

*World War Two Events*  
*and Their Significance:*  
*A Class Project*

Researched and written by Eagles Class – 13 Year 6 children who returned to school on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020

Teacher: Mrs Louise Bray

St Mary's Catholic Primary School,  
Lyme Road,  
Axminster,  
Devon,  
EX13 5BE

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## WW2 Events and Their Significance – An Introduction

To many children, World War 2 is “something really bad which happened a long time ago”; many of the plans, attacks, defences, losses and victories are unknown, lost, in the scale of the War. By being able to spend time focussing on specific events and the significance of these, Year 6 children in Eagle class were able to gain a far better understanding of how the War affected people and why it is still significant today.

When researching *Concentration Camps*, Grace was appalled by the persecution of Jews and was able to relate this prejudice to current Black Lives Matter protests and issues sweeping the country. We had in-depth discussions about how persecution still exists but in a different form; the significance of the persecution of the Jewish people opened her eyes to how cruel people can be.

When exploring *Dig for Victory* and *Rationing*, Balraj and Althea made links to the current Coronavirus pandemic and the limitations placed upon shoppers in supermarkets, leading many people to start buying seeds and vegetable plants to be self-sufficient. We talked about how the British people started cooking from scratch rather than buying ready meals and takeaways, using the food which was available and being creative with recipes. Linking this back to WW2, they were able to see how many British people were learning from the past and understanding the challenges faced by 1940s households. The concept of rationing suddenly became more relevant and significant.

On the subject of *Evacuation*, all the pupils thought about how they would feel if they were separated from their families. Many pupils could relate in some way, having to remain socially distanced from loved ones for these past months in order to remain safe.

What was once “something really bad which happened a long time ago” is now something which is more significant and relevant to the children as they make connections with their current lives and freedoms. Researching these events and experiencing a tiny fraction of some of these challenges has meant that they have more appreciation of what World War 2 meant to families and service men and women.

## Conscientious Objectors - by Emanuela

### What were *conscientious objectors*?

Conscientious objectors (who were all men) were people who did not fight in the war either because they were not fit enough or they felt they couldn't fight because of their religion. Instead of fighting they stayed behind and trained to be doctors and nurses or served on the Home Front. When the war was over, about 72,354 people had registered. They also worked in mental hospitals helping the staff.

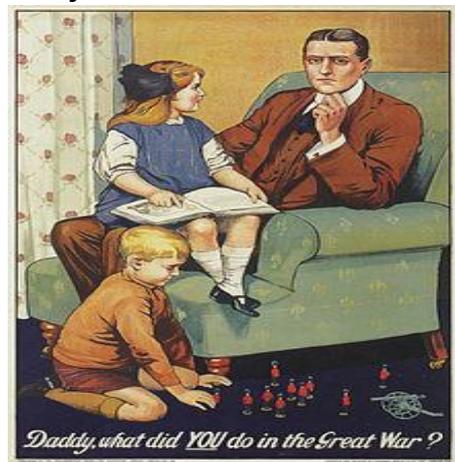


*Some conscientious objectors worked in farms vigorously digging and doing hard smelly work. Forest fires were put out by the conscientious objectors.*

This man worked in a mental hospital instead of fighting on the front line.

### When did conscientious objectors start objecting to fighting in war?

Conscientious objectors have been around for a long time, the first one being a Roman soldier named Maximilianus in the year 295. Conscientious objectors existed in both World War 1 and World War 2. In WW1, conscientious objectors became the target of abuse; they were made to feel guilty for not fighting in the war and supporting their country. Propaganda, with posters like this, attempted to make them feel ashamed. Luckily, in World War 2, they stopped shaming conscientious objectors.



## Why were conscientious objectors significant to WW2?

Conscientious objectors were significant during the war because they worked in mental hospitals caring for patients. Before conscientious objectors worked there, the patients were treated badly and whipped for something they could not control. Conscientious objectors came with love and showed wider society that patients these institutions were people too and deserved more respect and care. From then on, patients were treated much better than before. Men standing up for their beliefs and not being scared in to joining the army was very significant; it has taught us not to give in to pressure when we feel something is wrong.

