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Correspondence Clapham

Author:

College

1939 to 1950.

Recipient:

B3.(3.41 - 3.43).

Date:

1940's

Volume & issue number:

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Telephone:
Battersea 1462.

Clapham College,
Nightingale Lane,
London, S.W.4.

Dear Brother Martin,

March 21st./49.

I have been informed that Clapham advanced a loan of £300 to Manchester. This is confirmed in our books and the date given is Dec. 8th. 1942.

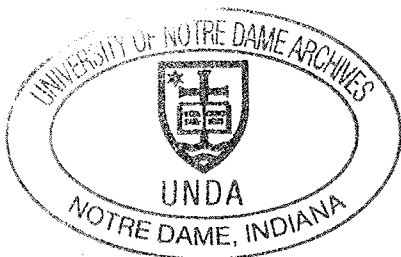
Now that Manchester is overflowing with milk and honey, thanks to Clapham's help without interest, would you kindly help Clapham by returning the £300?

We have a considerable amount of repairs and decoration to be done for which we cannot ask the London County Council to pay; the above cash will greatly help to cover the cost.

I presume all is going well at X.C. Manchester; may it prosper.

Yours sincerely in Xt.,

Br. Matthias. O.P.



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UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME ARCHIVES

Provincer paying in bk.

8.12.42

Clapham £200.

" £300

13.1.42 Mar 59.5.8

Provincial Cheque Bk.

Canon Ward 15.12.42

Salford Steners £250,00

Booke pass Bk.

1942 Oct. 27

per 2. c. mdr.

£ 212 - -

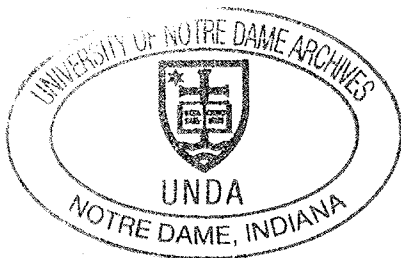
1943 July 21 " "

Sep. 29.

320 . 13.4

30 . 6

Wiped out Booke - 562 " 1944



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UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME ARCHIVES

Telegrams:
"Xavierites, London"
Telephone:
Battersea 1462

Clapham College,
11, Nightingale Lane,
Clapham Common, S.W.4

November 9th, 1940

Dear Aloysius,

We had a further visitation last night.
One dropped in the Mansions' Garden just behind the Lab.
The Lab roof is damage ALL the glass has gone and one of the
walls is cracked. I am afraid that nothing can be done about it.
Approximately 100 windows have gone in the school and Lab block.
6 windows are missing in the main building.
The other dropped in the garden of Westbury and a number of windows
are missing in Hollywood. So if you have any would be consumptives
you had better send them here for a fresh air cure.
The Nuns have lost nearly all their windows at the back and several
ceilings.
Westbury is a mess as far as windows are concerned. One lady
was killed there by flying glass.
I shall require a new heart before long.
This is the second visitation this week we had another shower
on Wednesday evening.

I think that it is about time that I had 10 days' leave from the
trenches

I forgot to mention that the greenhouse down the garden has lost
a deal of its glass.

In fact it is all best described as a MESS.
However we are all here to tell the tale.
Canon Thompson kindly called this morning to enquire whether I
was safe and sound.
12 were dropped in the vicinity.

I hope to see you soon and let me know when you are coming
in the meantime pray for the Clapham Community

Yours sincerely

Bah.



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UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME ARCHIVES

November 9th, 1940

Telephone
Baltimore 1462.

Dear Brother Alphonse,

We had a further visitation last evening.

One dropped in the Mansion Grounds just by the lab. The Lab roof is a mess and so is the Lab. About 100 panes of glass have disappeared from the School and Lab blocks, and 6 from the main building. Hollywood has lost its share. The once conservatory is very airy and greenhouse down the garden is hadly a hothouse. The second bomb dropped in the garden of Westbury. One lady was killed there.

The whole thing is best described as a mess. However we are all here to tell the tale.

