sleeping ARP men by our talking at night. We had a very lively conversation with much playful back-chat and badinage mostly with sex as the basis. Incidentally I thought I came out rather well. I am developing the happy technique at making verbal thrusts at each person's weak points – successfully. They usually laugh.
(It's supper time 6.30 – a plane has just passed over so I will go and eat to the accompaniment of A.A. if it keeps going.)

Thursday 12 Dec 40
After dinner tonight the girl at the cash desk handed me a heavy plain cardboard box. I wondered if it was some kind of joke. Then I snatched at the piece of paper and saw the words "Burgundy" and "Sherry". Then I came out of a stuporous rapture to look again – to make sure the note wasn't a bill. No it just said "please receive" which I did – after refraining from kissing the girl in the cash desk. She seemed to think I might too, - she had a homely smile.
I haven't opened the box to see the first bottles of wine I have ever owned but tucked them away safely in a cupboard under the window. I'm beginning to wonder why I didn't think of having Christmas away from home before. It will seem different but I think (now especially) that Christmas day will still be distinguishable from other days.

Well to go back to the rest of this day.
This morning I went to the old Bailey to give my first injections to cure V.D.
In the afternoon I wandered along the packed pavements of Oxford St. to try and get inspiration for Christmas presents.
I saw for the first time a party of AMPS (or perhaps engineers) demolishing a building. Yet they seemed familiar. A work party of the inmates at Cell Barnes Colony work exactly the same – but they don't wear uniform.

Cell Barnes Hospital was built by Hertfordshire County Council to provide care for those with learning difficulties and learning disabilities (the 'mentally deficient' or 'mentally handicapped') - being those who had been ill either since birth, or an early age, and who were seen to have no prospect of a full recovery. The Hospital adjoined Hill End Hospital where Paul worked and studied.

They stared in groups like true British workmen and tried not to notice the large admiring crowd on the other side of the poles.
As I was near and as it was M & S's wedday I decided to make a record and before I had a chance to change my mind I walked quickly into the "pleasure" arcade and pushed in the 6d, pressed the needle and waited for the needle to move to "START".

M&S are Michael Rowntree, Paul's brother and Sybil who had got married on 12 December 1936. Sadly this was at the time against their Colin and Mary wishes and cause such an upheaval in the family that not family member was invited to the wedding, including Paul which must have hurt him. Sadly Michael died in a motorbike accident in South Africa on 10th July 1942.

And then I started chatting off. I hadn't decided what to say and I hadn't anything written down. There was no sign (like a yes) at the other end of a phone to know how I was getting on; only the mercilessly moving needle moving rapidly across the lighted dial and the knowledge that everything I said and the coy pauses were being recorded beyond my control.
And they I played it over. I was rather surprised to hear Lord Elton (who chats on the wireless) speaking in a short hesitant voice which sounded rather old and not very cheery. But whereas he says what he wants to, I had said – mumbling the first things that had come into my head and as if I was facing a silent examiner.
Well, maybe I'll send it you for your amusement and you can send it on if you think it will not depress them too much – it seems a pity to waste it anyway.
(It may have helped if I had not been alone but had someone to hold my hand)

Friday 13 Dec 40
In the morning I went with Graham Stack to try to beg borrow or steal a set of drums for the Xmas show. (Nuts and Crackers). The first place was very helpful but as he had no drums but only orders for them (Glasgow wanted 10 drums for a band), it was not very hopeful. We tried Boosey and Hawkes and the man started off to explain how difficult everything was, they weren't able even to hire out drums now for fear they would be lost. He asked us if we could raise £5-5-0 [5 guineas] as security and was probably surprised when we said "yes" and promised to let us have a side drum and a foot beat we could use on tympani 3 days before the show. He seemed convinced that we were doing the best with anything we could get hold of and after a little more conversation from Stack, he gave us two drum sticks and two wire brushes (both second hand)
We have been hunting round and I have now 3 sets of toy drums (from which I am making 1½ unbroken drums, 2 halves of a castanet, a triangle, two small cymbals and a silver meat cover which gives some lovely effects.
The show is 9/10 musical, some plain singing, one unusual sketch which is a pantomime to all sorts of tunes and is called "Cinderella and the Sleeping Houseman".
It concerns a sleeping Houseman, who it transpires has been bewitch by the ugly sisters and can only be cured by a kiss. The disease baffles the chief. A porter finds a dainty shoe outside the houseman's door – every one is horrified and decide to find the owner who confesses her love and being sure of her house physician kisses him (regardless of being sacked). However the houseman seems to think she won't be sacked and sings "I'll walk beside you though the wood tonight" in a very sentimental ending which ends the show. It is of course full of topicalities and representative of actual people. The ugly sisters has superb pantomime.
The show will probably start with the roof watchers song (to the tune of "in the Balalaika") "in my balaclava" leading on to "Hi diddle-de-de a students life for me".
The music is by Jimmy Knott (who is a really first class pianist) and some rhythm by the drums.
They will be left pretty quiet though except for the rumba "six lessons from Madame Le Conga (where the words are not all important)
We are trying to get hold of a record so as to get the rhythm right as this although sung from the stage – is primarily a band number.
I was wondering if you could post "The Cuban love song" with the other number on the reverse side of the record as that is the lecture on rumba rhythm and effects. If you think it might break don't risk it. But it would be useful to have (and as soon as possible)

Saturday 14 Dec 40
As it was Gwen's birthday, the sherry was broken into. I had had some (sherry I mean) at Finchley and liked it and Gwendoline too liked it very much indeed. There is still a lot left.
As you will probably have seen, although the papers have not made much of it Barts beat Mary's 1st. Merryfield saw Hamer who was playing in the A match (which they won) and arranged a meeting after Xmas I believe. Bartlett was playing in the 1st and is now wearing a sling as he sprained his acromio-clavicular joint (the same as Dr. Shallom).
The Ex"A" (weakened) lost to a very strong side from Middlesex Regt. Depot (I wasn't playing)

Sunday 15 Dec
Rehearsals again with Piano this time.
I have been picking up what is wanted.
To assist the singing Tum Tum fixed up his projector shining onto a sheet in front of the performers and wrote out the words on blank slides.
People keep there heads up and have no need of written copies in their hands.
The all clear (as usual) went at about 10pm.
When Collier and Commandant were in the tunnel a girl came in with what I thought might be a Colles fracture of the forearm. It needs X-ray to make sure – it probably isn't a fracture actually.
Then we had a woman (from a synagogue) with a wonderful asthmatic attack which we all listened to. I injected 3mg adrenalin (Drs orders) and she improved. She should probably have had more judging by the results.

Monday 16 Dec
Raids are very slack and quite rare nowadays (though not so rare as in York)
Everyone is very pleased or rather amazed at the successes in Egypt, but aren't at all excited by it – just pleased.

Thank you very much for the long interesting letter. I didn't want to go to the W.C. before reading it.
Gutteridge didn't remember Gann – he's never said he had worked at Smithfield
Much Love Paul
M 16 Dec 1940 (3.30)

Communiqué No.19a
Barts, E.C.1

Mon 30 Dec 1940
Thank you very much indeed for the Xmas goodies.

Dear Parents
I'm sorry I haven't written sooner but the show and things have rather occupied me.
Last night was the City's hottest (and I mean hot) raid.
The all clear went before midnight and left most of the city a blazing mass. We had 25 cases in the post mostly AFS and mostly with brick dust in their eyes.
Ismay persuaded me to come and look at the fires after we'd looked at them from the roof and sacrificing a comfortable bed.
I stayed out till 4.30 am and did not regret it as it was a sight and experience which I will never get again.
Ismay went out again at 4.30 and apparently was allowed to play the hose on the fires in Aldersgate Street.
Newgate St, St Paul's Churchyard, Cheapside, Gresham St., Guildhall, St Giles Church were ablaze – the church making a wonderful picture.
East of Aldersgate was the most intense and in this area at least 1/3 of the buildings were a blazing inferno.
We were able to wander about completely unimpeded in our tin hats and we saw scenes that would have made marvellous photographs – but there was no sign of cameramen or cine men. I suppose Duggie Ismay and I saw more of the fires than anyone else and if only I could go to America right now I should make a fortune on a lecture tour.
In spite of the papers saying that it was indiscriminate bombing, by a miracle Barts and St Pauls were unaffected – perhaps they are better watched – (they had a bout of incendiaries in Barts). Our post was East of the blazes (deadly secret) the C.T.O. was gutted completely after a fire burning from every window.
Will write
Much love Paul.

Communiqué No.19b
Barts, E.C.1
18 Dec 1940

Dear Parents,
As far as communiqués are concerned there is very little to write about except that we are not getting any raids worth speaking of. We do sometimes get a warning and then perhaps an all clear in 10 minutes but usually if there is a warning, it is all clear by about 11 or so (pm). So I have slept at the posts some nights as it didn't seem worth risking the possibility

of having to turn out again if I went back with some of the others to Barts. In actual fact the warning has only once (I believe) gone again. We do not get the warning during the day now.
The weather is mostly cold but we have had warm damp spells of mildness. We can always see at least some of the stars at night and the moon as you know has been full. Perhaps they're saving up for a Xmas blitz – perhaps not.

Bunks are really appearing at least in some of the tubes (notably Covent Garden) and the L.P.T.B. are doing their best with twinkling coloured lights and "Merry Xmas" in large letters. But I believe they are trying to avoid decorations or attractions which collect a crowd and slow down the passengers.
Even so many of the shelters have a very gay reflective air.
The tunnel no longer has a few pathetic streamers but a whole barrage of coloured paper (which defies any description a "pathetic").
So the London war front (on which I feel compelled to write although I think of it little) is very uneventful, but London itself is very much "London Itself" so instead, I will write of:

Tuesday 17 December 1940
I was having breakfast at 9.15 and had not yet shaved (after 30 hours) when George "Silent" Binns asked if I was coming to see the Gt Dictator. They were going to all meet in the square at 9.30am., as it was Scower's MOP's I had nothing else to do. I remarked politely that I hadn't shaved – "oh that alright - you won't be seen in the dark and you can sit between two Gentlemen" so I gulped my breakfast and we set off for the Gaumont Haymarket (which is one of the 3 places that the Gt Dictator is showing).
We arrived at 5 to 10 and joining a short rapidly moving queue, we paid 1/10 (for the stalls) and sat down towards the front in two rows. Two other Barts students arrived at 10 past 10 and had g. difficulty in getting in. when we came out the cinema was surrounded by a queue.
We watched the news and an amusing "How to keep your (Anderson) shelter in winter" and a Walt Disney "Bone Trouble" which is about Pluto and is one of the best I have seen (though not so subtly funny as some) his adventures in a mirror side show were rather nice.
And then came the much publicised "Great Dictator".
I think perhaps it may depend on who you go with and whether you like Chaplin or are expecting a gloriously funny knock about.
Because I don't think Chaplin is knockabout. A lot of people were very disappointed in the film (perhaps because they'd heard so much about it) but most of our party when we were back at lunch spread over different tables could talk about nothing else but all the funny parts to the intense boredom and annoyed resignation of those who had yet to see the film.
I personally thought it was an extraordinarily good film and that a lot of the critics were just rather short sighted. Although it was a long film I was very surprised when I realised we were coming to the end. Some people think parts of it drag, but I didn't. Some think the film is jerky – consisting of many incident – good in themselves - well it didn't worry me.
And then the ending when the little barber mistaken for the Fuhrer (or Phooey as he is called) gives his revolutionary speech calling to the soldiers to be individuals not part of the state.
This is out of "time" with the rest of the film but not so much as I expected. Chaplin is here doing a straight part. Before this he is ridiculing and making ridiculous the dictator system and the dictators, but here it is as if he feels the audience is still not sufficiently against nazism and so he faces them straight (and close up) and pleads and shouts to them (almost as much as the man he has been ridiculing) and though he is obviously sincere and means everything he says ,he says it in a medium which is foreign to him.
As he is unable to be empathetic and convincing by straight speech making, he over does it so that it rings a little hollow. But to me it seemed, that although it was bad artistically, it was what Chaplin really thought, and fought for, and wants to express and so it did not seem artificial. Chaplin has written and directed the film and the film was directly his. Paulette Goddard too seemed to have more screen than she should, but here again, I imagine myself seeing it though Chaplin's eyes and she (who is his wife) would naturally take a large and symbolical place in the film which if not his greatest is certainly his most heartfelt.
But he is at home in his own medium in most of the film and with his pleasant voice and little mannerisms he is quietly and with ease, is very funny. Jack Oakie's more robust and "vulgar" clowning as Mussolini rather puts him in the shade but I much prefer his expression after he held the baby – his quiet calls for "Capitaine" when he's lost in a mist in the 1914 war (and finds himself walking with the Tommies). His superb ballet when he dreams of being world conqueror, his inimitable run along the pavement and gutter after he's been hit in the head, and his working of the A.A. gun.
It is a real Chaplin film and you should see it (and if possible not read or listen to criticisms of it before you see it.)
You may be disappointed with it, but even so I think it is a film to see.

