

WORLD WAR 2 NEWSPAPER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

FirstNews

MORE THAN A MILLION READERS



---3 September 1939---



**THIS COUNTRY IS AT
WAR WITH GERMANY**

Germany invades Poland

2 September 1939

THE German invasion of Poland began yesterday morning.

Just before dawn, German tanks, infantry and cavalry entered Polish territory on several fronts, with five armies and a total of 1.5 million troops. Planes from the Luftwaffe (German Air Force) began bombing several cities at 9am, including a continuous attack on the capital, Warsaw. There are thought to be many people hurt.

Communications out of Poland have been cut since noon yesterday, but it is believed that German planes have been raiding the country in squadrons of 50 every half hour. Heavy fighting has also been reported along the border with East Prussia, a territory that belongs to Germany but is separated from the mainland by Poland.

Poland has done nothing to provoke the German attack.

A report played on German radio claimed that Polish troops attacked a radio station in the border town of Gleiwitz and took over broadcasts. However, it has been suggested that the German claims are false and were made up so that it looked like Poland deserved the invasion.

The German leader, Adolf Hitler, wants the city of Danzig to be German once more. It became a part of Poland after the First World War. Hitler also wants the 'Polish Corridor', a stretch of territory that leads to the Baltic Sea. The attack on Poland follows Germany's invasion of the Czech regions Bohemia and Moravia in March, which led to Czechoslovakia falling under Germany's rule.

The British Parliament met yesterday evening. The Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, told MPs that Britain and France had warned Berlin that, unless they



German troops enter Poland after a 'blitzkrieg' (lightning war) in Poland on 1 September

got out of Poland quickly, Britain and France would be at war with Germany.

Mr Chamberlain also extended the ages for military service, meaning everyone from 18 to 41 has to join up.

It was a day of fast-moving developments. The President of the United States, Franklin D Roosevelt, sent an urgent appeal to the governments of Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Poland, asking them to say they won't launch air raid attacks on civilians. The British Ambassador to the US welcomed the "moving appeal" of the president.

We are at war



Winston Churchill (right), leaves the Admiralty in London with his secretary for a meeting of the war cabinet at 10 Downing Street

4 September 1939

BRITAIN and France are at war with Germany.

The British deadline for the withdrawal of German troops from Poland expired at 11am yesterday morning. The Prime Minister made the announcement in a radio broadcast at 11.15am.

"You can imagine what a bitter blow it is to me that all my long struggle to win peace has failed," he said. "Yet I cannot believe that there is anything more or anything different that I could have done."

France declared war at 5pm, following the passing of their deadline to the Germans.

Britain has to support Poland following the

Anglo-Polish military alliance, signed a little over a month ago. The alliance came after the German invasion of Czechoslovakia and promised that the British and French would protect Poland. A similar promise was given to Greece and Romania in April, following Italy's invasion of Albania.

A British War Cabinet of nine members has been created. Two new ministers have been added: Winston Churchill becomes First Lord of the Admiralty, a post he held during World War One, and Lord Hankey joins, too.

The King broadcast a message yesterday.

He said: "In this grave hour, perhaps the most fateful in our history, I send to every household of my peoples this message. For the second time in the lives of most of us we are at war. The task will be hard. There may be dark days ahead and war can no longer be confined to the battlefield."

In another important development yesterday, the British Board of Trade said it is now against the law for any Briton to do any business with the enemy.

Evacuation of children begins

1 September 1939

THE evacuation of three million children and adults from cities to countryside towns and villages begins today.

The decision to start was taken yesterday by the Prime Minister, following discussions with the Minister of Health and the President of the Board of Education. Less than 20 hours after the decision was taken, the first children were leaving their schools in the East End of London.

Around three million schoolchildren, mothers with toddlers, pregnant women, disabled and blind people should be evacuated as soon as this coming Monday 4 September. Homeowners in the countryside are taking in the evacuees. The Government says the move is just to be on the safe side and shouldn't last long.

All routes into London from the countryside were closed this morning, as they became one-way roads to make the evacuation from the city easier. Groups of children from individual schools began to get together at 6am this morning to travel by underground, bus and coach. Rehearsals took place three days ago.

Railway and bus services in and out of London have been cut back to make room for the evacuating children and adults. The Government has asked people to keep away from railways, bus stops and main roads as much as possible.

Most children in London schools do not know where exactly they will end up in the countryside. Parents will be told by postcard once the children arrive. All evacuees will get rations to last them two days once they arrive at their evacuation homes.



Schoolchildren crowd Ealing Broadway station in London, ready to be evacuated to the country

British ship torpedoed

4 September 1939

THE ocean liner SS Athenia, which was carrying 1,400 people, was torpedoed yesterday, 200 miles west of the Hebrides.

The 13,500-ton ship was sunk by a German U-boat. It is possible that the commander of the U-boat thought the liner was an armoured cruiser. Around 100 passengers and 19 crew members are thought to have died, including 28 Americans. The USA has not entered the war so far and says it has no plans to do so for now.



Survivors from the bombed ship SS Athenia are helped to safety by a soldier

The Athenia left Glasgow on 1 September, stopping at Liverpool the day before yesterday on its way to Montreal, Canada. Around 300 Americans are believed to have been on board. Two torpedoes were fired at around 7.40pm last night: the first struck the ship and exploded, while the second missed. Reports suggest a third torpedo was fired later but also missed.

The attack brings back memories of U-boat warfare in British waters during World War One, when the Germans thought ocean liners were fair targets for attack. However, at the time of going to press, it wasn't known if this attack is the beginning of a new U-boat war around Britain or if the cruise liner was mistaken for a military ship.

Women's Land Army returns

2 June 1939

THE Women's Land Army, which provided enormous help with the war effort during the last World War, is being formed again.

With Europe on a knife-edge because of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy's plans to invade and take over other countries, the British Government has brought back the 'Land Girls', as they were known before.

During World War One, more than 100,000 members of the Women's Land Army worked on farms and fields around the country, taking over the work of the men who were called up to fight in the conflict.

This time, the Land Girls will be led by Lady Gertrude Denman, who was approached last year to begin making plans for organisation and recruitment. Women from all over the country are welcome to apply and payment will be 28 shillings a week.

Their work will be essential if Britain gets involved in a full-scale war. Food supplies could be cut if farmers are sent to fight, and food imports from overseas will be limited.



Two Land Army girls carry pitchforks while looking after their carthorse

11 May 1940

Meet Britain's new Prime Minister

THE people of Britain got a new leader last night, to take control of the country as it copes with war.

Winston Churchill walked into Downing Street as new Prime Minister of the United Kingdom yesterday, after a long career in politics. The senior Conservative politician will lead the war coalition Cabinet of top Tory and Labour figures.



His arrival comes after former PM Neville Chamberlain resigned. He quit last night after almost three years as Prime Minister. The leader who took Britain to war last year felt he needed to resign when he learned that the Labour and Liberal parties would not support him as Conservative PM.

The Viscount Halifax, Edward Frederick Lindley Wood, is said to have been approached for the role before anyone else. However, as he is a peer in the House of Lords – the unelected chamber of Parliament – he turned it down. He said that a Prime Minister should be a Member of Parliament who had been voted into the House of Commons.

Mr Churchill first became an MP in 1900, and now represents people in Epping. He fought as an officer in World War One and has worked as a minister in many of the Government's most important departments.

A new Prime Minister is likely to mean a new approach to the war effort.

While Churchill has always been a loud critic of the Nazi movement in Germany, Chamberlain has been criticised in the past for being slow to react to Hitler's aggression.

Downing Street has revealed that the first thing Churchill did as PM yesterday was write to Chamberlain and thank him for his support. The 65-year-old leader is expected to give a speech in Parliament over the next few days.

Churchill: victory is our aim

14 May 1940

THIS country will win its fight against the Nazis, Britain's new PM declared yesterday.

Speaking in the House of Commons, Mr Churchill said: "We are in the preliminary stage of one of the greatest battles in history. I would say to the House as I said to those who have joined this Government: I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."



"You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word: victory. Victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory however long and hard the road may be; for without victory, there is no survival."

Rationing reaches food essentials

8 January 1940

BACON, butter and sugar will be rationed by the Government from today, in the latest attempt to keep control of food levels in Britain.

As the war continues, there have been increasing fears that the country may run out of food supplies.

To tackle these growing concerns, the Government is starting to limit the amount of food each person can buy. Coupons can be handed over the counter to shopkeepers, alongside money, to pay for the food.

Sources say ministers are also considering whether to add milk, fruit, eggs, tea, biscuits, breakfast cereals, cheese and meat to the rationing list.



Millions will now hand over coupons at shop counters

Miracle in Dunkirk

5 June 1940



The huge lines of soldiers waiting to be rescued could be seen for miles

HUNDREDS of thousands of British servicemen successfully fled the Nazis from the beaches of Dunkirk, France over the past two weeks.

With the enemy on their tail, more than 300,000 UK soldiers were picked up by lots of vessels – many of them small fishing boats, yachts and dinghies.

The evacuation, called Operation Dynamo by organisers, took place between 26 May and yesterday. Although many made it back alive, it is feared around 5,000 troops lost their lives.

British army chiefs have been slammed by critics for getting the size and strength of German forces wrong. Few knew of the technology and weaponry the Nazi forces used to chase the Allies to the coast.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill has



said he is concerned about recent events in the war. He told MPs in the House of Commons yesterday that "wars are not won by evacuations". He described the race to the beaches of Dunkirk as a "colossal military disaster".