## *D Day Landings at Normandy - by Lewis*

### What were the D Day Landings?

On D Day – 6<sup>th</sup> June 1944 – the heavily guarded French coastal town of Normandy was invaded by 156,000 British, American, French and Canadian soldiers who 'landed' either from the sea or from the air. The **D** in the name stands for "**day**." There was a countdown, so the **day** before June 6, 1944, was known as **D-1** and the **days** after were **D+1**, **D+2**, **D+** and so on. D Day was the **day** of the day.

### What happened on D Day?

Allied forces launched a combined naval, air and land attack on Nazi-occupied France. British troops parachuted dummies from the sky to distract the Germans patrolling the town so that the real troops could get past unnoticed before soldiers came from ships and attacked a 50-mile section of coast, divided in to code-named areas: Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword. The naval soldiers landed under heavy fire from guns overlooking the beaches, and the shore was mined and covered with obstacles such as wooden stakes, metal tripods, and barbed wire, making it extremely difficult and dangerous for the soldiers to get across the beach alive. It is thought that two and a half thousand soldiers died on the first day of the attack.



### Who was affected by the D Day landings?

People in Britain were affected by the D Day landings even if they didn't actually take part themselves. Workers had been making the aeroplanes, parachutes and weapons; many

families lost loved ones during the attacks. The air, land and naval soldiers were all men and many of them died during the attacks. Residents of Normandy also died during the attacks, as their homes were destroyed throughout the fighting. German casualties are reported to have been between 4,000-9,000 wounded or killed. The D Day landings were a hugely significant event in the war and the ultimate success of Britain during this event affected people all over the world.

## Why it was significant?

It is significant because it was a huge loss of life and it was the turning point of WW2. It was – and still is - the greatest military achievement ever due the depth and scale of the planning and the deceptive techniques employed by Britain (dummy parachutists and inflatable tanks to make the Germans think an attack was coming from a different direction). Many films have been made about the d Day landings; it is important that people remember this event and learn about the sacrifices all the soldiers made.



## Concentration Camps – by Grace

### What was a *concentration camp*?

The term “concentration camp” came from the thought of confining people in one area and “refers to a camp in which people are detained or confined, usually under harsh conditions and without regard to legal norms of arrest and imprisonment that are acceptable in a constitutional democracy” (<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/nazi-camps>). During WW2, this group of confined people were called the Jews.

### Who was affected by concentration camps?

Millions of Jews were sent to concentration camps and at least one million died at Auschwitz alone; millions more perished at Dachau. The leader of the Nazi party (Adolf Hitler) created the camps to kill and torture the Jews to create a perfect community of a blue eyed and blonde haired Aryan race. The majority of prisoners were Jews but in actuality 200,000 different people were also sent. He persecuted: non-Jewish Poles, the mentally challenged, Roma people, homosexuals and Soviet prisoners of war. Mass genocide was committed.

It was a horrible place to be and terrible things happened there that are completely unreasonable. They were forced into gas chambers where they would be killed. Some Jewish children escaped and travelled to England but not all were that lucky.



*Jewish prisoners*

## When where concentration camps used?

1933 was the start of concentration camps; 1.3 million lives were sent to the biggest camp (Auschwitz) and unfortunately 1.2 million of those lives were lost. There were 8 concentration camps: Arbeitsdorf, Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, Dachau, Flossenbürg, Gross-Rosen and Herzogschenbu. They were mainly in Germany and one in Poland. Concentration camps ended on 1945.

## What happened in the camps?

The term concentration camp can be used to describe places of imprisonment and murder under the Nazi regime; however, not all sites established by the Nazis were concentration camps. There were concentration camps (for the imprisonment of civilians seen as enemies of Germany), forced-labour camps, prisoner-of-war camps and killing centers (There were 5 killing centers for the murder primarily of Jews).



*Prisoners in a forced-labour camp*

## Why were concentration camps a significant aspect of World War Two?

The use of concentration camps was not one specific event in World War Two, but a horrific time when many innocent people were persecuted and killed because of Hitler's prejudice. The significance of this persecution and genocide is very significant today and must not be forgotten; even now groups of people are persecuted all over the world due to prejudice and we must learn from the unfairness and horror of the camps so that we do not allow history to repeat itself. Media coverage of the death of George Floyd shows us how persecution still happens and must be stopped.