Wed 18 Dec 1940 Rehearsals (Temps)

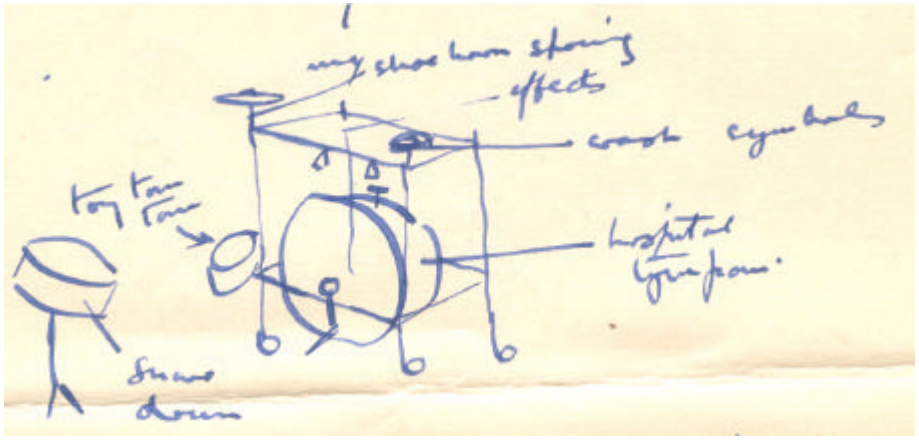
Thurs 19 Dec 1940
Was "on duty in the tunnel".
There was an F.A.U man [Friends Ambulance Unit] there (named Goff ?). He is one of the 150 or so who are now in London (some will be going to China.)

Communiqué No.19B (continued)

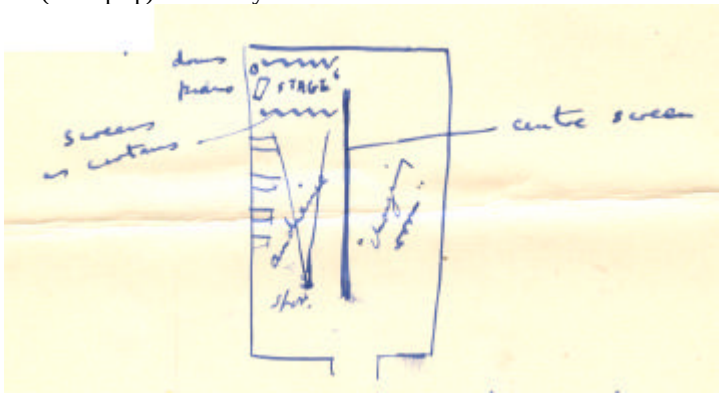
The smell of burning lies still in my nostrils while, on the last day of 1940, I go back to gloss over with maximum effect the may vents since Thursday 19 Dec. There has been a lot that I could write pages on (as you know I am able to write fully about nothing) but I shall have to be more sketchy (loud cheers).

I should like to have mentioned more about Goff the F.A.U. bloke. He is very able and keen to get the shelters improved and makes a point of getting the people to organize and amuse themselves – rather than be organized. He was to broadcast on health in shelters but his script was censored as it didn't correspond with M of H pamphlets and he seemed very interested and would be the sort of person to get it going. He said the City was one of the best areas – whereas Stepney was the worst – as far as local authorities are concerned. He was appalled on seeing the Tunnel for the first time.

I played in the A team against Charing Cross on Sat 21st. We beat them up. They had a wonderful modern club house – they were a lot of shits.
On Monday I took a cheque for £5-5-0 by Ellis - the resident anaesthetist – as security for the side drum and the bass pedal which Boosey and Hawkes lent us for free.



The drum set I made up in a hospital trolley (when the side drum was placed upside down on top) was all on wheels (There was a lot of string in its make up)
Rehearsals and dress rehearsals for the ward shows were in full swing.
The sherry you sent me (S.African Mozilla) was extremely good indeed. But when you send (to my great delight) chancellor Burgundy you set a problem
On Christmas day we had a dinner (1 cracker /person – including chiefs) at 12 midday and 5 ward shows until 7 – the inevitable after show drinking and then a party (and many drinks) at the first aid post in the evening.
And of course Burgundy should be drunk with food.
So on Christmas Eve – when she was off duty – Gwendoline braved the austerity of Barts and we slipped into the West Wing in the afternoon "borrowed" Allardice's electric fire for toasting and after she had peered down my microscope (which is one of her joys) we set to with primus to make and Xmas high tea and with S.African crystallised fruits and chocolates and cigarettes after the cheese and biscuits a coffee we did rather well. The Burgundy – yes just that alone – was like being in Paris again.
Allardice was tackless enough to burst in looking for his electric fire – he also had a corkscrew.
Christmas Day was as I have said. We started at 1.30 (after the very nice turkey – considering) and went on and on wheeling my drums back and forth, setting them up and playing in here and there packing p – wheeling on. There were many changed of costume for the performers and all the props (and footlights and spot light) were moved around on a bed (also a prop) and a trolley.



The housemen also toured the wards. There was a nice air of informality about the shows and yet the stage managing was first class and without hitches.
The first ward didn't laugh. The last ward was rather poor – the young sister made us hurry the show. Whereas one ward – with an excellent sister - was just a riot. She apparently gets them in the right mood first. I could see the audience – as I was on the stage all the time and it was very interesting.
The student show was generally thought much better than the housemen and was altogether a great success(as well as hard work).

There was a certain amount of vulgarity in the show and the one place where all the wards had laughed was the verse of a song: "We're three red rubber air rings

Three red rubber air rings are we
A. I belong to a Duchess I'm quite upper class
B. I belong to a baby its really rather a farce
C. I belong to a Sergeant with a boil on his neck"
(sung all blasé with a little dance between verses)

The pantomime was the best though and the caricatures were especially appreciated (most by the victims who slyly followed the show from ward to ward.)
The party at the post was rather patchy when we got there. Some very tight others not – everyone not knowing what to do. Commandant and Collier were doing their best to make people tight.
Ismay was already merry when we arrived and Hewitt Bartlett and I sat down and roared in uncontrollable hysterics at Ismay who for 40 minutes straight off (with a little encouragement from Collier talked the funniest "cock" I have ever heard and which I couldn't possibly remember.
As you know there were no raids on Christmas Day or Boxing day when we had the usual post Christmas depression and drank in the evening.
On Friday 27 Dec
After the combined show on the Barts stage and tea in the wards we had a hot night with an all clear before midnight. I was in the tunnel and collected into the 1st aid there a man who had been pensioned with shell shock after the last war and who had had a bomb drop near him and was wound up about it. There was one case in the post.
We returned to Barts at night to find it had a record number of cases, 45 admitted to wards and 40 treated in minor ops. Theatre.
I put on a gown to watch the ops in progress on 4 tables. They were nearly all from a surface shelter and tenement in Finsbury that had been hit and they mostly were suffering from flying glass. There were fractured legs, tendons at the writs being joined up after being cut, the main theme of he cases being flying glass about 1 inch square pieces and smaller. One had a punctured a man's pseudo pancreatic cyst (they thought the fluid might have been from his stomach but it wasn't acid)
Bartlett who was doing a locum in the hospital was assisting Nantan Morgan I stood by the table as they brought in fat gross middle aged woman with multiple cuts from glass (not bleeding) and with a continuous drip of polled plasma going into her angle vien.
She had a bad cut into her left cheek bone and a cavity which was just full of bits of broken glass. (which amazed Nanton). She had other head cuts and also cuts above her sternum.
Morgan was chatting to her and reassuring her and said he would talk to us about her after she was under.
They gave her an anaesthetic by mouth and then changed over to nasal intratracheal tube during which she started to cough. Then the unexpected happened . through the hole above the top end of her sternum gushed wave after wave of blood. Some glass in her wound – moved by coughing had cut open her jugular vein where it enters the chest from the neck.
We waited for death (which is always worse when the person has just been talking like an ordinary person)
There followed a fight which one only expects to find in cheap fiction (or A.J.Cronin) or Hollywood Dr. films. I saw it all happen.
Morgan stuck in his thumb explaining what had happened and that she would die and they couldn't do anything about it. But her didn't give up Hunt left the other table and between them they managed to pick out two bits of glass and somehow managed to get the vien from the pool of pouring blood and tie it. The audience waiting for the end looked very serious and raised resigned eyebrows to each other.
Nanton went one tro remove bit after bit of glass from her cheek bone. The plasma was finished – they dripped in whole blood (gp1r) to try to replace some of the lost blood.
Her condition was getting very bad. Straight away the sister went through the prefatal ceremony of filling a syringe (with Coramine?)
Asepsis was ignored in the frenzied fight for life (frenzied in fact though not so much in lay eyes)
The other wounds were loosely tied with one stitch and she was moved off to the wards while her condition was greatly improved (amazingly perhaps)
And so Mrs Chapman left the theatre in her bed, with a transfusion drip and with her life.
I don't know whether she still lives.
I went to bed at 2.30am leaving the theatres hard at it.

Saturday 28 Dec.
We played old Wandsworthians with a side containing many soccer players. They were very good and yet played dirty (unhindered often by the ref.). They won 29-3. there were no hot baths afterwards and no tea. We returned dirty to have a bath at Barts.

Sunday 29th Dec 1940
It was obvious before dinner that there was a big raid on. Incendiaries were banging down on roofs (one exploded on the roof above Ismays head as he stood in the little dark room. It didn't come through.)
Bartlett and others thought better to take a tube from St. Paul's to Bank and walk the rest so that we could hear falling missiles. I thought a quick cycle run would really be simpler (and take less time) and thought they were taking the raid rather too seriously. But my cycle lights were not working properly so I agreed with them. They ran like stages from Barts gate to St. Paul's tube (when nothing happened) with me panting and cursing behind. I wanted to linger and admire the golden glow reflected from St Paul's dome.
Down in the tube people were standing expectantly and chirping away like a bird house.
We boarded a crowded train and at the bank very slowly edged our way up narrow winding staircases with two way traffic – and people sleeping on the steps.

