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INTRODUCTION

Dear Member

We hope you find the details included in this edition of interest. Many of the matters are not greatly discussed in the general media any more but the consequences for world affairs are still being felt.

While we celebrate the victory and respect the dead of WWII it seems we must still fight for a peaceful future for our children.

Regards

Graham Castle

Chairman

V-J DAY

Japan publicly announced its surrender on 15 August 1945. This day has since been commemorated as Victory over Japan - or 'VJ' - Day.

On 2 September, a formal surrender ceremony took place on board the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, officially bringing the Second World War to an end. Millions of people across the world celebrated Allied victory over Japan in August and September 1945.



Imperial War Museum (EA 75893)

Japan had put forth an offer of surrender on 10 August, but it took several days for the exact terms of the surrender to be agreed. When news of this initial offer broke, London took to the streets to celebrate. In this photograph, American Sergeant Franklin G. Talley, assisted by an airman of the Royal Air Force (RAF), holds up a copy of the Evening News while seated on traffic lights in London's Oxford Circus on 10 August 1945.

Official Japanese Surrender - 2nd Sept. 1945

Missouri surrender picture by Army Signal Corps - Naval Historical Center Photo # USA C-2719. Photograph from the Army Signal Corps Collection in the U.S. National Archives., Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2684817>



Surrender of Japan, Tokyo Bay, 2 September 1945: Representatives of the Empire of Japan on board USS Missouri (BB-63) during the surrender ceremonies.

Standing in front are: Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu (wearing top hat) and General Yoshijiro Umezu, Chief of the Army General Staff.

Behind them are three representatives each of the Foreign Ministry, the Army and the Navy. They include, in middle row, left to right: Major General Yatsuji Nagai, Army; Katsuo Okazaki, Foreign Ministry; Rear Admiral Tadatoshi Tomioka, Navy; Toshikazu Kase, Foreign Ministry, and Lieutenant General Suichi Miyakazi, Army.

In the back row, left to right (not all are visible): Rear Admiral Ichiro Yokoyama, Navy; Saburo Ota, Foreign Ministry; Katsuo Shiba, Navy, and Kazuyi Sugita, Army. (Identities those in second and third rows are from an annotated photograph in Naval Historical Center files.)

History of VJ Day

Following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's acceptance to the **Potsdam Declaration** (held July 7th to August 2nd after war in Europe had ended - see below) and surrendered on 15th August 1945, effectively marking the end of World War II. However, the official surrender ceremony did not occur until over two weeks later, and thus President Truman marked 2nd September as the official V-J Day.

It is estimated that anywhere from 60 to 80 million people died during World War II, on all sides of the conflict. V-J Day should be seen as not only the celebration of the defeat of the tyrannical Japanese government of the time, but also the remembrance of those who lost their lives.

There are a number of different ways that people refer to V-J Day. This includes V-P Day, Victory in the Pacific Day, and Victory over Japan Day. No matter how people refer to this day, what matters is that it is the day on which Imperial Japan surrendered in the Second World War, marking the end of the war.

Interestingly, there are really three different dates that can be considered the date of surrender. The first is the 15th of August in 1945, which is when the announcement of Japan's surrender was made. However, in some parts of the world, including the United States, this was actually the 14th of August in 1945 because of the time differences.

As mentioned, there is also the date that the official document of surrender was signed, which was the 2nd of September in 1945. This is when the Second World War was officially ended. Because of this, V-J Day is celebrated on different dates throughout the world. While the official US commemoration occurs on the 2nd of September. In the United Kingdom, for example, they actually celebrate V-J Day on the 15th of August.

The Build-up to V-J Day

In order to understand the history of V-J Day, we need to delve deeper into the history of the war and the events that happened in the build-up to this date. On both the 6th and the 9th of August, in 1945, the United States dropped atomic bombs on both Nagasaki and Hiroshima. The Soviet Union also declared war on Japan on the 9th of August as well. A day later, on the 10th of August, the government in Japan communicated that it intended to surrender under the Potsdam Declaration terms.

Celebrations around the world started early when they heard that Japan intended to surrender.

In Paris, Frenchmen Americans paraded & sang "Don't Fence Me In" on the Champs-Élysées.

