

I) The heroic British memories of WW2

1) The Battle of Britain (July to October 1940)

At about 03.40 on 3 June 1940, the destroyer HMS Shikari sailed from Dunkirk en route to Britain. As the last ship to leave France laden with men, her departure brought to an end the most famous part of the evacuation of British troops following the French capitulation. Eleven days later German troops paraded through Paris. On 22 June the French Government signed an armistice with Germany. Now Britain faced the possibility of a Nazi invasion followed by all the horrors of brutal occupation suffered by many countries across Europe. Led and inspired by the Prime Minister, **Winston Churchill**, the people of Britain prepared to fight for their freedom.

No modern invasion can succeed unless the invading force has air superiority. So it fell to just under 3000 men of **Royal Air Force Fighter Command** to be at the forefront of British resistance. To the Prime Minister they were “*The Few*”; to their leader, Air Chief Marshal Dowding, they were “*My Dear Fighter Boys*”. Well over 500 of them died between **10 July and 31 October 1940** – the official dates of the Battle and nearly 800 more did not live to see the end of the war in 1945. Today we honour them as men who played the key role at a fulcrum of British history.

In July and early August they fought mostly over the **English Channel**. The Germans designated 13 August, *Adler Tag*, “Eagle Day”, when Fighter Command would be eliminated. After this utter failure of the Luftwaffe, it was not long before enemy attacks were concentrated more and more on the fighter airfields, the radar stations and the aircraft factories. Some historians and participants in the Battle argue that by early September Fighter Command was close to breaking point, many of the experienced airmen had been killed or wounded. Those that were left were nearing exhaustion. Replacements were coming through and fighting heroically, but they were desperately inexperienced and under trained. Then **on 7 September, the Luftwaffe changed its tactics and began bombing London**. On that Saturday night the East End and the docks burned.

“*Send every pump you’ve got, the whole bloody world’s on fire*” was the message from a London Fire Brigade officer in the Surrey Docks. For Londoners this was the start of the **Blitz, with night after night of bombing**. For Fighter Command the change provided a respite, because at the time there was little that fighters could do against German bombers at night. The last major daylight raid on London took place on **15 September, now commemorated as Battle of Britain Day**.

<http://www.battleofbritainmemorial.org/the-battle-of-britain/>

2) The Heroes of the Battle of Britain : Young British pilots

Perhaps the essential myth of the Battle of Britain can be summed up in the idea that this was a victory gained by young British officer pilots flying Spitfires. Many were far from young. Teenagers fought in the Battle, but so did men in their 20, 30s and 40s. One air gunner was 51. Many were not from the United Kingdom. The countries represented in Fighter Command in 1940 included Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, Poland, the Rhodesias, South Africa and the United States. (...) The Hurricane flew in much greater numbers in the Battle than the Spitfire and shot down far more enemy aircraft.

After the Battle it was decided that every Allied airman who took part should be entitled to the “immediate” award of the 1939-45 Star with Battle of Britain clasp. The qualification that was decided on for this award was that an airman must have made one authorised operational flight with a designated unit between 10 July and 31 October 1940.

<http://www.battleofbritainmemorial.org/the-battle-of-britain/>

Some biographies: *(extracts from the Battle of Britain Memorial website)*

George Kemp Gilroy

90481, Flying Officer, Pilot, 603 Squadron (Spitfires)

“Sheep” Gilroy (born June 1 1914) was a farmer before the war and a member of 603 Squadron in the Auxiliary Air Force. He was called to full time service in late August 1939 and shared in the destruction of the first German aircraft to fall on British soil in wartime, on October 28 that year. On August 31, 1940, he was shot down and landed by parachute on the eastern side of London, where he was attacked by a crowd who believed he was German. Legend has it that he was rescued by a bus conductress. He was admitted to hospital. On September 13 Gilroy was awarded the DFC. After being badly injured in an accident in December 1940, Gilroy flew sweeps over France in 1941. He later commanded 609 Squadron and received a bar to his DFC. He commanded a Wing in North Africa and was awarded the DSO on March 2 1943. He became a Group Captain and left the RAF at the end of the war. He took command of 603 Squadron in the Auxiliary Air Force in 1946. “Sheep” Gilroy died in 1995.