We finally reached the ticket office and were about to go up the steps into the open when bang and crash and flying glass (which I have learned to respect greatly) came falling in the entrance. – mixed up with a soldier and girl (who clasped each other). We had rather sheepishly but hurriedly thrown ourselves on the floor (I believe I only bent actually being furthest form the door)

The tube officials began shooing everyone down to the masses underground. Bartlett and co. wanted to wait down in the station but I pointed out that now was our best time to move as the plane had gone over and that anyway it was our job to get to the post where even now cases were piling in (which was not true but my fertile imagination only)

Having said before that on no account would I run from Bank to the post without provocation I ran with them at considerable speed to the post, where we uncovered our sweating shirts and washed in cold water.

A Happy New Year to You

We did a very brisk trade at the post reaching the unprecedented total of 25. one man had a puncture wound 1 inch long down to his muscle above the knee (presumably from a splinter) but without a tear in his trousers. We packed the wound with Eusol on gauze and gave him 3000 units (3 cc's) of A.T.S.

We left about 4 cases in our little "hospital" in one of the shelters on stretchers. There were a lot of AFS men led in blindfold complaining of grit in their eyes. We washed them with saline, folded the lids back and removed the colourless specks and put in castor oil drops – which gave them almost instant relief.

Then the all clear went between 11 and 12 and we went up on the roof to look at the fires, the whole sky was aglow and it was as light as a foggy day. It was easy to read small print in my diary. The main fires were towards Barts. There was also one in the direction of Tower Bridge (Trinity House).

We watched one church spire ablaze and as we watched the stiff breeze blew the flames across to a second fire which in a short time was completely ablaze. Although we didn't know it at the time we were witnessing the fir spread from St Lawrence's ? Church and setting fire to Guildhall.

A telephone was ringing and we were called down to six more firemen. In spite of goggles they're eyes were blinded. One of them told us there was a shortage of water as the mains had been hit.

I was tired but Duggie Ismay (who is also a photographer) finally persuaded me to come and look at the fires and see if Barts was still there.

What did we see?

What happened to the other first aid posts?

What happened to Allardice?

What happened to me on New Years Eve ?

Read the next communiqué – you lucky people.

Much love Paul.

Communiqué No.20

Barts, E.C.1

Tu 7 Jan 41

I had got as far as the all clear at about 11 o'clock on:

Sunday 29 Dec 1940

I am afraid that the extraordinary sights that might have left no separate chain of impressions – I am left with superlatives merely.

It was extraordinary the lightness everywhere. We had heard machine gun fire before the all clear and as the barrage had stopped although some people at first thought the Jerries were machine gunning the streets, most people believed it was our night fighters who, we reasoned, from above the Jerries would get a good view of them against the glow of the sky. (Most papers next day said fighters were up – but the Daily Mail most emphatically said there were no night fighters operating over London and they said that the reason the barrage stopped was because they would give their positions away with the City blaze on. So they would in daytime, I should think, and anyhow the mobile ach-ach on lorries would surely try and do something.)

We could hardly believe that the Jerries had been driven off or maybe, we thought, they could do no more damage in the City by dropping H.E. in fact they might put some of the fires out.

It turned out that a miraculous change in the weather prevented the follow up by H.E. alone. (There had been some H.E., a landmine or two etc with the 20,000 incendiaries.)

And so we walked along Threadneedle Street and then along Gresham Street. By the Bank the roads became filled with a web of hoses, some empty. I remembered the firemen say that there was a water shortage as a main had been hit. There was a blaze to our right but we went straight into and along Gresham St. We passed the Guildhall ablaze on our right with high water towers shooting water in.

Further on where the street bends right then straight again, we saw our fist big fire. It was just terrific. The whole inside of the building was one solid furnace of roaring flame. Flames were pouring to leeward across the street fanned by a stiff breeze. Again and again showers of glowing sparks would sweep along the streets as we walked about, but as we were frequently sprayed by hoses they did no damage. We soon realised why so many fireman's eyes needed cleaning out. Our eyes began to smart and water as we walked about.

I read in the paper next day that streets were closed to the public – we saw no sign of that and although we may have looked official, in our tin, hats, as we walked with an air of authority among the fire pumps and hoses and ducking under jets from the hoses yet the few other "civilians" we saw were not controlled.

Next morning however when the City was crowded by its workers there were ropes and

policemen so that we could hardly move and a policemen (who didn't know about Little Britain) wouldn't let us pass the rope when we knew we had a clear route and so we had to make a slow detour round by St.Paul's and the old Bailey. – and I was even more pleased at having seen the fires themselves in the comfort of the night before.
We turned right from our first fire and saw a church (St. Mary's) making a beautiful picture as the inside was burning.
We discovered that we were at Aldermanbury Post although it bore no resemblance to its normal appearance. Falcon St. leading to it was a mass of rubble. The post although safe in itself was evacuated when they were ringed round with fire with only one way out and that being closed.
Merryfield said that George Binns was in his element "organising" everybody as they put out fires in the building.
Their M.O. (I thought he looked a shit when I saw him some time ago) who is supposed to be a Czech refugee was last seen on 2 Jan that night asking if the roads to the country were clear.

I don't know if he has returned yet (he has) to the post which is temporarily in a small shelter (as casualties can't reach the proper post over the heaps of unrecognisable streets which are as passable as a rocky shore.
We found a way left into Cheapside where we were able to get to St. Paul's tube passing another fire to our right.
There was a fire raging over the entrance to St. Paul's tube station 9 opposite Pelham's (which is ok) and as we passed we noticed the very roof of the CTO had a thin sheet of flame along it (the fire having been blown across Newgate St.)
We went along Aldersgate but before we got to the Met Station there were huge fires on either side of the road. There were also many fires in individual buildings and in the streets to the right and left. We were able however to get along Little Britain and we waked round to Henry VIIIth gate, very apprehensive because thee was an ominous glow silhouetting the outer Barts buildings. Smithfield was lit up brightly by the general glow (again making a coloured picture) and the windows of the modern buildings to the west were lit up – but only by reflection. We entered the square and were relieved to find Barts unaffected by the 8 incendiaries (some explosive) which were soon put out by students and porters.
The electricity and gas was off and Barts was working on our emergency dynamos. We also managed to get a cup of tea.

We returned round by the old Bailey and Ludgate Hill and saw many buildings round St Paul's which we were surprised to see was alright. (some incendiaries fell though the roof but the watchers were hot onto them).
We came through St. Paul's Churchyard and saw the Central Telegraph Office completely ablaze with fire from all windows.
There were other huge fires along Newgate St – Efram Blakes (which still stands and

above the old Post Office tube station.

We stood and watched the C.T.O. but it was latish and we decided that the walls would not fall for some time. (they still stand).
Then we wandered the streets north of Gresham Street where the fires had got such a hold that there were no firemen there. They were ringing round the fires trying to prevent them spreading. We tried to make our way towards the post but we couldn't go straight on so we tried to go southwards (to the west of St. Mary's Church). We ran quickly passed a blazing building only to find our way blocked by a huge wall of rubble from a collapsed building. Things began to drop from the blazing building and we rushed back before anything heavy came down. We retraced our steps back along the only possible route to Aldersgate and the only way we could back to Cheapside.

There was a straggly young A.F.S. man with a Yorkshire accent who asked the way to Mansion House. He left gibbering and repeating himself. After a time, we understood that one of his pales (under his orders) had been killed by a falling cornice stone. He left repeating "poor c****" and whining "poor f******". I told him not to go there – it's not my fault – he wouldn't listen – I told him not to stand there – poor c**** – he's dead – my pal – do you realize he was my pal – it's not my fault is it." We assured him it wasn't – but it made no difference to him.
"Poor c****" – I told him not to go there – I couldn't help it". Apparently his pal and some others had been taken to Barts and we couldn't be sure if he had died yet.
It appeared that they found some bottles of whisky in a basement and he had allowed them to drink it. He also had a bottle himself and he was terrified that he would therefore be held responsible for his pal's death.
He was terrified that we would report him or hand him over. I thought he wasn't in a fit state to wander about (he had lost his brigade) and wanted to take him back to the post where we could give him a stretcher. But he was too suspicious and broke away from us. I was afraid he might throw himself in a fire in a suicidal fit but Ismay thought although drunk – he was rationalizing well and anyhow, having reach the Mansion House we could do nothing else but shake him by the hand and say goodbye and leave him to his own devices. I hope that the many AFS men and the policeman would keep him from harm)

We got back to the post (which we believed was the only 1st aid place still working in the City – with Barts refusing cases))
We were wet and tired and I went to bed. Ismay was far to excited and leaving his camera and valuables with me (he was a bit apprehensive going without my "steadying influence") he went out again (at 4.30 am) to rejoin the fire. He took over one of the hoses at an Aldersgate St fire. The fireman (who had been in the dock fires) said the City one was far worse.
Allardice (after evacuating from Aldermanbury) was walking along just outside the White Hart at about 11 o'clock when a bomb landed on top of the White Hats buildings. Stones and bricks were hurled across the road where windows in the observation room and R.S.Q. and the catering Coy. were caved in by the blast.
[Aldermanbury is positioned next to Guildhall]
He however being close to the building was safe under the waterfall of huge stones etc which fell into the road.
He hurried to the Vicarage [Barts club] and had 8 double whiskies straight off.
6am found him helping in the evacuation of patients to Hill End. They were to be evacuated at 10am. But even though the risk of fire and total evacuation changed with the wind, the police advised them to start earlier while the streets were empty.
PPS
If Nadeen asks to come and see you or stay with you, please try and make it possible as I think she would like someone to discuss her worries with.
Please don't say anything to anyone else and don't tell her I asked you this, as she might not want you to know she has worries.
So please curb any curiosity you will now have until you see her.
Thankyou

Communiqué No.20 (cont'd)

I am terribly sorry that I haven't sent you a letter for a fortnight but we have been having a very eventful time in the City during the last 3 weeks.
Because I was already out of date with these communiqués and because I have wanted to do justice to the events, I have put off writing to you again and again. I have been very happy though.

I saw a film in a news cinema of the City fires and, except for the commentary (the cameramen risked their lives to secure these pictures – there was an all clear on)
And the unrealistic background music, instead of the calm silence of the infernos, they were good films.
On New Years Eve I was pretty tired after late nights and decided to go to bed having spent several drinking evenings.
But George Ellis (anaesthetist) came over and invited us and any other students to a bottle party in his room in the houseman's quarters. Three of us combined to fill a slop pale with M&B [mild and bitter] from the Vicarage which we labelled "beer only" and took up to the party. Nanton Morgan was there, so were one or two cheery sisters, but mostly they were housemen and mates (sharing one chair and leaving the room at the same time to micturate)
It was a very good party (a radiologist who is a Major and looks like Ronald Fraham said how refreshing it was to see the young couples and gave us friendly advice that we should marry someone with an equal income – we should also be in love he agreed).
We were a little unpopular when we tried to get photos using photofloods (but I've got behind with developing too).
After the singing and merry making most couples left and we were still doing fine with a table still groaning under bottles of whisky, gin, martini and rum. I was drinking mixtures (mostly rum and orange) out of my tankard. At 2, I was pleasantly mellow and singing tunefully and smoking a manikin.
Suddenly I said "I don't feel too good" and apparently I turned bright green. Merryfield helped me out but after we had cheerfully avalanched down a flight of steps (I knocked my head severely – I am told – and remarked "I feel better now") Sandiford came to help.
I "parked several coaches" (vomited) on the way back. Sandiford (a 1st XV second row forward) was needed to help me – as I "weighed a lot".
I can remember I was going the right way and I distinctly recognised a picture on my wall. Sandiford was murmuring "be sick in a bowl" – "put your finger down your throat" as I

vomited uncontrollably but (I'm proud to say) in the right places.
I felt as if under an anaesthetic and very shortly passed out on my bed, after my trousers were removed.
Merryfield and "Snake" Sandiford returned to the party – looking in again at 4 to empty the bowl.
Jim Merryfield looked in next morning with some aspirin but as I was tired anyway and as there was nothing to do, I stayed in bed till 3pm when I had 3 cups of tea and one cake.
Well that's the first time I've been sick and I certainly deserved it – but I still think it was a very good party.