## Evacuation – by James

### What was *evacuation*?

During WW2, air raids (where bombs were dropped on towns and cities) happened frequently. The Government decided it was not safe for children to live in towns and cities which might be a target and so children were sent away to live in the countryside or villages where it was safer (they thought the Germans would more likely bomb busier places). Even though the families might not have wanted to send their children away to live with strangers, they knew it was the best option for their lives. *Evacuation* was the name given to this process of children leaving. Ladies who were pregnant, or mothers with very small children who couldn't be separated, were also evacuated.



### Travelling

Children said goodbye to their families at the train station and travelled to their new homes. This was on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939, the day that Germany invaded Poland (and two days before Britain declared war on Germany). Over three days, 3,823 special trains carried 1,334,360 schoolchildren and some adults to their new homes. Lots of children arrived in the wrong places and in some areas there were host families that were hard to convince to look after all the children; sometimes siblings were split up because the volunteer families didn't have space for more than one evacuee child. There were strict rules on what children were allowed to take with them to their new homes. Boys were allowed to take two vests, two pairs of pants, one pair of trousers, two pairs of socks, six handkerchiefs and one jumper; girls were allowed one vest, just one pair of knickers, a petticoat, two pairs of tights, six handkerchiefs, one shirt and one cardigan. Children also had to take a coat, a hair brush (or a comb), welly boots, a toothbrush, flannel, towel and soap, boots, trainers and some food for the journey.

## Struggles

There were children who struggled to live with strangers and some of the volunteers didn't really want to have children living with them. It was not just hard for the children and the new families; mothers found it hard to hand their children to someone who they had never met. Sometimes siblings were split up if they couldn't go to a new home together. Volunteer families would come to look at the evacuees and choose children they liked the look of. Host families (the people they were going to live with) haggled over the most presentable children while the sicklier and grubbier children were left until last.

## When did Evacuation end?

World War Two ended in September 1945, however evacuation did not officially end until March 1946 - when it was felt that Britain was no longer under threat from invasion. Surprisingly, even 6 months after the war had ended, there were still over five thousand evacuees living in the countryside with their host families. Many evacuees had returned home long before March 1946 but in April 1945, the Government began to make travel arrangements to return the evacuees to their homes when the war was over. By 12th July 1945, more than 100 trains had brought over fifty thousand evacuees home to London.



Parents and children were delighted and excited to be reunited after all the years apart.

## Why was evacuation a significant event in WW2?

The evacuation of over one million people during World War Two was significant for the protection of the future of England. The Government knew lots of adults would be killed in the war; if the children had died too there would be no one to grow up and be British adults. By moving children to safer areas and protecting them, future generations were protected. Evacuation also showed the lengths families would go to in order to protect their children, even though it was heart-breaking to send them away.

## *The Blitz – by Theo*

### What was *The Blitz*?

*The Blitz* was a series of systematically planned and co-ordinated air attacks, starting with London and then spreading to towns, cities and industrial sites which took place towards the end of the Battle of Britain in 1940. From 7 September 1940, London was bombed by the German Air Force (known as the *Luftwaffe*) for 56 of the following 57 days and nights.

This was a tragedy; when the German planes bombed England, lots of buildings, including homes, were destroyed and people lost their lives. When a bombing raid began, a siren would sound so the people would know to go to their bomb shelter for safety.



### What was a bomb shelter?

As you can see, bomb shelters were not very comfortable but were life-saving so civilians had to go in there or they would suffer from the deadly German bombs. The air raids would take place at night, so *blackouts* were put in place; a *blackout* was where no-one was allowed to have any light showing from their home which would attract the attention of the German pilots. The German pilots preferred to attack at night so they could not be seen and attacked back.



## What was life like in *The Blitz*?

Life was hard in The Blitz. Some people had to sleep in air raid shelters or they would use the London underground as a bomb shelter (which was not very comfortable but was considered safe as it was, and still is, deep below ground). The government tried to keep people coming into the underground.

