



ACTION THIS DAY

The Museum of WWII • Boston

Volume 2 • Number 2

May, 2015

SPECIAL EXHIBITION

75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAY THE WORLD CHANGED

MAY 10, 1940

HITLER ATTACKS CHURCHILL RISES

FROM THE ASHES OF APPEASEMENT

Friday, May 10th, 1940 was the day Hitler, and Germany, had been building towards for years. It would be the day of retribution against France for the humiliating terms of the Versailles Treaty ending World War I; the day that Germany's war machine would restore pride in the German people and show Western Europe and England that the Versailles Treaty was, for them, only a time out, a time to reload so that the German military was once again the masters of Europe. It was the day Germany invaded the Low Countries.

England, France and the Low Countries were incapable of believing that Germany would go to war again. The losses in The Great War, World War I, were so catastrophic that it was unthinkable. They all ignored Germany's rearming and its blatantly violating the terms of the Versailles Treaty, limiting the German military. They had complete confidence in their own military, with its World War I officers, ready to use the same equipment and the same tactics as before.

continued



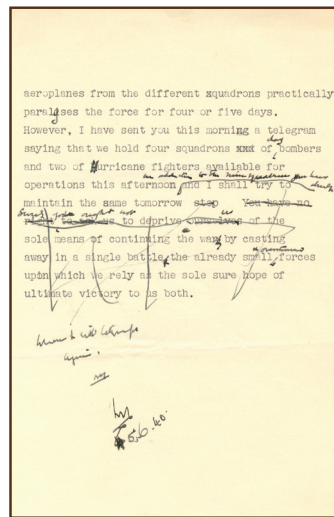
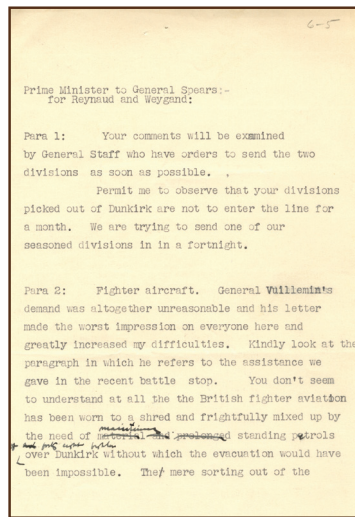
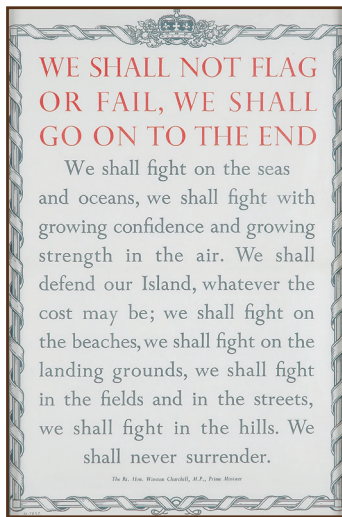
Winston S. Churchill attached a bright red sticker – “Action This Day” – to his memos to make clear to his subordinates that he expected action that day.



**CUMMINGS
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GRANT**

We are delighted to announce that we were just awarded a CUMMINGS FOUNDATION \$100K for 100 grant in the amount of \$100,000 for educational programming.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION



CHURCHILL RISES

Continued from previous

Two people were crying out that their governments and their military didn't understand what was happening. One of them was Winston S. Churchill, the lone voice in what he called his "wilderness years," warning of the reality of Hitler. The other, in the military context, was Charles de Gaulle, a French Colonel whose superior attitude got in the way of his prescient views in *Vers l'armée de métier* (*Toward a Professional Army*) in 1933.

What de Gaulle had to say was contrary to everything the generals believed to be certain, namely that the Maginot Line, a series of vast fortifications defending France's border with Germany, would protect the country from a rearméd Germany. He argued that a modern mechanized army would simply drive around the Maginot Line and go through Belgium. While his own generals ignored him, Hitler and his generals did not; their Panzers went into France as de Gaulle warned they would. The original copy of de Gaulle's prophetic work, inscribed to a fellow colonel, is on display in the exhibition.