3 of Mrs Mason's friends were killed last night in the street next to hers.

We had a shower on Wednesday evening too. I understand that 12 were dropped..

I shall require a new heart if we have much more.

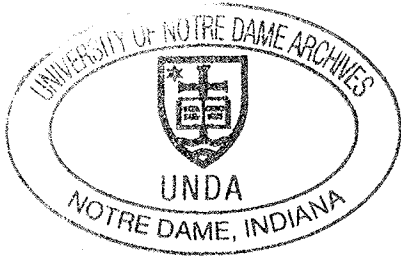
Cheerio, and in the meantime you had better all pray hard for the good estate of the Clapham Community.

*Yours sincerely
SAH.*

Clapham College,

Nightingale Lane,

London, S.W.4.



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Telephone
Battersea 1462.

Clapham College,
Nightingale Lane,
London, S.W.4.

Sunday, Oct. 20th, 1940

Dear Brother Alphonse,

Just a brief note to tell what you escaped by not sleeping here last night.

At 9-40 a large bomb landed just opposite to my bedroom on the very edge of the Common - the earth was piled up to the edge of the railings on our side of the road.

By a miracle we all escaped injury and the material damage to our property is surprisingly small.

One of the Grecian Vases on the top parapet is no longer there and another one of the Gate post came down. The ceiling of my office and the room next door look as though they do not need much more to bring them down.

Another Bomb landed in Alderbrook Road and has rendered many of the houses uninhabitable - here again there were no casualties. The back of the Mansions has lost about 30% of the window glass. The end of the classrooms has two panes missing and a large pane in the Hollywood Conservatory is missing.

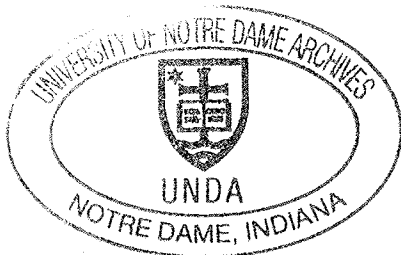
I was in bed at the time and I was lifted up about 6 ins. in the air the house simply swayed

A third bomb landed just on the other side of The Avenue among the trees.

What next?

I must say that I felt a bit shaken.

P.T.O.



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The Assessment has been reduced to £100
I will let you know more about that in a day
or so.

In the meantime don't forget to
pray for the Clapham Community

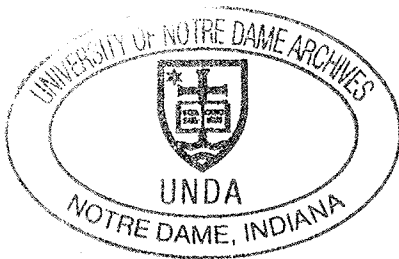
Yours sincerely

BAH

Your prayers are asked for John McSweeney
the lad from the Hostel who died this morning
at 4 a.m. R.I.P.

The voice of culture and progress has been
wailing all day.

*Excuse the dirty paper but the blast
found its way down the chimney
with unpleasant results.*



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Telegrams:
"Xaverites, London"
Telephone:
Battersea 1462

Oct. 16th, 40.

Clapham College,

11, Nightingale Lane,

Clapham Common, S.W.4

Tuesday
1 p.m.

* Mrs Mason insists upon called them
'unsanitary'

Dear Brother Alphonsus,

Since Saturday things have been getting worse and worse so your remark "Excitement seems to be dying down" unfortunately does not apply. Most of the happenings are just dreadful.

Last night was truly awful. Our share was fortunately insignificant and took the form of two incendiary* bombs on the paddock. The worse "incident" was a huge bomb in front of the Picture House near Balham Station - an 88 Bus is buried in the crater which went right through to the Tube underneath bursting the water and gas mains - I will leave the rest to your imagination. They had to evacuate Clapham South Station - we had some 30 Men, women, Children, Babies, Cripples huddled in my Bedroom cum Dining Room. As they were gathered in the bombs were dropping all over the place.