## Why was *The Blitz* a significant event in World War Two?

The Blitz was a significant event because it followed Germany's failed attempt to win control of the sky during the Battle of Britain. 43,000 British people died and over 100,000 were injured during the Blitz but it did not stop Britain fighting strongly. The failure of the Luftwaffe to dominate the sky meant that Germany could not invade England.

## *The Bombing of Pearl Harbour– by Oscar*

### What was the Bombing of Pearl Harbour?

Pearl Harbour was a naval base in Honolulu, Hawaii where battleships, cruisers, destroyers and anti-aircraft training ships were stationed during WW2. The Japanese pilots flew 4000 miles from Japan to Pearl Harbour; the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service attacked early in the morning of 7<sup>th</sup> December 1941. This attack led to America officially joining WW2 the very next day. Japan attacked the harbour in the hope that it would prevent the USA from joining with Great Britain to retaliate against Germany but it had the opposite effect. 353 Imperial Japanese aircraft launched bombs on Pearl Harbour.



### Who was affected by the bombing?

There were fewer than 100 hundred Japanese casualties but over two thousand American citizens died. 18 US warships and 188 Aircrafts were destroyed; 2403 servicemen or women died. It is not just the Japanese and American troops present on the day which were affected; ultimately the whole of America was affected as the country joined the war the very next day and were heavily involved throughout until the end.

### What was the significance of the Pearl Harbour bombing?

In February of 1941, Winston Churchill acknowledged the impact of US troops in securing victory in the First World War, and emphasised that Great Britain did not need American soldiers on the ground in WW2. Instead, he asked only for the supplies and equipment he believed Britain needed, and asked the USA to 'give us the tools and we will finish the job'. The bombing of Pearl Harbour was of great significance because it sparked America's immediate decision to join with Great Britain. Churchill had said that if the United States become involved in a war with Japan, that Britain would soon follow and join them. As a result of this, and of the Japanese attacks on other targets, Britain also declared war on Japan. Germany and Italy responded with declarations of war on the United States, and the US fought back. The war had now become a global one with mighty armies on both sides.

## *The Battle of Britain - by Jasmine*

### What was *The Battle of Britain*?

Adolf Hitler had hoped to invade Britain; in order to do that he needed mastery of the skies and to destroy Britain's RAF. Throughout the summer of 1940, wave after wave of bombers attacked British airfields accompanied by fighter escorts. The British RAF responded with Hurricane and Spitfire planes to defend our skies. When it was all over, the Germans (Nazis) realised the RAF couldn't be beaten and Hitler then turned his attention away from invading Britain and turned towards Russia instead.



### When did the Battle of Britain start and end?

The Battle of Britain started on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 1940 and ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 1940.

### Who was affected by the Battle of Britain?

Nearly 3,000 men of the RAF took part in the Battle of Britain – those who Winston Churchill called 'The Few'. While most of the pilots were British, Fighter Command was an international force. Men came from all over the Commonwealth and occupied Europe – from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Belgium, France, Poland and Czechoslovakia. There were even some pilots from the United States and Ireland. From an estimated crew of 3,000, only around half survived the four-month battle. 544 Fighter Command pilots and crew were among the dead, as were more than 700 from Bomber Command and nearly 300 from Coastal Command. As well as pilots, the British people were also badly affected as their towns and homes got bombed.



## What was the significance of the Battle of Britain?

The Battle of Britain was the first major campaign to be fought entirely by air forces, and was also the largest and most sustained aerial bombing campaign to that date. The Battle of Britain marked the first defeat of Hitler's military forces.

## *The bombing of Saint Paul's Cathedral - by Poppy*

### When did the bombing of Saint Paul's Cathedral happen?

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War in 1940, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of December (which was the time of the Blitz), a place called Saint Paul's Cathedral was bombed in the City of London by the Nazis (who were German soldiers). The bombings happened in the year 1940 so this year - the year 2020 - marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombings of Saint Paul's Cathedral.



*Saint Paul's Cathedral whilst on fire from the bomb*

### Winston Churchill's instructions

At the time, Winston Churchill -who was the Prime minister- announced that Saint Paul's must be protected at all costs as it was an iconic landmark in the city of London. This landmark was built in the June 1675 and was completed in 1711.