"We shall defend our island whatever the cost may be," he declared. "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender."

New Nazi camp



Thousands of people have been seen waiting to be taken to Auschwitz

26 May 1940

THE Nazis have set up a new concentration camp on the outskirts of the Polish city of Oswiecim.

There are reports that the city's name will be changed to the German name Auschwitz and that the name will be used for the camp, too.

The Nazis say that Auschwitz is just one more concentration camp of the type that they have been setting up since the early 1930s.

To make space for the camp, Polish and Jewish people were thrown out of their houses. Around 1,000 homes are thought to have been demolished.

There are concerns that the prisoners will be used as slave labour, with the Germans earning money from hiring out their services to companies.

The Germans are isolating all their camps from the outside world and surrounding them with barbed wire fencing. All contact with the outside world is forbidden.

Do with less—
so they'll have
enough!



RATIONING GIVES YOU YOUR FAIR SHARE

The Battle of Britain has begun

11 July 1940

THE most important battle of the war so far started last night.

German fighter planes flew across the English Channel in an attempt to attack Portland – the small island off Weymouth on the south coast of the UK. They were met by the might of the British Royal Air Force and shots were fired.

Ministers and military chiefs have called the clash the 'Battle of Britain'. PM Winston Churchill looked ahead to it last month, in a speech to politicians in the House of Commons.

"The Battle of France is over – the Battle of Britain is about to begin," he said. "Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilisation. Upon it depends our own British life, and the long continuity of our institution and our empire. The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us."

The Prime Minister believes that the world's future relies on taking on Hitler's forces over the next few weeks and months. "If we can stand up to him, all of Europe may be freed," he told MPs in the Houses of Parliament in June. "And the life of the world may move forward into broad sunlit uplands. But, if we fail, then the whole world – including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for – will sink into the abyss of a new dark age."



RAF planes have been blocking German attempts to attack Britain

Blitz bombing of Britain

1 October 1940

AROUND 150,000 people are using London's tube stations to keep safe during German bomb attacks.

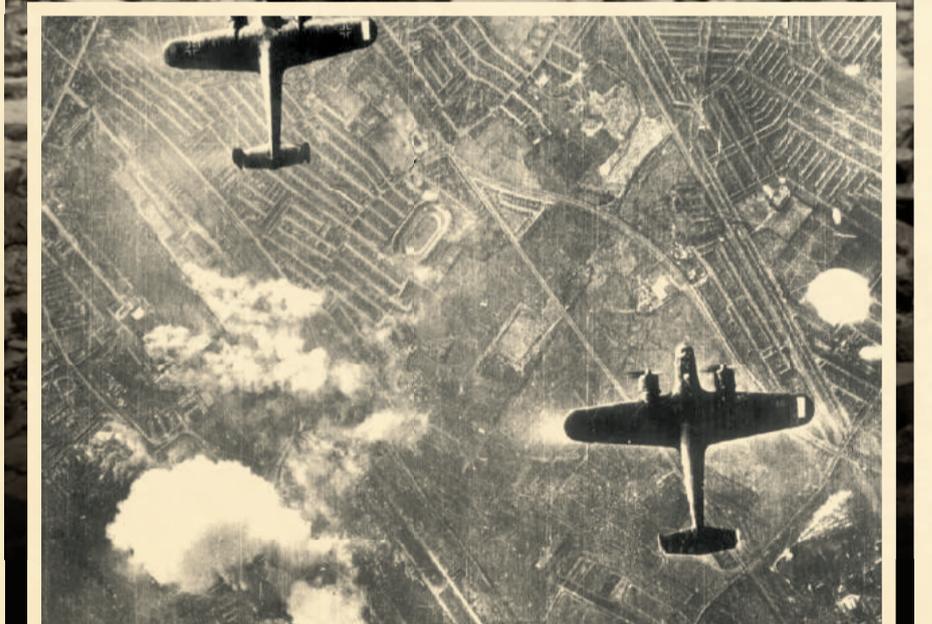
New figures revealed by Government sources show just how many people are using the Underground to hide from enemy air attacks each night.

The violent attacks from the skies started last month. They have been called 'the Blitz' after the German word for lightning. Each evening, German warplanes have been flying over the UK's biggest cities and dropping bombs, in the latest attempt by Hitler to destroy Britain.

Outside of London, cities with big factories or ports like Southampton, Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, Coventry and Hull have also been hit.

While some people are using public shelters to protect themselves from the explosions, others have taken to building their own. Indoor Morrison shelters and outdoor Anderson shelters are increasingly popular among people who have chosen to stay in Britain's cities.

Officials are insisting that all sources of light must be turned off each night. It is hoped that blackouts will make it harder for enemy planes to spot their targets. Sirens are being used across the country to warn of German aircraft in the skies above.



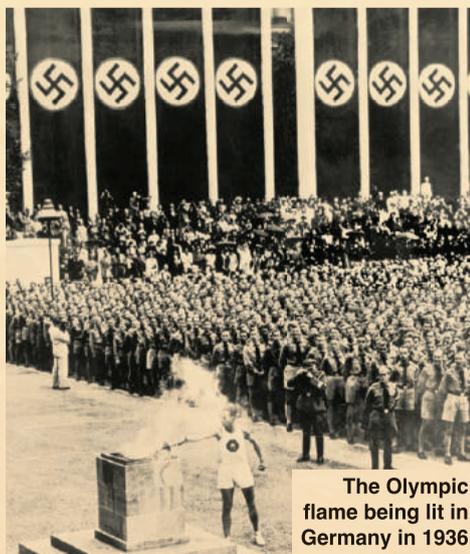
Olympics cancelled

21 September 1940

THE 1940 Olympic Games had been due to start today in Tokyo, Japan.

The decision was made to ditch the sporting festival because the world is still struggling with war. It now seems unlikely that the Games will be rescheduled.

Olympic bosses said it would be unsuitable for the event to take place in Japan, because their forces have been fighting alongside the Germans. Just four years ago, the eyes of the world were on Germany, where the Nazis were hosting the 1936 Games.



The Olympic flame being lit in Germany in 1936

Refugees flee from Hitler's rule

1 November 1940

HUNDREDS of Jews have arrived on British shores, in a last-ditch attempt to escape life in Nazi Germany.

Officials on the UK's borders say the refugees that have arrived are desperate to escape the empire of Adolf Hitler.

The German leader is known to have strong views against the beliefs and faith of Jewish people.



The key players: who's who?

Winston Churchill – Great Britain

British Prime Minister since 1940, Churchill has been a Conservative politician for decades. With Labour leader Clement Attlee by his side as Deputy PM, Winston Churchill is leading a wartime coalition in the battle against Nazi Germany.



He has previously been Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary of State for Air, and Home Secretary.

Franklin D Roosevelt – USA

President of the United States since 1933, Roosevelt took office in the middle of the Great Depression, the economic crisis that began in 1929. Roosevelt is said to be keen to make his country more involved in global affairs, but Congress (the US parliament) wants America to stay out of most international matters. For now, the US remains neutral in the conflict that is gripping Europe.



Adolf Hitler – Germany

The leader of the National Socialist party, also known as the Nazis, since the early 1920s, Hitler has been the leader of Germany since 1933. Born in Austria, he served in the German army during the last World War. He attempted to seize power in 1923, but ended up in jail. His political philosophy, Nazism, is extreme. After coming to power, Hitler put a series of anti-Jewish laws into place.



Joseph Stalin – Soviet Union

Stalin became leader of the Soviet Union in 1924. A dedicated Communist, he was part of the armed revolution that seized power in Russia in 1917. That revolt led to Vladimir Lenin becoming the first leader of the new Soviet Union (USSR); Stalin became the second. The Soviet political system of Communism is the opposite of Germany and Italy's Fascism. However, the Soviets and the Germans signed a non-aggression pact in August 1939, in which they committed not to attack each other.



Benito Mussolini – Italy

In 1922, Mussolini became the youngest prime minister in Italian history. The first Fascist dictator in Europe, he remains leader of the country. He abolished democracy in favour of a one-party state, just as Hitler did in Germany. Opposition parties, trade unions, the free press and freedom of speech are banned. A network of spies and secret police are in operation across Italy. In 1937, Mussolini led Italy into an anti-Communist pact started by the Nazis. From this point on, Italy and Germany have been close allies.



Map of Europe 1940



Countries Hitler has seized

- 1. Poland
- 2. Denmark
- 3. Norway
- 4. Netherlands
- 5. Belgium

Allied Powers

- 6. France
- 7. Great Britain
- British Commonwealth (not shown on map)

Axis Powers

- 8. Germany
- 9. Italy
- Japan (not shown on map)

Neville Chamberlain – Great Britain

Prime Minister of Britain from 1937 to 1940, Chamberlain is a Conservative politician. On three occasions in September 1938, he visited Germany to try and prevent the outbreak of a European war over Hitler's demand that Czechoslovakia give its Sudetenland region to Germany. In the Munich Agreement of 30 September, Chamberlain and the French PM agreed to most of Hitler's demands and left Czechoslovakia defenceless. But he was greeted as a hero on his return to Britain, talking of "peace in our time." However, Chamberlain quickly ordered an expansion of the British military in case of war.