William Howard Machin

968717, Sergeant, Air Gunner, 264 Squadron (Defiants)

Bill Machin came from Handsworth, Birmingham, and joined the RAFVR in 1939. He was posted to 264 Squadron at Hornchurch on August 22 1940. Two days later, on his first operational sortie, his aircraft was shot down and he was mortally wounded. He was 20 years old.

Richard Malzard Hogg

33486 Pilot Officer, Pilot, British, 152 Squadron (Spitfires)

Hogg was born in the Jersey parish of St Peter and attended the island’s public school, Victoria College. He was “Dick” to his family, “Sammy” as a cadet at Cranwell and “Fatogg” on 152 Squadron, where he needed to be distinguished from Flying Officer E S Hogg, known as “Finogg”. Before joining 152 Squadron on May 10 1940, Hogg had served with 14 and 263 Squadrons. He was shot down and killed on August 25 1940 over the Channel. His body was not found and he is remembered on the Runnymede Memorial.

Terence Gunion Lovell Gregg

29244 Squadron Leader, Pilot, New Zealander, 87 Squadron (Hurricanes)

Born in Wanganui (now often spelt Whanganui) in the North Island of New Zealand, Lovell Gregg was the son of a doctor and at one time wanted to study medicine himself. Instead he became the youngest qualified pilot in Australasia and was accepted for a short service commission in the RAF.

He served with 41 Squadron and between 1932 and 1935 he was with 30 Squadron in Iraq. Lovell Gregg was granted a medium commission in 1936 and then spent much time as an instructor and on operations room duties.

After converting to Hurricanes, “Shuvvel” Lovell Gregg joined 87 Squadron as a supernumerary on June 15 1940 and took command on July 12. Aware of his lack of recent experience he was initially content to let the Flight Commanders lead the squadron in combat.

At about 17.30 hrs on August 15, he led five Hurricanes against a force of at least 120 enemy aircraft over Lyme Bay. Lovell Gregg’s aircraft was hit and he was wounded. The Hurricane crashed at Abbotsbury and the pilot’s body was found beside it. He was buried in the churchyard at Holy Trinity, Warmwell, Dorset, close to the airfield from which he had taken off.

Your task: Introduce these 4 pilots according to their common points and differences.

The National Memorial to the Few: an architectural study *(sources from the Battle of Britain Memorial website)*

Your task is to explain the meaning of the architectural design of the Memorial, using all the sources provided.



Remembrance Day 2013



The Memorial Wall

A memorial in construction:

The National Memorial to the Few at Capel-le-Ferne, on the famous white cliffs between Dover and Folkestone in Kent, occupies a special place in the hearts and minds of all those who have visited this moving site. Maintained by the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust, the site at Capel-le-Ferne is dedicated to Churchill’s famous “Few” who fought in the skies overhead to keep this country free from invasion.

The Memorial itself inspires quiet reflection on the bravery and sacrifice shown by the aircrew – fewer than 3,000 men – who flew, fought and sometimes died in probably the most crucial battle fought by this country in the whole of the 20th century.

The Memorial Wall lists the names of all those who took part in the Battle of Britain, while a replica Spitfire and Hurricane stand nearby as a reminder of the iconic machines they flew to victory. But the Memorial is not just about the past but about the future. Preparatory work has now started on The Wing, an important new visitor centre planned for the Memorial site. This high-tech exhibition and learning centre is designed to keep the memory of the veterans alive for many years to come and is due to be open in time for the 75th anniversary in 2015, if funding allows.