### About the bombing

During WW2, Saint Paul's Cathedral was an inspiration to the British people of that time. There were such people called Saint Paul's Fire Watch who would protect the Cathedral at all costs from fire. At one point, the Fire Watch had to pull an unexploded bomb out from the roof of the Cathedral at a great risk to the Cathedral and the people nearby at the time. The bombing of Saint Paul's Cathedral was also known as *the second Great Fire of London* as it was not just Saint Paul's Cathedral which was damaged; it was also banks, offices, churches and homes that were under threat from the bombings that the Nazis had ordered to fire.

# The water supply

At the time, water was in very short supply as the bombings had destroyed most of the pipes transferring water; this made it hard to put out any fires. It was extremely fortunate that Saint Paul's did not have a major fire. The Fire Watch were told to patrol the corridors of the Cathedral with buckets of water and sandbags so they could immediately put out any small fires they saw, before they spread and caused too much damage.

# How Saint Paul's survived

After a bomb had been dropped on the top of the dome of Saint Paul's, it fell off of the roof and onto an area called the Stone Gallery. Luckily for the Cathedral, in that particular area there were sandbags covering the floor which prevented the bomb from causing any damage to the iconic landmark.

# A quote from a fireman that night

Fireman Sam Chauveau was on duty that night and was recorded as saying "By the time we finished tackling the fires on the roof of the Exchange, the sky, which was ebony black when we first got up there, was now changing to a yellowy orange colour. It looked like there was an enormous circle of fire, including Saint Paul's Churchyard."



# Why were the bombings of saint Paul's cathedral significant during WW2?

Saint Paul's Cathedral was significant during WW2 because it became an inspiration to all of the British people – it would not be defeated. Also, when Saint Paul's was caught in the smoke and fire of the war, it became a symbol of the fight that they would not give up even when something hard hit them. Churchill's desire to protect the monument was seen as: Protect the monument, protect the Country.

## *The Queen joining the Army - by Millie*

As the Second World War raged, Princess Elizabeth rallied to the cause and enlisted in the military, helping boost the morale of the British people, after months of begging her father to let her. Elizabeth (who was only 18 years old at the time) joined the Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) during World War 2. Princess Elizabeth Windsor donned a pair of coveralls and trained in London as a mechanic and military truck driver.



### Elizabeth led a very sheltered life up until WW2.

When Elizabeth was born in April 1926, she wasn't destined for the throne. Her father Albert, known as "Bertie" to his family, was the second son of King George V and wasn't first in line to be King. When her Uncle, Edward VIII abdicated, her father then became King. Elizabeth and her younger sister Margaret were doted on by their parents, with her father dubbing the family, "we four."

### What was the Queen's role in WW2?

With the British people keen to sign up and help in any way, Elizabeth yearned to do her part. But her protective parents refused to allow her to enlist, telling her that no female member of the royal family had ever joined the military. Elizabeth was strong-willed and determined; her family gave in in early 1945 and gave her permission to join up. She then trained as a driver and mechanic with the rank of Second Subaltern. Five months later she was promoted to Junior Commander, which was the equivalent of a Captain. Her younger sister Princess Margaret was a Girl Guide and later joined the Sea Rangers. During her time in the ATS, the future Queen learnt to drive and maintain vehicles. She learnt to drive every vehicle she worked on, which included light trucks and ambulances.

### Why was this a significant event?

The Queen remains the only female member of the Royal family to have joined the armed forces and is the only living Head of State who served in World War II. This is amazing

because she could have been sat at home safely, but she decided to stand up for her country and begged to be allowed to go to war. Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret could have been evacuated to Canada but they stayed at home. The Queen refused to leave Britain, and refused to send the girls away, stating, "The children won't go without me. I won't leave without the King. And the King will never leave."

The respect Elizabeth earned for joining the army boosted the morale of the country and helped to close the perceived gap between Royalty and normal people.



Our Queen now and when she was a proud member of the ATS.

## VE Day - by Louisa

### What was VE DAY?

VE Day was a special celebration for WW2. When the war ended, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May, they decided to call it VE day to celebrate *Victory in Europe*. It is a celebration of when the Allies overpowered the opposition and the end of Adolf Hitler's (who was a leader of the Nazis) Reich. The war lasted a dreaded 6 years. Adolf Hitler killed himself so he wouldn't be punished by everyone.