Wed 1 Jan 1941
There was a change round in 1st aid personnel with only 6 students (instead of 8) at each post. All the others went to the Old Bailey (except Stack who went to Friern). Bartlett was made chief of the posts and as I was the only remains at Gt St Helens was "chief stooge" there. I shepherded the Hill End people down there (I had picked them all from Bartlett's list) and brought them into the post "like a hen with chicks" so an ARP man had said.

Fri 3 Jan 1941
I went down to see the Hill End Barts show "Black and White" which was an ambitious revue with a too huge cast. It lacked a producer with a sense of showmanship in fact as a revue it was pretty "punk".

Sat 4 Jan 1941
During the day we jumped out of our shoes successfully as guncotton charges were fired in Newgate St. to demolish buildings that were unsafe after the fire. The bangs were very loud and always came unexpected (and during the all clear)
Again there was no rugger because of frost.

Mon 6 Jan 1941
In the medical wards under Dr. Gow. Had a patient having deep Xray after an op. for cancer of the cheek. He had no cheek. Had never been ill in his life and was rather unhappy at his appearance and inability to eat. I was very pleased to discover that he had always smoked a clay pipe (till 10 years ago) as this is supposed to cause cancer of the mouth. (He had not been asked about this at Hill End.)

Tues 7 Jan 1941
Gow's ward round. He has rather an anaesthetic tired voice but I prefer him to the other physicians of repute at Barts as he does seem to want to teach us.

Wed 8 Jan 1941
Under the pretence of wanting to go to Aldermanbury 1st aid post, I broke though the police cordon with Merryfield and toured the devastated City.
I had thought the damage pretty terrific before but I got quite a shock when I saw what it was like North and West of Aldermanbury. I have always tried to give you an accurate estimate of damage in London and you probably thought I was minimalising it. I was not. You will probably believe that when I say that for an area of over a quarter of a mile square all the buildings were completely wrecked. There were bits of walls standing up. It was not all flat but it was not like the complete shells of buildings I had seen previously. All buildings were just completely wrecked. We climbed over streets of brick and stone where black coated business men had come to look at their offices. They were sometimes able to collect valuables – though most of the basements were full of building. One cockney in Aldermanbury asked "which was no.7" and fatuously "the number on the door is rather dusty!".
One businessman said it was very like some Belgian towns after concentrated shelling for weeks. "yes" (he tried to convince us) " it was almost as ruined in Belgian in the last war as this" – (pointing to the City of London.)
The ruins stopped at Whitbreads Brewery to the North (they weren't out for military objectives) Gresham St to the South, Aldersgate to the West– as a rough indication.
Between Aldermanbury post (which was intact – amazingly) to Whitbreads was the worst. Of course there was a lot more ruination elsewhere round ST Paul's – in Cheapside and Specially Newgate St. – but the ruin here is not so impressive.
Scattered all over the place were many squads of soldiers pulling down walls with rope and lorries and tractors and mobile cranes and with gun cotton. It is a a peaceful scene and there were few casualties and there is a chance for a complete rebuild of this area of the City. I do it is done completely.

Sat 11 Jan 1941
Mawe wanted to buy a filter for his Zeiss so we toured the remaining camera shops (many have disappeared or have just closed).
Kodak in Regent St sent us to Wallace Heaton who had thousands of filters but none would fit. We were told we had "foreign" camera and would not be able to get any.
We managed to get what we wanted at the Westminster Sale and Exchange in Oxford St after bullying a wet youth. Besides getting one to fit it was also an interchangeable type – so I was pleased. It cast 7/- (which is very reasonable).
I went down to the post after chimes as the raid had been on since 6.15pm and found that Shallom was on leave and Collier was doing his "surgery" in the tunnel. Commandant deserted her post so as to be with him down at Liverpool St. I was the first down and found a man with a burn of the forearm – he had been waiting for over half and hour. I caused some surprise by asking for ordinary hot water and ordinary soap to wash him down before going on to Acriflavine and Tannic acid and then Tannic acid jelly on gauze (after cleaning the normal skin with alcohol) . He had gone to an ordinary incendiary which flared up.

Before I had finished, Loveless had arrived and I was called to the phone. It was Commandant to say that they had had a bomb at Liverpool St Stn and wee snowed under with cases. Would I send a student and an ARP man as a messenger. She and Dr. Collier would not be back for some time, so I would be in charge. Loveless went down.

Then casualties began to come in. McGrigor had arrived by now and together we set to work as the cases came in. They were nearly all shrapnel wounds but there were a few cuts. I would get started on one and in the middle a more severe case would be brought in so that I would have to go and see how urgent it was. Macauley came down ½ hour later (he had been playing rugger).

Soon we were in a mad rush – or at least I was. I was running round palming off minor cases with instructions to nurses who were behaving marvellously (as Commandant was not there to fuss them.) I would rush into the office to find A.T.S., morphia bromide tablets and local anaesthetic. It took some time and some phoning to find the key to one cupboard where I got bromide and A.T.S. The other cupboard was locked and although Collier agreed to A.T.S. he didn't want me to use local anaesthetic (which would aid sepsis) and because, he went on, it was surprising what you can do without it. He had already pulled out all sorts of things satisfactorily. Nor could I get any morphia. So I agreed and decided to do "battlefield surgery".

One cheery old man had a lump of clothing it seemed (actually is was covering shrapnel) at the front of his left wrist with skin over the centre third. I could not pull it out so warning him it was going to hurt him I snipped though the live skin quickly and removed the piece. It left a dirty jagged wound which needed excising. We could only remove the obvious dirt and wash with flavine. We gave him A.T.S. (3000 units).

Then there was a youngish man in great pain with two penetrating wounds on the left buttock to the left and in front of the left thigh.

The ant. One [anterior] was occupied by a glistening piece of shrapnel, the other was just bleeding. Inspired by this time to action, I risked causing haemorrhage by removing the F.B. (asyou may) and after tugging and cutting and tugging I removed that too. It was about the size of a prune. I have kept these pieces. This man was called Caffel. He got A.T.S. and bromide.

He was the most shocked and in the greatest pain. The others were surprisingly good.

We learnt by this time that Liverpool St. Station had received a landmine and a bomb and that dead were lying on a platform We also learned that a bomb had landed fair and square on the Bank Underground Station and that a bus had stopped with its front wheels over the edge of a huge crater which almost completely filled the large circle of the Road between the Bank, Royal Exchange, Mansion House in fact that part which is over the large ticket hall, rather similar (though not so strong) as Piccadilly Circus ticket hall.

An escalator fell apart so that people on it fell through.

As luck would have it, there was one train in one platform (Central Line) as the bomb exploded while on the other a train was coming in. The blast (which was strongly felt at Liverpool St tube) blew people off the platform before the incoming train which was smashed up. The windows of the other train were smashed up too.

courtesy of ww2today.com

The mobile unit from Unilever House was out and they carted their unwieldy cupboards about. They got down another way and started a 1st aid post which was also rapidly filling as a mortuary. The morphia was all in one chest and it was some time before both morphia and syringes were found. The student who told me was furious with the organisation of the mobile unit – which wasn't planned with almost a "pit disaster " in view. He said he would see Dr. White and suggest a satchel for each student with a syringe and morphia so they could work independently.

On the stairs they found just unrecognisable bits of people and also men women and children trapped under the beams. They are very subdued and quiet when they talk about it. One said it was difficult to tell who was dead. He had to walk on dead bodies to get to another when the "dead" one groaned.

They don't know how many have been killed, but a reliable estimate is 100. They are still retrieving bodies and bits of bodies from the crater.

This is just part of the story which you read in the papers as a subway (which is accurate really) being hit.

Cases are rushed to Barts and some trickled into our post though not many. One woman had a cut from her eye down to the right side of her face. She had been in one of the trains in the Bank. McGrigor stitched her up and made a very good job of it. (She would not have been at the Bank if she had not quarrelled and broken off with her fiancée – he appeared full of remorse but wisely was not allowed to see her until morning. – he was rather a wet and deserves all he gets if he marries her)

Well, it was all very nice for me, having the free run of the place though it was rather a responsibility deciding how many should go to Barts. A lot should normally go to a hospital but if Barts were full up and busy (as they might be) it would be better to keep them in comfort at the post. As the hospital was off the phone (and still is) there was no way of finding out.

I decided to send two – Caffel who was in pain and Goldsmith – a tough middle aged Rescue leader who calmly sat in a chair while having a wound (through his cheek, a long but not deep wound in his chest wall, that we weren't sure about, and a piece of shrapnel going right into his tongue (about 1"x 1"x 3/4")) . He let me snip at his tongue with scissors and pull away at this jagged piece of shrapnel (which I foolishly let his pal keep – not thinking at the moment I should like to have kept it). The "shrapnel " must have gone through his open mouth (For shrapnel – read anti – aircraft shell casing or bomb splinter.

As Commandant didn't ask me or the students (after she and Collier finally arrived back after we'd finished) (She couldn't even remember who she'd asked.), they took the wrong two cases. So finally we sent 5 to Barts. Three of these were warded (Caffel, Goldsmith and Patterson.)

Altogether we had 25 cases in perhaps two hours or less.

Barts admitted 139 cases and warded 99 cases (apart from minor ops). 18 went to the mortuary next morning. They had a bumper evening – at one time with two surgeons, one removing each leg. We got to bed at 2 – most of the Barts boys were 4 or 6 am. Some had not been to bed by midday next day (and were not even on duty).

The City mortuary was either overflowed or bombed as they piled corpses in one of the streets and removed them by dust carts. One of the mortuary "keepers" fainted – either with overwork or just strain.

Well these are the gory details. Liverpool St. Station lights went out on their second explosion and Collier etc were working by hurricane light. The marshals kept people from rushing about and panicking. I could hear the noise over the phone.

Gwendoline told me that for days after, mothers would come to the post (in the tunnel) and enquire for news (as they couldn't get any news from Barts etc.)

One mother had already lost two of her children before. She thinks her last one was with a party of children playing as usual in the underground. They were apparently playing on the escalators at the Bank at the time.

She had just been sitting, completely dazed, starring, taking no notice of her surroundings – until several days later when Gwendoline was surprised and pleased when this mother recognised her and smiled ("hopelessly, as nothing mattered any more") before sinking back into her solitude in the crowded tunnel.

