

# HOW HAVE THE CONFLICTS OF WORLD WAR 2 SHAPED BRITISH HISTORY?

## KEY EVENTS IN WORLD WAR II

1939	1st September	German troops invaded Poland. WWII begins.
	3rd September	Britain and France declare war on Germany.
1940	10th May	The Battle of France begins.
	26th May	Allied forces are evacuated from Dunkirk in France.
	10th July	The Battle of Britain begins.
	7th September	The Blitz begins.
1941	22nd June	Germany invades the USSR (Soviet Union).
	7th December	Japan bombs pearl harbour in the US.
1943	16th & 17th May	The Dambusters bombing raid is carried out.
1944	6th June	The D-Day landings.
1945	7th May	Germany surrenders to the Allies.
	6th & 9th August	The US drops atomic bombs on 2 cities in Japan.
	2nd September	End of WWII.

## WHAT WAS WORLD WAR II?

World War II was a battle between two groups of countries: the "Allies" and the "Axis". It lasted from the 1st September 1939 to 2nd September 1945.

Before WWII began, Germany was ruled by a man named Adolf Hitler. Together with the Nazi Party, he wanted Germany to rule Europe. To gain more land and power, on 1 September 1939 German troops invaded Poland. After Hitler refused to stop the invasion, Britain and France declared war on Germany and World War II had begun.

## THE ALLIES AND THE AXIS

World War II was a battle between two groups of countries: the **Allies** and the **Axis**. The major Allied Powers were Britain, France, Russia, China and the United States. The major Axis Powers were Germany, Italy and Japan



**THE ALLIES**



**THE AXIS**

## SIGNIFICANT LEADERS OF THE ALLIES AND THE AXIS

### WINSTON CHURCHILL



Winston Churchill was the Prime Minister of Britain from 1940.

He is known for leading the allies to victory during World War II.

Churchill inspired the country to keep fighting despite the bad circumstances. He also helped to create an alliance of Allied Powers to help fight Germany.

### ADOLF HITLER



Adolf Hitler was the leader of Germany from 1933 - 1945.

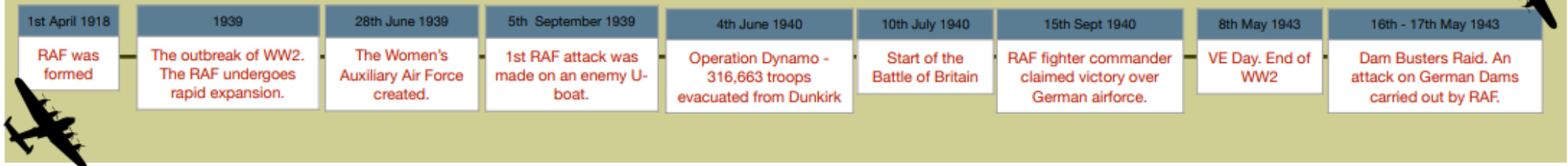
He was the leader of the Nazi Party and became a powerful dictator. He wanted Germany to be the most powerful empire and to rule Europe. It was Hitler who began World War II by invading Poland, in an attempt to gain more land and power.

### JOSEPH STALIN



Joseph Stalin was the leader of the Soviet Union (Russia) during World War II. Stalin came to power through being a member of the Communist Party and from 1929 to 1953 he was the dictator of the Soviet Union. He is well known for fighting the Germans, with the Allies in World War II.

## TIMELINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE RAF IN WWII



## LEO KISAMORE

Leo Kisamore was born in 1921 in Maryland, USA. He was killed in action in 1943. Leo was an American co-pilot, who was based in England, during World War II, at Thurleigh Airfield. He was part of the 306th Bombardment Group of the American Airforce (AAF). He flew a B17 Bomber, which was known as the Flying Fortress. Leo's plane was nicknamed The Battling B. His service number was T-000104.



Leo completed two missions. However, Leo didn't survive his third mission in World War II. He was shot down in Germany into the North Sea on the 15th May, 1943.

Leo Kisamore earned three badges and six medals for his work in World War II. He was awarded The Distinguished Flying Cross award, a Purple Heart award, a Flight Officer Badge, a Bronze Star Medal and many more. He earned the Purple Heart award for bravery after being killed in action.