Celebrations to mark the end of WW2

### What happened?

Crowds in Britain danced and sang while they celebrated their victory. Many people - who were having fun celebrating - lit bonfires and ignited fireworks to celebrate the occasion. VE Day was celebrated as a national holiday this year because it was the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the second world war.

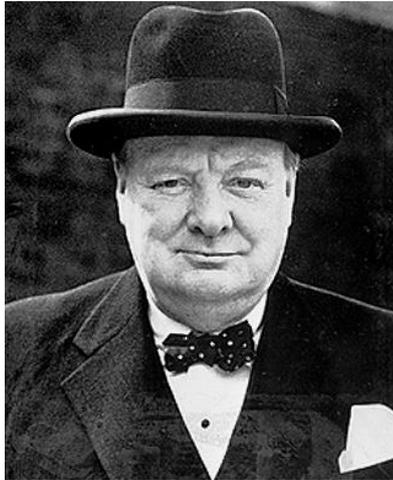
### What did the British Prime Minister do about the war?

The British Prime Minister (Winston Churchill) made an announcement. He said:

*My dear friends, this is your hour. This is not victory of a party or of any class. It's a victory of the great British nation as a whole. We were the first, in this ancient island, to draw the sword against tyranny.*

Churchill's announcement of the victory in Europe was meant to be broadcast on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1945 – the same day that America and Russia would announce – but a hold-up by Russia's leader (Stalin) meant that Churchill had to change his plans. Instead, a "pre-

announcement” was broadcast on the BBC that evening to state to the nation that the following day would be treated as Victory in Europe Day with a speech by the King at 9pm.



Britain's Prime Minister during WW2 – Winston Churchill

## This is victory!

Shortly after Winston Churchill's speech, King George VI, Queen Elizabeth, Princess Margaret and Princess Elizabeth II came out on to the balcony at Buckingham Palace. The doors of the palace opened at exactly 5:30pm by Winston Churchill who was the man of the hour. Later that evening, Winston Churchill told all of his people that 'THIS IS YOUR VICTORY'. Princesses Margaret and Elizabeth were allowed to leave the palace and celebrate with crowds outside, although they had to do it secretly.



## Why was *VE Day* significant to WW2?

VE Day was a significant event in WW2 as it was a huge celebration to mark the end of the war with Europe. People across the country felt victorious and relieved that their fear would be over. It showed what great things could be achieved when the nation worked together for a common cause.

## Rationing - By Althea

### Food rationing

Rationing began on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1940, when just butter, sugar and bacon were rationed. In 1942, other foods such as meat, cheese, milk, eggs and cooking fat became rationed too. Food was rationed because of how scarce it was during World War 2; most of the food eaten in Britain were imported from overseas but German battleships blocked the ports so that cargo ships could not dock. Soon, most of the food was under a rationing system; fresh vegetables and fruit were not in the rationing system however, due to the fact that people were able to grow most varieties.

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE

**Your Ration Book**

Issued to safeguard your food supply

HOLDER'S NAME AND REGISTERED ADDRESS

CONFINE WITH YOUR IDENTITY CARD AND REPORT ANY DIFFERENCE TO YOUR FOOD OFFICE DO NOT ALTER

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Other Names Edward G.

Address 10 Glencoe Rd.  
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Date of Issue 7 JUL 1941 Serial Number of Book

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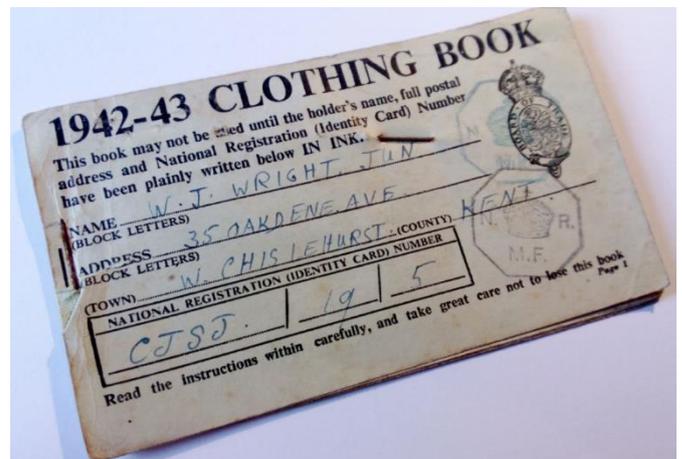
### Why is rationing significant?

