

# Bristol Blitz

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By John Rogers

## Email accompanying this article:

Attached is a document of the Avonmouth and Shirehampton bombings which I put together some years ago. I was cleaning out my files and found the document and thought that the editors of the *Shire* paper would like to read it and if approved include it in the *Shire*. I feel that many children of my age group, 86 years old, will remember or may at least jog their memory, and for the younger people of the area to read what their elders lived through back in the war years.

Kind Regards,

John Rogers

St.Louis, Missouri, USA

# Bristol Bombings.

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## A Chronologic Listing of Bristol Bombings.

Compiled By John Rogers. (revised June 1997.)

## June 1940

### 20th June 1940. Thursday

German bombers appeared over Portishead, the searchlight battery spotted them and they remained in the area for 15 minutes, they dropped their bombs and they fell around the searchlight battery and into the mud on the riverbank. No air raid warning was given.

### 25 June 1940.

The first air raid warning sounded at 12:30 am, bombs were dropped among the houses near Champion & Davies Factory in Lower Maudlin St, bombs also fell in Knowle at 1:30 am, also in St. George and Bedminster, the target was supposed to be Temple Meads Station; nine bombs fell on the station two of

which failed to explode. The raid lasted three hours. The city was hit fifty times, five people killed, 33 injured.

## July 1940

### 3rd July 1940. Wednesday

Avonmouth was bombed, all the bombs missed the target and fell in the farmer's field.

## August 1940

### 1st/2nd August 1940. Thursday/Friday

A single German plane flying at considerable height, shortly after midnight, dropped propaganda leaflets in the thousands over southwest England; some fell in the Blackwell district near Bristol.

### 11th/12th August 1940.

Enemy planes dropped a crude-oil bomb on Shirehampton at the West Town entrance to the docks; many bombs fell into the mud on the banks of the Avon, fourteen HE bombs were dropped in and around the village the children's playground in the St. Bernards school which contained a underground shelter was hit, along with several homes that were damaged. During the same raid seven H.E bombs fell in Stoke Bishop and in line with Old Sneed Ave and Redland. The school shelter contained 10 people, all survived the direct hit.

### 15th/16th August 1940. Thursday/Friday

A dozen bombs landed at the end of the North Pier at Avonmouth Docks, eight near Rockingham Farm and 17 around Hallen.

### 24th/25th August 1940. Saturday

Avonmouth was bombed and two homes were destroyed on Richmond Villas near the entrance to the docks. Six more bombs landed in the mud on the banks of the Avon.

### **27th/28th August 1940. Tuesday**

At 9.0 pm. Avonmouth came under attack with Incendiaries bombs dropped first followed by HE bombs, all hit the Petroleum tanks, the other bombs fell on the fields between Avonmouth and Shirehampton. Six more craters were found out near the Lawrence Weston fields.

## **September 1940**

It appeared the targets for the month of September was the railway lines from Bristol to Avonmouth, all along the line between Sea Mills, Shirehampton, and Avonmouth several bombs fell alongside the rails all missing the rails by about six feet. Many of the bombs remained in the ground un-exploded and the Army Bomb Disposal recovered them. One of the bombs a 250 pounder remained in the Sea Mills Creek until April 1951.

### **1st /2nd September 1940. Sunday**

Avonmouth and Shirehampton was bombed again, the Miles Arms Hotel and houses in Davis St took direct hits. Two people were killed, a young woman and her daughter.

### **3rd /4th September 1940. Tuesday**

Shirehampton was bombed, several homes destroyed.

### **10th September 1940. Tuesday**

Shirehampton was bombed again and the bomb disposal teams were working hard to remove the bombs that landed in the center of High St. One of the team was killed when an unexploded bomb that fell near the George Inn exploded.

### **15th September 1940. Sunday**

This date marks the climax of the battle of Britain, in the course of which from August to October 1940, the Germans lost 1,733 aircraft, while the RAF lost 915 fighter planes to the enemy. This a major turning point in the war, which will ever be immortalized by the words of Winston Churchill, Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.

## **16th September 1940. Monday**

On a Sunday night several flame bombs were dropped along with 60 HE bombs, 16 incendiaries canisters containing 3600 bombs for a total of 53,288 individual incendiary bombs. The intended target Avonmouth docks were not hit, even so three soldiers of the Gloucester regiment in the camp at Shirehampton were killed.