On May 10th, Germany unleashed its new warfare, the *Blitzkrieg* (lightning war), driving so quickly into Belgium and Holland that both countries were overrun in a matter of a few days. On display in the exhibition are original German invasion maps of Holland, Belgium and France, as well as pages of photographs taken by German soldiers as they redeemed their fathers' surrender in World War I. The Germans arrived in Belgium on May 10th with printed proclamations (an example is in the exhibition) warning that all arms had to be turned into the German army and that anyone found possessing them would be imprisoned; anyone fighting German forces would be executed. On May 10th, as American newspapers carried the shocking news that the German attack into Holland and Belgium was around the Maginot Line, Belgian de-

crees were being issued that all men from 16 to 30 years of age report for military service immediately.

May 10th was also the day that Winston Churchill became Prime Minister, a day he describes in his memoirs as one he had been preparing for all his life. To him, it was his destiny. On that day, a Conservative member of Parliament addressed then Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, who led his appeasement government into the Munich Agreement, with these words: "You have sat here too long ... depart ... and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go."

King George VI asked Churchill, that very day, to form a new government. More than ready, Churchill burst forth with energy, insight and understanding of the British people. He had understood the menace of Hitler when no one else did, and now he understood the courage and fortitude of the British working people as no other upper class politician did.

In his first speech as Prime Minister, he set the tone with these immortal words: "I would say to the House, as I have said to those who have joined this government: I have nothing to offer you but blood, toil, tears and sweat." This excerpt, signed by Churchill, is part of the exhibition.

On becoming Prime Minister, with the necessity of forming a new government, Churchill was also immediately thrown into what was shaping up as the Battle for France. In attacking Holland and northern Belgium, Hitler got the reaction he was counting on. British and French armies, with more than a million soldiers, moved north to block the Germans. Second rate soldiers were left behind to defend France, allowing Hitler to spring his trap. Attacking through the dense and deeply gorged Ardennes in southern Belgium, using the same route the Kaiser's troops had used

SPECIAL EXHIBITION

to surprise the French in World War I, at lightning speed, the Germans headed for the coast, trapping the Allies between German troops in the north and in the south.

This military disaster was now Churchill's first military problem. He immediately took control of the British military and flew to Paris (on May 16th) to bolster French morale and review the military situation. On May 19th, he wrote a "MOST IMMEDIATE" message to French Prime Minister Paul Reynaud:

"I must tell you that we have become deeply concerned about the position of our Army which is now very dangerous. ... [T]he French Army on our right has fallen back and amounts to very little. Cabinet ... decided today ... to instruct Gort [Lord John Gort, Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force in Western Europe] to march south in battle order and to crash through the mechanized elements now reported pressing forward towards the Channel ports. Troops are tired and it will take this night 19/20 to prepare them for their march which will begin today. ... All experience shows that the only safety is for Armies to come back in one mass together and that any item cut off soon dies. ... We have a fine army ... which has not yet been allowed to fight the enemy but which ... can play an important part in the defence of France."

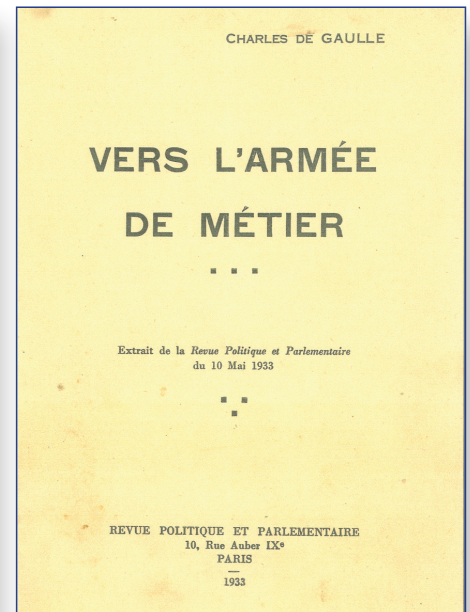
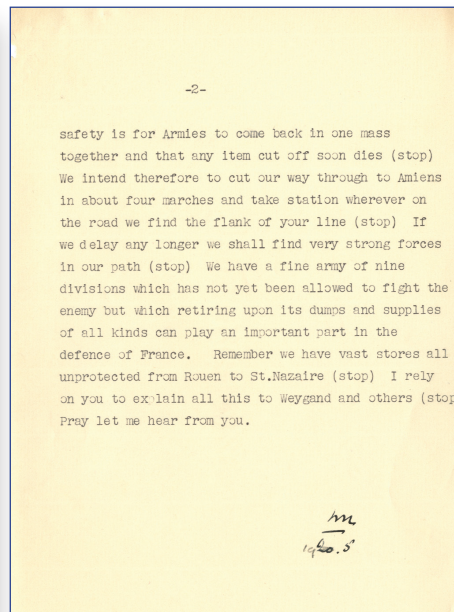
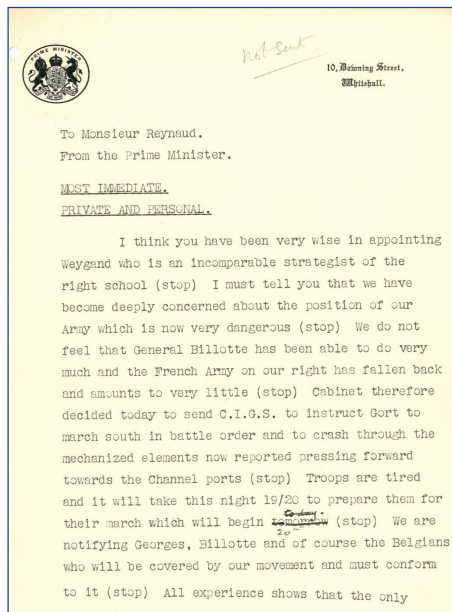
Two days later, Churchill was telling Reynaud how to fight against German tanks. Too soon, the Allied armies were being trapped along the coast surrounding Dunkirk. Flotillas of thousands of

