

# Memories of a 12-Year-Old Evacuee

The war is won. It's VE day.  
A wild excitement fills the air.  
Grown-ups busy, children play  
among the tables, standing there  
in roads bedecked with myriad flags  
and bunting hung across the street.  
Women dressed in their best 'rags'  
pile tables high with things to eat.

Men pull rafters from a bomb site,  
building a gigantic fire.  
Hitler, sitting very upright,  
waiting for his funeral pyre.  
Ernie plays the old 'joanna',  
favourite tunes that won the war.  
Any song for just a tanner;  
money goes to help the poor.

Beer and whisky flow like water,  
hoarded for this special day.  
Young men hang round Charlie's daughter,  
pretty as the flowers in May.  
Darkness falls, they light the fire.  
Flaming fingers reach the top.  
Adolph, sitting in a tyre,  
Burns until his head goes 'Pop'.

Dance and singing follow after.  
Okey cokey, Conga too.  
Food and drink and lots of laughter.  
Oh, it was a perfect do.

So our super day has ended,  
heads are aching, feet are sore.  
Still, at least they'll soon be mended;  
different from those hurt in war.  
Let us hope we never have to  
celebrate a VE day.

Be as one, just Europeans.



# The Longest Day

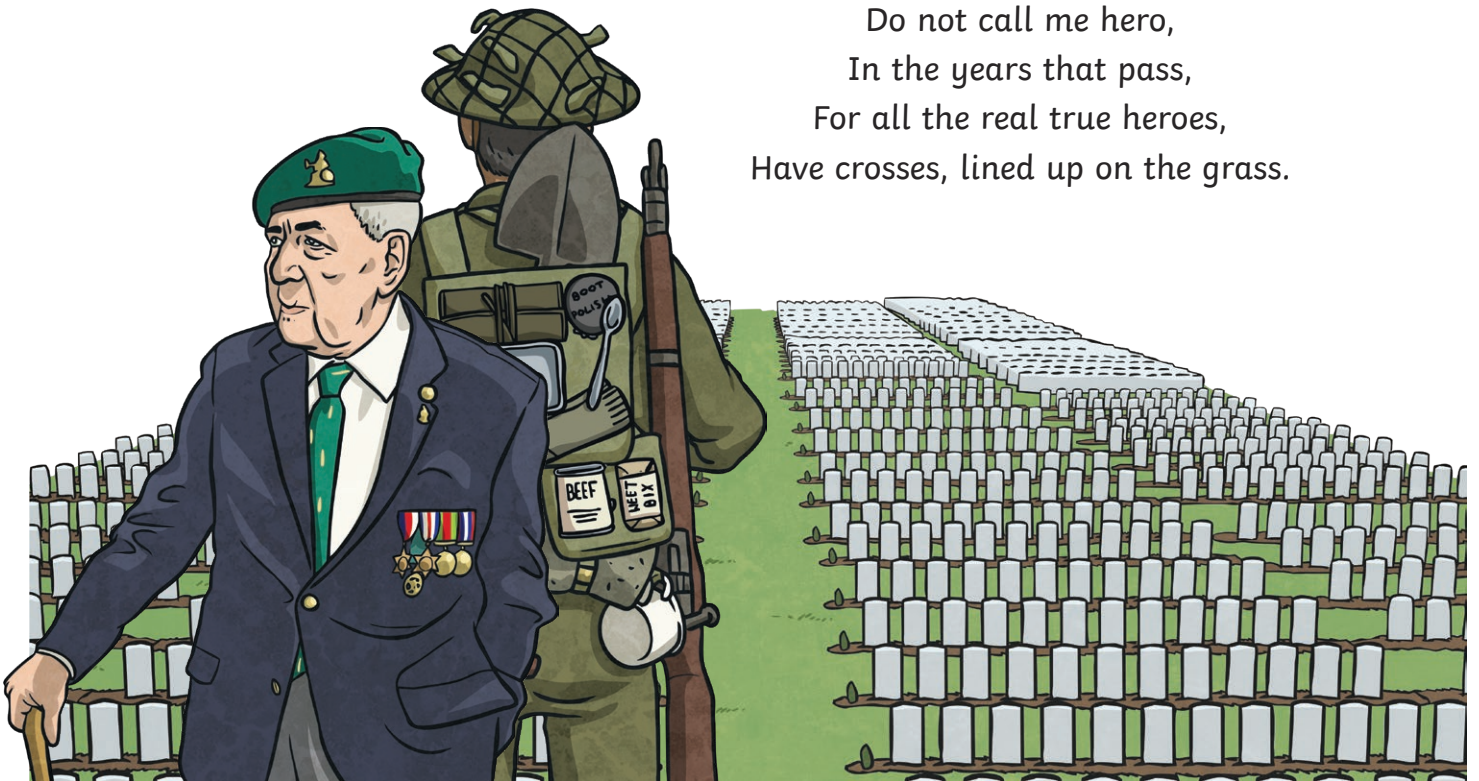
Do not call me hero,  
When you see the medals that I wear,  
Medals maketh not the hero,  
They just prove that I was there.