On the streets of London, on Regent Street, allied soldiers danced in a conga line.

It was six days later, on the 15th of August, a little bit after noon Japan Standard Time, that it was announced that Japan had accepted the Potsdam Declaration. Emperor Hirohito made the announcement over the radio to the people of Japan. Once the declaration had been signed, the celebrations across the world really ramped up.

The Potsdam Conference

Potsdam Picture y Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-R67561 / CC-BY-SA 3.0, CC BY-SA 3.0 de,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5368480>



Potsdam Conference session including Clement Attlee, Ernest Bevin, Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov, Joseph Stalin (white uniform), William D. Leahy, Joseph E. Davies, James F. Byrnes, & Harry S. Truman (right).

The Potsdam Conference, a meeting of the victorious leaders of the Allies in Europe, attempted to confront the delicate balance of power of the opposing governmental structures, democracy and communism. Held in a suburb of Berlin, it commenced July 17 lasting to August 2. Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and President Truman began the conference for their respective countries.

On the agenda was the partitioning of the postwar world and resolving the problems of the war in the Far East. This included hammering out the details regarding the division of Germany; the movement of populations from Czechoslovakia, Austria, and Italy; the creation of a Council of Foreign Ministers to administer the agreed upon zones of occupation; and issuing a proclamation demanding unconditional surrender from the Japanese government. Truman, despite his relative inexperience in dealing with foreign diplomats, was holding a trump card that would give him confidence in making demands of the other leaders. . .the atomic bomb. The most powerful and destructive armament to date, the atomic bomb was solely in the hands of the United States government.

Yalta and Potsdam - the basics

Yalta - February 1945.

Germany was not yet defeated, so, although there were tensions about Poland, the big three - Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill (Clement Attlee - 5th July after the General Election) - managed to agree to split Germany into four zones of occupation, and to allow free elections in Eastern European countries. Russia was invited to join the United Nations, and Russia promised to join the war against Japan when Germany was defeated.

Potsdam - 7th July to 2nd August 1945.

Germany had been defeated, Roosevelt had died and Churchill had lost the 1945 election - so there were open disagreements. Truman came away angry about the size of reparations and the fact that a communist government was being set up in Poland. Truman did not tell Stalin that he had the atomic bomb.

The Differences between Yalta and Potsdam

The issues were the same, but the goodwill to overcome them was gone because the countries no longer needed to stick together. Not all the broken promises were by Stalin:

Comparison of Yalta and Potsdam

Yalta	Potsdam
Germany to be split into four zones .	Arguments about the details of the boundaries between the zones.
Germany will pay reparations .	Disagreements about the amount of reparations Russia wanted to take. It was agreed that Russia could take whatever it wanted from the Soviet zone, and 10 per cent of the industrial equipment of the western zones, but Britain and the US thought this was too much.
A government of 'national unity' to be set up in Poland, comprising both communists and non-communists.	Truman was angry because Stalin had arrested the non-communist leaders of Poland.
Free elections in the countries of eastern Europe. This part of the agreement was called the Declaration of Liberated Europe .	America and Britain were alarmed because communists were coming to power in the countries of Eastern Europe.
Russia would help against Japan when Germany was defeated.	Truman dropped the atomic bomb so that Japan would surrender before Russian troops could go into Japan. America had the bomb in July 1945, but Truman did not tell Stalin about it. When he saw how he had been tricked, Stalin was furious.

The Russian Invasion

Russian Involvement

The Soviet–Japanese War was a military conflict within the Second World War beginning soon after midnight on August 9, 1945, with the Soviet invasion of the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo. The Soviets and Mongolians ended Japanese control of Manchukuo, Mengjiang (Inner Mongolia), northern Korea, Karafuto, and the Chishima Islands (Kuril Islands). The defeat of Japan's Kwantung Army helped bring about the Japanese surrender and the termination of World War II. The Soviet entry into the war was a significant factor in the Japanese government's decision to surrender unconditionally, as it made it apparent that the Soviet Union was not willing to act as a third party in negotiating an end to hostilities on conditional terms

At the Tehran Conference in November 1943, Joseph Stalin had agreed that the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan once Germany was defeated.

