

BEHIND

THE

LINES

Many Letters From Hamiltonians in Old Land Reveal Interesting Sidelights Upon Battle of Britain

Recent arrivals of convoys from England have brought many letters to Hamiltonians from friends and relatives in the Old Country. To-day this column prints a selection. First is from Flight-Sergt. S. E. Dawe, who is serving with the Royal Air Force, and has written to his brother, William Dawe, 390 Paling avenue. "I have met lots of Canadian airmen and soldiers," says Flight-Sergt. Dawe. "We had the pleasure of seeing a Canadian fighter squadron in action a couple of months ago, right above us. Needless to say, they did their stuff . . . They bagged four that day without loss to themselves. Pretty good going. . . I can remember seeing eight parachutes in the air at one time in that action. . . .

"A thought has been with me for several months now, and has been confirmed as the months have passed. It is that the Hun realizes that it is the ordinary people of Britain who are to be feared more than the military personnel, because it is these ordinary civilian men, women and even children who will eventually strangle the rotten ambitions of that Nazi heathen crowd. The spirit of our people is amazing. There is absolutely no panic whatever. In this connection I am sure that our King and Queen have been responsible in a very practical way for bringing the people closer than was thought possible, by the manner in which they endured the attack. . . .

"The King and Queen have never been more popular than they are now. Here is an example: The

King last week visited a heavily bombed Midlands town. A bloke just pushed himself forward, stood before the King, and said: 'I wish the people of Germany could see you now. Hitler wouldn't dare to visit the bombed cities of Germany. He hasn't got the guts.'

Second letter is from Signm. Richard Lord to his parents, who live at 130 Kensington avenue north. "Headquarters," the letter says, "sent out a call for guys that could drive nights through bombardments, etc., plus fog and dirty weather and with very poor lights, and who knew the roads and could be depended on to get there. This was up my alley and my years of nights behind the wheel of a taxi served me in good stead. . . .

"We took it in the September blitz. Night after night we roared through the streets on liaison work with only side-lights to see by and the Jerry planes overhead. The whole time was a maelstrom of emergency. I was lucky, but we lost several drivers. Night after night I have seen deeds of bravery and heroism that would amaze you and which by their very number were taken casually. I have seen men and women, with their whole families and homes wiped out, toiling bravely and dry-eyed, still carrying on and helping others. Very little selfishness was evident. . . .

"I have another memory of a policeman, his left arm hanging limply at his side, broken, his head injured, blood running down his face, but still carrying on directing rescue work, refusing to go in an ambulance because he wanted others to have the space. He carried on until he fainted from pain and loss of blood. I took him to the first-aid post in my car. . . .

"I have seen the British people take it on the chin, bravely, unselfishly and defiantly, until I can only humbly thank God for the privilege of being one of them and the privilege of serving these people. . . .

And the third letter is to Mrs. W. J. Wright, 189 Emerald street north, from a friend in England. "Poor ——— (naming a town in southern England) has suffered badly, but the people are wonderful. But the horror of it! School is a funny place. Our children seem to be constantly changing, for as each road gets its load of bombs the people have to evacuate and we have a fresh set of children—then those who went away at first get fed up and come back. It's funny. Life is anything but monotonous. . . .

"Last Sunday we had a Canadian padre at church. His name is Reginald Forneret, and he began, by telling us that his father used to be rector of All Saints', Hamilton. He was one of the finest men I have ever listened to. . . .



Lieut.-Col. F. I. Carpenter

An Allen Bill despatch from England the other day described the work of the No. 1 Holding Unit (M.G.), which is serving in England, but did not point out that the officer commanding this unit is a Hamiltonian—Lieut.-Col. F. I. Carpenter, who was appointed to the command early last year.

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