

Memories of 105574 Major R F 'Henry' Hall MC, The Dorset Regiment, on His and Her Majesty's Service

Part 1

I was accepted by The Artists' Rifles in February 1934. You had to be proposed by two existing members and vetted by the Commanding Officer. I was put in the Vickers Machine Gun Company. The Artists' Rifles was a Territorial Battalion in London and was part of the Officer Producing Group (OGPU), along with such other TA regiments as the Inns of Court and The Honourable Artillery Company. The idea of the Officer Producing Group was to produce cannon fodder Officers in the event of the outbreak of war. We were given orders at Munich time for action on mobilisation. We were to assemble underneath the arches at Canon Street Station.

So on 3rd September 1939 that is what we did. We were put on a train and taken down to Hythe, then transferred on to the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch railway. We were taken then, with our arms and legs and rifles and things sticking out of the windows, to the Daily Sketch children's holiday camp at St Mary's Bay. During our service in the Artists' we were continually assessed as potential Officers and at St Mary's Bay the unsuitable ones were sent to infantry regiments. The remainder of us were sent to Shorncliffe barracks and we became Number 163 OCTU Artists' Rifles. From there we were commissioned off and as my two best friends and I had been in the Machine Gun Company, we asked to go to the 8th Middlesex or any other Machine Gun Battalion. But naturally the War Office being what it is, we were all sent to different infantry regiments. I was sent to Weymouth to join the 4th Battalion, The Dorset Regiment. This was a Territorial Battalion, real sons of the soil, I could hardly understand what half of them said but they were an excellent crowd and it was a very good regiment indeed with a wonderful regimental spirit. We were part of 43rd Wessex Division. The whole division was both very poorly trained and very poorly equipped but we played at soldiering, trying to find out what it was all about down in Dorset.

On 8th September 1940 the codeword "Cromwell" was broadcast which meant — invasion imminent. Church bells fell silent, not to be rung again until the invasion actually happened and the whole of 43rd Division moved by road with a police escort to Hatfield forest, north of London. It was a wonderful experience, travelling as fast as we could through deserted streets, particularly through London, rushing up to a position where we had the task of GHQ Reserve, which meant that had the Germans landed in Kent, which was defended by XII Corps, we would counter attack London if they had got as far as that. In the Hatfield forest area we received a little more equipment but our state of training was pitifully low. We remained there until 22nd September when stand down was announced. We then moved from that area down to Kent and came under the command of XII Corps. We were first stationed in the Dover area and my Company defended the beach at St Margaret's Bay. It was there that I suffered my first casualties through the shells from the cross channel guns falling short. I had two dead and one wounded which shook me up a bit, never having seen dead bodies before, particularly bodies for which I was responsible.

After that we moved to various places in Kent and at the end of 1940 we were stationed in the Cavalry barracks at Canterbury. XII Corps was commanded by General Andrew 'Bulgy' Thorne. General Thorne had been Military Attaché in Berlin in the early thirties and had met the Principal of the Charlottenburg High School (the German equivalent of Sandhurst) who showed Thorne around his estates in East Prussia. Whilst there he noticed men digging holes in the ground and filling them with supplies. On enquiry he was told that they were bound to be attacked from the East and could not defend themselves. So, after the enemy had passed over, these men would be able to pop up and play hell with their supplies. Thorne used this tactic in XII Corps. He asked for an Officer to start one of these units and he was sent Peter Fleming from the Scots Guards. Along with Mike Calvert they started to form the first of the British Resistance Organisation Units. This was called the XII Corps Observation Unit and it was formed on the 27th June 1940 and later spread, under Colin Gubbins, to cover the whole of the UK. General Thorne also formed Battle Patrols in each Battalion with the same job as the Resistance Organisation, which was to stay behind after the enemy had invaded and then pop up and cause havoc amongst the enemy once they had landed. Exactly the same job the SAS had in the Cold War.

One day I was ordered to go and see our Commanding Officer and when I arrived in his office I found a Sergeant, John Davidson, there as well, whom I had never seen before. We were told that he had selected us to go on an 'Advanced Assault Course' in Scotland and that we were to pass it with distinction for the Honour of the Regiment.