London hit by worst Blitz blasts

11 May 1941

LONDON is recovering after the worst wave of Nazi air raids yet killed hundreds of people yesterday.

Parliament's House of Commons, where MPs meet to make laws for the country, has been destroyed. Across the road, Westminster Abbey was also damaged. The attacks started thousands of fires across the capital.

Early estimates suggest that more than a thousand people have lost their lives.

The Germans have now carried out dozens of raids on London. Other cities like Liverpool, Birmingham and Plymouth have also been hit badly.

There is now a massive effort to rebuild the parts of the UK's capital city that have been worst hit.

The Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defence (WVS), which was set up by Home Secretary Samuel Hoare to deal with air raids, is thought to have almost one million members. More and more women are signing up every week to help with the clean-up.

Many residents are struggling to get around in London, as roads and railway lines need to be cleared and repaired.

Some officials, however, are hopeful that this may be one of the final attacks after a surge of Nazi bombings on Britain. This is because there are fewer air raids now compared to recent months. Sources close to Hitler's government say that the German leader is beginning to believe his strategy for Britain's skies isn't working.

The Government is said to have handed out 50 million gas masks to people living in Britain to deal with the threat of a potential gas attack.



St Paul's Cathedral seen through the rubble of yesterday's bombings

Tobruk finally taken by Allies

28 November 1941

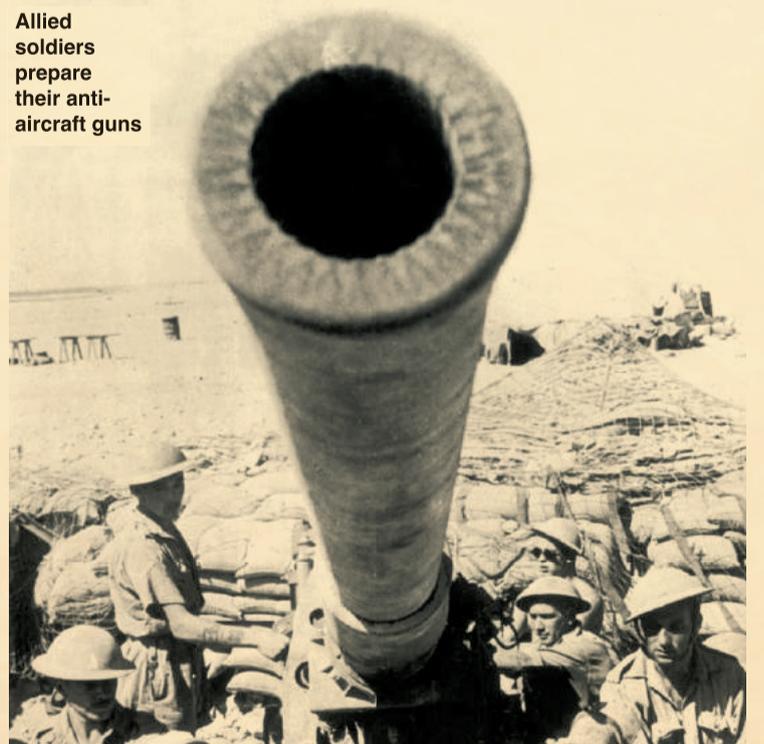
TROOPS from Britain and Poland have successfully seized the North African port of Tobruk from the grasp of the Nazis.

In a mission called Operation Crusader, UK commander General Claude Auchinleck led his men to take control of Tobruk, a coastal town in Libya. It is the latest success of the war in North Africa, where battles have raged for months.

Three months ago, the Allies thought they would be defeated, so the Australian government ordered their forces to withdraw. They were replaced by Polish soldiers, as well as more Brits.

Asked how Britain ended the 241-day battle in Tobruk, a UK intelligence source revealed: "The Italians appear to have been somewhat in the dark as to their actual objectives. The method of co-ordination by means of German liaison officers working with Italian units has not been successful."

Allied soldiers prepare their anti-aircraft guns





Models have been trying out new clothes that use less fabric

Rationing reaches clothes and fabric

2 June 1941

RATIONING was extended from essential food items to clothes yesterday.

The Government says the move will make things more fair and reduce unnecessary spending. Fewer coupons are needed when picking up clothes for children, because less fabric has been used and kids need new clothes more often than grown-ups.

A new campaign – 'Make Do and Mend' – will suggest cheap ways to fix clothes. Supporting posters say that the rationing project will help Britain win the war against Hitler's Nazis. However, critics have asked what ministers will start to ration next.

Many Russian soldiers surrendered yesterday



Germany attacks Russia

The Nazi-Soviet peace deal is over

23 June 1941

THREE million German soldiers started to invade Russia yesterday.

Thousands of surprised Russian troops were killed by Nazi soldiers, according to witnesses in the area. The operation – called 'Barbarossa' by German leaders – started when bombs were dropped on parts of Poland that are currently controlled by Russia. A ground invasion followed hours later.

Although this part of Hitler's strategy has been discussed in recent weeks, military sources say that the Russians were unprepared for an attack so soon. It follows a peace deal between Germany and Russia signed less than two years ago, just days before the start of the war. The agreement has now been broken.

The attempt by Hitler's Nazi Germany to march further into Eastern Europe shows that his invasion plan is split into two parts. While fighting with the Russians in the East, the Germans' battle against Britain and France will continue in the West.

Despite yesterday's unexpected start to the Nazi-Soviet conflict, Russia's leaders have been doing their best to get ready for war with the Nazis.

"War with Germany is inevitable," leader Joseph Stalin said in the country's capital city, Moscow, last month. Last night, the Russians were said to be trying to move as many troops as possible to stop Hitler's forces from taking control.



Nazi soldiers play around with a statue of Stalin

Japan attacks USA

8 December 1941

JAPAN has carried out a surprise aerial attack on a US naval base at Pearl Harbor in Oahu, Hawaii.



No declaration of war or warning about the attack was given to the Americans.

The first Japanese dive bomber appeared just before 8am. Another 200 planes in two separate attack waves followed – among them were torpedo planes and bombers, all of which had been based on six aircraft carriers in the Pacific. Submarines were also involved in the attack. Several navy vessels of the US Pacific Fleet were anchored in the harbour at the time, and many were unmanned.

The battleship USS Arizona was bombed and later sank. Over 1,000 officers and crew members are thought to have died. The USS Oklahoma suffered five torpedo strikes and capsized. These battleships were not the only Japanese targets – within two hours of the attack starting, five battleships had been sunk, another 16 damaged, three cruisers and three destroyers were damaged and 188 aircraft parked at the nearby Naval Air Station were destroyed. These are early figures and it is highly likely that more vessels were attacked.

Victims

Civilians were also caught up in the Japanese raid. It is believed there were almost 70 deaths on top of the 2,000 members of the US military who died and over 1,000 who were injured. At least two

Japanese planes were shot down.

America takes action

The Japanese High Command later announced that, from dawn yesterday, Japan was in a state of war with Britain and the US. A British gunboat was later sunk at Shanghai, China, which is under Japanese occupation. President Roosevelt has ordered the US army and navy into action.

Although the attack came as a surprise, relations between the US and Japan have been worsening for years. In December 1937, Japanese aircraft

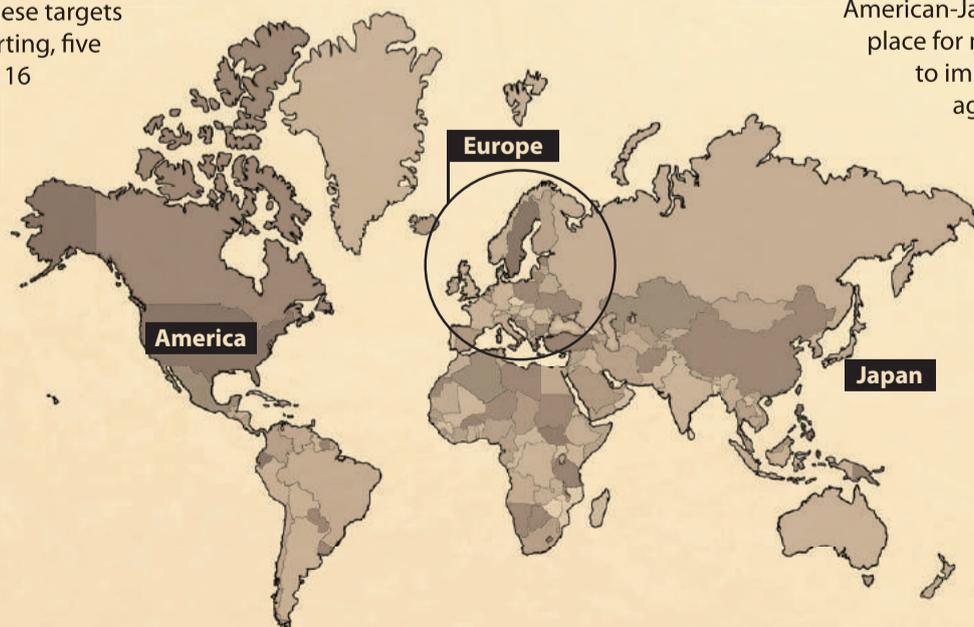
attacked an American gunboat off the coast of China. They claimed it was a mistake and issued an apology that President Roosevelt accepted.