3) The heroes of the Homefront during the Blitz: the memory of the People's War thanks to the BBC

The **BBC's WW2 People's War** project ran from June 2003 to January 2006. The aim of the project was to collect the memories of people who had lived and fought during World War Two on a website; these would form the basis of a digital archive which would provide a learning resource for future generations. The target audience, people who could remember the war, was at least 60 years old. Anyone who had served in the armed forces during the war was, at the start of the project, at least 75. Most of them had no experience of the internet. Yet over the course of the project, over 47,000 stories and 14,000 images were gathered. A national story gathering campaign was launched, where 'associate centres' such as libraries, museums and learning centres, ran events to help gather stories. Many hundreds of volunteers, many attached to local BBC radio stations, assisted in this. The resulting archive houses all of these memories. These stories don't give a precise overview of the war, or an accurate list of dates and events; they are a record of how a generation remembered the war, 60 years of more after the events, and remain in the Archive as they were contributed. The Archive is not a historical record of events, a collection of government or BBC information, recordings or documents relating to the war..

'We always listened to the BBC during the war. We knew we could trust them.'; 'It helps to work with a name that's known... gives me credibility.'[said some participants].

Feedback suggests that the BBC name was crucial in giving participants a sense of taking part in something national and significant. The BBC had played a central role for many during wartime, and the trust engendered by memories of this made them proud to be asked to contribute to the website.

'I would like to thank the BBC for all its wonderful history programmes and for allowing me to write down my history too.'



Regular broadcast promotion was necessary to inspire the audience to get involved, but also to motivate partners to stay involved. During spring and summer 2005, 15 dedicated WW2 People's War broadcast co-ordinators were appointed in 12 regions and 3 nations of the UK - providing support to recruit and train volunteers, to provide broadcast coverage of events and to encourage many more local people to contribute to the website.

So, visit the BBC website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/>

Then choose one section in the menu:

Blitz / Air raids / Anderson shelters / Land Army / Nursing and medicine / Childhood and Evacuation / Family life / Rationing / Love in wartime

Choose only one source: sum it up and explain how this person faced the war (his/her actions, emotions...) Correct if necessary his/her testimony according to your historical knowledge.

II) The History of the UK during WW2 needs some corrections...

1) A forgotten Navy ? The Battle of Britain Debate

* Churchill's speech: *the Few*

* But, the RAF couldn't win alone: the Battle of Britain was won thanks to a combine air and maritime effort:

The Royal Navy did not win the 'Battle of Britain': But we need a holistic view of Britain's defences in 1940

By Christina Goulter, Andrew Gordon and Gary Sheffield

« In truth, the notion that in John Keegan's words 'some 2500 young pilots had alone been responsible for preserving Britain from invasion' has long been disputed by historians. As far back as 1958 Duncan Grinnell-Milne made the case for the principal role of the RN [Royal Navy] in preventing invasion, and two years later Captain Stephen Roskill, the British Official Historian, argued for the primacy of 'lack of adequate [German] instruments of sea power' and the knowledge of their use in the thwarting of Operation Sealion. A few years later Telford Taylor produced what is still probably the most thorough study of the question, in which he integrated [put together] the air and maritime dimensions [aspects]. Wing Commander H.R. Allen, himself a Spitfire pilot, published in 1974 a controversial book on the subject. Allen defined the Battle of Britain widely, to encompass more than just the air battle, and concluded that the importance of the air and maritime dimensions had been respectively exaggerated and underestimated. »

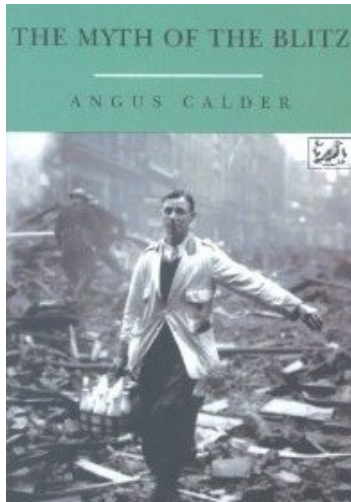
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/worldwar2/theatres-of-war/western-europe/investigation/battle-of-britain/sources/docs/4/>

This explains a certain distortion in the chosen architecture of the Memorial to the Few: the pilots were also helped by the marines and there is no Navy Memorial. The affective memory of the Blitz is intimately linked to the face of young courageous British pilots, the marines haven't got such a place in collective memory but do have in History.

