

The War in Europe



Europe in 1939



Conquering Northern Europe, May 1940

- Following the defeat of Denmark and Norway, Hitler advanced his armies south through Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and eventually France
- Blitzkrieg tactics seem unstoppable
- Retreating British, French and Belgian troops are trapped at the beaches of Dunkirk.
 - Belgian troops surrender

Evacuation of Dunkirk, May 26 – June 4, 1940

- It was hoped that approx. 45,000 would be saved in a rescue mission
- Approx 900 ships of all sizes sailed from England and rescued over 340,000 stranded soldiers
- German soldiers had surprisingly stopped advancing permitting the escape
 - Hitler is furious at this blunder
 - Seen as one of the first military woes of WWII by Nazi Germany
- This rescued crew will form the core of Allied troops that would invade Nazi-Europe
- Churchill (not PM yet) warns, “wars are not won by evacuations”









Fall of France

- June 25th, 1940 – Paris is occupied by Germany and France surrenders
- The once powerful French army of 6 million had been captured, killed, gone underground or fled





Area of maximum Axis expansion (Sep. 42)

Neutral Country

WWII Combat Europe



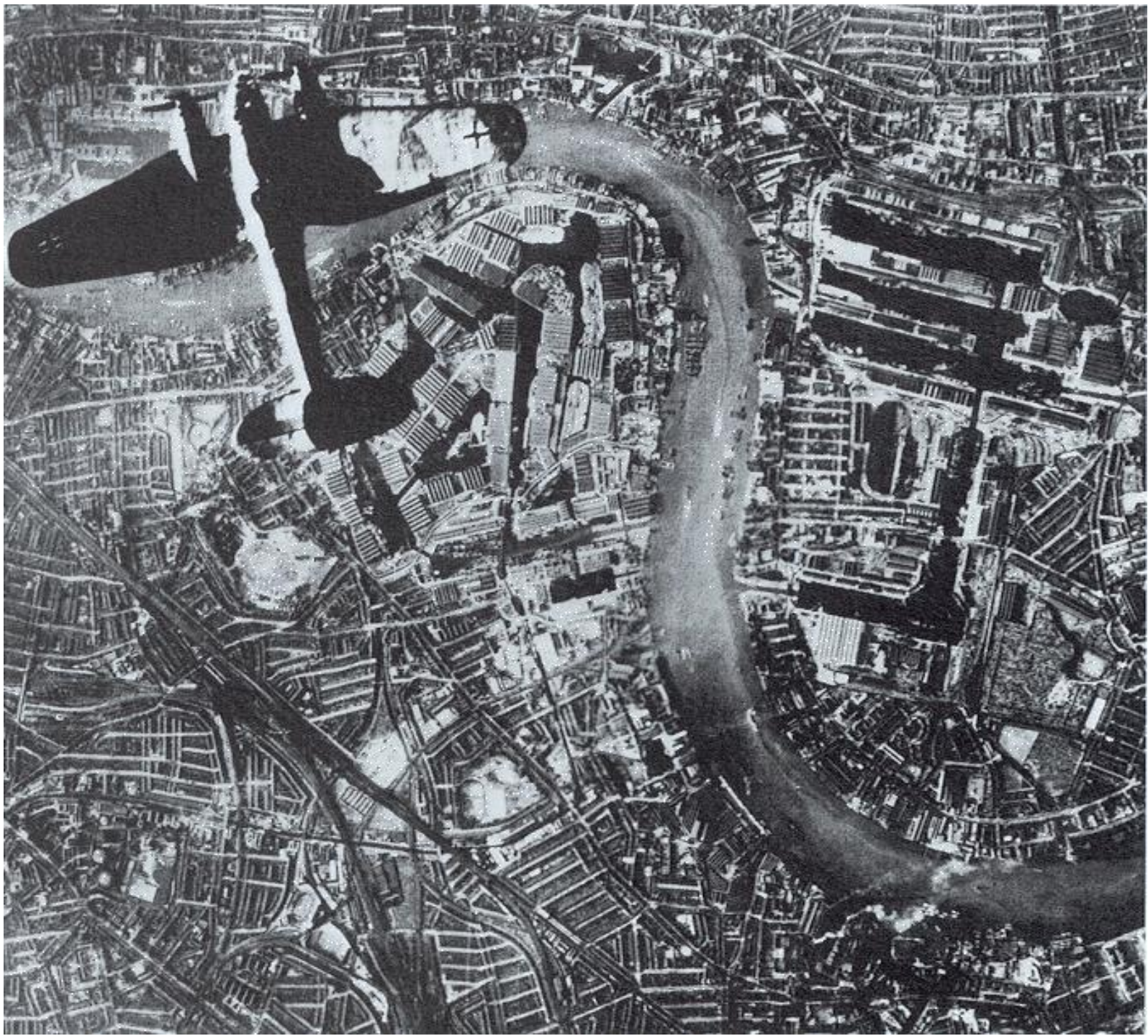
Battle of Britain (Operation Sea Lion) Summer 1940