In early 1941 we went to Inverailort in the Western Highlands of Scotland. We went up there by train from Canterbury all the way to Fort William and then we got on the little puffer train that used to go from Fort William to Mallaig, now called 'The Jacobite.' We were sitting there comfortably in the train when all of a sudden the train came to an abrupt halt. We were all thrown forwards, our kitbags came off the luggage racks and the place was a shambles. Then we realised the train was under fire and that explosions were going off all around us. Then instructors leapt out of holes in the ground and shouted, "Get out of the train! Get out of the train! Grab your kit and follow us!" So of course we all scrambled out, grabbing everything we had and we were doubled, ran all the way to the Big House clutching our belongings. We were shot at all the way as we were running the mile and half to the Big House and when we arrived there we were shown some Nissen huts on the lawn and told, "Find yourselves a bed, that's where you're going to live."

The ablutions were outside, also on the lawn, just a plain wooden bench with taps, cold water only and when we were lucky enough to sleep in the Nissen huts we had to clean, wash and shave ourselves in the morning with cold water whether it was raining or not. When we did feed, we fed in the Big House. The Big House is unique in irregular warfare. Bonnie Prince Charlie, the Young Pretender, a great irregular, used the house when he first landed on the mainland and he stayed in the house before he was picked up again to go back to France. One of the Cameron-Head ancestors, who lived in the Big House, formed The Rifle Brigade which was the first irregular force in the British Army, featured in the series on television called Sharpe. All modern close quarter and guerrilla methods and tactics stem from the teaching given at the Big House. It was formed into the Irregular Warfare Training Centre on 2nd June 1940 in order to train guerrilla leaders. On 27th June 1940 Colin Gubbins used the house to start the formation of the British Resistance Organisation. The Independent Companies were formed there and SOE started its life there on 19th June 1940, also under Colin Gubbins, before it changed its Headquarters to Arisaig House. The Commandos started life there before they were transferred to the Training School at Achnacarry under Charles Vaughan. Independent Companies were formed by Lord Lovat for raiding purposes and, when he decided to mass produce them, they were called Commandos, in honour of his grandfather who commanded The Lovat Scouts who had fought so successfully in the Boer War against the Boer Kommandos. The SAS originated there and even the CIA. That came about on 6th September 1941 when a place called 'Camp X' was formed in Canada. The two chaps concerned, 'Big' Bill Donovan, a rich American Industrialist who had formed an organisation called the OSS (the Office of Strategic Studies) to see what America could do in secret warfare, and another fellow, 'Little' Bill Stephenson who was a rich Canadian businessman, formed 'Camp X.' Fairbairn went there from the Big House to teach them dirty tricks. Sykes stayed behind to help SOE. He was the man who trained the Czechs who assassinated Reinhard Heydrich and he also assisted in the training of the Norwegian team which destroyed the heavy water plant in Norway.

Personally I think it is a national disgrace that the house has been left to rot and also a great pity that Mrs Cameron-Head did not record her memoirs. I tried to persuade her to and so did many others, because she was a mother and friend to all of us who attended the place, the staff and the students. She was the last of the Cameron line which is why the estate was sold and the house retained but sorely neglected. The origins of the Big House go back to before the War. In 1939 Carton de Wiart VC, 'The Old Flamer,' Colin Gubbins and Peter Wilkinson went on a military mission to Poland. They narrowly escaped and came back to the UK. Their main contribution was to bring back the basis of the Enigma machine. The Norwegian campaign in 1940 was commanded by General Paget and General Carton de Wiart, Colin Gubbins was with them. He was the leader of several secret organisations. He signed his orders 'M' — he could not use 'C' as this had been taken by the leader of the SIS and G was in common use by the Army. Gubbins was a Scot from the Western Isles and an Officer in the Royal Artillery and his middle name was McVeigh so he used 'M' which was copied by Ian Fleming (Peter's brother) for the head man in the James Bond books. Both armies withdrew from Norway and so did the BEF at Dunkirk. It was realised then that special troops were needed and so Gubbins ordered that a special battalion to be formed called the 5th Battalion, Scots Guards. In March and April 1940 they went to Chamonix to learn ski training prior to going back to Norway.