ships of all sizes were evacuating hundreds of thousands of troops to England. All the while, the Luftwaffe was attacking the boats and the troops on the beach, killing thousands.

Finally, on the last day before the Germans overran Dunkirk (June 5th, 1940), in another message to Reynaud and French General Maxime Weygand, Churchill writes with irritation: "... [Y]ou don't seem to understand at all that the British fighter aviation has been worn to a shred and frightfully mixed up by the need of maintaining standing patrols over Dunkirk without which the evacuation would have been impossible.... You have no right to ask us to deprive ourselves of the sole means of continuing the war by casting away in a single battle the already small forces upon which we rely as the sole sure hope of ultimate victory to us both."

The Director of the Churchill Museum in London considers this one of the finest and most important Churchill letters ever written.

In the course of events, with the Germans bearing down on Paris, Churchill encouraged the French to continue the struggle but turned his attention and energy to saving Britain. With the Battle of France over and the Battle of Britain about to begin, only one man stood between Hitler and the conquest of the last free country in Europe. Hitler knew enough about Churchill to fear him and in this he was correct. The new Prime Minister was about to become the symbol of defiance to evil and the symbol of the courage and fortitude he expected of the British people.



ENIGMA EXHIBIT EXTENDED

The special exhibition of German Enigma code machines has been extended. The exhibition attracted an unforeseen number of visitors and world-wide media attention. Two (of the nine) Enigma code machines in the exhibition can function so that a message encoded on one, can be decoded on another. Media coverage of the exhibition included the Associated Press (which was picked up nation-wide and world-wide), *The Boston Globe*, reported by Ty Burr, WBUR, WGBH-TV (with Jared Bowen), WCVB-TV, among others.

EDUCATION AT THE MUSEUM

School groups regularly visit the Museum. It is a natural environment for students, a place where they are encouraged to touch and to handle artifacts, to see them as access points to larger issues, and to learn about the causes and consequences of war in a multidisciplinary setting.

Last fall, thanks to grants from the MetroWest Foundation, the Middlesex Bank Foundation and Mathworks, we engaged Michael Goodwin and Chris Gauthier, Founders of the Concord River Institute, to develop curricula for the Museum in three specific areas: the Rise of Nazism, the Battle of Britain and America Enters the War. In March, as seen in the accompanying photographs, they prototyped their curricula with students from Matignon High School in Cambridge and with students from the “Rivers and Revolutions” program, which they developed, at Concord-Carlisle High School.

Our new Director of Education, Marshall Carter, presently Principal of Milton Academy, who is joining the Museum in September, observed these prototyping sessions. A highly successful exercise, the curricula will be incorporated in the Museum’s growing educational program.

In the near term, they will anchor a webpage (available by the end of the summer) to be built on the Museum’s website. Teachers bringing students to the Museum can use all or part of the curricula developed by the Concord River Institute to enhance their school visits.