The papers next day had headlines "Enemy fire raid thwarted" – Allardice (who had been down at the Bank) nearly vomited on hearing the bright cheerful tones of the announcer who did not tell of the terrible unlucky disaster of the night before.

Well, I must stop there on the morning of :

Sunday 12 Jan 1941

There has been nothing special since then (and no cases at the post) We have been having snow and ice continuously this year but the thaw set in yesterday. Today it is pouring down rain continuously.

Much Love Paul Mon. 20 Jan 41.

P.S. another reason why I've been so late in writing is that I wrote a full one to to Mike and Sybil.

Communiqué No.21

Barts, E.C.1

Sunday 23 Feb 41

Dear Parents

Thank you for the letters and parcel. I am hoping Bradley will write and let me know when I can go and chat to him – it is hopeless to get much out of him via letters.

There really isn't any positive blitz news but I'll put:

Sunday 16 – 23 Feb 41

Slept one night at the post but I could have slept every night at Barts since any raid there has been has finished before midnight. I don't know of any bombs dropped except via newspapers.

On Wednesday I cycled in the dark across the huge crater at the Bank Station. It has a very good one way bridge stretching from side to side carrying cars and buses etc (but not pedestrians) .

On Thurs, I have received a form from the ministry of lablour and national service on which I have to give my employers name and business and also the foreman's name. It was addressed to St Bartholomew's Hospital. There have been many others but I don't yet know how it should be filled it.

I have read "Antic Harry" belonging to E.E.Perkins as he has left his books in my room. I particularly liked the first chapter when the hero is a schoolmaster and during the chapel service he thinks of having a pneumatic attachment to trousers.

I was unable to get a fixture for Saturday and as it was a lovely day I persuaded Gwen to come for a nice long walk in the park, we rowed on the Serpentine – apparently she was never allowed to row before and was thrilled with it – so of course I let her.

On the way home I saw her onto a train at the right platform at Tott.Ct. Rd. but the trains were going the wrong way (there was a shuttle service as far as Leister Square only) – we discovered later). I had to hold the closing door back to let her get in and as it closed after her, her shoe fell onto the platform.

courtesy of www.pinterest.com

It was one of those trains with netting on the windows and only a small hole to look through. I frantically signed for her to come back (as she was going in the wrong direction anyone) and she was signing to me to come on.

Afterwards I realized that I could quite easily go one the next train to Goodge St. especially as she would be hindered anyway.

In the train she met Cyril one of her childhood friends who introduced her formally to his friend – Gwendoline trying to unsuccessfully hide her unshod foot in her behind.

I waited 5 minutes and a train came back without her (actually she had only just missed it) so when the next train came in another 10 minutes I went to Goodge St. with her shoe in my pocket. But she wasn't there. Another ¼ hour and a train came into each platform. I couldn't examine the incoming train without missing the train going back to Tott. Ct. Rd. so I caught it. But she was not there.

I was approached however by a man who told me (after asking if I was the young man with the shoe) that the young lady had been here and had just gone back to Goodge St.

(on the train I didn't have time to examine.)

I asked if I should go to Goodge St and he said yes I was to follow.

Luckily a porter came up (with a better memory) who said he'd been told to keep me at Tott.Ct. Rd. at all costs and so after another 10 minutes, she returned running in her stockinged feet.

And so she got into the Northern line at the Bank instead over an hour later than she had started.

I have been surprised at the amount of chocolate that we have been able to buy in the "refectory". Although it has all gone now you could buy 2 x 2 ½ slabs at each meal you went to.

At tea today (Sunday) I was talking to rather a "wet" named Druitt (who is a vegetarian and wouldn't think of entering a pub even to drink lemonade – otherwise ok)

He was at a maternity Hospital on "Black Saturday" the first big fire raid on the East end. He was delivering a child during that 72 hours of bombing. At each explosion when the mother was getting lax, she would start again, he would protect her from the window and the sister would dive under the bed.

He had been standing at a doorway and was blown outside. He picked himself up unhurt go back to the door when a second bomb repeated the action.

He had taken some excellent photos of he biggest of the fires that was about 250 yards away. 3 photos showed various stages of a school caught in the blaze – the last at night. They were excellent photos taken fro the hospital roof.

His sister is a Dr. and is in York. She had worked in the Dispensary 9 months and liked it. She had done a locum for Gosling (as one of the partners, Cocky Marshall, had been called up and he hadn't arranged for the woman who is now doing it.) Now she is an H.S. at the County (though he said the Royal York first).

While writing this the wireless has drained down, then the sirens sound (8.15), a plane has flown loudly overhead and a thunderstorm of anti-aircraft fire has burst out but died done again.

It doesn't effect me as I am off duty tonight. I expect the all clear will go in about 3 hours.

I refuse to write anymore about the Commandant – there is ton to write about but it would tire me to write volumes on variations of the same theme – her bitchiness. She has prevented Dick Gutteridge (who was seconding in the Odeon RAF boxing fights – when the King was to have attended (He did)) from going to a better paid massage job in an orthopaedic hospital.

She has ordered us and then ordered two other men to clear our beds each morning from the decontamination rooms (female) telling some of us it was because they were untidy and others that the gas danger prevented us from leaving beds there. She has prevented Keeble (the nurse that was at Barts) from becoming an assistant Commandant and rushed another nurse into Red uniform to make sure – but I told you this.

I used to worry as to how I could make conditions in the post better – but now I realise that so much is wrong (and all that is Commandant) that it just isn't worth worrying at all.

The affairs of the other members of the post go on (I hear them all from Gwen) and they are amazing and complicated.

If all the different incidents and characters were put it one book you would not believe them as likely as actual life – and the book would be crowded with conflicting and various currents.

Have you heard about the warden who was holding a baby to give its mother a rest; but after a time he rushed the baby back. He could no longer take it as the "yellow had come through"

The raid has fizzled out into complete silence – there can only have been one plane.
It seems ages since we were in York and really it's a little over a week.
I have not had any letter from M and S.- I don't think their reply, if existent, would be due yet anyway.
I have written a suitable letter (I hope) to Elizabeth Barnes.
Has Nadeen come to stay yet ?
Back comes the Jerry.
I am hoping to join the U.H.S.C. [United Hospitals Sailing Club] early this year. It has been open all winter. But I'm not sure who to send the money to. I should like to sail next Sunday if possible.
I should be grateful for some pants if possible. Mine now look as if they belong ot Daddy's Unit (but more "egg" and green)
Much Love
Paul 9 pm Sun 23 Feb 41

P.S. I see W.A.Hamer touched down 2 tries for Mary's 1st against Wads y'day.

Communiqué No.22
Barts, E.C.1
27 Feb 41
Dear Parents
Thank you for the clothes (and 2/6). I hope Daddy gets a decent job in the R.E.s [Royal Engineers] The wireless has suddenly dimmed so the warning may go any minute, before I've finished this letter. It's now 8.45pm.

Mon 24 – Tues 25 Feb 41
I have still only slept one night at the post since I have been back and then I needn't have done. Normal life goes on. I sent off the subscription to U.H.S.C. [University Hospitals Sailing Club], I hope to the right address.

Wednesday 26 Feb 41
The tide will not be right for another fortnight and I was off duty and had only one lecture to do all day, I got Story to sign me up and with a rucksack full of jerseys, shirts and extra trousers Gwen and I rushed to Mitcham to collect suitable clothing. She had already borrowed golf jacket from one stretcher bearer and a sweater from Dick Gutteridge (costing 2 kisses and no questions asked)
We caught a trolley bus to Hammersmith. There had almost been a fog in the early morning when there had been no wind but now the sun had come out strongly and although the leaveless trees barely moved my anxious eye had been noticing the ever increasing blowing of smoke from chimney tops.
We know high tide was about 4 o'clock and that we couldn't get the boat off until a certain height of tide but if we wanted to get far upstream we should leave moorings as soon as possible. So we hurried and bought some buns and confidently approached the London Corinthian Club – knowing that we might get chucked out – or even that the boats might be already out.
[The London Corinthian Club is located on the North bank of the Thames between Hammersmith Terrace and Hammersmith Bridge]
The man at the bar bowed slightly as he ushered us towards the waiting hospital dinghy. It was about three when we finally heaved and tugged and got the boat stern first into the Thames. With wind and a nearly full tide, we sailed past the empty moorings off Hammersmith Terrace and past Chiswick Eyot, almost under water.
(It is 10.20 – I've listened to the news, mended Story's electric fire, drank coffee and talked shop and the warning hasn't gone.)
The South East wind was gusting past the line of trees, but later houses cut out most of the wind. We were sailing slowly and drifting more rapidly, as we happily looked around when I suddenly remembered "Barns Bridge" more consciously and realized that I didn't know what happened at bridges. The tide was high and over the road on the south bank and although our mast and gaff seemed much higher than the bridge, I knew it was deceptive.
The crew was bundled forward to get ready and lower sail if necessary. My nerve didn't hold and it was lowered (necessarily it turned out) and we blow crabwise and under the bridge.
We hoisted again and got straight but the wind was blanketed as we drifted leeward towards a big stream of barges surging round the corner and overtaking us downwind. I had forgotten about tugs, too, and although he didn't swear, the tug man looked as if I had trodden heavily on river etiquette, as he changed course and avoided us.
We passed under Chiswick Bridge (not so low) and the railway bridge successfully, lowering each time. We sailed between the boats and the footpath along Strand on the Green, passed Picton House (with my old bedroom window latticed with paper). Pedestrians were picking their way along the half flooded path.
There was very little damage noticeable. The house from the City Barge to the Hubbard's house by the railway had their windows smashed and were all evacuated, except the pub. At the end, near the laundry, ½ a house was demolished. But everything seemed very much the same – but smaller than I remembered.
I went and bought some food leaving Gwen bailing (as she didn't want to be seen shopping in yachting clothes). A woman stopped and asked sympathetically and in mock surprise " Has your husband left you to do all the bailing?"
Gwen mournfully answered "Yes".
The tide change while I was buying "tea" and at 4.45 (after discovering the City Barge opened at 6.00), we drifted passed the little steam boat with a funnel (joy of my childhood) under the railway bridge and set sail into a fresh wind towards Chiswick Bridge. Skilfully (with the wind now against the tide) we picked up a buoy and started

eating and then realised how much the river had dropped and that if we didn't hurry the rafts would be high and dry and we should be unable to haul the boat up back again (safe from parachutists).
So we rowed under Chiswick Bridge and sailed down with the tide. The wind was mostly lightish but with patches of gust.
Consciously we peered round the corner to see if the rafts were dry. There still seemed a chance although we knew we were late. Pulling up centre board and rudder we drifted gently over the shallow water out of the tide up to one of the rafts. Hurriedly we unpacked everything movable and towed the boat round (one boat leaking) to the raft where it belonged.
We heaved the bow up a yard high onto the raft and pulled and tugged and sweated. We tried hitching the tow rope though a ring to stop the steadily tilting boat falling backwards. It seemed a hopeless job and I went into the club for help. There was a barmaid and two old members (L.C.) one with a fractured arm who said we should have been back earlier.
The barmaid said yes it would be alright on another raft, which although not floating was only 2 ft out of the water. So we stared again on the other raft and got the bow up again after both straining (Gwendoline's period had started at midday).
We found a roller and put that under the bow. I managed to lift the stern up and we were surprised how easily the heavyish boat slid forward onto the raft and we were pleased at managing it.
Night was gently falling as we packed away and changed into shore clothes. When we left we could just distinguish the slinking shape of a police boat moving silently down stream.
We walked to Hammersmith Broadway eating fish and chips (4d cod 1d chips) and Gwen said she'd never felt better before (which was a relief)
We trolley bussed back to Mitcham passing Fulham Hospital which we had seen damaged when coming. A raid started. I was accused wilfully and wrongly of showing a lighted match, the conductor didn't stop soon enough so we had to walk further back across Mitcham Common, (where people suffer murder or worse than death). We saw about half a dozen flares, like bright stars falling imperceptibly until they were shot into showers of falling pieces.
Gwen's parents were very friendly and insisted that I should share a double bed with father – while Mrs. shared Gwen's double bed. He said I didn't wake him during the night. – but I am not sure.
Gwen has been writing round to LCC and all general hospitals to see what work and /or training she can get in a path lab. with the hope that the new call up will mean a better chance.
She received a curriculum for a 9 months course, at what seems a pretty bogus sort of college – mostly in very elementary stuff – and costing £40.