Rationing in WW2 helped everybody's attitudes; the fact that everyone was restricted to buying a certain amount of goods created a sense of sharing and co-operation in Great Britain. If people they could not have a certain thing, then they would have to try to grow it themselves.

Every man, woman and child was given a ration book with different coupons. These were required before rationed goods could be purchased. Basic foodstuffs such as sugar, meat, fats, bacon and cheese were directly rationed by an allowance of coupons.

## Cloth rationing

Not just food was rationed but also normal, every day clothing. This began on June the 1<sup>st</sup> 1941, 2 years after food rationing started. Clothing rationing ended on 15 March 1949. Clothing was rationed due to the fact there was a shortage of materials to make cloths. People were urged to "Make-do Mend" so that clothing factories and workers could be used to make more essential items such as parachutes and army uniforms needed against the Nazis. Clothing had ration books too. They were filled with lots of different coloured coupons depending on what type of clothing bought. The ration books were made by the busy Government.



## Why was rationing a significant event in WW2?

Rationing was significant because, initially, the British people would have felt worried about where they would get most of their food when supplies were cut off. Working together to grow and harvest crops brought people together and created not just a sense of community but also kept the nation fed and fit for fighting and helping with the war effort.

The strength and resilience of the British people during this time has real relevance today; during the Coronavirus pandemic when shops imposed restrictions on goods, people have taken to buying vegetable seeds and have been doing much more home cooking instead of buying pre-packaged ready meals and takeaways. Modern society has been reminded of the strength and determination of Brits at home during WW2 and have felt inspired by their efforts.

## Dig For victory – by Balraj

### What was Dig for Victory?

The "Dig for Victory" motto was created by William Morrison, the first Minister for Food during World War Two. He simply told people to grow their own food because of harsh rationing; not many vegetables were available in shops because of shortages. In the 1930s, 75% of Britain's food used to come from overseas; these foods couldn't be delivered because of the German U-boat blockade threatened the country with starvation. According to war records, annual food imports had halved to 14.65million tons by 1941. The campaign's tagline "Spades not ships!" encouraged people to start planting on all available land.



*William Morrison*

### What happened during Dig for Victory?

Open spaces were turned into gardens for people who lived in flats; even the Tower of London's lawns were turned into vegetable patches! Lots of posters were put up (like these) to encourage and motivate people do join the effort and grow their own vegetables.



## What did people grow?

Most of the vegetables grown on the patches were carrots, beetroots, parsnips, turnips and swedes. They did also grow other foods that would be necessary, such as tomatoes, potatoes, cabbage, lettuce and carrots. These patches were known as 'Victory Gardens.'



## How did Dig for Victory affect the people of Britain?

It affected people by encouraging them to get a pitchfork and grow food for themselves; people were kind and grew vegetables for their neighbours if they had no garden. "Dig for Victory" was a hugely successful campaign. By 1942, half of all people were part of the nation's "Garden Front", and ten thousand square miles of land had been "brought under the plough" for farming.

## What was the effect of Dig for Victory on Britain?

The effect on Britain when Dig for Victory came out was huge. The demand for most fruit and vegetables had dropped significantly. The Dig for Victory campaign was as vital as the war effort as any of those other battles; with a starved and weakened work force, Britain would have been a much easier target. Britain's campaign helped the country to remain strong. Dig For Victory was a battle that lasted the entire war!

## Why was Dig for victory significant in WWII?

It was significant because 75% of the food was transported from other countries by ships and without this food, British people would have been weakened and unable to fight. Dig for Victory reminded British people how to be self-sufficient and fend for themselves as much as possible; it also brought people together as they harvested crops.