Japan has also been involved in a long and bloody war with China since 1937, and in 1940 the Japanese military invaded French Indochina to prevent vital supplies reaching China. In response to this move, the Americans stopped trading machinery, military equipment and aircraft fuel with Japan. Earlier this year, President Roosevelt increased the US military presence in the Philippines.

Failed talks

American-Japanese negotiations had been taking place for most of this year, in an attempt to improve relations and halt Japan's aggression towards China and other Asian nations. The last peace proposal from the Americans was sent to Japan on 26 November, calling for the complete withdrawal of Japanese troops from China and French Indochina. The strike on Pearl Harbor yesterday suggests that the Japanese are no longer interested in negotiating.

The US Congress is expected to approve a declaration of war today, bringing the Americans into this second global war.



Animal heroes

Pandas go to the country

4 September 1939

LONDON Zoo was closed at 11am yesterday by order of the Government, along with all other public places where people gather in large numbers.

The zoo has been preparing for war for some time. Last week, some of the zoo's most valuable animals were transferred to Whipsnade for safety, including two giant pandas, two orangutans, four chimpanzees, three Asian elephants and an ostrich.

All the venomous animals were killed humanely to remove the possibility of having dangerous animals escape if the zoo is bombed.

However, some reptiles have been saved, among them the Komodo dragon and Chinese alligators. Two large wooden boxes were built for a pair of huge pythons.

The war is expected to bring shortages of many things, like fuel and food. To save on petrol, camels and llamas will be used to carry fodder across the zoo to the animal houses.

An appeal is being broadcast on the radio asking people to gather acorns to help feed some animals like agoutis, squirrels, monkeys and deer.

Sad goodbye to pets

10 September 1939

DURING the first week of the war, thousands of people have had their pets put to sleep by vets.

The pet owners think it is the right thing to do. They have said they were worried about having enough food for them.

They spoke of concerns, too, that their pets would become contaminated by mustard gas or hysterical at the sound of sirens and explosions, and run wild through the streets.

A zebra crossing (the road)!

28 September 1940

A ZEBRA has been caught after going on the run in London.

The animal escaped with a donkey and her foal after several bombs fell on London Zoo yesterday. Luckily, there were no injuries to any animal.

The pigeon that saved an RAF bomber crew

25 February 1942

WINKIE, a carrier pigeon, has saved a crew after they ditched into the North Sea two days ago.

The RAF crew were returning from a mission over Norway but their Beaufort bomber had been hit by enemy fire and crashed into the sea more than 100 miles from home.

The four men thought they would die but they managed to release their secret weapon – a carrier pigeon called Winkie. Winkie was set free in the hope that she could fly home and alert the air base about what had happened.

After flying 120 miles, Winkie made it home. She was exhausted and covered in oil. Owner George Ross immediately informed RAF Leuchars in Fife.

A rescue team set off and found the crew within 15 minutes.

Winkie has become the toast of the air base, with a dinner held in her honour.



Medals for hero animals

1943

MARIA Dickin CBE, founder of animal charity the PDSA, says animals should also get medals for their war actions.

Maria says she is aware of the incredible bravery displayed by animals on active service and on the Home Front.

Announcing her special medal for animals in war, she said: "I am inspired by the animals' devotion to man and duty."

The Dickin Medal is a large, bronze medallion bearing the words "For Gallantry" and "We Also Serve", all within a laurel wreath. The ribbon is striped green, dark brown and pale blue, representing water, earth and air to symbolise the naval, land and air forces.



Maria Dickin



Irma was given the Dickin Medal for rescuing people

Meet Rob the parachuting dog!

22 January 1945

A PARACHUTING collie dog called Rob has been awarded the PDSA Dickin medal.

Rob took part in landings during the North African Campaign with an infantry unit. He later served with a Special Air Unit in Italy as patrol and guard dog for small units hiding in enemy territory.

Those who awarded Rob the medal said: "His presence with these parties saved many of them from discovery and subsequent capture or destruction. Rob made over 20 parachute descents."



Japan captures Singapore

16 February 1942

THE British armed forces on Singapore were forced to surrender to invading Japanese soldiers yesterday.

Around 100,000 Allied troops, including Australian and Indian servicemen, were captured, even though the base was thought to be invincible. The naval fort's huge guns would be deadly to any attacking ships, but the Japanese took the island by surprise when they stormed the base from the unprotected landward side rather than approaching by sea.

The advancing Japanese troops gradually split the Allied forces into small units, reducing their ability to defend the island. A lack of supplies and the large number of Japanese enemies eventually forced the Allies to surrender.

Singapore is a crucial island in the Pacific because it gives control of the major sea route from Japan to India and Africa.



Tamil workers clear up after a Japanese bombing raid last month



Volunteers preparing to help in the defence of Singapore from invading Japanese forces

US victorious in the Battle of Midway

5 June 1942

THE war in the Pacific turned in the Allies' favour yesterday, when US bombers sank four Japanese aircraft carriers and destroyed nearly 300 aircraft.



Dauntless dive bombers from the USS Hornet prepare to attack the Japanese cruiser Mikuma



Torpedo bombers on the decks of the USS Enterprise prepare to launch attacks against Japanese aircraft carriers

Most of the Japanese naval fleet had planned to attack the US-controlled island of Midway, which gets its name from the fact that it sits halfway across the Pacific between America and Asia. Its position means that it is useful to refuel and repair ships and planes operating in the Pacific.

Thankfully, Japanese plans broadcast over the radio were decoded by US forces. This meant that they were able to plan for the Japanese attack and wait in ambush, even though the Americans were greatly outnumbered.

At first, it seemed like Midway would fall to the Japanese, after they successfully bombed the forces on the island and fought off an American attack on their ships. However, dive-bombers from the USS Enterprise found a gap in Japan's defences and managed to sink the aircraft carriers Kaga and Akagi within a few minutes of each other. Two more Japanese aircraft carriers were sunk within the next few hours.

The Americans also suffered some losses, including one aircraft carrier plus around 100 men and 130 aircraft.

Rommel forced back from El Alamein

12 November 1942

THE German armoured divisions commanded by Field Marshal Erwin Rommel have been pushed back after more than two weeks of fighting near the Egyptian city of El Alamein.

The British Eighth Army controlled by Lieutenant-General Bernard Montgomery managed to punch a hole in the German minefields and attack their defences. Many other Allied nations were involved in the attack, including those from Australia, New Zealand and India.



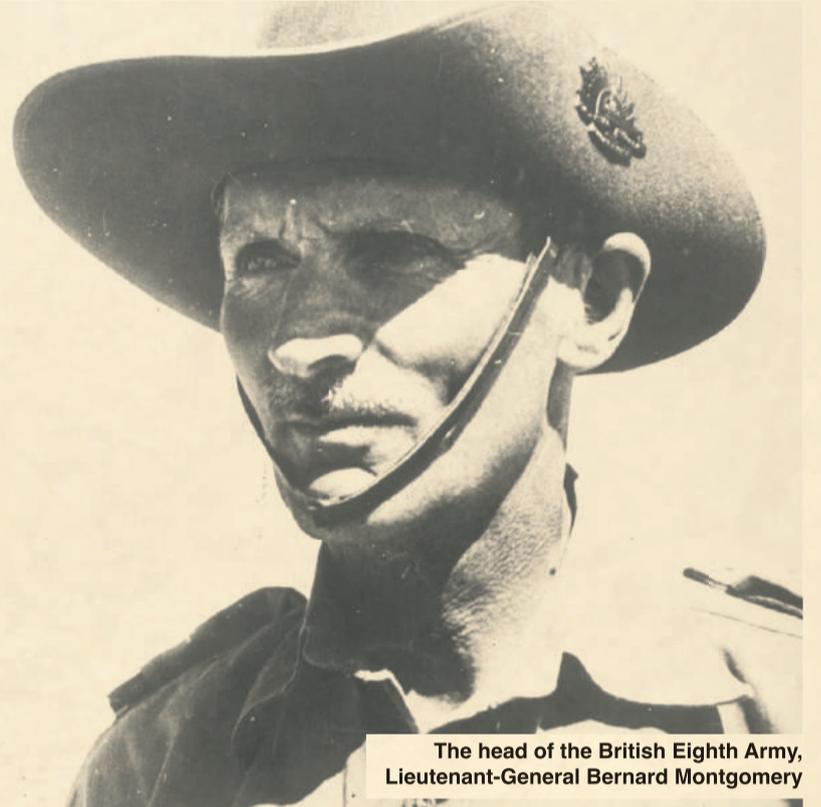
Allied tanks chase Rommel's forces through the desert



German commander Erwin Rommel (left)

Although outnumbered, Rommel has built up a reputation as a skilled tactician because of the large number of victories he has had over the Allies. His complicated defences of deep minefields helped to slow down the Allied advance, but the last few days have seen Rommel's forces suffer heavy losses and they have been forced to retreat. Attacks on German supply ships in the Mediterranean have also been starving Rommel's army of petrol and other crucial supplies.

The battle for control of North Africa is important because the vital shipping route of the Suez Canal is nearby, as well as the major oil fields of the Middle East.



The head of the British Eighth Army, Lieutenant-General Bernard Montgomery

Jewish prisoners arriving at Auschwitz



Nazis carrying out "mass executions"

18 December 1942

THE House of Commons has been told about the large numbers of Jews being killed by the Nazis in eastern Europe.

Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden spoke in Parliament about the mass executions being carried out in the German-occupied parts of Europe.

Eden said that hundreds of thousands of Jews were being killed or taken to labour camps, and that the sick or injured are often left to die.

He also read out a declaration from the 'united nations' of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Luxembourg, the

Netherlands, Norway, Poland, the United States, the UK, the USSR, Yugoslavia and the French National Committee. It made clear how horrified these countries are with the "cold-blooded extermination" being carried out by Germany.

Reports from the Polish government and other sources have revealed information about the killings. These are happening in places such as the Auschwitz camp in what used to be southern Poland before the Germans invaded.



Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden in Westminster

Loose Lips
Sink Ships



657-448-014

WIGHT SINK SHIPS

694

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3 February 1943



Germany defeated in Russian city

GERMAN forces surrendered at the Russian river port of Stalingrad yesterday, in the country's biggest setback of the war so far.

Germany's 6th Army was beaten in southern Russia after five months of fierce battles in the city of Stalingrad. Many soldiers on both sides are thought to have lost their lives.

In a statement, the Russian government said yesterday: "Our forces have now completed the liquidation of the German Fascist troops encircled in the area of Stalingrad. The last centre of enemy

resistance in the Stalingrad area has thus been crushed."

45,000 German troops have reportedly been taken prisoner by Russian forces.

The German attack on Stalingrad started in August last year. The city is important to Russia because it is a key part in its defences from invasion. It is also named after the country's leader, Joseph Stalin.

Britain and India battle on in Burma

4 January 1943

ALLIED forces are continuing their fight against Japan in Burma – one year after the campaign there began.

The battle lines are incredibly close together, with some fights taking place over a single tennis court in northern Burma.

Thousands of troops have been killed over the past 12 months, as Britain and India took on the Nazi-supporting Japanese forces. The Allies have recently struggled to take control of the fight.

There is no sign of the conflict ending in the region any time soon.



Axis soldiers kicked out of Africa

14 May 1943

THE Nazi regime has been forced to surrender in Tunisia, after nearly three years of violent battles in North Africa.

Allied commanders are praising the work of troops, who fought a long campaign in the hot desert. Hundreds of thousands of people have been hurt or killed in the region since war first arrived there in June 1940.

Just a few days ago, British and American forces seized control of two key Tunisian cities. This was a massive blow to the Axis powers – made up mainly of Germany, Italy and Japan – who are attempting to take over the world.

The breakthrough follows the takeover of neighbouring country Libya earlier this year. North Africa is no longer in Italy's grasp. Italy's mainland is now in the sights of Allied forces trying to take the upper hand in the war.



Britain begins Italy invasion

4 September 1943

ALLIED troops arrived on Italian soil yesterday, attempting to take control from the enemy.

British and Canadian forces reached southern Italy and continued to march forward. They had been expecting to see mines and barbed wire in their path, but very little was found.

Italy has been overrun by Nazi forces, with reports from the German high command suggesting that their soldiers are set to take over key Italian bases and defence points.

Yesterday – four years to the day since war was declared on Germany – was an important day in the Allied campaign against the Germans. British soldiers used amphibious vehicles, known as 'ducks' due to their ability to travel on land and water.

The campaign will see the Allies try to stop Italy from helping the enemy in the war, while also trying to break the Nazi influence over the country.

British commander General Sir Bernard Montgomery is hopeful of victory. He told the BBC: "We have a good plan and air support on a greater scale than we have ever had before. There can only be one end to this next battle, and that is another success. Forward to victory! Let us knock Italy out of the war."



Brits win key Italy battle



The ruins of Monte Cassino abbey are now controlled by the Allies

19 May 1944

ALLIED troops have made a major breakthrough on their tough journey to the Italian capital of Rome.

As one of Germany's key allies, Italy has backed Hitler's invasion programme. The Nazi regime now practically rules over Italy.

After the bombing of the historic Monte Cassino abbey in Italy in February, fierce battles have taken place almost every day across a 20-mile stretch. The abbey had first been built in the year 529, and its remains were quickly used as defences by desperate Italian troops.

Yesterday, after 123 days of fighting, Hitler's generals ordered their forces to retreat. Allied troops will now continue their battle to control the country. They have around 87 miles left before they reach Rome.

British troops worked with soldiers from

America, France, Australia, Canada and a number of other countries.

240,000 Allied troops outnumbered an Axis force of fewer than 140,000 soldiers. However, more than 50,000 Allies were injured or killed – many more than the casualty count of the Italians and Germans.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill was furious about the Allies' arrival in Italy, which did not go as well as he hoped. "Instead of hurling a wildcat ashore, all we got was a stranded whale," he said.

It is not known what lies ahead on the rest of the road to Rome – but military officials do not believe that anything as tough as the battle of the Monte Cassino ruins is in store.



FDR, 62, has put his name in the history books

Fourth term for Roosevelt

8 November 1944

PRESIDENT Franklin D Roosevelt became the first US leader to win a fourth election in a row last night.

FDR, a Democrat politician, beat his Republican rival, Thomas E Dewey, by more than three million votes.

Roosevelt had already made history when he won a third term in power four years ago. No other president has done that before. Since becoming the 32nd President of the United States in 1933, he has remained popular with the American people.

Unconfirmed reports of the American President's poor health failed to stop voters from backing him in the polling booths. Roosevelt's candidate for Vice President during the campaign, Harry S Truman, has also proved popular.

USA frees island from Japan

11 August 1944

AMERICAN soldiers have regained control of the island of Guam.

After a 21-day conflict, the USA successfully toppled the Japanese, who invaded less than three years ago. Between the two sides, it is thought that around 20,000 men lost their lives.

Before the war, Guam had been controlled by the United States since 1898. It is 6,227 miles away from America, but just 1,623 miles from the Japanese mainland.

Japan seized the island just hours after its attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, which killed more than 2,000 Americans.

With high cliffs and strong waves, the retaking of Guam was no mean feat for US military chiefs. However, at sunrise on 21 July the Americans began their land operation. The Japanese fought back, but they were outnumbered.

US planners feared that the tough terrain around Guam would make it difficult to drop vital supplies off to their country's troops. Another big problem they faced was that the Japanese troops know the island very well.

"We can lie here absolutely breathless listening to the slightest sounds and not see anything – in fact, not hear anything – and then we wake up and find that they're all around us," one Marine explained recently. "We lost quite a few people in our unit. A very popular captain was killed."



The American flag has been raised on Guam

Baltic battles see Russia return

25 November 1944

TWO months of fighting between Germany and Russia in the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania ended yesterday.

Russia has regained control of the region after pulling back in February.

Although the Nazi reaction to Russia's Baltic Offensive was strong at first, the Germans had only around half the number of troops in the region as the Soviets.

A series of fierce battles since September have seen the Russians push back the Germans, who first attempted to seize land from Russia in 1941. More than two million men were involved in the last front of violence to hit Europe.

Tens of thousands of troops have been killed in these three Baltic countries over the past few months. Around 200,000 German soldiers are said to have been taken prisoner by the Russian Red Army.



Some Estonian women hugged Red Army troops when they arrived

D-Day: the turning point of war?

More than 150,000 troops have landed in Normandy

7 June 1944

YESTERDAY the Allied Forces of Britain, America, Canada and France attacked German forces on the coast of Normandy, France.

by editor Nicky Cox

With a huge force of over 150,000 soldiers, the Allies attacked and made some early gains. Commanders hope that it will go down in history as the turning point of World War 2 in Europe.

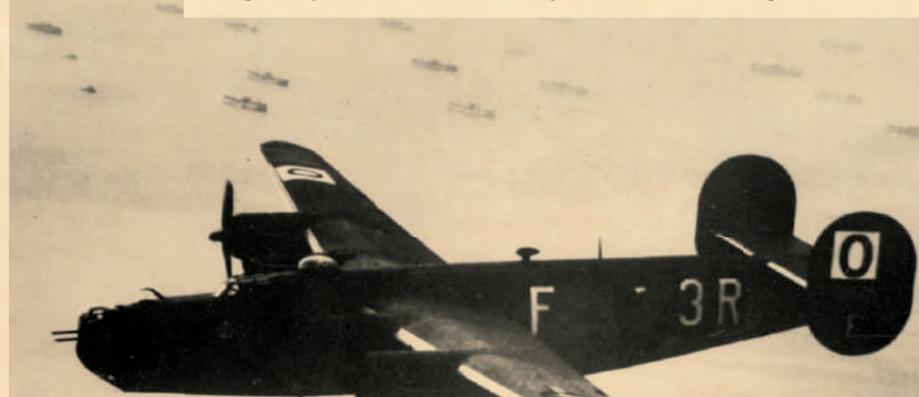
Leading up to the battle

Germany had invaded France and was trying to take over all of Europe, including Britain. However, Britain and the United States had managed to slow down the expanding German forces. They are now able to go on the attack.

To prepare for the invasion, the Allies gathered troops and equipment in Britain. They also increased the number of air strikes and bombings in German territory. Right before the invasion, more than 1,000 bombers a day were hitting German targets. They bombed railroads, bridges, airfields and other strategic places in order to slow down and obstruct the German army.

The Germans knew that an invasion was coming. They could tell by all the forces that were gathering in Britain, as well as by the extra air strikes. What they didn't know was where the Allies would strike. In order to confuse the Germans, the Allies tried to make it look like they were going to attack north of Normandy at Pas de Calais.

