

Air Ministry News Service

DAMAGE IN COLOGNE

Cologne was attacked in force last night. The weather, though changeable, made for accurate bombing, and allowed many of our bomber crews a wide view of what was done to this great industrial city in the course of the attack. What this amounted to may be judged from such brief official reports as "tremendous explosion resulting in fire visible 50 miles away", or "all report fires." This last comes from the crews of a Hampden squadron.

Reports have now come in from Germany of destruction in Cologne in earlier attacks. This month, it was noticed that for the first time, German newspapers and the German censorship were forced to reveal something of the dislocation caused in the city by recent attacks. Theatres which had advertised future programmes suddenly cancelled them; alternative methods of travel were advertised, and there were many notices of offices transferred to new addresses.

From various reliable sources it is now learned that the Sienstal district in the south of the city, near the Rhine harbour, was without gas or water for a week. On one night in July, at least 100 goods wagons were destroyed, and many trucks and carriages were still burning in the morning. Several warehouses of the Rhine Shipping Company were burnt out or badly damaged. On the same night in July, over 500 houses in industrial quarters were demolished. A few nights later, great damage was done to the main railway station, and adjoining buildings.

In another attack, a railway yard was so effectively bombed that later reconnaissance showed that no sorting was in progress in a yard with a capacity of 6,000 waggons a day, and a main artery for traffic southwards from Cologne was effectively cut.

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