Then came 'Operation Knife' on 23rd April 1940. The party consisted of Bill Stirling, Bryan Mayfield and Jim Gavin. They went in a submarine called HMS Truant to attack communications in Norway. Unfortunately they hit a magnetic mine on the way there and had to limp back to Rosyth. The three of them went back to Keir, the Stirling home, to recover. It was Bill Stirling's idea to start the Irregular Warfare Training Centre to train guerrilla leaders. Lord Lovat requisitioned the whole area from Fort William to Mallaig. Gubbins got on to General Ironside, the GOC in C Home Forces and the formation of the Irregular Warfare Training Centre was authorised on 2nd June 1940. The first courses were about 30 strong of Officers and Sergeants. They lasted three weeks and anybody who didn't come up to scratch was returned to unit immediately. David Stirling, who eventually formed the SAS and Fitzroy MacLean, who joined David in the SAS and then went to Yugoslavia to help Tito settle the Balkan problem, both attended the first course. Fitzroy attended it in plain clothes (because he was not yet in the Army, he was still in the Foreign Office).

What were the courses like? First of all the staff, the instructors. The Commanding Officer was Bryan Mayfield of the Scots Guards, the Chief Instructor was Bill Stirling of the Scots Guards, the Assistant Chief Instructor was Freddie Spencer Chapman of the Seaforths, a Polar Explorer who eventually spent two years alone in Malaya helping the Chinese to fight the Japanese. Fieldcraft was taught by 'Shimi' Lovat of the Scots Guards and Lovat Scouts. He ended up commanding the Commando Brigade. The Assistant Fieldcraft instructor was Peter Kemp and later David Stirling of the Scots Guards. Bill and David were cousins of 'Shimi' Lovat. Demolitions were carried out by the famous Mike Calvert, Royal Engineers, who started off (again under Gubbins) the British Resistance Organisation and made a real name for himself in the Chindit campaign. Jim Gavin assisted him, he was an Everest climber.

There was a Royal Naval contingent at the Big House under Commander Geoffrey Congreve DSO. His part of it was called HMS Lochailort.

There is an organisation called MI(R) — Military Intelligence (Research). Even now they are thinking of ideas to deal with contingency plans, looking for people with special skills and abilities and devising various instruments for surveillance, demolition and everything else you can think of. The two key figures at Inverailort were 'Dan' Fairbairn and 'Bill' Sykes. MI(R) discovered them in the Shanghai Police — they were both ex Superintendents. Their speciality was close quarter combat, silent killing and dirty tricks. 'Dan' Fairbairn was the first European to be awarded a Black Belt.

The RSM was John Royle who had served with the Highland Light Infantry with David Niven before the War in India and misbehaved a bit, I'm afraid. He eventually joined up as a Private in the Scots Guards and was killed as a Glider Pilot at Arnhem. David Niven attended a course — he says in his book 'The Moon's a Balloon' on page 220, "They taught us dozens of different ways of killing people without making a noise." He did the course before joining the 'Phantoms.' The Lovat Scouts were very prominent. They carried out demonstrations, gave instruction and generally supervised. There were drivers, cooks and other people to help run the place. Later on others joined as instructors — Martin Lindsay from the Gordons who was a Polar Explorer. Peter Fleming, Ian's brother, who with Mike Calvert, helped to form the British Resistance Organisation, Gavin Maxwell and Captain Scott, a Polar explorer and descendant of the famous Captain Scott. Norman Field took over from Peter Fleming and Mike Calvert who both moved on to higher jobs.

Part 2

On the first morning after our arrival we met 'Dan' Fairbairn and 'Bill' Sykes. We were taken into the hall of the Big House and suddenly at the top of the stairs appeared a couple of dear old gentlemen (we later discovered one was 56 and the other 58). Both were wearing spectacles and both were dressed in battle dress with just a plain webbing belt. They walked to the top of the stairs and fell, tumbling, tumbling down the stairs and ended up at the bottom in the battle crouch position with a handgun in one hand and a fighting knife in the other. A shattering experience for all of us.

Fairbairn was the elder of the two. He was about 5 feet 10, lean faced and lean bodied, a tough leathery looking man, a taciturn character, he never spoke very much, except to say, "Stick a knife in here," or "Hit him here," or "Put your thumb in his eye" or whatever. He kept himself to himself and I think he considered himself to be a little better than Sykes.

Sykes was a much more gregarious character, slightly shorter than Fairbairn, average build, certainly not on the lean side, he looked more like a bishop than anything else. He was easy to talk to, a pleasant character. One of the things he did for me — I asked him one day about sharpening my fighting knife, he said, "Come up to my room, I'll hone it for you." Which he did.