At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, Stalin agreed to Allied pleas to enter World War II in the Pacific Theatre within three months of the end of the war in Europe.

On July 26, the US, the UK, and China made the Potsdam Declaration, an ultimatum calling for the Japanese surrender that if ignored would lead to their "prompt and utter destruction".

The commencement of the invasion fell between the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on August 9. Although Stalin had been told virtually nothing of the US and UK's atomic bomb program by Allied governments, the date of the invasion was foreshadowed by the Yalta agreement, the date of the German surrender, and the fact that, on August 3, Marshal Vasilevsky reported to Stalin that, if necessary, he could attack on the morning of August 5. The timing was well-planned and enabled the Soviet Union to enter the Pacific Theatre on the side of the Allies, as previously agreed, before the war's end. The invasion of the second largest Japanese island of Hokkaido, originally planned by the Soviets to be part of the territory taken, was held off due to apprehension of the US' new position as an atomic power.

At 11 pm Trans-Baikal time on August 8, 1945, Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov informed Japanese ambassador Naotake Satō that the Soviet Union had declared war on Japan, and that from August 9 the Soviet Government would consider itself to be at war with Japan. At one minute past midnight Trans-Baikal time on August 9, 1945, the Soviets commenced their invasion simultaneously on three fronts to the east, west and north of Manchuria.

Japanese reaction to the surrender

On August 15 and 16, some Japanese soldiers, devastated by the surrender, committed suicide. Well over 100 American prisoners of war were also murdered. In addition, many Australian and British prisoners of war were murdered in Borneo, at both Ranau and Sandakan, by the Imperial Japanese Army. At Batu Lintang camp, also in Borneo, death orders were found which proposed the murder of some 2,000 POWs and civilian internees on September 15, 1945, but the camp was liberated four days before these orders were due to be carried out. Japanese forces remained in combat with Soviet forces on several fronts for two weeks following VJ-Day.

Kissing the War Goodbye



Picture by Victor Jorgensen - US archives, Public Domain,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2720024>

One of the many iconic photographs which travelled round the world.

Personal War Experiences

Jim Healy

D-DAY veteran Jim Healy had already seen the worst war can offer when he was redeployed to the Far East in the summer of 1944. On June 6, as a 19-year-old Royal Marine coxswain, he had ferried Canadian troops on to Juno Beach in a landing craft under heavy fire at the start of the Allied invasion. He said: "We went in, in the early hours, taking the Canadians in. It was not very pleasant. But there were a lot of things that happened after that that were just as unpleasant.



PROUD VETERAN:
Jim today at 95

"After six weeks of ferrying men and supplies across the Channel to Normandy, he got two weeks leave, and soon after getting back found himself on HMS Peninsula heading for India. He said: "I was on board in Bombay docks when I heard through the tannoy that Germany had surrendered. I was in the mess deck with about 200 fellow royal marines and everyone was so happy. We were given a tot of rum. But our war wasn't over - we were then sent to Burma and I did three or four landings there."

Jim, 95, a retired printer from Middleton in Manchester, said "Each time we expected the worst. But each time we went in unopposed, it was quite a relief. The Germans were bad enough but what the Japanese did to our lads was outrageous."

He cannot remember the moment he was told the war was over but he and his comrades were so grateful not to have to fight the Japanese.

He said: "although we were unopposed in the Burma & landings we were heading for Singapore and you could have guaranteed that the Japanese would have been waiting for us."

Like many of the dwindling band of veterans Jim had hoped to go back to the battlefields for the first time this year with the Royal British Legion. Instead he and his family will be their guests at the National Memorial Arboretum ceremony today in Alrewas, Staffs.

