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The Bombing of Hartleys – Jan. 1941

The very first bomb dropped in a concentrated raid on the night of 8th Jan. 1941 had most unfortunate results. It hit Hartleys Jam Factory in Green Walk off Tower Bridge Rd. And burst between the factory shelter and one of the factory blocks, causing the deaths of 4 people, the serious injury of 23 people, and minor injuries to 37 more.

Many of the casualties were buried under the wreckage, and their rescue was a major operation.

Hughes quantities of glass jars smashed to fragments by the explosion, were heaped on and about the shelter, and to get to the people within, the rescuers actually had to tunnel through the shifting glass, shoring up the evacuation with timber like a mine shaft as they progressed.

The factory was badly damaged and great quantities of marmalade presented a salvage problem both prolonged and awkward.

A feature of the raid was the number of incendiary bombs dropped in close clusters of from 20 or 50 or more. 28 high explosive bombs and a large number of incendiaries fell on Bermondsey that night.