Do not call me hero,  
Now that I am old and grey,  
I left a lad, returned a man,  
They stole my youth that day.

Do not call me hero,  
When we ran the wall of hail,  
The blood, the fears, the cries, the tears  
We left them where they fell.

Do not call me hero,  
Each night I stop and pray,  
For all the friends I knew and lost,  
I survived my longest day.

Do not call me hero,  
In the years that pass,  
For all the real true heroes,  
Have crosses, lined up on the grass.



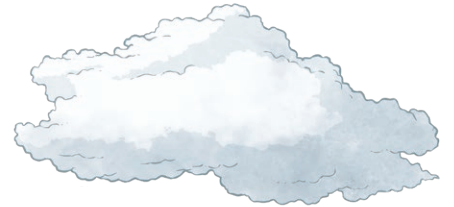
Rob Aitchinson, WW2 People's War  
WW2 People's War is an online archive of wartime memories contributed by members of the public and gathered by the BBC.  
The archive can be found at [bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar](http://bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar)

# Forget Us Not

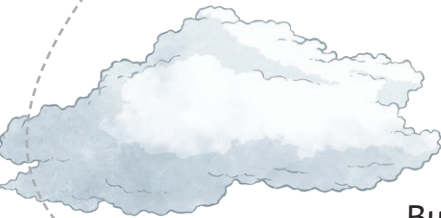
Forget us not,  
For we made our pledge for you,  
Gave Heart, and Mind, and Life,  
For peaceful times.



For us not,  
Our cause for England's sake,  
Look to those foreign fields,  
Upon our endless graves.



Look to the skies,  
To where the skylark sings in freedom's flight,  
Piercing with song,  
The tranquil morning light.



Look on, and think not of goodbyes,  
But with us pledge, that we, with thoughts of you,  
Gave body, hope for future years,  
Man's path would lead to right.



Forget us not,  
When thoughts of England flow,  
When in the fields  
The abundant poppies grow.

For life, gave life,  
As of the scattered seed,  
And this our sacrifice,  
In England's times of need.



Maxwell Dunlop, WW2 People's War  
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# Victory Day



Day of joy and of sadness,  
Day of sorrow and of gladness,  
Day of cheering and of drinking,  
Day of crying and of thinking.

Day of prayer to God above,  
Day of prayer for those we love,  
Day of prayer for those we've lost,  
Day of counting up the cost.

Day when Allies fight is done,  
Day when victory is won,  
Day for peace - so long expected,  
Day for children - long neglected.

Day with factory wheels at rest,  
Day with people in their 'best',  
Day of crowds and shouts and noise,  
Day of returning girls and boys.

Day of Liberty, day to pray,  
Day of Victory, Victory Day.



Joe Heard, WW2 People's War, who lost two of his brothers during the war.