Peter Heppell

FORMER sapper Peter Heppell will never forget his 24th birthday: he flew into action behind Japanese lines on a glider with the legendary [Chindits](#).**

Peter, now 100, then faced four months of grueling, rain-drenched action relying on airdrops for supplies and praying he did not get wounded. He said: "We always worried about getting wounded. If you could not carry on marching you were left behind. I had already had malaria before I went in with the Chindits and I got a small shrapnel wound - so small the shrapnel is still there - **but the worst bit was the jungle sores.** "My main memory is of the long marches through the jungle carrying the weight of our packs, marching ankle-deep in mud, soaking wet. I have a lot of pride in being a Chindit. I can't regret it but at the time I did." Peter, who worked in an art studio after the war, had a lot of respect for the Chindits' charismatic leader, Brigadier Orde Wingate. He said: "Wingate and his officers circulated this feeling of success and trust in what they were doing. You felt everything was going to be all right." But like so many other Burma veterans, Peter feels they were Britain's forgotten army. He said: "So often commemorations of the war are about Europe. It would be nice to get a mention sometimes. In Europe the troops could advance along a road or a railway. In five months in Burma I crossed a road and a railway line once - and that was on my stomach under fire.

Peter discovered the war was over when he was preparing for an amphibious landing in Burma. He said: "On the first VJ Day I was on a troopship in Calcutta waiting to go back to Burma. I'd spent five months in Burma with the Chindits.

They announced VJ Day over the intercom. Everyone was very excited. They gave us a bottle of beer each - but it wasn't a wild party. For the last 20 years on Remembrance Day I have been up to the Cenotaph in London. I haven't done it for my benefit but for my friends who were not able to come back. This feeling will be even stronger on this VJ Day.

***Chindits' was the name given to the Long Range Penetration (LRP) groups that operated in the Burmese jungle. They were named after the Chinthe, a mythical Burmese beast that was half-lion and half-eagle and, to Brigadier Orde Wingate, symbolised the need for close air-land co-ordination. Orde Wingate was the founder and leader of the Chindits.*



LOT OF PRIDE:
Peter Heppell in his days as a Chindit and, left, today at the age of 100

Bill Broadley

"VERA'S STAGE WAS ON THE BACK OF A WAGON"



MEMORIES OF THE FORCES SWEETHEART: Bill today at 99 and, top, in his Army days

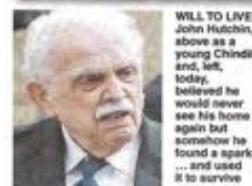
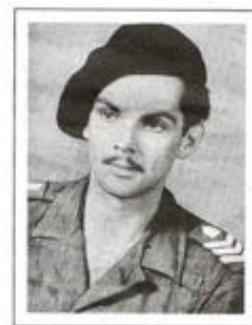
ONE of the strongest memories that stays with driver Bill Broadley is of the day the Forces Sweetheart, Vera Lynn, paid the Forgotten Army a visit. He was serving in India before crossing into Burma when she gave the troops a concert just 30 miles from the Japanese frontline. Bill, 99, said: "She didn't dress up and her stage was the back of a wagon in a field. "She sang 'We'll Meet Again' and 'White Cliffs of Dover'." We asked if we could have her autograph, but we didn't have any paper. So, one of my friends got out a five rupee note, and she signed it. But I've no idea where that note is now."

When the end of the war was announced, Bill was in barracks near Calcutta waiting to be sent to Burma. He said: "It was strange. there was no jubilation really. We already knew the Japanese were finished when the atomic bombs were dropped." Bill, from Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire, served with the Royal Army Ordnance Corps as a driver and mechanic, keeping troops supplied with food, weapons and ammunition, following the advance as the Japanese retreated. His son, Wayne, said: "When he was out there, like a lot of soldiers, he had a tattoo done. "He came back with a peacock on his arm. It was a nude dancing lady originally, but he had it covered up before he got home. He might have been fighting the Japanese, but he was still scared of his mum. "After the war Bill returned to work as a mechanic and married Jenny who had served as an aircraft spotter during the war. She died in 2010 but he has his son Wayne and daughter Lynn. He had hoped to make his first trip back with the Royal British Legion to the battlefields of the Far East this year but it was cancelled due to coronavirus. So today he hopes to be attending the official commemorations at Staffordshire's National Memorial Arboretum.