## **25th September 1940.** Wednesday.-First daylight raid on Filton.

It was a beautiful sunny morning hardly a cloud in the sky, when a large force of 100 German aircraft approached from the Bristol Channel, half of the aircraft made for the Welsh coast the rest turned over Avonmouth. The time was 11:40 am, the planes flying in V formation made an impressive sight. Having no interception, those who saw them assumed they were ours. But they were Heinkel bombers with Messerschmitt long-range fighter as escorts, weaving in and out of the formation. The target was the Bristol Airplane Works at Filton, which they found without difficulty, and was completely at their mercy, without any British planes to oppose them. In 25 terror-filled minutes the alert was sounded at 11:40 am and the all clear at 12:05 pm. They dropped 190 bombs, causing a very high death-toll and much destruction. When it was over a 168 people had lost their lives and 300 other injured. In excess of 1000 were made homeless. The only consolation as far as Bristol was concerned was at 11:50 am. One of the bombers was shot down by the Portbury Gun site. All five members of the crew bailed out and were taken prisoners. The plane crashed at Racecourse Farm at Lower Failand.

## **27th September 1940.** Friday- Second daylight raid on Filton

On this day history almost repeated itself of two days earlier, but not quite! It was a fine sunny morning once again when a large wave of German bombers with fighter escort appeared in the skies over Avonmouth making for Filton Airplane Factory, and at about the same time 11:30 am. But here the similarities of the two days ended in an attempt to repeat the same effect. This time the RAF was ready and waiting for them. A squadron of Hurricanes fighters had had been placed at Filton the day before. They took off and soon scattered the German aircraft and with the help of the anti-aircraft gunners the German planes were driven off before they could inflict any damage. Crowds of the local villagers came out into the streets to watch the dogfights taking place in the skies above. Ten German aircraft were destroyed with the loss of two of ours. A German fighter was shot down and crashed near Stapleton Institution (Now Manor Park Hospital) both crewmembers were killed. Another fighter was shot down and crashed near Radstock; the pilot bailed out and was taken prisoner.

# October 1940

## 12th October 1940. Saturday

Avonmouth was targeted again, the raid lasted two hours and the bombs damaged the railway near the transit station and a few trucks were derailed.

## 15th/16th October 1940. Wednesday

Shirehampton was bombed, H.E bombs and incendiary were scattered in the Park, Henleaze, and Westbury-on- Trym were heavily damaged, the raid lasted 3 hours.

# November 1940

## 14th /15th November 1940. Thursday

A bright moonlit night saw the start of a new phase in the Luftwaffe bombardments. Previously their mass aerial attacks had been reserved for London, but now started a series of heavy night attacks against industrial and military targets.

## 24th November 1940. Sunday Bristol's First Blitz.

The Sunday worshippers had hardly any time to get home before the sirens sounded the alert at 6:21 pm. with the arrival of 60 Heinkel's led in by pathfinders dropping flares. By the time the enemy planes had left at 11:59 pm. Bristol the Mediaeval City was a raging inferno. The hostile planes attacked in waves, raining down thousands of incendiary bombs. The red sky of Bristol burning could be seen for miles around- as far away as Stinchcombe Hill at Dursley. A thousand years of heritage perished in this one night, as did Wine St and Castle Street, Bristol's renowned shopping center. The German High Command reported that Bristol had been wiped out, and certainly the City of Churches had in one night become a city of ruins.

A high wind was blowing across the target area and it certainly contributed to the destruction of the most ancient parts of the city .The situation was further handicapped by the water mains being destroyed, the reserve water from the tanks was soon exhausted, and the only supply came from the River Avon and the harbor.

### **25th November 1940. Monday**

7:00 pm the bombs began to fall again. A building at the canning factory was hit, the smelting works was set on fire, and the dock sustained minor damage.

### **26th November 1940. Tuesday**

In the evening between 6:35pm and 7:30 a shower of incendiaries preceded by flares were dropped over Avonmouth and Shirehampton, the majority of the bombs fell on Shirehampton Golf Course. One person died in Shirehampton.

## **December 1940**

### **2nd December 1940. Monday. Bristol's Second Blitz.**

This large-scale raid lasted from 6:15 pm until 11:00 pm. This raid was to finish off Bristol according to the German high Command. The casualty figures for the night were 156 killed and 279 injured; it included the death of people in Shirehampton where stray bombs were dropped.

### **6th December 1940, Friday. Bristol's Third Blitz.**

Bristol's third big air -raid in quick succession, began just after 6:30 pm and lasted until 11 :28 pm. Casualty figures for this raid were 100 killed and 188 injured. A H.E. bomb struck the railway alongside the 7.10 train from Bristol to Salisbury , which was derailed and accounted for many of the dead and injured.

