



Sinking Of The Lancastria

Stephen Wynn



Sinking Of The Lancastria:

The Sinking of the Lancastria Jonathan Fenby, 2005 A fortnight after the evacuation at Dunkirk some 150 000 British troops were still stuck in France As the German advance thundered west these Allied soldiers and airmen were faced with a mad dash to the coast in the hope that a troop ship awaited them there One such vessel was the Lancastria a 16 000 ton liner pressed into service and now anchored off the port of St Nazaire On 17 June 1940 ready to head for home the ship was bombed by the Luftwaffe As she sank between 3 500 and 4 000 of those on board lost their lives Re creating this extraordinary episode with great narrative flair Jonathan Fenby shows us not just the human stories behind the disaster but the cover up that followed as Churchill ordered a blanket ban on news stories for the sake of the country s morale Gripping and moving LANCASTRIA tells one of the great forgotten stories of the Second World War *Lancastria. [An Account of the Sinking of the Lancastria at St. Nazaire. With Plates.]*. Geoffrey Bond (Novelist.), 1959 **The Lancastria Tragedy** Stephen Wynn, 2020-09-19 The story behind the sinking of the Lancastria comes in two parts the sinking of the ship itself and the people who died and the aftermath which led to allegations of a government cover up ordered by Winston Churchill There is an officially accepted list of those who died but allegations that hundreds more went down with the ship and have not been accounted for still linger to this very day The Lancastria a pre war Cunard cruise liner was requisitioned by the Admiralty and turned in to a wartime troop ship On 17 June 1940 whilst being used as part of Operation Aerial to evacuate civilian refugees and British military personnel from France it was anchored about 5 miles from the coast of St Nazaire While waiting for a naval escort to see it safely back to England the Lancastria was attacked by enemy aircraft and sank within 20 minutes As no official figures have ever been released there is no way of knowing exactly how many lives were lost Winston Churchill placed what was known as a D Notice on the tragic events thereby restricting the press from reporting it However once a New York newspaper had broken the story the flood gates were opened for British newspapers to follow suit But what was the purpose of the D Notice Was it because the British public had already received too much bad news since the war had begun as Churchill declared Or was it a cover up Those who survived the incident were told in no uncertain terms not to speak about their experience although plenty did With much of the information about the Lancastria s sinking in the public domain within a matter of days the question has to be asked why are official documents in relation to the matter being kept secret until the year 2040 **The Sinking of the Lancastria** Jonathan Fenby, 2006-09-20 On June 17 1940 just after the Dunkirk evacuation had supposedly ended in success several thousand of the many British troops still left in France swarmed aboard the five decked cruise liner Lancastria Immediately after they boarded the ship was dive bombed by the German Luftwaffe the 17 000 ton Lancastria sank and hell on earth ensued German fighter planes strafed the oil slick sea setting it ablaze as British troops banded together singing Roll out the Barrel in a courageous attempt to protect any sense of hope that still remained With 4 000 soldiers women and children dead and some estimates as high as 6 000 the disaster would