Marshall Carter, Director of Education



Chris Gauthier and Michael Goodwin, Founders, Concord River Institute



Students from “Rivers and Revolutions” Program, Concord-Carlisle High School



Meghan Burns, Teacher, Matignon High School



Students from “Rivers and Revolutions” Program, Concord-Carlisle High School



Students from “Rivers and Revolutions” Program, Concord-Carlisle High School



Students from Matignon High School



Students from Matignon High School



Chris Gauthier and Michael Goodwin with a student from Concord-Carlisle High School.

CONTACT

TO SCHEDULE A VISIT: www.museumofworldwarII.org • MUSEUM DIRECT: 508-651-1944
ADMINISTRATION: 508-653-1944 • E-MAIL: director@museumofworldwarII.org





THE MUSEUM OF WORLD WAR II

“It provides visitors with a profound understanding of the real life complexities of the times....”

The Museum contains the most comprehensive World War II collection in the world. It is a mosaic of everything in the lives of all the people in every country in this global conflict. The visitor, teacher or student follows the story of the war, from the rise of Nazism to the dropping of the atomic bomb, not as historians after the fact, but by the side of the leaders and the people who lived and died during these dramatic years. Uniquely for a museum of this type and scale, they touch and hold many of the artifacts; they see what people saw at the time; and they see the whole war, not one aspect of it.

The scope and quality of the collection -- with over 7,500 artifacts and documents on display, and more than 500,000 documents, photographs and journals in the Archives, and a complete research Library – is unrivalled anywhere. It provides visitors with a profound understanding of the real life complexities of the times and with the opportunity to be inspired by the aspirations and hopes of the World War II generation. Significantly, it offers insight, especially through our education program, into the challenges of today.

Our present 10,000 sq. ft. building was originally designed as a private museum with an intense experience. When the Museum became a 501(C)3 (nonprofit) in 2011 and welcomed the public, this model became limiting; the aisles were too narrow, the number of artifacts was restricted, and school groups wanted more space and a longer experience.

A year ago, the Trustees approved a capital campaign which expands the building to 60,000 sq. ft., tripling the exhibition space on the ground floor and allowing for a 20,000 sq. ft. education center on the second floor (along with a special exhibitions area, offices and a conservation lab).

BUT FIRST

We are extremely fortunate to have an option to acquire the land and buildings adjacent to us for \$2.75M, if we do so by September 30, 2015. While we have raised over \$10M in our capital campaign, we can only use these funds for construction of the new building. So far we have \$500,000 towards the purchase price of the adjacent property. We still need to raise \$2.25M by September 30th.

We need your help

Acquiring the adjacent property will be transformative for the Museum and for its mission. Your help will make a difference. You will be a part of insuring that future generations understand the causes and consequences of war, and the values of courage, fortitude, leadership, patriotism, and individualism. They will learn that war is personal and it is complex. They will remember how the world came together to defeat evil, and how the experiences of World War II are relevant today. Individual actions mattered then and they matter now. We need yours!

CONTACT

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TELEPHONE: 508-653-1944 • E-MAIL: sfarrington@museumofworldwarII.org





THE MUSEUM OF WORLD WAR II

YES. *We want to be part of the campaign to ensure the expansion of The Museum of World War II*

- ☐ I/We pledge \$10,000 over a period of _____ years
- ☐ I/We pledge \$5,000 over a period of _____ years
- ☐ I/We pledge \$1,000 over a period of _____ years
- ☐ I/We pledge _____ over a period of _____ years

As an initial payment on this pledge, I/we are enclosing: \$ _____

Please send checks to our Administrative Office:

The Museum of World War II
46 Eliot Street • South Natick, MA 01760
Telephone: 508-653-1944 • E-mail: sfarrington@museumofworldwarII.org

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Name of Bank: Middlesex Savings Bank, 6 Main St., Natick, MA 01760
ABA number: 211371227
Account Name: Museum of World War II, Inc.
Account Number: 163788361

Appreciated stock: Donations of appreciated stock offer great tax benefits.

Please call Kenneth Rendell at 508-653-1944 or e-mail kwrendell@museumofworldwarII.org

Credit cards: Please contact Susan Farrington: sfarrington@museumofworldwarII.org
or call: 508-653-1944

Please use my/our gift to honor the following person(s):

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I/We wish this gift to remain anonymous. ☐ YES ☐ NO

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