University college has no vacancies. Harris does know if there are coming vacancies but has forwarded her letter to Prof. Hadfield at the Sector Labs at Hill End., who has been some little time in not replying.
On the day that she was to enter Scotton Sanatorium, Emu received a telegram from the doctor saying "admittance cancelled" – "not postponed"- "am writing". She hasn't received a letter to know why not or whether she will go in later on.
[Scotton Banks was a Tuberculosis Sanatorium]

Thursday 27 Feb 41
"Birds Eye view of Strictures by Kenneth Walker who seems an old man now. He is about 65. he talks well but as if tires and gives the impression always of being slightly drunk with all his movements slightly uncoordinated.
In the evening Sheen took three of us in his sports car to Mary's where we swam for the first time this year. J.F.Pearce (who was with Mauve in 77 Victoria St S.A.) is now secretary.

Friday 28 Feb 41
The three call boxes in our cloakroom are now all working on the priority number AVEenue 2849.
"Fred" will take messages 9am-4.00pm. but I think casualty dep. Will still take messages day and night on the hospital number of CLErkenwell 1141.
Thank you for letter and pants and stamps. The previous pair pant arrived Wed. and a pair of Colin's on Monday I think. So that I now have 3 pairs in all or 4 when the other arrives.
Bugger Bradley hasn't written yet. I do hope the Jerries aren't hotting up for a blitz in York. I hope that you too will send a telegram or (P.C.) (if of course you are able) to say that you are alright after any blitz in a N.E. town.
Have you filled up the window at the end of the passage beside the medical room so that you can sleep in the safer passage? Ought you to ?
I like Douglas's poem. Who are Aunties May and Flavia ?
I reprimanded Gwen for wasting such a lot of good sweets on you, unnecessarily, I thought - But she didn't take much notice, but still thought you deserved to have them.
I don't know if you (Mary) or you (Colin) are better separately – it is impossible for me to know – but I shouldn't think so especially as you are referred to as "ColinandMary".
I expect Nadeen is away with Ruth but they would be back by 1st March.
This morning I was asked to fill a gap in the "A" against the Preclinicals at Cambridge. We have to get to Hill End by 10 tomorrow morning, where Dr Joan Ross (HE Pathologist – does the PM's) and Prof. Christie (med.) and Prof. Hadfield will take us by car to Cambridge.
Later.
Hadfield has written to G saying no vacancies at present and suggesting she should write to pathologist sector 8 at the Star and Garter Hospital.
Must do to ward round.
Much Love Paul 2pm Fri 28 Feb 41 P.S. I hope you like lengthy letters.

Communiqué No.23
Barts, E.C.1

5 March 41

Thank you for letter. I think you had better hang onto the evening shirt anyway until I get to Friern. I have one but its collar band is too big to be comfortable. I doubt I shall want them. There is probably a rugger dance at Chislehurst soon, but I think it will be too expensive and not worth it.
Yes, it is the first time Gwen has sailed and she seemed to enjoy it very much. I have got my membership card and must be the first one to have paid it being no.1. I should like to have sailed last Sunday but was on day duty. Apparently it was too windy to sail on Saturday, even with two reefs. One boat turned over in the river.

Sat 1 March 41
Prof. Christie met us at St Alban's Station and took 4 of us to Cambridge. We went to the famous "Dot" (Dorothy) café for coffee but were unable to find a place in the big room where co-undergrads were having their coffee and Saturday sing-song. I don't imaging the war has had much effect on Cambridge. They seem to be very much in a cheery colourful world of their own. We invaded Monkton's room in the new Queens building looking from outside like Welwyn Garden City but with very nice rooms inside.
His father is a keen Dr. but Monkton wants to go straight into the Navy and is doing so I gather. At a pub, where we had lunch of beer and fish cakes, I did notice one undergrad sitting mournfully by himself and spoiling the impression that an undergrad's life was all "beer and fishcakes".
The Preclinical XV were quite good having played as a regular and unchanging team for some time. Although they beat us 15-0 (they were unable to convert). About three of these tries were off forward passes. Also they were pretty dirty players and were offside most of the game. The referee was also a preclinical wet and was bloody as a ref. and spoilt what was otherwise a very fast and enjoyable game. Profs Christie and Hadfield watched with "all the gang" (as Christie called the other Profs). The student hospitality was very lacking in the Barts tradition. Although we did get shandy we were not supplied with soap and towels at the few baths.

Prof Hopwood (Physics), however, supplied a terrific high tea in Erasmus for both teams (including sausage on fried bread with chips and 2 eggs each!).
I managed to come back to St Alban's (where we caught a fast train to London) in Prof Hadfield's 10 HP car. I managed to pluck up the courage and said that one of the nurses at the first aid post that I was attached to wanted to do pathology and what chance was there.
After saying about her, how she had always been interested in scientific work, how she was allowed to work alone in the labs and how her science and head mistress had been appalled when she went into the civil service (for other reasons). He said the requirements were "metric" (so that they knew what a cc. was) and an interest in the work. Did she know what the prospects of pay there was as a livelihood ? He said the Ministry of Health had a trainee scheme and women were chosen in each sector. He had foreseen the shortage of men lab. technicians and the coming shortage of any technicians and he had 3 girls at Hill End and, as here was not room for anymore labs., he had no vacancies. After chatting he seemed to think Gwen would be just the sort of person they wanted (which she would be) and that he would try to get a job for her at Wellhouse Hospital St Alban's. As however she would start with only £1 a week, she would probably prefer a job in a sector near Mitcham.
He asked me to tell her to write to him and he would write to Bamforth of Sector 12. at the Richmond Star and Garter. She should send a letter to coincide. He explained that otherwise (in spite of the shortage) little notice would be taken of the letter when nothing was known of the person. In fact he didn't remember Gwen had already written and he suggested she should write to Bamforth. I thought it best not to admit I knew she had written and he replied and had to keep up the pretence.
He also said that he had about 6 applications a week but as he knew nothing about them he just referred them to another sector. (NB. being civil servants they can't be sacked.)
Gwen has written again but has had no reply but a letter from Hadfield to Bamford would probably make all the difference. She is giving up as hopeless any chance of doing path work and could hardly believe what Hadfield had said about the chances.
It is rather complicated her having written to Bamforth already (and not coinciding with Hadfield, but I hope it will be alright and that Hadfield will not loose interest or forget about her after seeming so keen about her.

Sunday 2nd March 41
Gram. Concert in evening attended by Barts intelligentsia (including me and one lift boy).
Gwen told me that Goldsmith (who had shrapnel in his tongue, wound in cheek and wound to chest on 11th Jan after the Bank do) had made a rapid recovery at St.Alban's and everyone was very pleased.
She says he was discharged from hospital (though I suspect the possibility in his case that he might be self discharged – he was the type).
Anyway he was back on duty and was driving a car when he collapsed and was found suffering from bronchopneumonia and died.
This is not an official report of happenings (only word of mouth) and I should like to see his notes. I don't think we could have done anything to prevent his death during his 1st aid at St Helen's. it sounds as f a lot more must have landed in his lung or something perhaps as a result of lying in bed. It's rather sad though. I've since heard (even more reliably) that he died in hospital.
Had a letter from Joan saying she is on 7 days leave from last Sat.

Wed 5 March 41
One of the students was asked to go to Fevers so I took the chance of deputizing for him and saw far more cases than we ever saw in the summer. About 3 bombs have landed in the grounds there. One ward is flat except for one wall with a door in the middle which had been calculated as being the safest place. Two nurses were standing there as the bomb exploded and so no one was killed? (I suppose the ward was empty).
Hopeless trying to get an Ex A team as everyone is slacking off rugger with the event of spring.

Saturday 8 Jan 41
Sunday wandered with Gwen among docks below Tower Bridge (we saw A.P.Herberts "Water Jifsey" with white Ensign). There is a lot of damage about but "Prospect of Whitby" and the pub by Wapping Old Steps were still intact. We noticed a sound of aeroplanes and later tracks left in the sky as if about 3 were being driven off. There was no siren. We though no more about it. We were underground in a News flicks when the alert was signalled but it was not till we came out that we realized that things were hot.
Piccadilly ticket hall was crowded as Gwen rang home to Mitcham where the noise of gunfire was intense and Mrs Marshall was getting very worked up and didn't want Gwen to return (even though she had to collect uniform for the next day). So Gwen told her father to say she would stay the night at the post but that actually she would return and that if I wasn't needed at the post I'd come with her.
We got to St Paul's and found everyone taking the raid very seriously there. They cleared the escalators and everyone was shooed onto the platform. A marshal politely advised me to wait as they were dropping bombs outside. I waited a bit but finally started off to get two tin helmets from my room and find if Mauve (as I expected) had gone to the post and so make me free. As I reached the top of the moving empty staircase there was a loud crash and tinkling of glass down the outside steps. Apparently it shook the platform where Gwendoline was being cheered up by a kind but rather unconvincing marshal. It was quiet and I went out up the steps, passed a policemen in a helmet and a fire watcher or marshal (without a helmet). It was half moon and fairly light as I ran towards Barts so as not to waste time. As I turned towards the G.P.O. along the side of the CTO (ex) there was a loud long drawn out whistle or scream as a bomb fell and exploded. As I ran into Barts gates the porter in tin hat exchanged pleasantries and remained standing unconcernedly at the gate. Down in C.C.S. there was little happening and a lot of people who hadn't seen Mauve so I collected tin hats and rushed out again.
The sound of planes was loud overhead and some people said there was dive bombing. There was a group of about 8 flares towards the West End. Another 1 or 2 bombs whistled loudly down but fell harmlessly (to me).
As I came opposite the G.P.O. I avoided what I thought was a man hole cover but from which a noise of rushing water emitted. I thought vaguely then and have since heard that it was made by an unexploded bomb which penetrated 30 feet down to the roof of an underground room (tunnel actually).
Sweating from running, I rejoined Gwen who had been shaking so much she had be unable to light a cigarette – she had been worried about the first explosion.
We went to Liverpool St. I was to go to St Helen's and come back unless there were only 3 students there in which case she would come on after half an hour if I hadn't returned. She promised she would not go home alone.
I met Commandant on the stairs at St Helen's and she said they'd 3 cases in. There were only 3 students but after 10 minutes another arrived so I slipped back again to Liverpool St – it was very quiet then and found Gwen who had been looked after by a very kind policeman who had later handed her over to an RAF man with orders that he showed make himself scarce when I returned as I was "tall and came from Barts".
The tube sounds were much more cheerful here in spite of 3 bombs in the Street.
We went to Bank, walked underground to monument, across London Bridge in company with several other travellers. On the other side pneumatic drills and a team of men were working on the road, they were quickly on the job on mending a leaking gas main – we could smell it.