# The Home Guard – by Henry

## What were the Home Guards?

The Home Guard were volunteers who defended the five thousand miles of Britain coastline in the event of an invasion by Germany. They were originally called the Local Defence Volunteers; the name Home Guard came about because they were guarding the country at home on British soil. The role of the Home Guard was to protect factories, explosive stores, beaches and seafronts. To be a home guard you had to be 17 or over 50 (as you would be too old to be in the army). At the end of July 1940 the name was changed from Local Defence Volunteers to Home Guard.

## How was the Home Guard formed?

On the evening of Tuesday 14 May 1940, the Government (through Anthony Eden, the Secretary of State for War) made an urgent appeal on the radio to all men aged between 17 and 65. They wanted all men not already serving in the armed forces to become part-time soldiers. The government hoped that 150,000 volunteers would join but within 24 hours of the radio broadcast, a quarter of a million men had volunteered. By the end of July this number had risen to over a million. Many of the men who joined the Home Guard were those who could not join the regular army because their day time jobs were necessary to keep the country running. They included farm workers, bakers, teachers, grocers, bank staff and railway workers. The men were given military style training and to start with they had no uniforms and little equipment. The public were invited to give their shotguns and pistols to the Home Guard and within a few months over twenty-thousand weapons were handed in. Many of the men

**FORM OF ENROLMENT IN THE HOME GUARD**

To be completed in original only, and forwarded to the Territorial Army Association when completed.

Surname: **GILBERT S** Christian Name in Full: **DEKIE S CAFE**  
Religion: **C.A.F.E.** (In BLOCK CAPITALS) National Registration No: **BOLB/500/1**

**QUESTIONS TO BE PUT ON ENROLMENT.**

1. What is your name? **Walter James Gilbert S. CAFE**
2. What is the date of your birth? **19.2.1899**
3. Where were you born? **14, St. James Street, London**
4. What is your address? **14, St. James Street, London**
5. What is your occupation? **Cafe**
6. (a) Are you a British subject? **Yes**  
(b) Nationality of parents at birth? (i) Father: **British**  
(ii) Mother: **do**
6. (c) Are you married or a widower? **Married**
6. (d) If married, name and nationality of wife before marriage? **Wife: Helen E. Gilbert**
6. (e) Name, address and relationship of next of kin: **Edna E. Gilbert (Wife) at above address**
7. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, the Armed Forces of the Crown, including the Home Guard? If so, state particulars of all engagements. **No**
8. Do you understand that when enrolled you become subject to military law and that you will be liable on summary conviction by a civil court for a fine of £10 or one month's imprisonment, or both, for failure to attend or to give part-time service, and will not receive pay for your service? **Yes**
9. Do you understand that your service in the Home Guard will be for a period of 12 months? **Yes**
10. Do you understand that in the event of your incurring a disability attributable to your service, any claim for compensation will be dealt with under the regulations for the time being in force for the purposes which provide in the case of death or other discharge for permanent disability the same basis as in regulations for permanent disability of dependants? There is also provision for discharge on compassionate grounds of dependants' incapacity due to Home Guard service and during the period prior to discharge in the case of permanent incapacity. **Yes**
11. Do you understand that you are engaged to serve in the Home Guard for a period not exceeding the duration of the present emergency, but that during that period your service may be terminated, in accordance with instructions issued by the Army Council, by competent authority at any time. **Yes**

**Declaration.**  
I, **Gilbert S. CAFE** do solemnly declare that the answers made by me to the foregoing questions are true.  
Signature of applicant: **G. S. CAFE**  
Signature of enrolling authority: **[Signature]**

Date: **15.5.43.**

## What did the Home Guard do?

The Home Guard defended key targets like factories, explosive stores, beaches and sea fronts. At night they patrolled fields in which the enemy gliders or paratroopers might land. No one expected them to beat well-trained German soldiers; their job was to slow them down until the army arrived. The expected invasion by Germany never came. Instead the main role of the Home Guard was capturing German airmen whose planes had been shot

down over Britain. They also guarded weapons factories and aeroplane hangars and checked people's identity cards.



## Why was the Home Guard significant in WW2?

The Home Guard were significant because it allowed everyone to play a role; lots of men were not able to sign up to active service but were still able to join the Home Front so they still felt useful. The Home Guard were also significant because they frustrated the Germans by protecting the coastline and supporting the British army.