2) Revisionism of *The Myth of the Blitz*

The historian Angus Calder denounced in his book *The Myth of Blitz* published in 1991 the orthodox reading of the British History of WW2. According to him, the popular union of all Britons behind Churchill and the Royal family is exaggerated to hide a certain disunion.

Since 1945 the contours of British memory have been shaped by a particular cultural-historical interpretation of the Second World War which gives prominence to the summer of 1940 as a transformative episode in British society. According to this narrative, perhaps most succinctly elucidated by Richard Titmuss in his 1950 book 'Problems of Social Policy', 1940 was the point whereby the nation, divided by the class conflict and political infighting of the depression years, overcame its internal fractures and, united in defiance of German hegemony on the continent and daily bombing raids by the Luftwaffe, became the people. It is this orthodox view which Angus Calder sought to confront with the publication of 'The Myth of the Blitz' in 1991.



Calder's primary contention relates to the manner in which representations of the war in Britain – which he suggests are centred on the mythological triad of Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain and the Blitz – are predicated upon the acceptance and internalisation of wartime propaganda. In essence, the rhetorical oratory of Churchill, the scripted radio broadcasts of Priestly and the staged cinematography of Jennings, have been used by academics, politicians and laymen alike as a factual guide to the realities of the war. This has led to a particularisation which has not only excluded marginal (and not so marginal) groups from the public discourse, but has also allowed for the totalising of a narrow, nostalgic and politically malleable collective memory of 1940 which reinforces a certain form of British identity.

At the time of the monograph's release a questioning attitude towards the consensual memory of the war was not historiographically unique. *The People's War*, published by Calder in 1969, had already navigated this path, as had Clive Ponting's *'1940: Myth and Reality'*. In a sense the quantitative empiricism of *The Myth of the Blitz* can be seen as a continuation of a wider trend of European revisionism which emerged in the 1960s, concerned as it was with renegotiating the realities of the Second World War. Calder's most noteworthy addition to the field, then, was to highlight how memory evolves and is appropriated to define national identity and give meaning to contemporary situations.

Indeed, the content and context of the 'Myth' are inextricably linked. The book began to take form in the early 1980s, a period of heightened class antagonism and political polarisation, which saw the myth of 1940 being invoked by both sides of the divide to confer legitimacy upon their respective viewpoints. Calder is clear that the continuous politicisation of Britain's wartime experience and the ubiquitous position of the 'myth' in public life provided the principal impetus behind his decision to write the book, and this is evident in its focus on the continuation of acute social cleavages in Britain throughout the war. As he elaborates "...my anger over the sentimentalisation of 1940 by Labour apologists, then over the abuse of 'Churchillism' by Mrs Thatcher during the Falklands War, led me to seek, every which way, to undermine the credibility of the mythical narrative".

(...) Although it is questionable as to whether Calder's literary intervention had much of an impact on prevailing political and social attitudes, it did play a central role in laying the foundations for further revisionism in academia and the media.

James CHIAM, « Angus Calder's Myth of the Blitz » in *E-International Relations*, June 1, 2011
<http://www.e-ir.info/2011/06/01/angus-calders-%E2%80%98the-myth-of-the-blitz/>

Your task: After reading and understanding this article, explain to what extent Calder's historical research questions (= remet en cause) the memory of the Myth of the Blitz. Comment also the book cover.

3) The use and abuse of the myth of the Blitz in time of crisis

* The Falklands war (1982) :

« Today we meet in the aftermath of the Falklands Battle. Our country has won a great victory and we are entitled to be proud. This nation had the resolution to do what it knew had to be done—to do what it knew was right.