The guns were still firing and bombs dropping in the distance as we descended into the London Bridge tube and trained to The Oval. I was surprised at the number of other travellers nearly all without tin hats. The raid which was general all over London, was cooling off as we walked towards the bus stop tramping as ever over the inevitable glass. We had tea in a blacked out coffee stall.
The buses had stopped and we set out to walk the many miles to Mitcham [about 7 miles]. It was along a main road and we were dying for a lift but there were no offers. It was however a lovely night for walking.
At last a car with only two people in drew up to the curb and we rushed gratefully towards the open door. A woman poked her head out and said was much happening as they couldn't hear whilst motoring. We said "not much now". With a thank you they politely shut the door and drove off leaving us too flabbergasted to ask for a lift after that.
So we plodded on with (I might tell you) Gwen getting more tired than me.
We had to do a detour round some older craters into which a landmine ? had landed lighting two huge gas flares and giving a brilliant glow in the sky for miles. We had been walking over an hour and the all clear had gone.
We were getting on our last legs and dropped into a small bar for "supper". After starting out again we decided it best to take a taxi from Mitcham on as there was rank there. But it was empty and all the taxis passing were full. A car stopped for us with room for one in the front. We both got in. The man was going some distance. He had been near Buckingham Palace where it had been very hot and he was sure they had been specifically attacking the Palace. He told us he had already give 7 people lifts on the way from there. I think he was glad of someone to talk to after the bombing. We expressed our thanks for being the only kind hearted motorist and we had another half hours walk and we arrived at Abbotts road

at 1.30 and crept in and I made a bed with blankets and coat in the dining room. The "parents" were awake and Mrs Marshall thought we were burglars.
I slept very well till breakfast time.

I got back to Barts to find Little Britain ringed with "Unexploded Bomb" signs and found that the Gaene [Gynaecology] Theatre – beside the block where the mothers and babies (in peace time) had been hit and damaged slightly and people weren't sure if that too was an unexploded bomb. Another loud bomb had gone off at about 7 am.
The restaurant that was hit, with many killed, was the Café de Paris which had been considered pretty safe. There was also a cinema – I don't know which.
I have just heard a rumour that is circulating and is supposed to have come via the leading Almoner. It is rumoured that a Barts student is dying from wounds received when a bomb exploded on the dance floor of the Café de Paris. His surname (for no good reason) does not seem to be known but his Christian name is Ian.
The first person to jump to our minds as likely to have been there is Ian McLean – the tall dark secretary of the U.H.S.C. who was at St Helen's the 1st 3 months. But I hope, and doubt that that is true. (47 is the rumour no. of killed there – which is probably a great exaggeration).

During World War II, on 8 March 1941, the café was bombed soon after the start of a performance and at least 34 people were killed and around 80 injured. Two bombs fell into the basement ballroom down a ventilation shaft and exploded in front of the stage. The victims included 26-year-old bandleader Ken "Snakehips" Johnson, his saxophonist Dave "Baba" Williams, other band members, staff and diners. One survivor was cheered by the crowd outside, when, on being carried out on a stretcher, he shouted to them "At least I didn't have to pay for dinner". *Wikipedia*

View of the devastation from St Paul's

In my detours round the "unexploded bombs", I have been up Aldersgate St and have been very impressed with the great area laid flat by the A.M.P.s since the great fire.
The greatest area of devastation is, I think, to be seen from Newgate St, now open.

Standing by the shell of Blakes Ltd (with its battered clock) which is an island in a sea of flat demolition, there is a grand amount of open space leading (but for a wall) to the foot of St. Paul's. St Paul's is thus greatly improved and I read that the Dean hopes it will not again be shut in.
The City now really is a sight, and again today, it was crowded with sightseers from London – one taxi man was giving a guided tour. If we leave it untouched after the war except for some tasteful hamburger stalls and "blitz milk bars" we should be able to pay for the war from the American tourist trade. (some red paint here and there would help)
I was surprised to learn the other day (and I don't think I've written about it) that for a longish time now we have been having oil burners every 20 yards, to give a smoke screen on the outskirts of London.
Today, Sunday, has been low cloud and no sign of raids (Sunday 9 March 41)
8.15 raid now on – plane droning and some bursts of gunfire. – nothing much.
Thank for the P.C. I am glad you have been enjoying your holiday in Helmsley. Do tell me at once what sort of job "the Captain" gets when things come through. (no letter from S.A.). are you going to send the other pair of pants?
Think I ought to go the post (1st aid) and post this letter. I have been reading some of the "Republic of Plato" which Perkins left in my room and which I thought interesting and easy to read.
Much Love Paul
8.30pm Sun 9 March 41

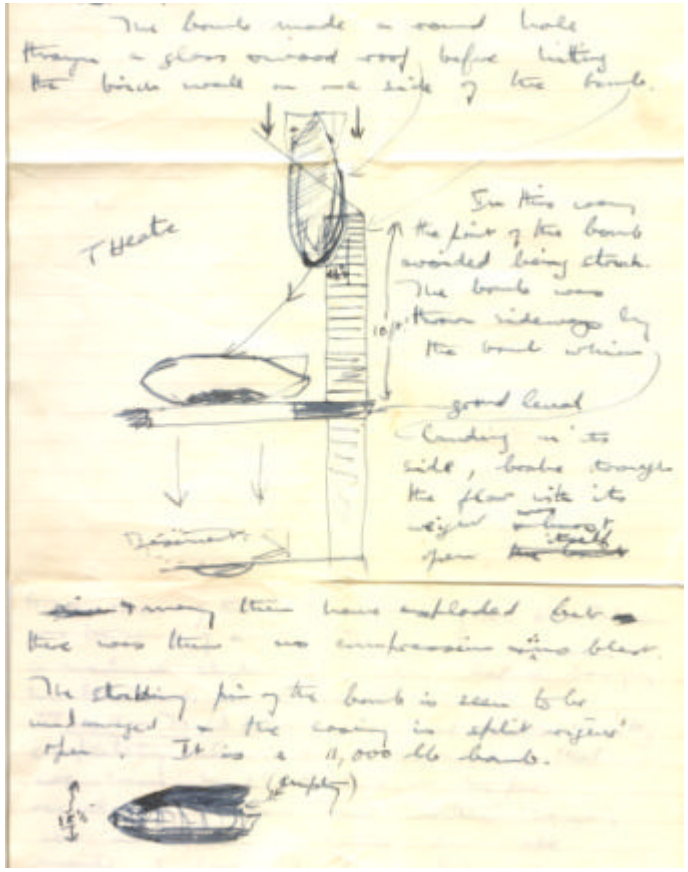
Communiqué No.24
25 Mary's Ward Barts, E.C.1
Th 13 March 41

Dear Parents
Thanks for your letter (and pants.) I'm glad you had such a nice holiday and rest.
I had paid in Bradley's money order into you account on Tuesday. I have acknowledged it to him and said that you will probably send him an official receipt. (when it goes through) – he doesn't ask for one but he'd better have one don't you think? I suggested he should have £3 instead of pinning him down to £2-10-00 (10% because of letters etc) and as he is only charging garage to Dec. it is naturally less "rake off" than I was calculating. (so please find enclosed letter, a/c and receipt from bank)

Monday 10 March 41
Just after Gow's round had finished the Delayed Action Bomb outside the P.O. (in which I nearly put my foot) exploded and carried with it onto Barts roof etc bits of road and bits of three B.D.S. and injured severely two others. My gastric patient was very upset by the noise and the crashing. I didn't rush to see the damage and didn't imagine that people would be injured. Chief surgical assistants Tuckwell and Hunt broke the chain closing the back gate and dealt with the casualties. An ambulance arrived quickly (but too late) (it wouldn't of course be of any use)

I examined, too, the damage to theatre "A", the pre-war gaene [Gynaecology] theatre. It is easy to reconstruct this remarkable incident.
The bomb made a round hole though a glass roof before hitting the brick wall on one side of the bomb.
In this way the point of the bomb avoided being struck. The bomb was thrown sideways by the bomb which landing on its side, broke through the floor with its weight and was burst open itself and may then have exploded but there was no compression and no blast. The striking pin of the bomb is seen to be undamaged and the casing is split right open. It is a 11,000 lbs bomb.

A bomb (which did go off) and may have been from the same stick landed on the post office just thro' the main Smithfield arch from Barts.
All of course vital secrets.
I see that Buckingham Palace was being raided (as the car driver said) [communiqué 23]
The bomb which exploded in the Café de Paris (which still looks the same from the outside) apparently killed Ken Johnson before exploding in front of the band. It was a Gala night with more than the usual number of dancers (400) there were about 80 killed and 135 casualties. Lambert, a very black West Indian, who has published two books of poems and who is doing a month's locum at the post, knew most of Ken Johnson's band. He has been to see some of them in Charing Cross. Ken Johnson was the son of a West Indian Dr. and was a medical student in London before bringing his band over to England.



Tues 11-Th 13 March
Official raids (mostly silent) each night so that we have had to sleep at the post regularly. Joan had written saying she was on leave but she made a 3 look like and 8 so that when I rung up today she had gone back.
It was good getting the 9 raiders down last night. The ach – ach tactics now seem to be to wait for a plane to move into a certain volume of sky when suddenly there is a terrific roar from all the guns ready aimed. Apparently they did this about 3 times last night but without seeming to hit anything. It was a perfect night for fighters.
Emu has entered Scotton and has determined to do everything she is told to get well quickly. The other patients don't and she hasn't met anyone intelligent to talk to yet. Otherwise she doesn't dislike it.
I think my account needs about £18 to make it up to the cost of the fees. This is less the amount you paid in towards rugger and the clothes and books account when I was home (£5). This still seems an awful lot but the clothes a/c is low. The U.H.S.C. has come out of this but I think I will be able to pay it back later. The amount to bring it up to £82 may be less, but I missed filling in details of one cheque which I think is £4-10-0 but may be less. I'll ask for my pass book if you like. It still looks as though I have been living above my

income unless the clothes a/c is really down as low as all that. I have just bought a pair of flannels today the cheapest at Hope Bros. 21/-. They haven't much choice of sizes now. I asked about unit hats for the RE's [Royal Engineers] and they have rankers at 8/6 (used to be 5/- but the officers is 38/6 or there about) [38 shillings and six pence].
After a lot of research I could probably salvage the clothes a/c which lost itself at the outbreak of war after which I didn't bother about it but paid for everything except the very expensive, out of weekly income. Before I had taken stamps, books etc etc out of it but at Finchley I did without it. So that when I went to St.Alban's I had nothing to work on as the balance but recorded the expensive things in my diary for later reference.
It is because of this that there is not a proper clothes a/c to give you.
I haven't been counting the laundry in the clothes account – that has been more that I calculated about 34 shillings a week. After March there will be the cost of digs and so living expenses will go up. I'm sorry it is in such a muddle especially as it looks as if I haven't been earning my keep as much as I had hoped. The trouble about meals in, is you have to buy chocolate or buns or coffee at night as extra to make up the day's diet and that any meal s away from the hospital, isn't a saving but costs the fare /and (if not free) the meal.