Two completely different characters, they hated each others guts but they worked together as a wonderful team and they both taught exactly the same things. Their speciality was close combat fighting and silent killing. They had learnt their trade on the waterfront of International Shanghai. They had absolutely no respect for the Geneva Convention. They said, "If you think our methods are not cricket, remember that Hitler does not play this game!"

First of all they taught how to fall — a continuation of their falling down the stairs, they taught handgun and knife work and neck breaking. Now when you are attacking somebody the clothing that they are wearing and their equipment must be considered. For example if a fellow is wearing a greatcoat you can't kick him in the parts because the blow won't have any effect. You have got to hit him somewhere else. If you suspect that someone is wearing body armour you can't stick a knife into his chest, although the favourite place for sticking knives in, taught by Fairbairn and Sykes, does work even with body armour. We were taught releases. If you are grabbed by somebody from the back, front, side or whatever, how to get out of his grip. We were taught 'come-along grips' — how to take a prisoner along safely without him being able to escape.

We were taught the use of sticks, anything from four inches to six feet long; a four inch stick is just held in the hand and you can strike with the end of the stick and give a chap a nasty knock with it. A stick can be anything, an actual stick, a rifle, something you pick up in a farmyard. A clipboard for example is a stick, you can strike somebody with it across the side of the neck, on the head, on the nose, under the nose, you can hit him in the parts, you can hit him in the solar plexus, almost anything is a stick. A stick is always held in two hands as exemplified by Robin Hood and Little John.

They taught the use of coshes, they preferred the spring type best, longbows, crossbows, catapults, garrotting, with anything that happens to be handy — a scarf, string, wire, anything you like; the use of shovels — every good soldier always carries either a pick or a shovel and you simply use it to chop off a chap's head, or whack him on the shoulder, or just use it like a battle axe. A pick and shovel are the only things you can dig in with quickly. Somebody made a lot of money from 'entrenching tools' — similar to the American ones — which were absolutely useless. You can do the same with a tin hat, just whip the tin hat off and use the side of it to hit him in the face or whatever part happens to be handy.

We were taught mouth slitting. If you are being gripped by somebody you can stick your thumb into the corner of his mouth and slit his cheek right up to his ear; ear clapping — cupping both your hands and hitting both his ears at the same time which of course breaks his eardrums; ear tearing — the easiest way to tear a chap's ear off; eye gouging; the gralloch, - a nice little tip that 'Dan' Fairbairn told us is, that if you gralloch anybody, to keep the point of your knife down, because otherwise when it comes up you might hurt the sharpening of the blade where it might catch his belt or his buckle; rib-lifting — grabbing a fellow under the ribs and lifting them up hard; nose chopping — chopping downwards or upwards with your hand or anything else; shin scraping — giving a fellow a good kick, say if he's holding you from behind, a good kick on the knee with your boot, scraping it down his shin and ending up with a good sharp stamp on the instep; shoulder jerking — a sharp jab downwards of the arm which will dislocate the shoulder; the bronco kick — if you get somebody on the ground you jump on him hitting him with both heels at the same time which will break the particular part that you hit.; the bone crusher — a blow used on the sternum they recommended, where you put the tips of your fingers against the sternum and then with the full force of your body hit him with the ball of your hand and it will smash his ribs or it can be used on any other part of his body, especially the chin, and how to tie up a man — tying his wrists with a good old fashioned sailor's handcuff knot and they also taught a way of tying the fellow's wrists behind his back and pulling his ankles up and tying them with the same piece of cord and then putting a loop round his neck so that if he struggled he strangled himself. They also taught the grapevine where a fellow is fixed to a thin pole by the forced bending of both legs round the pole, then he will lose his grip, fall backwards and eventually kill himself. All these actions and holds were sometimes demonstrated by the two of them or with somebody else acting as a stooge and then after that they were practised on your own, supervised by Fairbairn and Sykes and if you did anything wrong you were severely ticked off and very often thrown about a bit and shown how to do it properly. It was a one to one instruction on how to fall correctly or how to impose a particular grip or a particular release or how to use a particular instrument in the correct manner to achieve the result required. It was a personal touch and personally done. If you didn't show keenness or enthusiasm you were thrown off the course.