*Hubert, Joe's youngest brother, was in the RNVR and was called up as soon as war was declared. He served on the "Jerivs Bay" and was killed on 5th November 1940. His other brother, Peter, was a skipper of the "Rosena" and a minesweeper. He was killed on 7th January 1943.*

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# VE Day, 1945

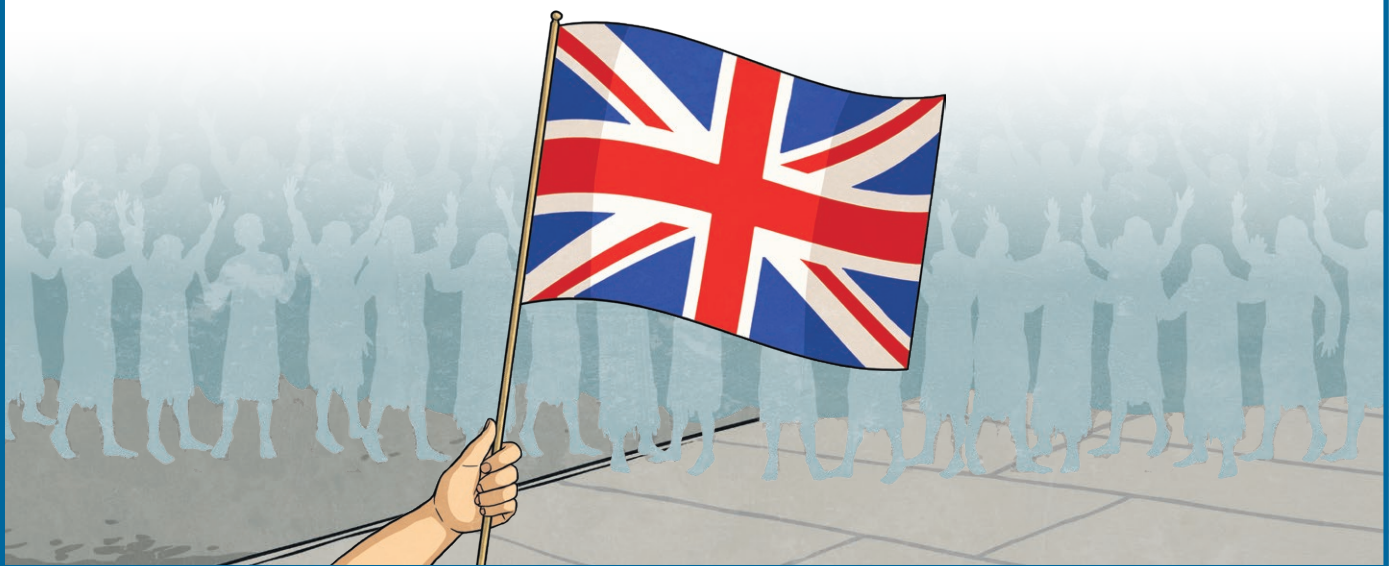
The radio gave out the news: "War's Over!"  
We've victory in Europe. peace at last!  
The Government announced a National Holiday  
To celebrate that war in Europe's past!

Our students hostel buzzed with great excitement,  
My fellow students rushed to Leicester Square  
Or Piccadilly Circus, Buckingham Palace,  
Westminster Bridge, Embankment; funtime shared!

I longed to travel home, rejoin my parents,  
But feared I'd not complete the journey back  
Through crowded London Underground, be sharing  
Congested carriages, each one jam-packed!

Decided to catch up with College studies.  
Heard dance music from Clapham Common rise  
Up to my study-bedroom. Dropped all prudence  
And joined an Army Band on Common espied.

We danced with men in uniform, al fresco,  
Quickstep, waltz, foxtrot played by military Band.  
Great War was over. Peace now reigned in Europe.  
Enjoyed our VE Holiday unplanned.



*Gwen Blott, WW2 People's War*  
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