John Hutchin

CHINDIT veteran John Hutchin is the soldier who came back from the dead. Too sick to walk, he was left to die in the jungle behind Japanese lines — but somehow recovered and marched to safety. Just 19, and wounded in the neck by shrapnel, he could not go on. Maggots had been applied to prevent infection, but when he could no longer keep up with his unit he understood his fate very well. At his home near Ashford in Kent, John, 96, said: "We knew the score. If you got killed, that was OK because you wouldn't care. If you were walking wounded, you carried on. But if you couldn't carry on, you were left behind with three days' rations, water and ammunition. "I was left behind. My legs were covered in deep jungle sores. I was finished and I knew I would never see my home again. "But after four days I found a spark and I walked on my own through the jungle for four days and nights until I caught up with my men." They continued to march out of the jungle to a remote US airbase where John was put on a special diet to manage malnutrition before they were flown back to India. By then, like all the Chindits, John had seen months of intense fighting, playing cat and mouse in the jungle against a fanatical enemy. For more than five weeks he and his comrades had defended their base, which they called White City, from Japanese attacks every morning and evening. It straddled the road and railway, cutting off the Japanese supply route. John recalled: "We sat in our bunkers and they used to cross not 20 at a time but 500 at a time. I was by the razor wire with the South Staffords. "As they came across the open land between us and the jungle, we sprayed them with a Vickers machine-gun. You never stopped firing. "Only once, did they get through. They were silhouetted against the night sky. We had rifles and bayonets and we drove them out. "That is war. You can read about it in a book. But I was there. I remember it like yesterday. There will never be a campaign like it again. "By the time John, originally from Cardiff, got to the US airbase he weighed 8st 41b after being ravaged by malaria and dysentery. He admits that reliving the campaign was stressful but feels it is important to educate future generations. By V-J Day he was in Indonesia using radio broadcasts to counter an attempted communist uprising in the Dutch colonies. He said: "V-J Day" made no difference to me at all other than the fact that nobody was shooting at me. "In peacetime John, married his wife Ann, studied at Cardiff University and became a fire surveyor for an insurance company.

Now a great grandfather, he said: "My service in the Chindits is a great source of pride. I remember the comradeship and single-minded purpose we shared. But even now the memories are still a bit raw."



WILL TO LIVE: John Hutchin, above as a young Chindit and, left, today, believed he would never see his home again but somehow he found a spark ... and used it to survive

SHELAGH BROWN, 26, SUMATRA:



THE English secretary was on a ship sunk by the Japanese as she and her mother tried to escape from Singapore in February 1942. They were imprisoned in camps on Sumatra, and the TV series *Tenko* was based on their experiences and that of other British, Dutch and Australian women interned and often abused by the Japanese.

Shelagh survived over three years of deprivation, but her mother died in February 1945. She described. In her diary the moment she heard the war had ended on August 26: 'Peace! We were all ordered to assemble under the trees up the hill. Captain Siki appeared all polished up in his uniform.

Much "harumphing" to his minions who returned to the guardhouse and brought back a table and a chair. Ugh, we thought, a long meeting ... To our surprise, he mounted the chair and stood on the battle and announced: "The war is over." 'Everyone embraced and one or two women fainted. That night, God Save The King was sung around the camp. They were free at last.'

J.G. BALLARD, 14, JAPANESE INTERNMENT CAMP:

BROUGHT up in Shanghai, the future novelist was 14 years old when he and his family were interned. in 1943 after the Japanese invaded. The experience formed the basis for his autobiographical story, 'Empire Of The Sun', later turned into an acclaimed Steven Spielberg film. After the surrender, Ballard returned to where his family once lived. He recalled: 'I climbed through the barbed-wire fence and set off, across the paddy fields to Shanghai; which was about eight miles - very dangerous. I found our house eventually. There was a Chinese soldier, in one of the puppet armies that fought with the Japanese, guarding the house ... I sort of took command of the house, pushed him aside and said: "This is my house."



Seeing the damage inflicted by army occupation on his home, Ballard became deeply ill at ease. He left, returning to the internment camp where his parents were, saying later simply: 'I was happy there.'

PAUL NEWMAN, 20, ABOARD USS HOLLANDIA:



THE future ten-time Oscar nominee was assigned a turret gunner's post - widely regarded as the most dangerous job for airmen. On August 6, 1945, he was stationed aboard the aircraft carrier *Hollandia*, about 500 miles off the Japanese coast, when news came through that the first atom bomb had been dropped:

'I know all of the controversy about those weapons', he later recalled. 'But I'm one of those guys who says thank God for the atomic bomb because it probably saved my life.'