Mrs Mason had a large sized bomb about 15 yards from the house and escaped with the rest of the household thanks to their shelter. That was on Sunday evening.

On Saturday at 12-30 p.m. bombs fell between Cautley and Narbonne Avenues at least two families were just wiped out and the injuries ^{of others} were terrible.

Last night they came over in droves and bombs were raining down all night. Even this building rocked. I could write lots more but it is all too tragic.

If you come along on Saturday I shall be pleased to give you something to eat - as long as I know before hand I shall be only too happy to feed my brothers. The unexpected visitor is a problem under the present conditions.

I do not recommend sleeping? in Greater London at the moment. "When these things come to pass, flee to the hills" and stay put.

Thanks for the papers re Norbury. In any case in is practically hopeless trying to get in contact with anyone in these times.

The claim for the rebate on the Water Charges has at last "gone forward" as the say in the R.A.F.

I hear a German Plane so had better retire for a while - you never know. It seems to have passed on so let me continue.

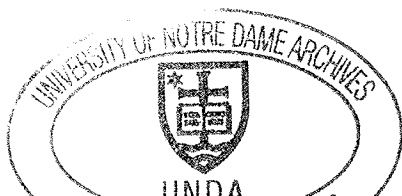
Miss Ellis is still in the land of the living - beyond the disappearance of most of the glass in the front of the house she has nothing of which to complain. I managed to get across and see her this morning.

Mr Le Gros Clark and Mr Dallow called this morning to see the Community and seemed very pleased to find that he was still alive.

I have pieces of the first bombs dropped on the property and I am sure that you all hope that they will be the last.

Well cheerio I am sorry that I cannot write in a more cheerful strain but that ain't my fault.

Yours sincerely The Clapham Community



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Clapham College,
11, Nightingale Lane,
Clapham Common, S.W.4

October 1st, 1940

Dear Brother Alphonse,

Thanks for your note of Sept. 26th.

After Thursday night here the Provincial thought that I had better have a little relief so away to the country I went until yesterday evening.

I can do nothing about the enclosed - the 1937 Certificates are in Brother Bernadine's desk which is buried beneath the furniture. You had better write to the good lady.

I got back here after some difficulty about 25 minutes before the guns started - at 8-50 a bunch of bombs came down partly on the Common and partly on the corner of Lessor Avenue where two houses were reduced to rubble and many others very badly damaged. My heart has not recovered from the shock yet.

Balham Hill down to Balham Grove has caught it hot - a dreadful mess.

Last night we lost one pane of glass in the kitchen and the glass on the lamp over the front door came down - two letters of college remained whole - "O L" . The syrens have just gone again - it is just 8 minutes since the "All Clear" That's me going to the dug out two steps at the time - bombs and guns - I have just crept out again.

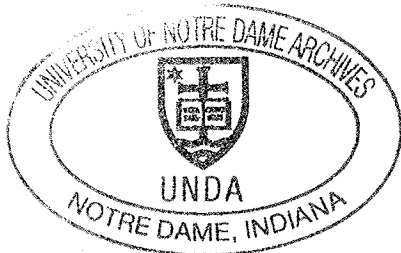
I am sure that the Provincial was pleased to get away this morning I hope that he has a good rest to-night.

I shall try to post this to-day but there is a rumour that our post office is not working and I am certainly not going to venture down Balham

Pray for the Clapham Community

Yours sincerely

B.A.H.



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Telegrams:
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Clapham College,

11, Nightingale Lane,

Clapham Common, S.W.4

September 20th, 1940

Dear Brother Alphonse,

Many thanks for yours of the 13th which reached me this morning.

The post is beginning to improve. The telephone is not. I have tried to get you several times but "Toll" is as dead as mutton.

It is evident that the enemy don't like our village.

No trams or gas since last Sunday but we still have our water supply.

I am posting the local rag which may interest you all - you will possibly be able to recognise some of the pictures of devastation. However there is a very great deal which has not been hit.

