

**Report by the Chief Constable of Leith,
on the Zeppelin Air Raid, 2-3 April 1916**

National Records of Scotland, HH31/21/8 fols.11-17

[page 1] Chief Constable's Office,

TOWN HALL

Leith 12th April, 1916

Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 25478FA/2 of 10th inst[ant]
requesting a detailed report of the recent air raid at Leith.

I beg to state that about 11-25 p.m. Sunday 2nd April, 1916

A Zeppelin was sighted crossing the Firth of Forth west of Inchkeith
coming in a south westerly direction towards Leith

Docks, and on arriving over the Edinburgh Dock, the first bomb
(Explosive) was dropped into the water at the west end of said
Dock, and sank two small rowing boats, and broke several sky-
light windows in two Danish Sailing vessels lying in the dock
nearby.

The second bomb (Incendiary) fell on the quay in the Albert
Dock, and it was extinguished by the Police and others before
any damage was done.

The third bomb (Incendiary) fell in a yard close to the Albert
Dock. It set fire to a wooden fence but the fire was extinguished

by the Police and others before any damage was done.

The fourth bomb (Explosive) fell on the roof of a grain warehouse in Timber Bush, belonging to Watt & Jackson, grain merchants. It damaged the roof and part of the walls on the top flat, and threw some/

[page 2] some of the masonry on to the adjoining properties doing considerable damage. Amount of damage not known.

The fifth bomb (Explosive) fell on the edge of the quay of the harbour, damaging the quay wall near to the Custom House, and breaking a large number of windows in shops, offices and dwelling houses in that vicinity.

The sixth bomb (Explosive) fell on the roof of the tenement at 2 Commercial Street destroying part of the roof and wall on the top flat. A piece of shell struck and killed a man named Robert Love, 66 years of age, residing in the top flat in said tenement, and then in bed.

The seventh bomb (Incendiary) fell through the roof at 14 Commercial Street into a room occupied by an old woman and through the floor of her house into the house underneath where it burst into flame. The old woman referred to calmly got out of bed and poured water through the main hole made by the bomb and extinguished the fire, and thus prevented a serious fire.

The eighth bomb (Incendiary) fell on the roof of the tenement at 45 Sandport Street and was extinguished by the tenants before any damage was done, except by the fall of the bomb. Damage slight.

The ninth bomb (Incendiary) fell on the footway at 9 Sandport Street. No damage done.

The tenth bomb (Incendiary) fell in the yard at 9 Sandport Street. No damage done.

The eleventh bomb (Explosive) fell on the roof of a whisky bond belonging to Innes & Grieve, wholesale spirit merchants, setting fire to the bond, which was entirely destroyed. The estimated value/

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value of stock and property destroyed is £44,000. There were also a large number of windows in shops and dwelling houses in this vicinity broken. The premises were not insured against aircraft.

The twelfth bomb (Incendiary) fell through the roof of the tenement at 15 Church Street into a house occupied by a soldier's wife and three children, and through the floor of this house into the house underneath occupied by a man and his wife and five children. Both houses were set on fire and a good deal of damage done before the fire was extinguished. None of the occupants of these houses were injured.

The thirteenth bomb (Incendiary) fell on the roof of St. Thomas' church manse in Mill Lane, setting fire to the manse which was practically destroyed. Damage estimated at £1,000. The minister, his wife, and servant were all in bed and had a miraculous escape. The manse was not insured against aircraft.

The fourteenth bomb (Incendiary) fell on the gravel in front of Leith Hospital, Mill Lane. No damage done.

The fifteenth bomb (Incendiary) fell in the playground at St. Thomas' school, Mill Lane. No damage done.

The sixteenth bomb (Incendiary) fell in Hawthorn & Cos. ship building yard, Mill Lane. No damage. done.

The seventeenth bomb (Explosive) fell in a garden at 200 Bonnington Road, causing practically no damage.

The eighteenth bomb (Explosive) fell in a court at 200 Bonnington Road, breaking windows and damaging doors. A child one year old son of Robert Robb, residing there was killed/

[page 4] killed in bed by a piece of shell which came in by the window.

The nineteenth bomb (Explosive) fell on the railway line at Bonnington Tannery but did not explode. No damage done.

The twentieth bomb (Explosive) fell through the roof of Bonn-

ington Tannery into a leather manufacturing tank, damaging the roof and also the liquid in a number of other tanks.

From the position in which the bombs were dropped it is evident that those in charge of the Zeppelin were following the course of the Water of Leith from Leith Docks to Edinburgh, as all the bombs dropped were not more than 100 yards from said Water of Leith at any point except the one dropped in the Edinburgh Dock. There were a great number of premises rendered insecure through the breaking of glass in windows, doors etc, by the explosion of the bombs, and although goods in many cases were exposed not one case of pilfering has been reported to the Police. Though the inhabitants rushed into the streets their conduct was on the whole very good. The authorised Police force was assisted by 250 Special Constables who gave valuable assistance.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(SIGNED) John Macleod

Chief Constable.