## **January 1941**

### **2nd,4th,5th January 1941, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday**

The bitter cold weather added to the horrors of the fires and bombs that fell in the past three days. Avonmouth came only second to London, (with Bristol third) in the number of tonnage of H.E. Bombs that were dropped in raids. These dusk to dawn raids, to that date were Bristol's longest lasting raid, 12 hours, the weather was ice cold ,water froze on the uniforms of the firemen; water froze in the hose adding to the plight of the brave men fighting the fires. It was during this time that the Germans dropped the largest bomb on the city, which fortunately did not explode, the bomb named SATAN, a 4,000 pound monster, which fell at Beckington Road, Knowle, measured 8ft 11 in length (without tail) and 2ft.2in in diameter. When the bomb disposal unit recovered it in April 1943

they had to dig down 30 feet. Satan rode in the Victory parade through London. Not the plan the Germans had for the bomb. People killed in these raids were 149 dead and 260 injured.

### **5th January 1941, Sunday.**

Avonmouth was the target again this night; the attack began just after 7:15 pm, and was concentrated on Avonmouth docks. German records confirm that a 103 aircraft were over the target that dropped 82 tons of H.E. Bombs and 735 incendiaries containers (26,460 small bombs). The raid ended at 10:00 pm. One man died in the raid from Shirehampton.

### **10th January 1941, Friday.**

A short raid on Shirehampton lasted 2 hours and 15 minutes, 6:30 pm to 9:15 pm. Two H.E. Bombs were dropped in the center of the village, and one up on Penpole place, near the army camp.

### **16th/17th January 1941, Thursday/Friday. Avonmouth Blitz.**

Bristol had something of a respite from the bombing from mid-January to the end of February 1941, but not so for Avonmouth. Germany confirmed that Avonmouth was the main target and planned a concentrated attack on the docks. A 126 aircraft dropped 124 tons of H.E. Bombs and 1,480 incendiary containers (53,280 bombs) on the docks and surrounding area, not a house or street in Avonmouth came through unscathed. The raid lasted 11 hours, from 7:08 pm until 15:39 am the next morning with only a lull in the bombing around mid-night, people thought the nightmare was over, but the planes were back for a repeat performance. The pathfinder planes came first dropping the flares to light up the ground, followed by waves of planes dropping incendiaries, and last but not least came the bombers bringing the H.E. bombs. Considerable damage was done to the dock and the village, 50 homes were destroyed, and bombs hit several ships. The Parish Church was gutted by fire bombs, in West Town near the entrance to the dock the whole village was leveled, 200 hundred people lived there, they were evacuated while the raid was in progress, the damage was so bad they never re-built the village. In comparison with the violence of the attack, the following casualty list was light; seven people lost their life.

# February 1941

## 22nd February 1941, Saturday.

Today's raid was very short lasting a mere 13 minutes, and was the one, which gave the people of Avonmouth and Shirehampton the most gratification. It was a wet and blustery day when the alert was given at 1: 59 pm. As a German Heinkel approached Avonmouth from the Bristol Channel. Almost immediately the Ack Ack Gunners at Portbury opened up and had a direct hit on the aircraft, it banked over Avonmouth spraying the area with machine gun fire as it began to drop, there was a loud twanging noise as the plane hit the wires on the barrage Balloon then it crashed onto the mud on the bank of the river. The only survivor was the pilot who parachuted to safety, the rest of the crew was killed on impact. The bodies of the observer and flight engineer were recovered and buried in Greenbank Cemetery in Bristol, the remains of the gunner and radioman was never found. Later it was learned that the target for this aircraft was the aircraft works at Yate.

## 27th February, Thursday and 7 March, Friday 1941.

In only five days the enemy attempted yet a third daylight raid on Yate, and this time he was successful with disastrous results. Parnall aircraft Ltd factory was high on the German target list. After the war it was found out that the Germans were taking pictures of the factory in August of 1939 five days before the war was declared. At 2:30 pm. a single enemy aircraft in broad daylight and unchallenged, passed over Charfield Railway Station, flying at a low altitude with the Swastika plainly visible. The plane followed the railway line to Yate, with the undercarriage lowered to foil the defenses, and to create the impression that he was a British bomber about to land on Yate airfield. It dropped its bomb-load of six H.E. and one oil bomb before anyone in the factory could take cover, and then escaped into low lying clouds. The casualties could have been higher had it not been for three of the bombs not exploding, and there was 4,000 workers in the factory at the time. On 7 March another daylight raid on Parnalls by a single raider was pulled off again causing much damage and stopping all production. Altogether 52 workers lost their lives in the two daylight raids.