If you could possibly manage to get a friend with a car to run up with Brother Dunstan and collect the remainder of the valuable equipment from the Lab it would be a good piece of work. The trouble is shrapnel which has already made one hole in the glass roof of the Lab. A similar hole has appear in the roof of the small room where the chapel stuff is stored. Corbridge has done his best but with the number of guns now in action this menace will increase.

The last 24 hours has been relatively quiet - Wednesday night was just hideous. The area around the Plough - between Clapham North and Clapham Common Stations is a dreadful mess so I am told. Adkins, Endlesham, Holmewood, Gosberton Roads have also suffered. Your Odeon Cinema is still standing.

A few cracked window panes is the extent of our damage so far.

Father Daly is very much alive and kicking and continues to arrive punctually every morning. The nuns are not having Mass at present but send a couple of representatives in here each morning.

It is very difficult to get on with business with the post and phone functioned so erratically but this is as far as I have got:
WATER; I am hoping that the R.A.F. will repay us Fifty three sixteths of the accounts from Sept. 1939 to Sept 1940 and after that they will pay 100%.

This matter is held up for the moment until I receive from the M.W.B. information as to the basis upon which the Garden Rate is charged. The Administrative Officer here is very helpful and the Billeting Clerk Mr Shaw knows his job and we get on very well together.
RATES: Waiting for the Councils next move. A Post Card from them acknowledging receipt of my letter took SIX days to come from Wandsworth Town Hall.

ESTIMATES for the L.C.C. Here I am completely in the dark. I am keeping all the papers which you have given or sent me and take them down to the funk hole every night in case we get a fire or other bomb around the premises.

Mrs Mason has had a lively time round her part of the world -



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Bombs of every kind. She is a wonderful old soul and I am so pleased that she loves to see things clean. Together we have collected and washed all the glass and china and stored it in one of the cupboards in the basement.

Rates: I am trying to make an appointment with the Council's Assessor.

Water: I have all the necessary data.

Cheerio,

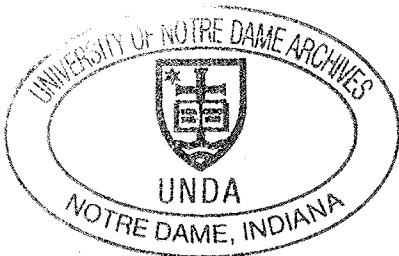
Yours sincerely

B.A.H.

Mr Bishop phoned yesterday to enquire after the good estate of Clapham College and the Brothers.

I enclose some bills which I know you will welcome.

The R.A.F. have cleared all the stage stuff out of Hollywood into the classroom next to the chapel. Corbridge's heart is trembling for fear that they will want his duck run next but I have asked to C.O. to spare him that anguish. I have told ^{him} to collect all the old metal around the place and to get what he can for it and use the proceeds for beer money.



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Telegrams:
"Xaverites, London"
Telephone:
Battersea 1462

Heatham
College Lane
East Grinstead.

Clapham College,
11, Nightingale Lane,
Clapham Common, S.W.4

Sept 18th 1940.

Dear Brother Aloysius,

Congrats on having escaped the bombs!
Let's hope your armour-plate will not be pierced. After all we cannot spare you just yet until all the business matters have been settled up. Now, don't blame me for this belated reply; you have probably realized already how utterly disorganised the delivery of letters has been lately. I got your letter and other correspondence which you forwarded on the 11th and 13th - yesterday - the 17th. I intended dealing with it last night but the howling started at 8.30 p.m. I went to the First Aid post and returned at 7.30 this morning. We have had three sirens already this morning, but, thank God, no activity overhead. I've just seen the wreckage of a Junkers going through the town. I am glad you have been able to get some sleep: after all, with your philosophical frame of mind, sleep should come easily. I won't quote 'Macbeth' but you know what Shakespeare says about sleep, and I am glad to say that all here are enjoying the "chief nourishes of life's feast." As for the soothing weed (Gold Leaf) please use the money there to get what you want. I have ordered ours but regret to say I forgot yours. (Order it from Mitre Square & ask them to send the bill to Heatham.) Ours has not arrived though it has been ordered 10 days. I wonder if K + T's ~~is~~ still stands. I went over to Foxhunt on Monday afternoon. The Provincial is the Squire at the moment and still finds it necessary to prolong his stay there for



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Heatham

College Lane
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Sept 18th 1940.