We fought to show that aggression does not pay and that the robber cannot be allowed to get away with his swag. We fought with the support of so many throughout the world. The Security Council, the Commonwealth, the European Community, and the United States. Yet we also fought alone—for we fought for our own people and for our own sovereign territory. Now that it is all over, things cannot be the same again for we have learned something about ourselves—a lesson which we desperately needed to learn.

When we started out, there were the waverers and the fainthearts. The people who thought that Britain could no longer seize the initiative for herself. The people who thought we could no longer do the great things which we once did. Those who believed that our decline was irreversible—that we could never again be what we were.

There were those who would not admit it—even perhaps some here today—people who would have strenuously denied the suggestion but—in their heart of hearts—they too had their secret fears that it was true: that Britain was no longer the nation that had built an Empire and ruled a quarter of the world.

Well they were wrong. The lesson of the Falklands is that Britain has not changed and that this nation still has those sterling qualities which shine through our history. This generation can match their fathers and grandfathers in ability, in courage, and in resolution. We have not changed. When the demands of war and the dangers to our own people call us to arms—then we British are as we have always been: competent, courageous and resolute.

When called to arms—ah, that's the problem.

It took the battle in the South Atlantic for the shipyards to adapt ships way ahead of time; for dockyards to refit merchantmen and cruise liners, to fix helicopter platforms, to convert hospital ships—all faster than was thought possible; it took the demands of war for every stop to be pulled out and every man and woman to do their best.

British people had to be threatened by foreign soldiers and British territory invaded and then—why then—the response was incomparable. Yet why does it need a war to bring out our qualities and reassert our pride? Why do we have to be invaded before we throw aside our selfish aims and begin to work together as only we can work and achieve as only we can achieve? That, ladies and gentlemen, really is the challenge we as a nation face today. We have to see that the spirit of the South Atlantic—the real spirit of Britain—is kindled not only by war but can now be fired by peace. »

Excerpt from Margaret Thatcher's speech at the House of Commons on July 3, 1982

* The London terrorist attacks of July 7, 2005, 52 dead: Extract from Tony Blair's statement.

This is a terrible and tragic atrocity that has cost many innocent lives. (...)

I have just attended a meeting of the Government's emergency committee. I received a full report from the ministers and officials responsible. There will be an announcement made in respect of the various services, in particular we hope the Underground as far as is possible and rail and bus services are up and running as soon as possible. I would like again to express my profound condolences to the families of the victims and to those who are casualties of this terrorist act.

I would also like to thank the emergency services that have been magnificent today in every respect. There, of course, will now be the most intense police and security service action to make sure we bring those responsible to justice. I would also pay tribute to the stoicism and resilience of the people of London who have responded in a way typical of them.

* Parallel with the US video *London can take it*, Quentin Reynolds (1940)

* **David Cameron and the Blitz Spirit to face the economic crisis, 2012.**

« In his speech to the CBI conference on Monday, David Cameron issued a call to arms for the British public to realise their 'blitz spirit' in a bid to bolster the economy and reinstate Britain as one of the major contenders in the 'global race' of competitive industry.

His historical analogy alludes to a time where Britain, in a time of war, threw its conventions out of the window in order to address the fundamental issue: the threat of Nazi Germany. Cameron argued that Britain currently is in an 'economic equivalent of war' and could no longer be hindered by legal processes which frustrated its economic growth, the number one priority. (...) According to the Prime Minister, the government needs to be bold. It has been too slow in cutting the deficit, since judicial review applications are taking too long, and time is money. (...) »

Alexandra Rogers, « Keep quiet and Cameron » in *The Courier Online*, November 26, 2012

The cultural use of WW2:

The Dunkirk Spirit : <http://www.dunkirkspirit.com/>

Explain in details the marketing strategy of the Dunkirk spirit Gin.

III) A forgotten History is being written

1) The Jewish immigration during WW2, an issue raised partly thanks to the emergence of the compulsory Holocaust studies in the UK school curriculum since 1994.