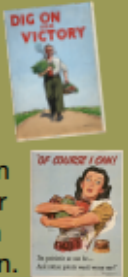
## EVACUATION

During World War II, over 3.5 million children, along with mothers with very young children, pregnant women and people with disabilities, were evacuated from the cities to the countryside, where it was believed they would be safer from bombing. All evacuees had to take their gas mask, ration book and identity card. When they reached their destination, a billeting officer would arrange a host family for them.



## THE HOME FRONT

The term 'home front' refers to the activities of the people who stayed in their home countries, to support the military during war. This was called the 'war effort'. During World War II, the support and actions of the civilians in Britain played an important part towards the eventual success of the allies. People on the home front contributed to the war effort in many different ways, including: joining a civil defence organisation (like the Home Guard or Air Raid Precautions), rationing, joining the land army, growing food, evacuation, taking on jobs men who joined the army had left behind and simply making do while the war went on.



## RATIONING

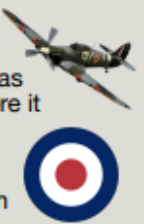
During World War II, supply ships were targeted by German bombers and it was necessary to conserve as much food as possible. Rationing meant that each person was only allowed a fixed amount of foods. Ration books were issued, with coupons that showed people how much of each item they were allowed. Shopkeepers would remove or stamp the coupons when they were used. People were also encouraged to 'Dig for Victory' and grow as much of their own food as possible. Petrol, soap, clothing and timber were also in short supply.



## THE RAF

The Royal Air Force (RAF) is the United Kingdom's air force. It was formed towards the end of World War I on 1st April 1918. The RAF was the largest air force in the world at the time and has played a key role in British military history. It played a large role in the Second World War where it fought its most famous battle, the Battle of Britain.

The Battle of Britain took place between 10th July 1940 and 31st October 1940. It was the ongoing battle between the RAF and the German airforce to control the skies above the British Isles.





# THE BLITZ

On 7th September 1940 the German airforce began bombing London and other cities in the UK. The bombings came night after night and thousands of people lost their lives. London faced almost two months of continuous bombing, and many other big cities were also targeted. Many lives were lost in the Blitz, from RAF pilots to innocent civilians. This was part of the Battle of Britain.

Air raid sirens were used to warn people of a bombing. When a bomb was expected to drop, cities would play an air raid siren that would alert people to get into an air-raid shelter for protection.

During the Blitz, cities were told to go into blackout during the night. This meant that streetlights, car lights and any lights that were outside needed to be switched off. People boarded up their windows to make sure that light could not be seen from their houses. 1.5 million women and schoolchildren were also evacuated from the cities to the countryside.



## ANDERSON SHELTERS

Anderson Shelters were designed, during World War II, to keep you safe during bombings. Anderson shelters were half buried into the ground with earth heaped on top to protect you from bomb blasts. They were effective at saving lives and preventing major injuries during air raids. They were, however, cold and the government had to issue guidelines about how to make the Anderson Shelters more comfortable during winter months, to ensure people stayed protected even in winter.

Anderson Shelters were made from 6 corrugated iron slates, bolted together at the top with steel plates at either end.



## SOCIETY IN WWII

### Men

Men aged between 19 and 30 were expected to fight in WWII, unless they were medically unfit. Men would be called up to serve their country, and would have to leave their jobs and their families to join the fight. Men who did not fight, supported with the war effort on the home front.



### Women

With men away fighting, women had to take on jobs and roles only men would have previously been allowed to do. They supported with the war effort on the home front, being called up to work in factories, on the land or in the armed forces. After the war, women fought for more equal rights, after having proved themselves while then men were away fighting.



### Children:

During WWII, many children who lived in cities were evacuated to the countryside where it was believed they would be safer from bombings and air raids. They would have to leave their families and homes to stay with a host family.



## THE END OF WWII

The 8th of May 1945 officially marked the end of World War II, in Europe. This came after Germany's surrender, the news of which quickly spread throughout the world. This marks what we now know as VE Day (Victory in Europe Day). People gathered in the streets, hugging one another and celebrating the end of the horrific conflict that had taken over the world for the past 6 years.