Consolidated B24L Liberators of the 832nd Bomb Squadron, 486th Bomb Group, US 8th Air Force, flying from their base at Sudbury, England, pass over the Normandy invasion fleet sailing in the channel



One of the first pictures of the D-Day landings in Normandy, showing US jeeps and men landing on the French coast



American troops of the 4th Infantry Division ('Famous Fourth') land on Utah Beach yesterday as Allied forces storm the Normandy beaches on D-Day



The weather

Although the invasion had been planned for months, it was almost cancelled due to bad weather. The troops needed the light of a full moon to see properly. For this reason there were only a few days during the month when the Allies could attack. So General Eisenhower finally agreed to attack, despite the overcast skies. It tricked the Germans, who thought that no attack was coming. They were unprepared.

The first wave of the attack began with paratroopers. These are soldiers who jump out of planes using parachutes. They jumped at night in the pitch black and landed behind enemy lines. Their job was to destroy key targets and capture bridges in order for the main invasion force to land on the beach. Thousands of dummies were also dropped in order to draw fire and confuse the enemy.

In the next stage of the battle, thousands of planes dropped bombs on German defences. Soon after, warships began to bomb the beaches from the water. While the bombing was going on, members of the French Resistance sabotaged the Germans by cutting telephone lines and destroying railways.



American troops plunge into the water at Utah Beach with their equipment. Bulldozers were used to prepare the beach for the landing parties



Bomber crews of the US Ninth Air Force leave their B26 Marauder aircraft after returning from a mission to support the D-Day landings by disrupting German lines of communication and supply



The Allied commander US General Dwight D Eisenhower was in the UK to give instructions to paratroopers at the beginning of the D-Day operations

The invasion

Soon the main invasion force of more than 6,000 ships carrying troops, weapons, tanks, and equipment approached the beaches of Normandy. American troops landed at Omaha and Utah beaches.

The Utah landing was successful, but the fighting at Omaha beach was fierce. Many US soldiers lost their lives at Omaha, but they were finally able to take the beach.

By the end of yesterday, more than 150,000 Allied troops had landed in Normandy. They are pushing their way inland to allow more troops to land over the next few days. Now the Allied troops have arrived, they will hopefully begin to push the Germans out of France.



British soldiers of the Royal Army Medical Corps in France on D-Day

Prison camp horror revealed by Russian troops

28 January 1945

THE hellish conditions inside some German prison camps became clearer this week, when Russian forces invaded the huge Auschwitz camp.

The camp is in Polish territory that was invaded by the Germans, and it is obvious that the Nazis have killed many innocent civilians there.

Troops say that the stench of death coming from Auschwitz can be detected three miles away. It is too soon to know how many prisoners died there, as there are too many dead bodies to count.

For a special report on Auschwitz and other Nazi camps, turn over to p24-25.



The entrance to the Auschwitz camp in Poland

Dresden destroyed by Allies

14 February 1945

DRESDEN was ablaze last night, after RAF bombers dropped hundreds of tons of bombs and incendiary devices (designed to start fires) on the German city.

Air Force chiefs say that Dresden was one of the last remaining cities in Germany not to have been bombed. It is also said to have become a major communications centre for the German army and is home to many factories and their workers.

Waves of Lancaster bombers released their loads mainly over the Altstadt (old town) part of Dresden. This is largely made up of old timber-framed buildings.



The destruction caused in Dresden

Richard Peter/ Deutsche Fotothek

Truman takes over after Roosevelt's death

13 April 1945

THE American President Franklin D. Roosevelt died yesterday, after suffering a brain haemorrhage (burst blood vessel) at his private cottage in Warm Springs.

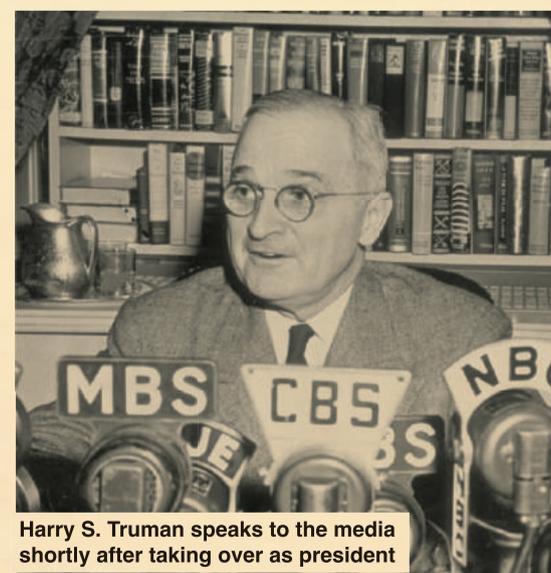


Franklin D. Roosevelt sitting in between Winston Churchill (left) and Russian leader Joseph Stalin

Roosevelt was signing some papers and sitting for a portrait artist at the time. He was in the White House for over 12 years and was just 83 days into his fourth term as President of the United States. He has been one of America's most popular presidents, ever since he took over in 1933 at the height of one of the worst economic periods in the country's history, when a quarter of the workforce was unemployed and two million people were homeless.

FDR, as he was popularly known, is said to have been in poor health for some time, although this was not widely known.

Roosevelt's place as the American leader has been taken by Harry S. Truman, who only started his job as vice president on 20 January.



Harry S. Truman speaks to the media shortly after taking over as president

Hitler dies as Germany surrenders

8 May 1945

THE war in Europe is over at last. Germany has surrendered, although the Nazi leader Adolf Hitler took his own life before he could be captured.



Prisoners of war start their journey out of Berlin

The German army signed a document to declare their surrender yesterday. It appears that Adolf Hitler killed himself several days ago and had given orders for his body to be burnt so that he could not be put on trial or publicly executed.

Russian troops raise their country's flag on top of the Reichstag building in Berlin



The German capital has been devastated by bombing and artillery over recent weeks, but Hitler was hidden away in an underground bunker alongside some of his closest generals.

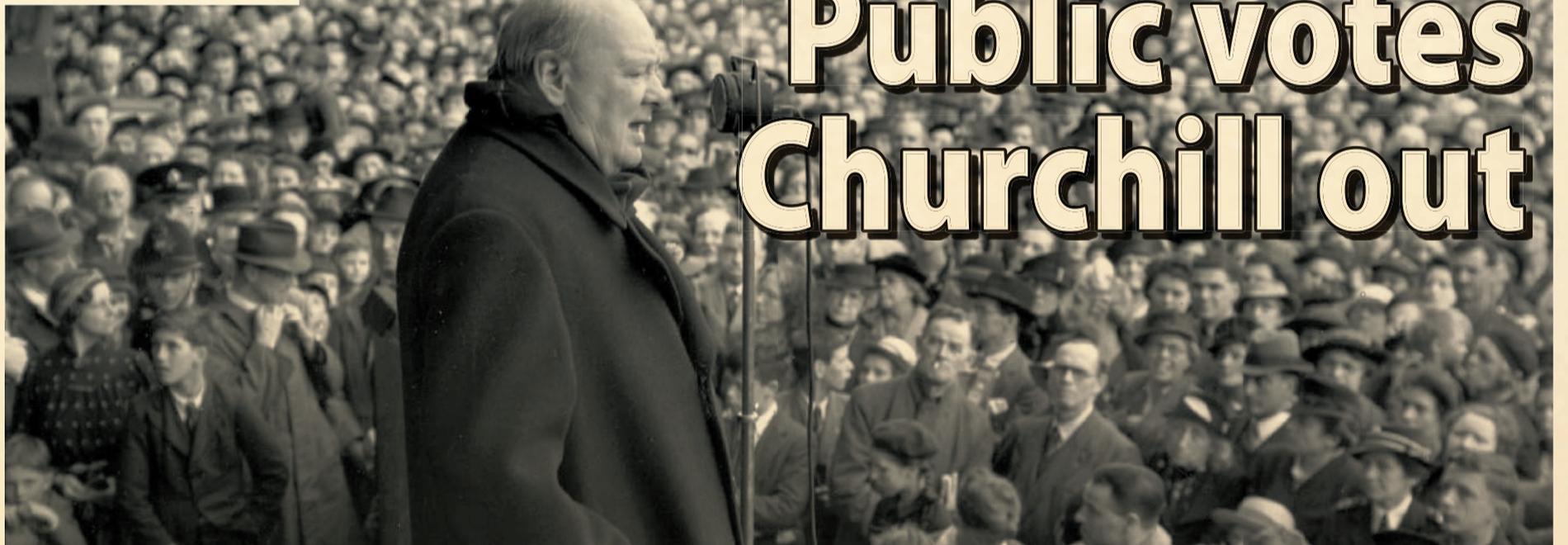
The Russian army reached Berlin before British or American forces, after starting a massive artillery bombardment of the city at the end of April. Although many German soldiers were killed, the Russians suffered very heavy losses in their race to reach the centre.

A crucial battle on the Russians' route into Berlin took place at Halbe, in the forests south of the city. This was where Hitler's army made its last stand, but the Red Army troops proved too strong for the Germans.



General Hans-Jürgen Stumpff of the Luftwaffe, German Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, and Admiral Hans-Georg Von Friedeburg of the German Navy prepare to sign the surrender document in Berlin

Churchill speaks to the public at an election rally earlier this month



Public votes Churchill out

27 July 1945

THE results of the General Election were finally declared yesterday, with Winston Churchill's Conservative Party suffering a huge defeat to the Labour Party.