Digging the British past towards the European Jews: the position of the historian Louise London, herself a refugees' daughter:

« (...) Telling the largely forgotten story of the exclusion of European Jews and of the battle to humanise British policy during the Holocaust is thus a task which falls to the historian, and it is not without risk. Because the story of exclusion and failure is not part of what most people remember, the historian who tells it may well be accused of neglecting the positive experience of refugees who came to Britain. (...). It falls to the historian to excavate the lost and forgotten parts of the past, as well as the truths we don't want to remember. The fact is that Britain did not welcome the refugees with open arms. (...) »

Louise London, *Whitehall and the Jews 1933-1948, British immigration policy, Jewish refugees and the Holocaust*.

Extract from the Introduction. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

'The less heroic side of Britain's record is now receiving greater attention' – Louise London:

« (...) By the 1930s, the UK's tradition of granting asylum to refugees had been relegated to the background. Still the source of much national pride, the humanitarian tradition had little impact on practice and had been largely superseded. (...) Minimising policy on refugees was seen as a way to minimise British involvement in action on refugees. (...) The British government never considered trying to solve the Jewish refugee problem nor did it believe that to do so would be in the interests of the UK.

(...)

In 1945, some 60,000 refugee Jews remained in the country. By then, many had been absorbed into British society. They had contributed to the war effort. (...) A final total of over 80,000 Jews from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia whom the government permitted to escape via the UK.

(...)

Ever since, the British record has been obscured by selective memories and complacency over Britain's war-time role. The myth was born that Britain did all it could for the Jews between 1933 and 1945. This comfortable view has proved remarkably durable and is still adduced to support claims that Britain has always admitted genuine refugees. (...) The less heroic side of Britain's record is now receiving greater attention. (...) A gulf exists between the memory and the history of that record. We remember the touching photographs of unaccompanied Jewish children arriving on Kindertransports. [But] in the aftermath of a devastating war, the predominant mood was relief, mingled with pride at Britain's heroic struggle, and the predominant desire to rebuild and make the most of the peace. In this climate, memories of the unsuccessful public campaign to persuade the government to rescue Jews from mass murder faded quickly. (...) »

Louise London, *Whitehall and the Jews 1933-1948, British immigration policy, Jewish refugees and the Holocaust*.

Extracts from the Introduction. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

As a result, much was done at a local and non governmental level :

a) One must underline MP Eleanor Rathbone's involvement during the 1940s:



Feminist Eleanor Rathbone, elected to parliament as an independent MP in 1929, had long campaigned against injustice. During the 1930s she was one of very few MPs, along with Churchill, who spoke out against the antisemitic policies of the Nazis. She was also violently against appeasement.

As news of Nazi mass murders made its way to Britain, Rathbone's parliamentary committee joined Jewish organizations in trying to frame some response. When Jan Karski reached England late in 1942 bringing word of extermination camps in Poland and the early use of gas, Rathbone was among those he contacted. For the next two years this issue almost blotted out all others. Together with Victor Gollancz, Victor Cazalet, and others, she founded a new organization, the National Committee for Rescue from Nazi Terror, to press the government to mount efforts to rescue those threatened with annihilation. A wide range of proposals—from underground work to pressure on neutrals and the satellite states and an actual offer to Hitler to take in all Jews from occupied lands—made their way from her committee to the Foreign and Home offices. Until 1944 at least its efforts met with very little response: officials adopted a dilatory, wait and see attitude and, to Rathbone's fury, tied the question up in leisurely international consultations. Repeatedly warned by officials that publicity might lead to retaliation against those she wished to help, she usually held her tongue; on a few occasions, though, she and her allies forced bitter Commons debates. Although Rathbone accepted that military efforts must come first, she could not understand the government's unwillingness even to contemplate attempts at rescue. As the death toll mounted, a sense of impotence occasionally overwhelmed her. Yet she never succumbed to despair or to talk of revenge: she was one of the few British politicians to denounce forthrightly the deportations of Germans at the end of the war and, together with Victor Gollancz, spearheaded a civilian effort to send foodstuffs to her former enemies in that dreadful post-war winter. She was caught up in this effort when she died suddenly of a stroke at her home, 26 Hampstead Lane, Highgate, Middlesex, on 2 January 1946. She was cremated and her name added to the family monument in the Smithfield Road cemetery, Liverpool.