F 14 March41
(to bed with a headache and 2 veganin)
I hope the N.E. town raided last night wasn't York. We had nothing hear really – only sirens but I was off duty. Colder later but sunny now.
Much Love Paul

Communiqué No.25
25 Mary's Ward
Barts, E.C.1
March 41

Dear Parents
Have been quite content the last two days to lie down all day and doze all the time. In fact it was rather complicated because the dozy periods were full of dreams and thoughts (mostly of early life – Junior House etc) and also I would dream that there were nurses and other people in the room when there weren't.
Not of course that that mattered at all but the doze world seemed at times as real and really conscious. Its rather pleasant in a way lying almost asleep with the brain freewheeling along most amusing paths that you wouldn't stop and consider. I thought (what I've never thought before) that E.J.William's odourless and yellow hair ointment which cost him a lot when he was in the J.H. was probably, olive oil. Also this rather feeble poem arrived in semi sleep.

Nursing Auxiliary - should be put in a pillory
Red Cross Nurse - far worse
But a nurse from Barts - Doesn't mind the ffarts (I don't think she'd like Farts)

Thursday the headache went but the temperature remained and I wasn't very energetic.
(Your letter has just arrived)
Friday the temp. went down and I looked better but all day I had "stomach pains". I'd been three days without "going" and Thursday night had cascara. I think it was the cascara and the barium that were the cause of the trouble.
(Another pause for a bed pan blitz – they seem to expect us to have flat bottoms)
Things started Friday (yesterday) the first lot of coffee covered Barium – the last of several just the coffee cream.

I didn't feel like eating but did try some marmite and a little jelly but it was nauseating and I later vomited it all.
So with the stomach pain relieved by shifting or sitting up and letting wind, it was a little depressing.
The rash came on yesterday. I have missed a sore throat and the glands aren't tender.
They are all enlarged including the ones in the mesentery of the guts which might have counted for some of the stomach aches.
In spite of everything fitting in with a diagnosis of glandular fever the blood count (the proportion of white cells) is n't typical but they are doing an other one.
Incidentally if it is G. F. I get a +ve Wasserman in (I think) the 2nd and 3rd weeks. So that the diagnosis isn't certain yet and I remain an interesting case.
Glandular Fever though fairly common is a short lived (though uncomfortable) disease which may recur rapidly (3-5 weeks) if convalescence is not respected. It's rather vague and as no one knows what causes it and how long the incubation period it, it is difficult to pin it down.
It is thought to be due to some virus.
For exams it is a very useful disease to have because it there is no question on it - it can be discussed as a possible diagnosis to several symptoms or signs, pyrexia, sore throat, rash, enlargement of the lymph glands.
Needless to say Gwendoline has been spoiling me. Yesterday she arrived with ……..

The rest of this communiqué is lost

Communiqué No.26
Barts, E.C.1
31 March 41

Dear Parents
Thanks you very much for letter and parcel and also the money that you sent to G. Actually I have not needed the butter as we get plenty (at least I think it's butter) so I will bring it home and make a pig of myself then.
I tackled Scower on Saturday and he said I would be back at work in not under 3 weeks. (and I gather not much over 3 weeks either). Asked when I would be able to leave hospital he said the end of next week. (ie this weekend) and mentioned vaguely Fri or Sat. I have been agitating to be up and having been allowed in a wheeled chair the last 3 evenings. Last night I was given a rise and was officially allowed on my feet (though actually on the first evening I walked to the end of the ward and the w.c. unnoticed). I felt mildly drunk at very first but soon was quite normal on my feet. My temperature has been subnormal for about a week. My blood cells have become more typical of Glandular fever but my Paul Brumnell test is still negative. They did my Wasserman Reaction and that was negative (I'll bring a signed certificate if you don't believe me).
I'm more reconciled to the general ward now. There is a large variety of characters. A tough Irishman who thinks he's Spencer Tracy I think. He's rather a trouble maker and the nurses dislike him. I've got on alright with him though. In complete contrast there is an extraordinarily nice young soldier – a tall healthy looking lad with a septic finger. All the time he is sweeping the ward, doing the blackout, collecting bottles and ragging and helping Pop (a wizened little man with life but bad legs). He helps him to walk and even baths him. They are all surgical cases and most of them are able to get up. The only real case for the nurses is the old man lying impatiently on a plaster bed having broken his back. Simultaneously he has had a tidal washout apparatus attached to a permanent catheter, a suction apparatus attached to a stomach tube and saline dripping for days into a vein. He is not always cooperative (he started shouting "murder murder" one night as a form of blackmail) he cannot see much except the ceiling (which must be rather depressing), sometimes he starts talking or singing to himself.
Last night I had a bath, though the nurses were not quite sure if Scower would approve because having said I could get up and walk when I felt alright, he next day ticked off a nurse for letting me walk which left them wondering and a little annoyed.
Parkinson came to see me once (when I was in the side ward). I apologised for being on the wrong firm. He has not braved the foreign ward since and he would hardly look at my board for fear of being unethical. (it's pity really I'm not on the other firm because Gons and Parkinson would have more cause to remember my name which seems to be an essential before being considered for a house job).
Gwendoline went sick on Saturday morning so as to keep an appointment with Doc Bamforth of the Star and garter. He was very nice to her and said he would like to have her actually at the Star and Garter. (I think he meant "have her as an assistant" where she could pick up lots from him if "if she was interested" – but he may not have meant that , G said he had a bed on the floor of his office!) Actually too it would have been fairly difficult travel to Mitcham. She might however beg somewhere else in the sector. He would ring he within 3 weeks (which is before registration day) and say whether there was a vacancy which he expects as someone is ill and not likely to return to the job. G does not know whether she likes him or not. He greeted her like an old friend and said he hadn't had women staff before. He reminded her - that she would only be bottle washing for the first 6 months and did she realize that - so many times that she would have cheerfully have wrung his neck. She would get 20/- I think at first under the Ministry of Health Trainee scheme.
She had also asked for a post in the Postgraduate Medical College (for refresher courses) where she would start at 30/- But nothing is fixed up yet.
While she went to this appointment her father rang up Commandant to say that Gwen felt to ill to come up that morning but that she had no temperature and he thought she would be alright and would almost certainly come in the afternoon. She [The Commandant] spoke honeyed words (that nearly made Mr. M vomit) how sorry she was. Of course she'd like to say she could take the whole 24 hrs off but that she was rather short staffed you know and that if Miss Marshall did feel alright she would be glad if she could come. Mr. M said yes G. had said she would be alright to come in afternoon.
But when G arrived at the post Commandant said "when I heard you were so ill and had a headache and had vomited, I didn't expect you to come at all this afternoon. I expected you had caught something (ie glandular fever) from Mr. Rowntree. If you had have done you would have heard about it".
G was flabbergasted (not for the first time) said she hadn't a headache anyway and rang up home to make sure what her father had said. He was furious (having heard all about the Commandant before – as we all have) and wanted G to let him ring the Commandant about her lies as to what he had said and that did she remember G nursing a diphtheria case for about 6 hours last Xmas in the tunnel and that if she had caught that would she have heard about it. But G would not let him.
I was of course annoyed that Commandant should think of blaming G for visiting me on her off duty under hospital conditions. (If BARTS thought it was ok who was she to say no) But she was never a reasonable woman. I have also been annoyed because Commandant cornered G and very "pleasantly" asked her if she'd broken off her engagement with Kenneth (to whom she had been engaged for years until "she grew up" and "realized" how incompatible they were). G had not told the post because she knew what a good story it would make and how the nurses would talk. Actually one of the nurses had guessed as much (having been similarly engaged and then disillusioned) and when asked point blank G had not lied to her.
Well Commandant asked her about Kenneth and was very joyful at getting the news out of her that the engagement had been off (G like a fool didn't not take the chance of telling

Commandant to mind her own business – such is the power of discipline.). She then went on to ask about me. (on a previous occasion she had made G white with anger by accusing her of leaving a patient so as to come over to me with another – which I need hardly say is completely untrue though perhaps Commandant really believes her own lies. G and I had (as you probably can guess) been over conscientious about things at the post and Commandant has helped by making sure that G wasn't given a chance to help me. Well that was before she now pointed asked about me and did G think "Mr Rowntree was serious…."

Commandant returned joyfully from the tunnel to the post and according to her custom proceeded to discuss her latest news with the nurses there. She announced with a flourish that Miss Marshall had broken off her engagement – the sensation she expected was rather spoilt when the chief nurse said she'd known that weeks before. (But it takes a lot to shut Commandant up)

Is it possible that the City are getting wise to Commandant. G said that Dr. White (the MOH) seemed to speak quite sharply to her and question her sharply when he inspected the tunnel post. He also insisted on referring to her as Mrs Butler which seemed to have the expected effect of making her very small.

But we have realized for some time that they do not love each other. She told me how glad she was that after the Guildhall fire, Dr White did not have to come and sleep at the post.

Well I'm sorry to bore you with post gossip but there is really an incredible amount of meat among the characters there.

One stretcher bearer (married) is known to be living in sin with an ex nurse who got in with the Commandant hen fell out of favour (as is usual) and finally resigned. Another just "lives in sin" with a Billy. Another nurse is married with a husband in the army ? She manages several lovers ! which have been called up but now has managed someone in a reserved occupation. Yet another has been weekends with a Harry who is a fireman, I believe, and eats at the same canteen as Gt St Helen's nurses. Another nurse had lossed her fiancée (I believe killed – some sort of tragedy anyhow). She was sure she would never fall in love again. Then she fell (rather surprisingly) for a St John's Ambulance man at the post. He already had a girl and although he liked her he avoided he rather obvious net and made a point of being nice to other nurses in front of her. (the nurses thought is was rotten of her to try and get the advantage over this man's girl who was at a disadvantage). Well that sad little story continued. They both had holidays. He came back to say he'd broken off his engagement and was ready to love her with a free conscious. She had met a New Zealand airman had fallen and was engaged to him within the week. It is very sad as the rather decent little St John's man still thinks an awful lot of this girl.

Then, of course, there is Collier and Commandant with their official matches in the North of England. And there's the other nurses shift, about which I know nothing except for the religious maniac in charge.

Then there is the half French night nurse (she answers the phone there) She is a bitch to the girls who dislike her but gives (or gave) us tea. She is thought to be "in love" with Commandant (who doesn't return it I gather). I wouldn't have believed this at first but it may be true.

Well of course the characters, and situations are much more detailed and amusing than this crude sketch of the more lurid lives would lead you to suppose.

The weather is fine now and as lectures have stopped all last week it has made enforced convalescence seem rather irksome. Not that I am really bored but it does seem rather a waste of fine weather and free time. Before I had usually 2 lectures and a ward round on my off duty day (except when it fell on a Sunday or Wednesday afternoon.)

I've had a letter from Nadeen. She was sorry not to be able to come and see you but she started a job in a racing stable (including riding I gather) as soon as she got back from holiday with Ruth in Westmorland. Her address is c/o R Renton Esq Ox close Ripon Yorks.

George (=Alaztar) has passed his medical A.T. and P.O. (potential officer). He is waiting to be called up into the OCTU West Yorks. After which he hopes to transfer to mechanised cavalry. P.Lodge is let.

I had written to Emu who had asked about "the people who lived near Scolton" and as well as Margot, I suggested Nadeen might visit her.

Enough chatter I think.

A sparrow is again flying around the ward and sitting on bedside tables. Gwen's red tulips are opening wider in the centre of the ward.

Much love Paul.

THIS IS THE END OF THE LAST COMMUNIQUÉ