Pictures and stories courtesy of the Daily Express Newspaper. For those who did not see them we are pleased to reproduce them here as a commemoration to the people who served and died in the last World War.

PRINCE PHILIP, 24, TOKYO BAY:



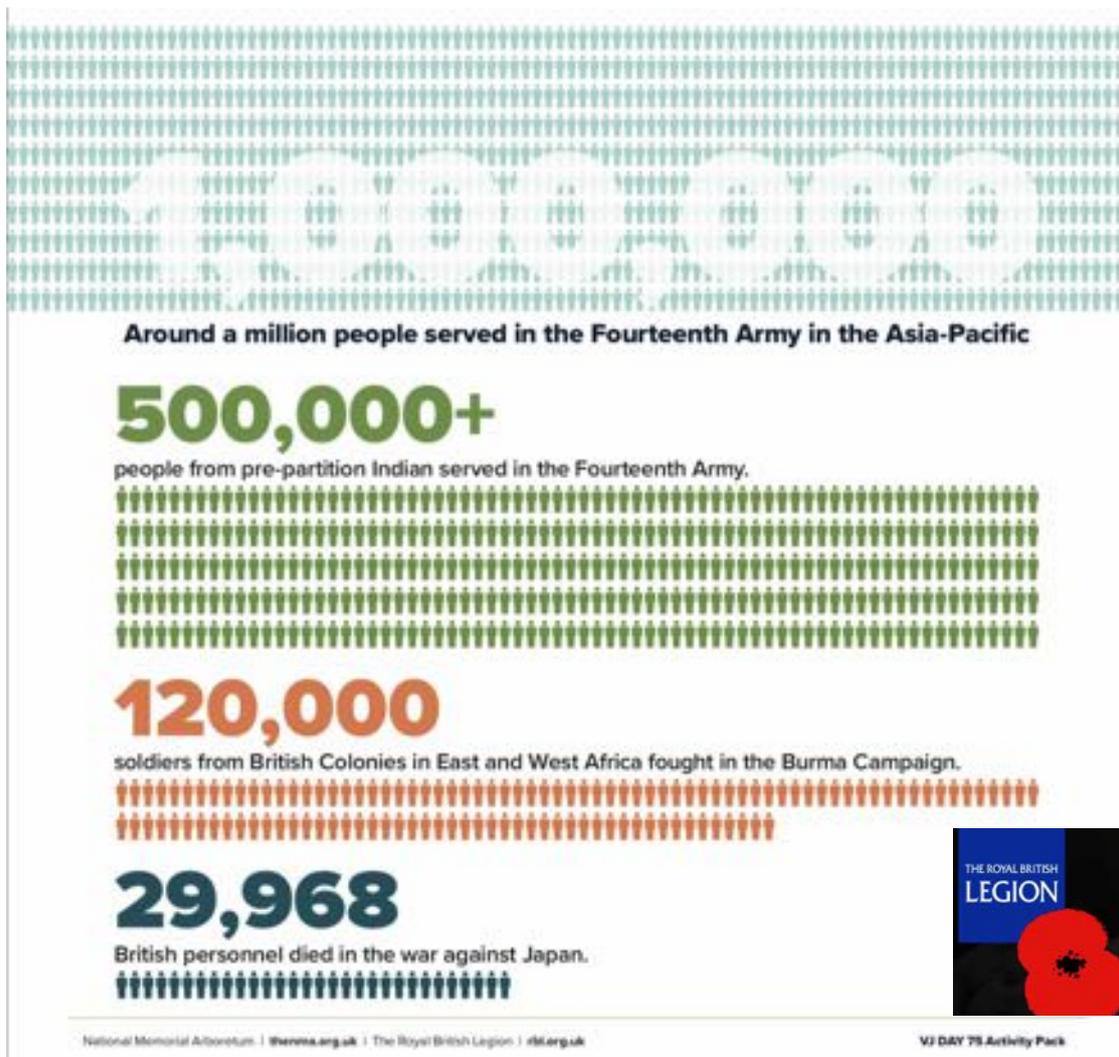
IN SEPTEMBER 1945, Philip Mountbatten was a Royal Navy officer serving as First Lieutenant and second-in-command in the destroyer HMS Whelp.