eclipse that of both the Lusitania and the Titanic Although the story was picked up in the United States a few weeks later it was reported only once by any British news outlet and as the war progressed the tragedy eventually vanished from the public record and the collective memory of a nation under siege Author Jonathan Fenby argues that this was the result of a shrewd but necessary kibosh put in place by Winston Churchill in order to preserve British morale Churchill claimed he simply forgot to tell his administration they could report the news Lancastria. [On the Sinking of the Lancastria, Off St. Nazaire, June 17th 1940. With Plates Geoffrey BOND (Novelist.),1959 Britain 1940 Anton Rippon,2020-05-27 This portrait of early WWII British life nicely weaves together anecdotes and stories of actual individuals that help illustrate the overall experience The NYMAS Review On New Year's Day 1940 the people of Britain looked back on the first four months of the Second World War with a sort of puzzled unease Wartime life was nothing like what they'd imagined Unlike in the First World War there was no fighting on the Western Front Indeed there was no Western Front There had been no major air attacks Four days into the war German bombers had approached the East Coast but no bombs were dropped Everyone carried their gas masks but there was no poison gas Petrol was the only commodity rationed and there was no noticeable shortage of food Young men called up to join the forces were largely idle They certainly were not fighting the Germans In January 1940 life in wartime Britain was simply an inconvenient version of life in peacetime Even the hitherto strictly enforced blackout regulations were relaxed when it became obvious that because of them people were being killed in road accidents But on New Year's Eve 1940 Britain was deep in the throes of war In September the Germans had launched what was to be an eight month bombing campaign that targeted every one of Britain's major cities By the end of 1940 German air raids had killed 15 000 civilians This book tells the story of this dramatic year as the war in Britain progressed from dull to devastating *Maritime Casualties* Tuuli Messer-Bookman,2015-08-28 Since the Titanic disaster of 1912 the horrors of major maritime casualties have prompted international conventions and domestic legislation but the link between events and outcomes which are often separated by many years is rarely understood by those working in the maritime industry This book the only comprehensive guide to this link sets forth the major casualties of the last hundred years and explains resulting regulatory changes Taking a macro level view it describes the trends and reactions across decades and how over time focus has shifted from equipment failures to people and their behaviors as the primary cause of maritime casualties Timely and thorough it also explores the alarming increase in the criminalization of maritime accidents especially the relatively recent reclassification of pollution incidents as environmental crimes This book offers broad insight to the history laws and conventions that regulate worldwide commercial maritime activity The Sinking of the Laconia and the U-Boat War James P. Duffy,2013-04-01 Originally published Santa Barbara California Praeger ABC CLIO 2009 *Doomed Ships* William H., Jr. Miller,2012-06-29 Nearly 200 photographs many from private collections highlight tales of some of the vessels whose pleasure cruises ended in catastrophe the Morro Castle Normandie Andrea Doria Europa and many others **Churchill's Flawed Decisions** Stephen

Wynn,2020-05-30 An examination of the political and military controversies that turned out to be missteps on the road to greatness for the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill is undoubtedly one of the most respected and best loved characters England has ever known However much of how people view him is based on his leadership during the bleak and dire times of the Second World War If it wasn't for him Britain would almost definitely have lost the war there were those in government who encouraged Churchill to strike a deal with Hitler at the time of the Dunkirk evacuations which took place just three weeks after he had been made Prime Minister but he stuck resolutely to his guns and said no However Churchill was never the favorite to take over after Neville Chamberlain resigned Indeed everyone believed Lord Halifax would be the next Prime Minister although even he thankfully recognized that Winston Churchill was the best man for the job even though King George VI disagreed Yet there was another side to Churchill that is not often spoken of and one that led to him making some questionable decisions Some of these it could be argued were for national security reasons but others were not proving that even the very best are not always as perfect as they first appear This book looks at Churchill's most questionable decisions throughout his career from the Sidney Street Siege in London in January 1910 through the Bengal Famine of 1943 to the Mau Mau Uprising in British Kenya between 1952 and 1964

Devon at War, 1939-45 Derek Tait,2017-10-30 When war was declared on 1 September 1939 the people of Devon pulled together in a way that they hadn't done since the Great War of 1914-18 This book covers the people of Devon's contribution to the war effort from the commencement of the conflict in September 1939 to its end in September 1945 It features many forgotten news stories of the day and looks at the changes to civilian's everyday lives entertainment spies and the internment of aliens living within the area Devon became vital as a base for troops and as a dispatch point for the many men who left to fight in Europe Several RAF bases were also established within the county to repel German attacks Air raid shelters were erected in gardens and at public places and many children living in larger cities were swiftly evacuated to the countryside as Plymouth and Exeter both suffered greatly from German bombing with much of Plymouth being obliterated Carrying a gas mask rationing the make do and mend culture and the collection of scrap metal all became a generic way of life Many of the jobs left open by men fighting abroad were taken up by women on the Home Front The Women's Voluntary Service assisted with the evacuation of mothers and children to the country carried out civil defense duties and provided food and clothing for the many refugees from occupied Europe During the buildup to D Day American troops were trained and stationed within the county before leaving for the beaches of Normandy Slapton Sands Dartmoor and Woolacombe were all used as training grounds with tragic loss of life at Slapton Devon played a truly vital role in the war and its people contributed greatly to bringing the world changing conflict to an end

The British Army in France After Dunkirk Patrick Takle,2009-07-19 Although over 330 000 British and French soldiers were evacuated from the Dunkirk beaches between 26 May and 4 June many thousands remained in France most under French command Churchill now the Prime Minister and desperate to keep the French in the War decided to form a