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further negotiations with the Colonel. (The advance party of the R.A.M.C. has arrived) He was very anxious about you and hopes to come and console you for a few days! Please share my sympathy and good wishes with Fr. Daly.

As for the business matters - first I'm glad to hear you have taken all the matters in hand so well. If you have received my previous letters, you will be acquainted with the correspondence re. R.A.F. I enclosed several receipts for Water Rates in the registered packet.

I have just been through all receipts and accounts and cannot find anymore information than the enclosed. I shall give on a separate paper the payments to the Metro. Water Board as I find them in the account book. Please look after all receipts as I shall want them for the auditor of the school A/c.

I cannot, ~~un~~unaided, find anything about Fire Insurance. I shall ask Wilfrid when he arrives tomorrow. However I suggest you ask Mr. Davies in case Wilfrid does not know. Pleased to know you have offered the use of our shelter.

I also found correspondence & amounts for rates. (enclosed with above - also see separate paper)

Let's have some more of your newsy letters. The Brothers are all interested in your safety and we all join with you in praying to St. Joseph.

Every good wish. Sincerely
Fr. Alphonsus.



Telegrams:
"Xavierites, London"
Telephone:
Battersea 1462

Clapham College,
11, Nightingale Lane,
Clapham Common, S.W.4

September 16th, 1940

Dear Brother Alphonse,

The enclosed came on Saturday. I have received nothing from you since the registered letter.

I fear that some of our correspondence disappeared when the local sorting office was hit by an air torpedo. Nothing has been seen of the premises since.

At the moment we are without gas. The army is cooking in our kitchen.

Last night was just awful. The damage around is very extensive. Yesterday afternoon, no trams, no tube, and many parts no water, what a life.

Mr Woodroff's Road has been rendered uninhabitable, most of the houses are down and the rest unsafe. The people escaped unhurt. I am sheltering him and his family here for the time being.

More and more guns are arriving and you will have a good collection of cracked windows before it is all over. And we shall have to be very thankful if the damage stops with cracked windows. The enemy seems to have taken a thorough dislike to our village.

The second raid since breakfast is on at the moment but our guns are silent so far.

HAVE YOU ORDERED MY TOBACCO?

The nuns next door are having a great time. All the old ladies insist on Dressing up with hats on ready for immediate departure, and day and night at that. I gave the nuns some coal yesterday to help them do a bit of cooking and they have just sent round for more.

The All clear has just gone and it is raining hard - a real Black Monday.

Corbridge reports that a piece of shrapnel has found its way through one of the Lab skylights he has gone off to repair the damage as far as possible.

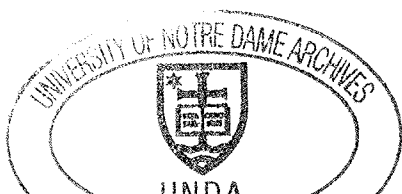
You chaps are missing something. I am keeping some pieces for you.

Well, cheerio and pray for the Clapham Community
which is behaving itself very well

Yours sincerely

B.A.H.

*The Henry Thornton Sch.
had a bomb just in
front of it yesterday.
Cleaves Joffee factory went
up at the same time*



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September 13th, 1940

Dear Brother Alphonse,

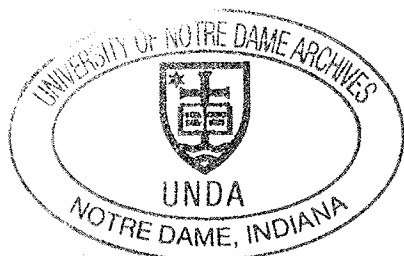
First and most important: Have you order^{ed} 1 lb of Players Gold Leave from K. & T. if not, will you please do so at your earliest convenience? My nerves must be soothed.