http://www.theholocaustexplained.org/ks4/how-did-the-world-respond/how-did-britain-respond/did-britain-do-enough-to-help-the-jews/#.U_ZDbD_lrIU
<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35678>

b) The Kindertransport : facts and emerging memory

* In the wake of the *Krystallnacht* pogrom, the Central British Fund for German Jewry and other relief organisations lobbied the British government to allow more German and Austrian Jews into the country. The government agreed that unaccompanied Jewish children between the ages of two and seventeen years could enter the country. However, this was on the condition that they should not be a burden on the state. Entry into Britain was temporary, and for each child a £50 bond had to be found in order to guarantee its eventual return home. On 2 December 1938 the first 200 children assembled in Berlin to begin their journey. Over the following nine months 10,000 unaccompanied, mainly Jewish, children travelled to safety in Britain. This mission became known as the 'kindertransport'. The children had been allowed to pack a small suitcase containing clothes and their cherished possessions. Their journey saw the children travel by train across Germany, through Holland and on to the Hook of Holland. From there they travelled by boat across the English Channel to Harwich in England.

<http://www.theholocaustexplained.org/ks4/how-did-the-world-respond/how-did-britain-respond/the-kindertransport>



The first 200 Kindertransport children from Germany. They were Jewish Refugees and arrived in Harwich, England in December 1938.

Photo Courtesy of the USHMM

<http://www.kindertransport.org/history.htm>

An emerging memory: The Kindertransport Association (KTA) story:

In 1988 Bertha Leverton, a Kindertransport child living in London, began to plan a local 50th anniversary reunion of the Kindertransports. The news spread and the local gathering became an international reunion. In June 1989 over 1,200 people, Kinder (as they now called themselves) with spouses and children, arrived from all parts of the United Kingdom, Israel, the United States, Canada, Australia, and other countries including Nepal. They came to see and find old friends, to rejoice in their survival, to thank the people of Britain, to say Kaddish for the thousands of parents who with the strength of love had sent their children away to live, with the inner knowledge that they themselves might not. The majority of Kinder had never seen their parents again. In a letter read at this first major reunion of Kinder in England, Baroness Thatcher, then the Prime Minister of England, wrote "I am pleased and proud that the Government of the time offered you refuge and help, following the dreadful persecution you suffered in Germany and Central Europe. You came to us as homeless children and grew up to enrich the life of this country with your courage and fortitude."

The North American Kinder returned enthused from the London reunion and wanted to maintain their new and renewed associations. Eddy Behrendt in New York conceived of and, with the help of a few others, formed and

launched the Kindertransport Association in 1989. Approximately 2,500 Kinder had emigrated to the United States and Canada, and the response was immediate. Hundreds of Kinder and their spouses and children joined the new organization.

http://www.kindertransport.org/history06_London.htm

Rachel's testimony: video on line

Ruth was born in 1935 in Berlin, Germany to a Jewish father and a Christian mother. The Nazis classed Ruth as Jewish. After Kristallnacht on 9 November 1938 the situation for Jewish families across Germany became increasingly dangerous. Ruth's family decided that she and her brother, Martin, should be sent to Britain on the kindertransport.

<http://www.theholocaustexplained.org/ks4/how-did-the-world-respond/how-did-britain-respond/the-kindertransport/#.VBYTST9xnIU>

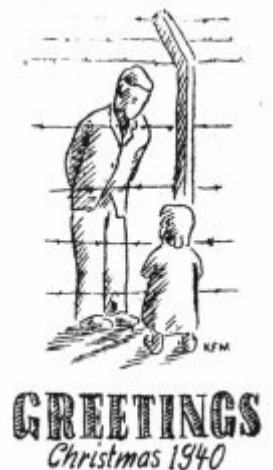
2) The British concentration camps for 'Enemy Aliens'

Many Jews and others considered 'undesirable' by the Nazi government were able to escape to Britain, but at the outbreak of war in September 1939 the British government, worried by the possibility of enemy spies infiltrating, rounded up hundreds of families of German origin and sent them by boat to the Isle of Man where they were separated - men to some camps and women and children to others.