Second BEF made up of 51 Highland 1st Armoured and the Beauman Divisions reinforced from the UK by a second Corps He also ordered vital and scarce RAF fighter squadrons to France Had these been lost the Battle of Britain might have had a very different result General Alan Brooke was to command the second Corps comprising the only viable formations in the UK Realizing the hopelessness of his mission he delayed for as long as possible Meanwhile the situation in France went from bad to worse and five units were squandered At St Valery 800 of the 51st Highland Division surrendered after heavy fighting and being outflanked by Rommel This is the fascinating story of a disaster that could have been so much worse had Churchill had his way

Remarkable Women of the Second World War Victoria Panton Bacon,2022-06-16 They were told to hold the fort They did far more than that When the Second World War broke out the task of keeping society afloat fell on the shoulders of the women left behind Women the world over stepped into boots they d never worn before becoming engineers labourers and intelligence experts Their houses were razed to the ground they fled their enemy occupied countries and they picked up guns to defend their homes but their stories are rarely told Remarkable Women of the Second World War is a collection of twelve of these stories all carefully gathered and retold by Victoria Panton Bacon These are the stories of Galina Russian navigator who flew on the front line for the Red Army alongside the feared Night Witches Ena an ATA engineer who didn t think much of the Spitfires and Hurricanes she worked on and Lee a Jewish girl who fled Frankfurt and arrived in Coventry on a Kindertransport train These women weren t remarkable because of high rank or status but because of their grit resilience and determination These are the tales of ordinary women who did extraordinary things

Dunkirk Hugh Sebag-Montefiore,2007-05-31 Special 75th Anniversary Edition Hugh Sebag Montefiore s Dunkirk Fight to the Last Man tells the story of the rescue in May 1940 of British soldiers fleeing capture and defeat by the Nazis at Dunkirk Dunkirk was not just about what happened at sea and on the beaches The evacuation would never have succeeded had it not been for the tenacity of the British soldiers who stayed behind to ensure they got away Men like Sergeant Major Gus Jennings who died smothering a German stick bomb in the church at Esquelbecq in an effort to save his comrades and Captain Marcus Ervine Andrews VC who single handedly held back a German attack on the Dunkirk perimeter thereby allowing the British line to form up behind him Told to stand and fight to the last man these brave few battalions fought in whatever manner they could to buy precious time for the evacuation Outnumbered and outgunned they launched spectacular and heroic attacks time and again despite ferocious fighting and the knowledge that for many only capture or death would end their struggle A searing story both meticulous military history and a deeply moving testimony to the extraordinary personal bravery of individual soldiers Tim Gardam The Times Sebag Montefiore tells the story with gusto a remarkable attention to detail and an inexhaustible appetite for tracking down the evidence Richard Ovary Telegraph Hugh Sebag Montefiore was a barrister before becoming a journalist and then an author He wrote the best selling Enigma The Battle for the Code One of his ancestors was evacuated from Dunkirk

Remarkable Journeys of the Second World War Victoria Panton Bacon,2020-09-01

Those who lived through the Second World War have many stories of bravery sadness horror doubt and longing Inspired by conversations with veterans following the publication of her grandfather s wartime memoir Victoria Panton Bacon has gathered a moving collection of their experiences Their recollections tell of a different time and reveal the courage actions and sentiments of those whose wartime experiences changed the course of history stories of ordinary people who lived under the long shadows cast by the war and whose young lives were changed irrevocably Though many tales are sad describing being sent into war and the loss of friends and family there are also stories of joy and love found in the darkest of times For them war the ultimate leveller threw them into remarkable times whether they were a merchant seaman army officer pilot young Jewish girl code breaker or Home Guard recruit From one extraordinary story to the next Remarkable Journeys of the Second World War immerses the reader in the lives of real people who lived through conflict

The D-Day Landing on Gold Beach Andrew Holborn,2015-09-24 The Normandy landings of 6 June 1944 across five sectors of the French coast Utah Omaha Gold Juno and Sword constituted the largest amphibious invasion in history This study analyses in depth the preparations and implementation of the D Day landing on Gold Beach by XXX Corps Historians have tended to dismiss the landing on Gold Beach as straightforward but the evidence points to a different reality Armour supported the infantry landing and prior bombing was intended to weaken German defences however the bulk of the bombing landed too far inland and many craft foundered in difficult conditions at sea It was the tenacity of the assault units and the flexibility of the follow up units which enabled the Gold landing to secure the right flank of the British Army in Normandy Using detailed primary evidence from The National Archives and the Imperial War Museum this volume provides a substantial assessment of the background to the landing on Gold and analyses the events of D Day in the wider context of the Normandy Campaign