There was very little enemy air activity at night over the Bristol area due to the bad weather; however they began again in mid march.



# March 1941

## 14th March 1941, Friday.

One aircraft appeared over the skies of Avonmouth and it was intercepted by a Beaufighter and was hit by machine gun fire and crashed in flames. Following German aircraft dropped their bombs in the location of the burning aircraft; no damage was done to the surrounding area.

## 16th/17th March 1941, Sunday/Monday.

Bristol's Fifth Blitz. This was a mass attack and considered Bristol's heaviest raid of the war so far. Records indicate 168 aircraft attacked Avonmouth and Bristol dropping 166 ton of H.E. Bombs and 33,840 incendiary bombs. The raid lasted eight hours with bombs raining down on the area causing a high rate of casualties. The shelter at St.Barnabas church took a direct hit killing 24 people. At Avonmouth scores of bombs fell on the dock, one cottage near the Smelting works was set on fire and the raiders used the flames to aim their bombs as 78 bomb craters were found in and around the cottage.

## 29th/30th March 1941, Saturday/Sunday.

Estimated 55 long-range bombers carried out a fast raid on Avonmouth lasting almost two hours. This raid was centered on the oil tanks, several were set on fire. In Shirehampton some of the bombs hit the Greyhound Inn and it was destroyed, the police station was also hit. Six people were killed in Shire that night and several injured.

# April 1941

## 3rd/4th April 1941, Thursday/Friday.

This was a moonlight raid centered on Avonmouth and Bristol; the raid started at 9:00 pm and ended 1:0 am the following morning. Seventy-six aircraft were reported over the target and dropped 80 tons of H.E. and 19,656 incendiary bombs. The attack began on a line between the Horse Shoe Bend and Filton. Several H.E. Bombs hit Avonmouth and Shirehampton and a military convoy was damaged on the Portway. Over a 1000 homes were damaged. The number of dead for this raid were 22, and 90 injured. One of the bombs hit the A.A Battery at Markham, and one bomb fell on the army transit camp in Pen Pole.

#### **4th/5th April 1941, Friday/Saturday.**

Avonmouth was once again the target for the raiders; thousands of incendiaries bombs were dropped over a wide area. Many hundreds burnt on the riverbanks, and many fell on the village of Shirehampton. Several fires were started in the docks and in the Smelting Works. The sky was illuminated by chandelier flares; fifteen were counted at one time eight were seen over Avonmouth. Antiaircraft fire drove the raiders off their targets, with the results that damage was kept to a minimum. The A.A. barrage, in fact was considered the heaviest yet put up in Bristol. Considering the scope of this raid the casualty were light, 9 dead and 22 injured. Four German bombers were shot down with crash landing at Redding's farm, near Weston-Super-Mare.

#### **7th/8th April 1941, Monday/Tuesday.**

Single raider dropped H.E. and incendiaries bombs on Shirehampton; slight damage was reported to some homes.

#### **9th /10th April 1941, Wednesday/Thursday.**

Raiders attacked Avonmouth again with H.E. Bombs hitting the railway station and destroying the Cinema.

#### **11th/12th April 1941. (Good Friday) Bristol's Sixth Blitz.**

This heavy two-scale raid was the sixth and final large-scale attack on Bristol. The enemy claimed to have 153 aircraft over the target, Bristol/Avonmouth, dropping 193 tons of H.E. and 34,884 incendiaries bombs. Incendiaries H.E. Bombs were dropped in waves of planes after they had broken through the heavy Ack-Ack fire. The attack started at 10:00pm and lasted 2 hours; at midnight the all clear was sounded. Thirteen minutes later the enemy planes were back over the city and did not leave until 3:52 am. The second raid was far more serious than the first. Bombs fell on Shirehampton and Avonmouth, a large bomb destroyed 10 homes in Richmond Terrace, and a large land mine fell on Priory Rd in Shirehampton killing five people in their homes. Total dead for the night were 180 and 300 injured.

#### **17th April 1941, Thursday.**

German raiders dropped four bombs on Avonmouth docks, two fell in the mud at the entrance of the dock, and the third demolished a building near the old Passenger station. The fourth fell on the new oil-jetty under construction. There were two slight casualties.

