

COMMONS AND ABBEY DAMAGED IN BLITZ

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Title: Women Without Names.

Track: Ditto.

Discs: 432.

Lines: Stagg.

Voice: Mellor.

Parliament, Westminster Hall and the Abbey were the most famous places damaged in the reprisal blitz. At the House of Commons a delayed action bomb and incendiaries wrecked the interior.

Little now remains but the walls of this historic place which everyone remembers as it looked before the raid - this place where "freedom broadened slowly down from precedent to precedent" - where John Bright, Gladstone and Disraeli passed on the faith of liberty to Asquith, Churchill and Lloyd George. The Father of the House himself was exclusively photographed by Paramount as he surveyed the scene. The clock-tower is hit, just above the face of Big Ben.

The Abbey too is damaged. It was little thought, when the coronation was filmed, that next time cameras came within the walls daylight would stream through a shattered roof down to a nave strewn with wreckage, which a cart would come to remove.

The far-famed rafters of Westminster Hall have not escaped. Only surviving part of the Old Palace of Westminster, the Hall was built by William Rufus. Reflections in large pools left by the fire-fighters meet the eye to-day. These buildings may suffer and even be destroyed. The spirit of democratic freedom survives unharmed.

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