

This Incident was at Masons Cement works, Ipswich Oct 1941.

Documents from the RE Museum Archives.

Copy

SECRET.

Ref: 3800/259/90. 40

To :- I.F. & D.B.D.

Report on the recent demolition of chimney shaft, etc., at
Mason's Cement Works, Claydon, near Ipswich.

On 1st. February 1941 a stick of H.E. bombs were dropped across the above Works by enemy aircraft, all thought to have exploded. The first in the stick appeared to pass through the shaft of one of three tall chimneys. This chimney was 125 ft. high, and the entry hole was 85 ft. from the ground, the apparent exit hole being 80 ft. high. A line joining these holes gave a ricochet mark on the ground near one of the craters; no more was thought of the matter, and the holes were patched up.

Nearly eight months later, on 26th. September 1941, an explosion demolished this chimney. On investigation pieces of a 50 Kg. bomb were found in the debris, including a portion of the nose, a quarter of the tail and the suspension ring, and it would appear that the February bomb entered the northern wall of the shaft at the 85 ft. hole, struck the opposite south wall of the shaft at the lower level, knocked out the brickwork there, and then fell down the inside of the shaft, coming to rest on the concrete floor of a disused boiler flue (See sketch attached).

The writer (Major Barefoot) visited the Works and was shown the site by Mr. H. Mason, the Managing Director, who said that the heat from the other boiler-flue (in use) might occasionally reach 400° F. but that the disused flue had not been used this year, and was permanently shut off by a fixed damper from any other boiler. There is no question of sabotage, as it was impossible to reach the position where the bomb is assumed to have been lying. This position is indicated by explosion marks in the dis-used flue.

Most of the damage was caused by the fall of the chimney, but at a brick-built workshop approx. 25 yards from the base of the chimney, a 2ft. square piece of 9" brick wall, at ground level, had been blown bodily into the workshop, and was under some debris from the shed, showing that the hole in the wall was caused by the explosion being at ground level, i.e. at the base of the chimney.

In the opinion of the writer, the explosion of the bomb may have been caused by soot catching fire and burning itself out on the bomb-flue.

A report in detail by Lieut. T.J. Deane, R.E. of No. 220 B.D. Section, is enclosed, and photographs of the damage are available here if required.

See 41A
42A

IF + DDBZ
ABW(F)
D.F. DDBD(T) 20
C.S.O.(M)

Capt H.W. White
per. with per. 1 "Summary"
L. Barefoot.

Major. R.E.
for/ C.R.E. No. 3 B.D. Group. R.E.

Enclos:
Cambridge.
3rd. Oct. '41.
LB/THN.

INSPECTOR OF FORTIFICATIONS
AND
DIRECTOR OF BOMB DISPOSAL
DATE 15 OCT 1941 No. 7038 ✓