# May 1941

## 4th May 1941, Sunday.

The RAF, night fighters began to keep the German planes away taking a toll on the bombers. Thirteen of the enemy planes fell to fighter aircraft. And on 7 May 24 more were shot down.

## 31st May 1941, Saturday.

Avonmouth and Shirehampton was under attack again, bombs destroyed several buildings on the dock, and bombs fell on Park gates and Sea Mills. Two people were killed and 12 injured.

# July 1941

## 27th July 1941, Sunday.

When the new RAF airfield at Broadfield Down was built (which is now Bristol Lulsgate Airport), no one in their wildest dreams could have envisioned that the first aircraft to use the new hard runway would be a German bomber. It was a misty morning on 27 July 1941 when a strange looking aircraft circled overhead above Lulsgate Bottom, which was still under construction. The plane made a perfect landing. The time was 6: 20 am. It taxied up to the workers on the strip. The pilot stepped out of the cockpit and asked the workers what part of France he was in. Apparently the pilot had been following the coastline down from Birkenhead after a bombing mission and mistook the Bristol Channel as the English Channel; he had been driven off course by one of Britain's secret weapons, a radio transmitter at Weston-super-mare giving out false signals. The pilot was told he was not in France but in England, at that point they tried to take off but the workers placed the mechanical digger in front of the aircraft and it was stopped from taking off. Military attached to the field arrived with Tommy guns and took the crew prisoners. The aircraft was a prized capture, a new Junkers 88 with all the advanced equipment installed.

# 28 August 1942.

**28th August 1942, Friday.**

On a sunny morning, flying at 20,000 feet above unsuspecting Bristol, a single German fighter-bomber armed with a 500-pound bomb aimed at the heart of the city. It dropped in Broad Weir; near the junction of Philadelphia Street, the time was 9:20 am at the rush hour.

At such height the plane was thought to be a reconnaissance aircraft and no alert was given until the bomb had struck. Three double-decker busses full of passengers were waiting at the bus stops, with men, women, and children going to work or school. The busses were all destroyed, and the casualties totaled 45 killed and 56 injured. It was the last bomb to fall on Bristol in 1942.

## 1943

There were no raids recorded for 1943. Although the German High Command reported that they were again bombing Bristol.

## May 1944

**15th May 1944, Monday.**

This is the last entry in the Official Record of the Battle of Bristol  
German aircraft approached Avonmouth at 2: am, thanks to the heavy barrage of A.A fire the planes were driven off target and some dropped their bombs at random to gain altitude. Ten bombs were dropped in Bedminster, five in Abbots Leigh, and two in Kings Weston Lane where a soldier was killed at a searchlight site, the only casualty .The Germans planes turned, altered course for home, and they never came back. Bristol and Avonmouths ordeal was over.

# My recollections - John Rogers

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The official details of Bristol air raids were published for the first time in November 1944, when it was disclosed that the total number of warnings had been 548, and bombs had been dropped 76 times. Altogether 1,299 people were killed in the city and 3,305 were injured.

Over 3,000 homes were totally destroyed, and 90,000 properties were damaged. Apart for London, only Liverpool published higher figures.

Most of the rubble was taken aboard ship as ballast and moved to New York City and became the foundation of the East River Drive.

It's amazing that after all these years unexploded bombs are still being found in and around Bristol, as in the case of one in the playground of the Shirehampton infants school In October 1966, and another a mile from the Severn Bridge in 1988.

## I was 10 years old when the first air raid warnings sounded...

The information for this article 'The Bristol Blitz' was researched from various sources. The Bristol Website, Official documents, and Books on the Bombing of Bristol. Whilst searching this data the memories kept going back to when I was a young lad living in Shirehampton and experiencing the bombings first hand. I was 10 years old when the first air raid warnings sounded and the bombs began to fall on Avonmouth. I cannot remember the details of every raid due to my aging memory, but some nights I can remember as if was yesterday. I was playing in the street as most of the kids my age did at that time, we heard the roar of aircraft and looked up to see the sky black with aircraft, the date was the 25th of September and the planes were on their way to bomb Filton Aircraft Factory. I also saw the German planes two days later moving in the same direction, this time we knew they were the enemy. We watched as the RAF fighters engaged the bombers and fighter escorts, for a kid of 10 it was quite a sight. As the attack progressed we were ushered of the street by air raid wardens including a smack around the ears for not following their orders fast enough.