I have been in touch with Mr Davies and he agrees that I can manage any outstanding points with the R.A.F. here. I have just found the Administrative Officer most helpful.

In this connection, please let me have by return the receipts for any Water Rates paid since last August and then I shall be able to get a substantial rebate. In the future the R.A.F. will meet all Water Charges except that for the garden.

I understand that they are meeting all their own Electricity and Gas charges. Owing to the severity of the recent raids the O.C. has accepted my offer to allow the men off duty to sleep down in our basement at night - they will in consequence pay the lighting bill for no. 11.

What has been done with regard to Fire Insurance? I do not mean fire due to enemy action, that is another matter. Please let me know whether or not the matter is in order giving me the address of our Fire Insurance Firm. The Company should certainly be informed that the furniture is stored in one room.



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UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME ARCHIVES

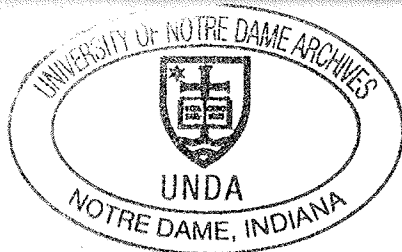
Last night I am please to say that I slept right through the night in spite of the most infernal din. We had an organ accompaniment on the guns during Mass this morning.

As the result of further raids dear old Mrs Mason arrived here at 2-30 this afternoon.

I have opened the basement as an unoffical shelter during the day - the guns follow the warning so quickly at times that folk do not know where to run. In spite of it all there is a deal to laugh at. The Common has received a deal attention from the enemy but fortunately well away from us. I fully expect to be turned out one of these times on account of time bombs - in which case I am going over to Father Daly's place and if he is turned out he comes here. There was a scare here this morning when one of the men reported a suspicious hole in the grounds but it turned out to be one of Mr Corbridge's gardening efforts!

Greetings

B.A.H.



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UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME ARCHIVES

From

The Secretary, Clapham College, London, S.W.4.

September 11th, 1940

Dear Brother Alphonse,

The enclosed arrived from Alexius this morning and I thought it was meant for me.

The storage of the furniture was completed this morning - it is all in the Brothers' Refectory. I have written to the Borough Treasurer and asked for a visit from the Council's Assesor.

Incidentally it will be impossible to get any of the furniture out of the storage as it has been professionally packed, actually a work of art.

I think that you had better pay the £51-9-10 for Rates by return - I have not given the cheques which you left to the tradesmen and could hold them over for awhile which would help you.

Our nights are more than lively - at ten to two this morning I thought that the end had come. A very large bomb fell in Eldridge Road - this building shook and Hollywood just danced - I waited for a crash of glass but none came. Not a pane on the estate was even cracked. St. Joseph is doing well for us. The mobile A.A. gun parked itself just out in the road last night and the row was just terrific. You will understand that I am not feeling very energetic at the moment.

B.A.H.

The Provincial has not turned up as yet.

Sept. 10th 1940.

Tuesday Evening

Dear Brother Alphonse,

The enclosed arrived this morning.

Well, I am still alive. C.C. has not shifted yet but we are having Hell's Bells with the lid off. You and your confreres are missing SOMETHING!

Father Daly had a bomb just behind his flat yesterday but he and the rest of the folks in the flats escaped unharmed.

I have fixed up a well protected bed downstairs and managed to get some sleep last night.

The furniture shifting is all but complete in spite of the syrens. The last warning caught me in the bath which to say the least was awkward.

I have discovered that the army has two of our pianos and I am having them shifted to-morrow morning.

Mind that you all pray for the good estate of your caretaker

Yours sincerely

B.A.H.

Clapham College,
Nightingale Lane,
London, S.W.4.



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"Xaverites, London"
Telephone:
Battersea 1462

Clapham College,
11, Nightingale Lane,
Clapham Common, S.W.4

Heatham
College Lane
East Grinstead.
Sussex. 7/2/41.