'Being in Tokyo Bay with the surrender ceremony taking place in the battleship which was, what, 200 yards away, and you could see what was going on with a pair of binoculars, it was a great relief.'

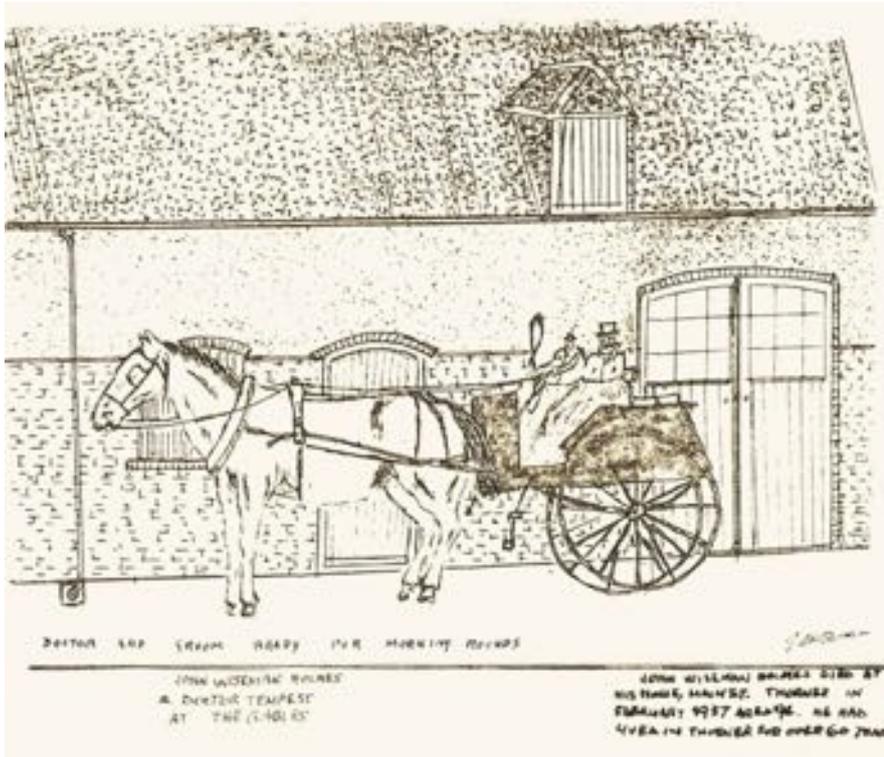
The Prince later recalled the end of the war: 'It was the most extraordinary sensation. We suddenly realised we didn't have to darken the ship any more, we didn't have to close all the scuttles, we didn't have to turn all the lights out. All these little things built up to suddenly feeling that life was different.'

After the surrender, HMS Whelp welcomed former PoW's from Japanese camps on board. They were emaciated. They sat down in the mess ... and our ship's company recognised that they were fellow sailors. We gave them a cup of tea and it was an extraordinary sensation, because they just sat there, and on both sides, theirs and ours, tears pouring down their cheeks, they just drank their tea, they really couldn't speak.'

Fourteenth Army Statistics from The Royal British Legion & The National Arboretum



G Brown sketch - Doctor & Groom



Sketch notes:

John Wiseman Holmes & Dr Tempest at "The Gables"

John Wiseman Holmes died at his home in Main Street, Thorne on February 1937 aged 94. He had lived in Thorne for over 60 years.

Going back 75 years it seems likely that carriages and a Landau would still be seen in the village. This idyll was in stark contrast to the vast industrial, science & technological revolution "inspired" by the war. The so called benefits of innovation from wars are always debated, but climate change and pollution are a stark warnings of the unknown consequences of such untrammelled revolution. Electric Landau now for sale anyone?

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THSoc have been scanning in archive documents and photographs for the last three years to provide an easily accessible database. Any information you may have about the pictures and documents we have will be added to the archive.

All meetings have been cancelled until further notice. However if you can think of events that we can hold in a suitably safe location which meets lockdown medical criteria, please let us know. If the Film Club works OK we shall look at having an event or two.