By the end of 1940, 14,000 'enemy aliens' were interned on the Isle of Man. Many of them were University Professors and other professionals (Ellen's father, for example, was an Industrial Chemist) and the camp included such inmates as Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, Lord Weidenfeld, Sir Charles Forte, the famous artist Kurt Schwitters, and the concert pianists Rawicz and Landauer.

Slowly this traditional holiday island was transformed into an internment camp. Boarding houses became barrack blocks and internees took part in local farm work, ran their own newspapers, and even set up internal businesses

<http://timewitnesses.org/english/IsleOfMan.html>



Testimonies:

Source A

Why should 70,000 aliens be allowed to go about freely in this country? I know from German servants that they idolise Hitler.

The Germans interned Englishwomen of 70 years and more in Poland. The time has come when all persons of German origin should be looked upon as potential enemies and interned.

There is no such thing as a friendly German.

Letter in the *Daily Sketch*, 10 April 1940

Source B

I was interned. Just like that. Two policemen came and fetched me. People stood lining the streets, throwing stones at you, spitting at you and shouting 'Spies!' That was horrible. Everyone thought it would be a concentration camp like it is in Germany.

Several of them wanted to jump into the water, because they didn't know what was in front of them. When we arrived on the Isle of Man, we had pictures taken with our number on. We already had the feeling that we were criminals.

Mrs Hilda Wolfgang, remembering later.
Hilda was an ordinary housewife and was completely loyal.

Source C

I think the government of the day panicked. Of course there may have been a few spies. But I can't believe it was necessary to lock up thousands of people, some of them great scientists and engineers who could have been useful. Surely a couple of days checking backgrounds would have revealed that we had more reason to hate Hitler than the British.

[Claus Moser](#), remembering in 1983
Claus and his family were refugees from Hitler's Germany.

www.johndclare.net

3) A smell of British Fascism still alive ? Oswald Mosley's shadow on the British Far Right

(...) The fascist groupuscules that emerged after the first world war were initially of an extreme reactionary and antisemitic cast, but they also had taproots deep in the English countryside. Oswald Mosley, whose fascist conversion was godfathered by Il Duce (and his party financed by him), paid much attention to farmers, and just as his attacks on international finance capital would strike a chord with today's anti-globalisation protesters, so his emphasis on protectionism and economic autarky would play well in the shires. Even the antisemitism of the BUF – as detailed by Pugh – emerges only in the late 1930s as a tactical measure and as a byproduct of anti-communism, rather than being intrinsic to Mosley's own political vision. This is not to suggest that Mosley wasn't an antisemite, only that his antisemitism – like the racism of the British right today – was an ambient noise rather than a fanfare. (...) Just as the BUF waned in the late 1930s, so the BNP has been in decline for the past couple of years, despite the political climate seeming more propitious than ever for far right germination. But then British fascism, I would contend, has never been simply about skinheads sporting swastikas: there remains a sector of our society that still believes parliamentary democracy to be a sham; still thinks that black and brown people are inferior (while Jews are worryingly and magically superior); remains powerfully xenophobic and looks to a nationalist renaissance; and of course, still reads the *Daily Mail*.

It may not be the case that Ukip occupies the same Cotswolds of the psyche as these indigenous fascists, but their territory certainly borders it, and just as the Tories may fear their own diaspora, Nigel Farage has to worry about immigration from the far right.

Will Self, « Will Self walks through Britain's flag-waving heartlands » in *The Guardian*, March 7, 2013

<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/mar/07/will-self-flag-waving-heartlands>