Dear Brother Aloysius,

Just a few words of comfort in your illness. We don't forget you and hope + pray for your speedy recovery. All at Heatham are well, if you exclude the ordinary colds. Fr. Chrysostom has been very good since his arrival and all are everything in spick and span. His only regret is that he can't use our Hoover - the usual trouble of different kinds of current.

And now for the 'bomb' business. The Convent next door had a direct hit from a sixty-pounder and two of the nuns were killed outright and two seriously injured. An old lady was also killed and a few others hurt. The Mother Superior escaped, as she was out at the dentist's. Another nun was in another part of the house. This happened last Friday afternoon about 10 o'clock and there was no warning. The German dropped a stick of eight bombs, fortunately for us at an angle. One fell just on the edge of the lawn outside Hollywood back door. Two airmen were killed by shrapnel, and only one injured. The Co. O. and Squadron Leader Barclay had marvellous escapes as it was just outside their window. They were unhurt except by plaster from the ceiling. All Corbridge's 'nick-nachs' were blown about. Off course all the windows at the back went. (The next bomb) The next bomb



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fell on the edge of the College lawn and did no damage beyond windows in the house & school. The next one fell just behind the school in the mansion grounds. All these windows are gone again. The next one on a house in the next road & one on Muller roads. So you see we were very fortunate this time. All the windows have been patched up. I saw to that before I left on Wednesday morning. I got Br. Aloysius up on Monday and we ~~have~~ ^{are} putting in our claim.

The poor nuns are in a bad way; their chapel, dining-room etc. are in ruins and probably the house (i.e. the one nearer the Tube) will be demolished. They may save the other house. I think they will. Mother Superior is very brave. Her income, sadly depleted before, is now gone. I have sent her £10 - I think you will approve under the circumstances.

I have been able to find only one copy of the Heringophone books. I will send it to Deeping. I may unearth the rest later.

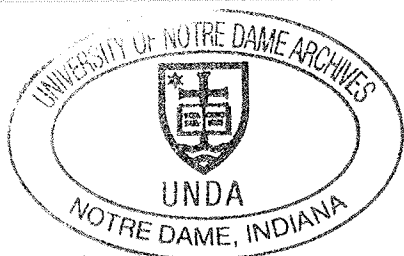
Well, that's all. We all hope you are not in pain and will soon be well.

Sincerely

Br. Aloysius.

P.S. I took Br. Chryostom up to Clephan with me and we checked the "valuables."

The Hostel should soon be ready. B.A.



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Clapham College,
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September 30th 1940

Dear Brother Alphonsus,

The enclosed was handed in to-day by Mrs. Brennan of Balham representing school fees for her boy. She requests a receipt for this payment and also for the payment she made last term.

I let Brother Aloysius go away last Friday so that he could get a few nights' rest. He should be returning this evening.

I can merely describe the doings every night as "Hell let loose". Last night we made sure our number was up. A stick of bombs wiped out a large number of shops and houses from Balham Hippodrome to as far as the George. Last Saturday about seven Houses in Grove Road near Holdron's were completely destroyed, several people being killed. On the Friday afternoon considerable damage was done round by the Plough. There is a time bomb in the monastery garden and another one in the convent grounds.

I hope to leave for Deeping to-morrow and I shall not be a bit sorry to leave London. I did not get a wink of sleep last night. I can't say when I shall be coming south again but when I do come I will bring along the articles you asked for.

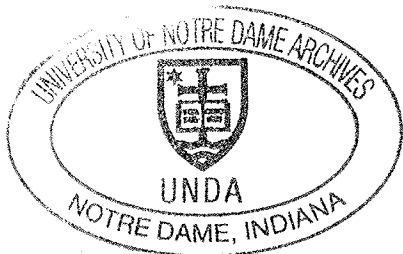
Greetings to all,

Yours very sincerely,

Bro. Aloysius, C.F.X.

(Provincial).

Please note that I had to pay a surcharge of 5d on the enclosed letter from the L.C.C. I'll get it back from Aloysius of course.



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