## 8-hour candles...

I remember well the cold nights we spent in the Anderson Shelter, double layering of clothes to keep warm, (I guess that was the start of the layer look). Taping over the window panes with tape in order to stop the glass from flying around in case of a bomb blast, covering the windows at night with a blanket to stop the light shinning out or a knock on your door from the warden. I remember the small stubby candles we would buy, they were called 8-hour candles and would last the night when you were huddled in the shelter, also the government said they could be used for heat if you placed the candle in the base of the clay flower pot (the saucer) and turned the pot upside down on top the candle it would warm the clay pot, all it did was to keep your hands warm when you placed them around the pot. Before leaving for the army my father covered the shelter with sand bags and put an old bed frame with springs in the shelter. Then there were the Blackouts, No street lamps to guide us; they were out for the duration.

We were given a button about an inch and a half in size, this button glowed in the dark and you wore it on your coat to stop people bumping into one another. Headlights on the cars and busses were painted black halfway to stop the light shining into the sky at night. There were also posts set up in various places in the village and they were painted a pale yellow, if mustard gas were dropped these yellow posts would turn green.

the only good meal some of the kids got in those times...

Who could forget the fitting for your gas mask, I see the little kids now, crying because they were scared to death of the ugly masks, and it got worse when they tried to put them on. Then there was the school lunch programs, another government idea, not a bad one, for at times it was the only good meal some of the kids got in those times, but one dessert they could of kept from me and that was the Semolina Pudding, I swear it was made out of sawdust and milk, you could of stuck wall paper up with it.

I cannot forget the school nurse who would make her rounds with that darn( Nit Comb) looking for those little animals in your head, then she would spoon feed you a large dollop of Cod-liver oil and malt to make sure you were not suffering from mal-nutrition.

Enough of the good times let me go back to the raids. The night they dropped the bomb on St. Bernard's school my mother and I was in the Savoy cinema watching a film.

the building shook and the exit doors blew open...

Suddenly the film stops, we thought it had broken, a very common thing back with the old projectors. The lights came on and the manager walked on stage and reported to us that a air raid was in progress and if we wanted to remain seated we could or we could leave but he would not run the film until the all clear was sounded. As he finished speaking there was a large explosion the building shook and the exit doors blew open that was the cue my mother and I needed to get the heck out of there. We ran down the street as fast as our legs could carry us to our home and the shelter. While running home we stopped a couple of times and took shelter in the gutter or a wall when the noise of the bombs and the Ack.Ack fire became fierce, a lot of steel was falling from the sky and we could see the German aircraft caught in the beams of the search lights. Next morning I found out the bomb had hit the playground of St Bernard's school not 50 yards from the Cinema.

Then one day at school the bomb disposal team...

It was common practice for the kids to go out after an air raid and look for souvenirs, bomb fragments, shrapnel, and tail fins from the incendiaries bombs and of the unexploded A.A shells that fell back on the ground. It was like show and tell, and we would trade for items we didn't have. Then one day at school the bomb disposal team had a little talk with us and told what could happen if that prized shell we had exploded in your hand or in your house, after that a lot of the boys were not so keen on collecting.

On 16 January 1941 my relatives lost their home in Avonmouth, they lived across the street from the park, they lost everything, but felt very lucky because two doors away people lost their lives.

On the night of 11 /12 April 1941 the family was already in the shelter when the bombs began to fall, the ground was shaking with the large explosions, we were peeking out of the shelter door when the ARP man came to the shelter and told us that three fire bombs had gone through the roof of the house and landed in the front bedroom, lucky for us one did not go off and the other two were put out very fast by the firemen by placing sand bags over them, the only damage was broken tile where they came through the roof and two burned spots on the floor. The smell of the phosphorous remained for a long time in the bedroom.

we would play on the rubble where once lived one of our playmates...

A hundred yards away a large bomb reported to be a land mine had dropped by parachute behind the homes on Priory Rd, the explosion blew down 10 Row houses, the blast was so tremendous it blew a piano in one house clear across the street, through the front wall and landed in the back room of the house. Five people were killed in the homes, one of them a little boy I knew and played on the street with. For months afterwards we would play on the rubble where once lived one of our playmates. It was years later before they re-built the homes back to where they were original.

I believe one day in the future they will find many more bombs still buried in the mud of the Avon River and in the fields around the smelting works, that land was once covered with water and it is very soft.

This data on the bombing of Bristol was put together in 1970 for a chat board group who were interested in the air raid on the city; the paper was updated in June 1997 for spelling and dates.

John Rogers.