Although it is only two months since the war in Europe ended, clearly the voters do not think that Churchill is fit to lead the nation in peacetime. Instead, Labour's Clement Attlee will take over as the new Prime Minister.

It took three weeks for the results to be counted, partly due to the large numbers of votes coming from members of the armed forces that are still stationed abroad.

Labour's promise to start a National Health Service and bring in a new housing policy may be part of the reason why Attlee's party did so well.

Although many appreciate Churchill's efforts during wartime, it is possible that voters are reacting to Conservative policies from before the war. Some critics say they didn't do enough to stop Hitler's rise to power.

Clement Attlee, the new Prime Minister, waves to the crowds alongside his wife Violet



Death camps



5 September 1945

THIS week, American troops have shown German people the horrors inside Hitler's concentration camps.

Hitler started to set up concentration camps in 1933 but, at the time, people had no idea he planned to turn them into death camps.

In all, the Nazis set up around 100 camps and they had two uses. Some were concentration camps for prisoners to be used as slave labour in nearby factories. That was bad enough but, during the war, the Nazis

by editor Nicky Cox

used them as death camps for the killing of "undesirables" – mainly Jews.

As the allied armies raced towards final victory, the troops liberated the camps one-by-one, revealing the horrors of the Nazi idea of creating a "pure" society.

5 April 1945: British, American and Allied prisoners of war cheer as their liberators, the 9th Army, move them out of the Nazi camp at Altengradow, Germany

The first camp to be liberated

The first camp to be liberated was in July 1944 when Soviet troops entered Majdanek, a death camp located in Poland two miles from the city of Lublin.

Majdanek was set up by the Nazis in 1941. Hitler's plan for it was the speedy extermination, by gassing, of new arrivals (mostly Jews) brought in from countries including Czechoslovakia, France, Austria, and the Netherlands.

The BBC's Alexander Werth was one of a group of reporters who went inside Majdanek a week after it was liberated.



Thin Polish prisoners of war are deloused before being evacuated from the Nazi prison camp at Dossel

room' was a series of large square concrete structures. The naked were forced from the bath-house into these dark concrete boxes and then, with 200 or 250 people packed into each box, the process of gassing began. In anything from two to ten minutes everybody was dead..."



Jewish women and children getting off the train coaches on arrival in Auschwitz

"My first reaction to Majdanek was a feeling of surprise," he said. "It looked harmless from outside. The place was large; like a whole town of barracks painted a pleasant soft green. We stopped outside a large barrack marked Bad und Desinfektion II. 'This,' somebody said, 'is where large numbers of those arriving at the camp were brought in.'

"Did any of them suspect, while washing themselves after a long journey, what would happen a few minutes later? They were asked to go into the next room. The 'next



Children made to wear striped clothing stand behind a barbed wire fence at the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz

Auschwitz – the most famous camp of all

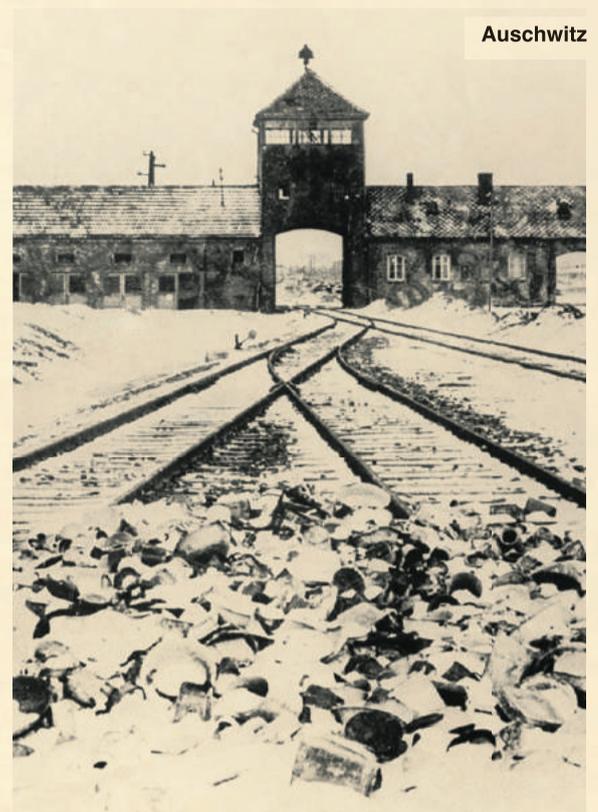
On 27 April 1940, Heinrich Himmler ordered a new camp to be built near Oswiecim, Poland.

The Auschwitz concentration camp (Auschwitz is the German spelling of Oswiecim) quickly became the largest Nazi concentration and death camp. It was made up of three large camps and 45 sub-camps.

Auschwitz II (or Birkenau) was completed in early 1942. Birkenau was built around 1.9 miles away from Auschwitz I and we've found out now that this was the real killing centre of the Auschwitz death camp.



Nazi officers supervise Jews leaving railway trucks during the deportation to the camps in 1941



Auschwitz

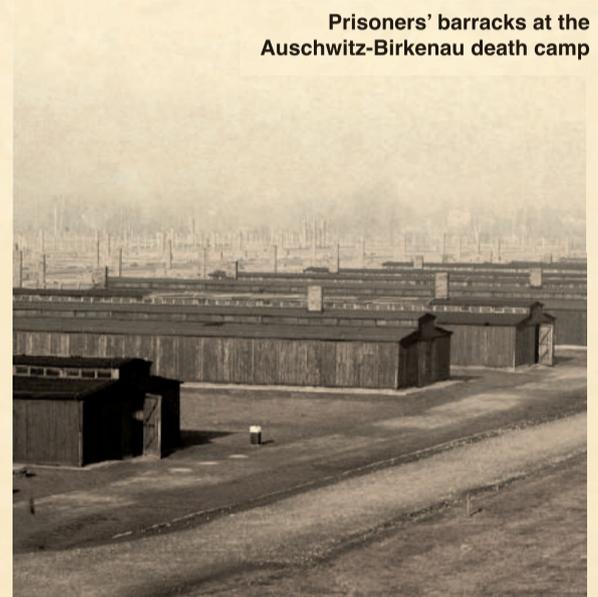


Everyone at Auschwitz was tattooed with a prisoner number to identify them

Medical experiments

Also on the ramp, Nazi doctors would search among the new arrivals for anyone they might want to experiment upon. One of their favourite choices was twins.

At Auschwitz, there was a team of Nazi doctors. One of the most well-known was Dr Josef Mengele. He experimented on identical twins, hoping to find a secret to cloning what Nazis considered the perfect person.



Prisoners' barracks at the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp

Jews, gypsies, and other people the Nazis thought were "undesirable" were captured and sent to Auschwitz. When the trains stopped at Birkenau, the people were told to leave all their belongings on board and were forced to gather on the railway platform, known as "the ramp".

Families were quickly and brutally split up as an SS officer, usually a Nazi doctor, ordered each individual into one of two lines. Most women, children, older men and those that looked unfit or unhealthy, were sent to the left. Most young men and others that looked strong enough to do hard work were sent to the right. They didn't know it at the time, but the right line meant that they would become a prisoner of the camp. The left line meant immediate death at the gas chambers.

The entire mass murder system depended on keeping this secret from its victims. If the victims had known they were headed to their death, they would most definitely have fought back.

Those that had been sent to the right had their heads shaved and were thrown into the cruel, unfair, horrific world of camp life.

The limited amount of food and extremely hard labour meant many prisoners starved to death.



Auschwitz

Freedom

When the Nazis realised that the Russians were pushing their way toward Germany in late 1944, they started destroying evidence of their appalling activities at Auschwitz.

In the middle of January 1945, the Nazis removed the last 58,000 prisoners from Auschwitz and sent them on death marches. The Nazis planned on marching these exhausted prisoners to different camps.

On 27 January 1945, the Russians reached Auschwitz. When they entered the camp, they found 7,650 prisoners who had been left behind. The camp was liberated and these prisoners were now free.

Auschwitz facts

- Auschwitz was the largest of the Nazi camps.
- It was set up in May 1940 and was liberated by the allies on 27 January 1945.
- In all, 1.1 million people died during the four and a half years of Auschwitz's existence. One million of them were Jewish men, women and children.
- More people died in Auschwitz than the British and American losses of World War Two combined.
- Some Jewish prisoners secretly wrote eyewitness accounts of the atrocities of the gas chambers and hid them in bottles buried in the ground. A number of these accounts have since been discovered.

Japan surrenders after atomic bombs destroy cities



Crowds outside Downing Street wave at Prime Minister Clement Attlee after hearing the news that Japan has surrendered

16 August 1945

THE utter devastation caused by two atomic bombs has forced Japan to surrender and finally brought an end to six years of war. (See back page)

Tens of thousands of people are thought to have died in each of the bombings, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Just two extraordinarily powerful weapons did the same damage as waves of hundreds of planes dropping standard bombs.

Allied forces were celebrating victory in Japan yesterday, although an official document of

surrender hasn't been signed yet.

The first bomb was dropped by an American plane over Hiroshima on 6 August, with the Nagasaki bombing following three days later. The Nagasaki bomb came just a day after Russia declared war on Japan, which is also likely to have been a major reason why Japan surrendered.