Spanish Republicans and the Second World War Jonathan Whitehead,2021-09-30 Spanish Republicans and the Second World War tells the stories of the 500 000 Spanish Republicans that fled across the Pyrenees in 1939 as Catalonia fell to Franco s victorious army in the final weeks of the Civil War Many of the exiles played an active part in the Second World War Some joined the French and British armed forces and saw action in various theatres including Africa and Europe both in 1940 and after D Day In August 1944 Spanish Republicans in the La Nueve Company of General Leclerc s Deuxi me Blind e were the first Allied troops into Paris during the liberation of the French capital Those that had remained in Vichy France were active in the early days of the French Resistance and Republican Maquis also played a significant part in the liberation of the south west of France in 1944 Those who fought the Axis troops in Spain during the Civil War and then again in France assumed that once the Allies had defeated the Nazis they would launch a military campaign to overthrow Franco s government in Spain In October 1944 a force of thousands of Spanish Maquis took part in Operaci n Reconquista the invasion of the Valley of Aran on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees Their declared aim was to trigger a popular uprising and force the Allies to intervene against Franco s dictatorship Whitehead also examines the role of the Spanish volunteers of the

Division Azul who swore an oath of allegiance to Hitler and fought with the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front the role of the master double agent Garbo who played a crucial part in the success of D Day the strategic importance of Gibraltar and the activities of the British diplomatic corps and secret services in resisting Hitler's plans to invade the Iberian Peninsula

Allied Air Operations 1939-1940 Jerry Murland, 2022-07-20 While much has been written about the Battle of Britain the air war over France and the Low Countries from September 1939 to June 1940 has been largely neglected until now As expert aviation author Jerry Murland reveals in this fascinating book there may have been little ground action until May 1940 but the war in the air was far from phoney In contrast to their adversaries the Allied air forces on the mainland of Europe were poorly equipped regardless of increased development from 1934 onwards But in spite of this when the German invasion began the Low Countries of Holland and Belgium fought back tenaciously While development of the Spitfire Blenheim and Wellington was continuing at a pace the RAF with only four squadrons of Hurricanes among a force of outdated bi planes was a little more prepared than the French but still woefully outgunned by the Luftwaffe While the Allied air forces of Britain France and the Low Countries may have been inferior the gallantry and tenacity of their pilots makes for inspiring reading This is a work that will enthral and inform all those interested in the history of the Second World War particularly aviation enthusiasts

Fleeing France Alan Hlad, 2024-07-23 Inspired by real wartime events including the evacuation of Dunkirk and the sinking of RMS Lancastria one of the most harrowing disasters in British maritime history this is a riveting superbly researched slice of historical fiction and a timeless story of strength and sacrifice Will appeal to fans of *Beneath a Scarlet Sky* and *Eternal France* 1939 A talented singer Ruth Lacroix has left Maine to live with her aunt and uncle dreaming of performing at the Casino de Paris But with the outbreak of war and the heartbreaking news that her cousin has been killed by German forces that goal is supplanted by another to support France in any way she can Though Ruth has never driven a vehicle larger than the tractor on her parents farm she joins a friend in enlisting as a driver for the French ambulance corps On their way to transfer injured soldiers to Dunkirk for evacuation they encounter Jimmie a British Royal Air Force pilot with No 73 Squadron RAF who has bailed out of his burning plane As Dunkirk falls blocking off the route to the northern coast word spreads of a daring Allied plan to rescue the remaining troops and civilians from ports in western France code name Operation Aerial Over two hazardous weeks Ruth and Jimmie will journey hundreds of miles together helping other refugees as they rush to reach the sea before they are overtaken by the Germany army But all their courage and resilience offer no certainty in wartime when a single stroke of luck or a split second decision can mean the difference between life and death

Finest Hour Tim Clayton, Philip R. Craig, 2002-02-12 This book recreates the tensions and uncertainties of the events of 1940

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