- May 10, 1940 – Winston Churchill comes to power in England
 - ~ Promised victory through “blood, toil, tears and sweat”
- Hitler ordered massive air strikes – cities, airfields and industrial areas
 - ~ didn't account for the Royal Air Force (RAF) who fought fiercely over Britain
 - ~ many fallen British pilots were up in the air again within weeks – if possible
- The RAF (with some Canadian pilots) are so successful, Hitler switches to night time air strikes











The Blitz, Sept. 1940 – May 1941

- An 'error' by a German pilot bombs London – causes Churchill to retaliate by bombing of Berlin – a promise that Hitler made to protect Berlin was broken
- Ordered an all out blitz on London – probably saved British aircraft production and helps the RAF concentrate on defence in one area
 - Hitler switches to nighttime bombings as the daytime missions are not as successful as hoped
 - At one point, Hitler ran 40 straight nights of London bombings
- After continual losses, and the approach of winter, Hitler postpones Operation Sea Lion indefinitely
- The RAF are victorious
 - Churchill proclaims, “never... was so much owed by so many to so few”
- Hitler would turn his attention toward invasion of Russia for oil – despite the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact













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The Invasion of Russia (Operation Barbarossa) June 1941 – Winter 1942



- Probably Hitler's greatest mistake was to stab the Soviet Union in the back and break their agreement
- He needed the wealth of minerals and particularly the oil to fuel his war machine in the west
- Invaded with 3 million troops along a 1 609 km front
 - Blitzkrieg tactics worked well at first
- Now Hitler had a two-front war... again
- Came within 39 km of Moscow before being stopped
- Russian's fought using a "scorched earth" policy – destroyed everything of value as they were retreating that could be of use to the enemy
 - It worked against Napoleon, and again against Hitler
- Hitler got caught by the early arrival of the Russian winters. The NAZI advancement turned into survival and defense



4. 4.
Forgive me
Comrade, but
it seemed such
a good
opportunity!

Russo-German Pact

Operation Barbarossa, 1941

-  Areas of fierce fighting
-  Front line, Dec. 1941





🍁 Dieppe Raid – Operation Jubilee 🍁

- Canada's first call to land combat in the war
- Intended as a hit-and-run raid to test Nazi defences along the French coastline
- A 'surprise' attack with a convoy of ships carrying troops was made in the pre-dawn hours of August 19, 1942 – before sunrise
- German patrol ships fired on the convoy alerting the Nazi troops on the shore
- By the time our troops arrived it was daylight and the Nazi forces were ready to fight – mowed down thousands of Allied troops who never stood a chance
- Canada's largest single day of loss in the entire war – 901 Canadians killed, 586 casualties & 1874 captured
- Was it worth it? Did the allies learn anything? Opinions were divided

AUG. 19, 1942 - OPERATION JUBILEE