Soldiers celebrate in the streets of London

The Japanese will now have to stick to the rules laid out in the Potsdam Declaration. This document says that Japan will be restricted to its four major islands and will have to give up any other islands or territory that they have taken over before or during the war.

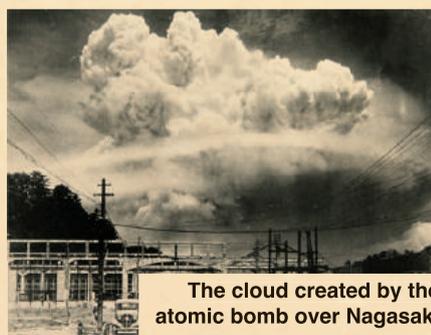
What is an atomic bomb?

THE powerful new weapons dropped on Japan have helped to bring the war to an end, but what are they?

They use standard explosives to start a powerful chain reaction in a small amount of nuclear material, either uranium or plutonium. These substances have very heavy atoms, which means that they can release huge amounts of energy compared to more everyday materials.

When a chain reaction starts, it develops quickly and expands into an explosion many, many times more powerful than even the largest bombs available up to this point.

It is hoped that a controlled version of this chain reaction can be used to produce power for homes and factories, but in an atomic bomb the reaction is allowed to grow and grow.



The cloud created by the atomic bomb over Nagasaki



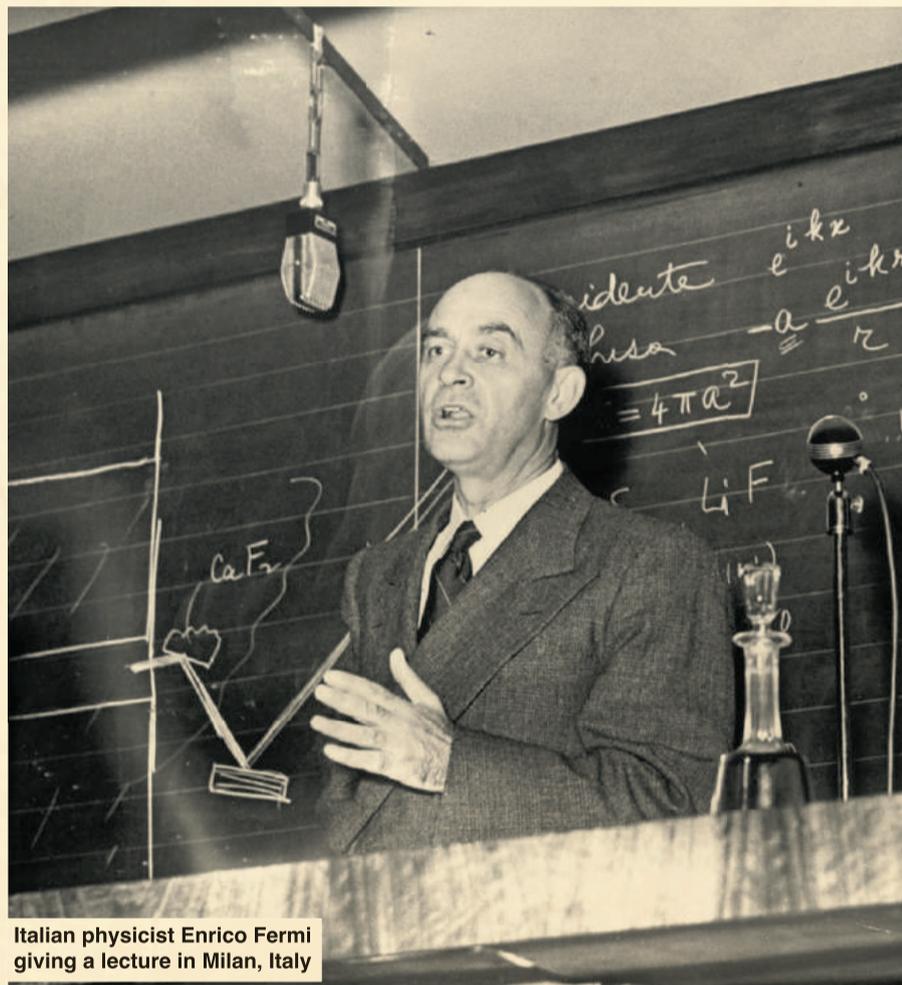
Colonel Paul Tibbets of the US Air Force (centre) poses with ground crew in front of the Enola Gay, the plane that Tibbets piloted to drop the atomic bomb over Hiroshima

Who made them?

TOP scientists from all around the world have contributed to the development of these nuclear weapons, although the research and funding have mostly come from the United States.

It is thought that Germany, Japan and Russia have also been trying to develop atomic weapons. The war could have had a very different outcome if one of our enemies had managed to build an atomic bomb before America did.

Although experts from the UK and Canada have been involved, the famous Italian physicist Enrico Fermi has been the main scientific leader of the atomic project.



Italian physicist Enrico Fermi giving a lecture in Milan, Italy

What did the atomic bombs do?



The blast flattened a huge area of Hiroshima

THE bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki had the power of many thousands of tons of the explosive TNT.

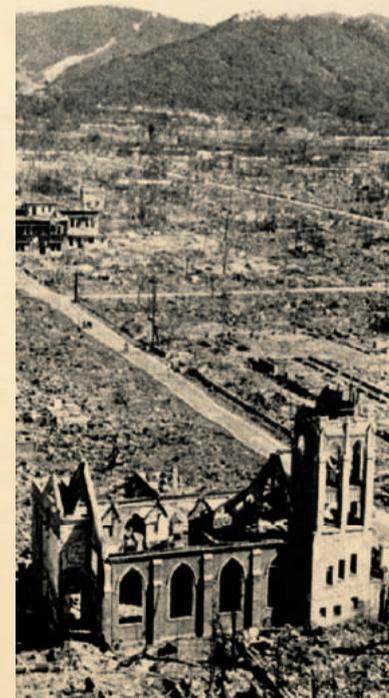
Although both cities are still blanketed with dust and debris, it seems like several square miles of each one was almost completely destroyed. Tens of thousands of people are likely to have been killed in each city. Those in the immediate area will have died instantly.



Most of the weaker or wooden buildings in the area were destroyed immediately, although the burnt-out shells of some large concrete buildings are still standing. This is thought to be due to strengthening included in their designs to defend against earthquakes.

The huge mushroom-like clouds thrown up by the explosions will have dumped harmful 'radioactive' dust across Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which is likely to lead to even more deaths in the weeks to come.

There are already reports of people being burned to death in the explosion or the many fires that started soon afterwards.



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The war is over!

Fall of Japan marks an end to the fighting

16 August 1945

PEOPLE across the world are celebrating an end to almost six years of war.

Yesterday, Japan surrendered to the Allies, days after the Americans dropped two atomic bombs on the country.

US President Harry S. Truman broke the good news at a press conference at the White House at 7pm yesterday.

At midnight, British Prime Minister Clement Attlee confirmed the news to the nation. "The last of our enemies is laid low," he said.

There was joy and celebration around the world yesterday, which has already become known as 'Victory in Japan (VJ) Day'. It follows May's 'Victory in Europe (VE) Day', a national celebration that saw thousands party on the streets of Britain.

Yesterday was also Britain's state opening of Parliament. Thousands of people braved the rain to see King George VI and the Queen driven down the Mall in an open carriage.

Speaking about the Japanese decision to surrender, Emperor Hirohito blamed the "new and most cruel bomb" used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

"Should we continue to fight, it would not only result in the ultimate collapse and obliteration of the Japanese nation but would lead also to the total

extinction of human civilisation," he said.

Victory on the continent

Just three months ago, people in Europe celebrated the end of war on the continent, after Germany surrendered. Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who has since been voted out and replaced by Clement Attlee, broadcast a message to the nation from Number 10.

During the celebrations on 8 May, many people pooled together their ration coupons to have enough to provide food for thousands of street parties across the country. Partygoers used anything they could get their hands on to make decorations.

The Prime Minister's historic announcement about the surrender of Nazi Germany was broadcast around the world to British soldiers.

He gave thanks to God and then went to join the royal family on the balcony of Buckingham Palace. "This is your victory... advance Britannia," he told the crowds.

Just like on VE Day, church bells have been ringing out across the land and churches have been packed with people giving thanks that, after six long years

Ex-Prime Minister Winston Churchill, with members of the War Cabinet, waves to crowds gathered in Whitehall after announcing victory in May



of suffering, victory has finally arrived. Inside the churches there has been a quiet opportunity to reflect on the millions of lives lost.



King George VI waves from the balcony of Buckingham Palace with Queen Elizabeth and Princesses Elizabeth (left) and Margaret

Partying princesses

BRITAIN'S future Queen was among a million people who came out onto the streets to celebrate victory in Europe, it has been reported.

Princess Elizabeth and her younger sister, Margaret, are said to have slipped out of Buckingham Palace to mingle with the masses at May's Trafalgar Square VE Day celebrations.

Earlier in the day, the young princesses waved from the Palace's balcony and greeted crowds outside, as the country celebrated the Prime Minister's announcement of surrender by the Germans.

Later, it is said the girls wanted to join in the party spirit and went out onto the streets in a unique burst of freedom – almost a Cinderella moment in reverse!

Witnesses said the princesses happily did the conga back into Buckingham Palace around 2am.