Fairbairn and Sykes also taught the use of the hand gun. They favoured the 9mm Browning. Now if you hit a man with a 9mm bullet, it will not stop him. If you use a .45 or anything larger, such as a shotgun, that will stop him dead, maybe blow him backwards. With a 9mm round you need two shots to stop a man dead and so Fairbairn and Sykes taught the Fairbairn Sykes 'double tap.' You draw your handgun, two shots, pom pom, and the chap is dead. They carried their handguns in the right hand trouser pocket. The normal opening of the trouser pocket is a little bit higher than where your hand naturally hangs and so they modified the trouser pocket so that you hand could go into the pocket with your arm at its normal length. The holster of the handgun was sewn into the inside of the pocket. The inside of the pocket was sewn to the trouser so that when you drew the handgun it came out without snagging on the pocket. They carried the fighting knife in exactly the same way, in the left hand trouser pocket. I carried my handgun and fighting knife that way during the whole of the War. As I mentioned they taught us to use the 'double tap' with the handgun, we were not taught to hold the gun out at arm's length or with two hands but to draw the gun and hold it tucked into your navel with the gun pointing straight ahead so that wherever you looked your gun moved round towards the target you were looking at. So you either drew your gun straight into your navel, pom, pom, the chap was dead, or you advanced as I did on one occasion in the mystery shooting house that 'Dan' Fairbairn had made at Inverailort - with my handgun drawn, held into my navel, firing at the various targets that appeared here and there. With that particular exercise which was supervised by 'Dan' Fairbairn, if you were not a good shot, you were out, back to your unit. One thing they did emphasise, particularly with the handgun, was to count the number of shots you had fired so that you were never caught with an empty magazine and therefore unable to get a round off at your enemy.

Now the Fairbairn Sykes knife. Fairbairn and Sykes developed the knife in Shanghai, incidentally they never mentioned Shanghai at all at Inverailort, I didn't discover they had come from Shanghai until years afterwards. When they got back to England they went into Wilkinson's in Pall Mall and got hold of one of the Directors and explained exactly what they wanted and what they wanted was a seven and a half inch blade made from one piece of metal right from the tip of the haft right down to the point and then with the guard put on and then the handle, the grip. The grip was to be checked so that you could hold it whether it was wet or bloody. Each was individually hand made, sharpened and honed so that your knife should be able to cut a piece of paper. I bought mine, one of the original Number 1 knives, in Pall Mall for thirteen shillings and sixpence. Later on they developed various other models for economy purposes. They only made 2,500 original No1 shiny knives — now worth over £3,000 each! The Fairbairn Sykes knife is straight. If you are using it for slashing cuts you use it like a paintbrush, stroking it so that when the blade hits the surface you are trying to cut, it cuts at an angle, on the principal of the curve of the samurai sword. You held the knife between the thumb and forefinger just behind the guard. The knife was perfectly balanced and so you could throw it from hand to hand. As you carried it in your left hand pocket, if you were right handed you could draw it with your left hand, throw it to your right hand and catch it quite easily, no problem at all. The guard was not to stop the other chap's knife from cutting your hand but to stop your hand going down and being cut on the blade when you made a thrusting blow. On the battlefield you probably had your boots on for three or four weeks and you were filthy dirty, mucky and probably splashed with blood and the last thing you wanted to do was to draw any more blood and so the favourite blow that Fairbairn and Sykes taught was to a particular part of the body. They taught many other blows, vulnerable points and so on, but the snag is that with a man with equipment on or doing it in the dark you just don't know what equipment he has got on and you can't find a vulnerable point or somewhere to stick the knife.

The so called winged dagger of the SAS is not a dagger. The badge was designed by David Stirling and Jock Lewes, the original founders of the SAS. The weapon represents King Arthur's sword, Excalibur. The wings come from a Phoenix in Shepherd's Hotel, Cairo and the motto was David's idea. The light and dark blue represent the colours of Cambridge, attended by Stirling, Oxford by Lewes.

We had lectures in Nissen Huts, but these Huts were located on the Islands of the River Ailort so that every lecture we attended we were wet either up to the ankles, the knees, the waist or perhaps even the chest, depending on the height of the water. We had lectures in map reading — they insisted on very precise map reading, probably five to ten yard error only was acceptable, on nutrition, on hygiene, on living off the land, stalking, night work, explosives and explosive devices, fuses and so on, timing devices, booby traps and demolitions of anything, bridges, tanks, cratering roads, blowing down trees, the lot. On the practical side we had demonstrations of all the things I have mentioned. We practised camouflage, sniping, stalking by day and particularly by night, demolitions and bridge demolition on the Glenfinnan viaduct, living off the land, told what was edible and what was not edible and one occasion we stood round a fire where something was being cooked and then we were asked to take a bite of what had been cooked - we were then told they were rats, hygiene — particularly your teeth, keeping your teeth clean after every meal (anything will do to clean your teeth, a stick of heather or anything like that), how to carry out one's natural functions in the field — you obviously can't stand up or squat down.

Every week we went to the top of An Stac, the local highest mountain, and back, up the wall at the back of the house and then back down again, which was the origin of the Commandos going up Ben Nevis every week and the SAS doing their endurance trials on the Brecon Beacons.

We started off from Inverailort one day over the hills and attacked Lettermorar on the banks of Loch Morar. We practised assault landings on the beach near to the Big House all under fire. We had an interesting exercise, we were taken down past Fort William and across the Loch to a place near Corran and then we had to make our way from there back to the Big House. It was a night exercise and we had to get across Loch Shiel. They did provide us with a small rowing boat, with only one oar. It was a timed exercise, and if anybody didn't get back in the prescribed time they were sent back to their unit immediately.

The final grand exercise was the attack on Skye. We were taken at dusk one evening in assault boats from Inverailort across to Skye. We landed on the West coast of Skye, blew a gap in the barbed wire with Bangalore torpedoes and then crossed the Island and attacked Portree (it was raining all the time). Having attacked Portree we advanced down Skye attacking various places on the way, eventually attacking Broadford and ending up near the Kyle where we got on a Destroyer and were brought back to Inverailort and landed on the jetty probably about midday the following day.

Part 3

There was no psychology as such taught at Inverailort, but everything was done with such confidence and such expertise and devil-may-care atmosphere, all the instructors were wonderful chaps, you came away from everything feeling that you knew the lot and you were better than anybody else and that the other chap was dead before you even saw him. Anyone who showed any sign of weakness was sent back to his unit immediately.

We were monitored and assessed all the time and anybody who showed any lack of confidence, lack of trying to do something, any idleness or anything of that sort, was straight off the course and back to his unit.

We were wet, tired, hungry; being shot at all the time, exhausted and it was really a test of endurance and absorbing the knowledge that was given to us. We were not taught any battle drills as such at Inverailort. The emphasis was on initiative and acting according to the situation. We were taught battle drills later on, after Montgomery had taken over XII Corps, set drills for attacking, by shouting out by numbers and so forth, which was very effective for training men en masse. There were Divisional Battle Schools which taught anybody who had not been in action before, the basic skills of infantry work and the experience of being fired on, the experience of advancing under a live artillery barrage so that when the attack on Normandy came, anybody who had not already been under fire, had been so at a Divisional Battle School before they actually landed. I was an instructor at our Divisional Battle School later on.

I think the great advantage of the advanced assault course at Inverailort was that it gave you so much confidence. You knew so many more tricks of the trade and methods of attack, demolition and causing havoc and destruction that you became super confident.

Whatever you did, you did it automatically, subconsciously. The answer to whatever attack you were up against would be an instinctive reaction. You didn't have to think about things, you just took it as something as natural as drinking a cup of tea or making a sandwich — you would do it instinctively, just like driving a car. As regards your emotions when you stick a knife into a chap, you just don't have any because, as I say, it's just like driving a car or making a cup of tea.

When Sergeant Davidson and I returned to Canterbury I was made Battalion Bombing Officer. In World War 1 any Officer who conducted trench raids was given that title, I was told I was to command a Battalion Battle Patrol. Our Commanding Officer, Harold Matthews, had selected three experienced Corporals and thirty men for the patrol. Our first task was to train and teach them all we had learnt at Inverailort to the Commanding Officer's satisfaction. After training was completed he tested us by doing all our demolitions and dirty tricks himself!

This BBC WW2 People's War extract is from the Memories of 105574 Major R F 'Henry' Hall MC, The Dorset Regiment. His full memories can be read by visiting their site www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar