



THE LIBERATION OF PARIS

SEVENTY YEARS AGO • AUGUST 25, 1944



After more than four long years of occupation, Paris, the City of Light, the symbol of France, was liberated by the Allied Armies.

All of Paris was ecstatic; Parisiens embraced their liberators and danced in the streets. The German occupation had been terrible, from the draconian rules enforced by the Germans to the shortages of food and consumer goods. French men were in German prisoner of war camps or working as enforced laborers in Germany. Those who stayed in Paris survived somewhat at the whim of the occupiers. The lightening sweep of the American Army (under George Patton) across France electrified the waiting Parisiens.



The day after the official German surrender on August 25th, the American, British and Canadian Armies marched into Paris; the French Army was brought forward to give them the leading role entering the city. The Parisiens knew who was liberating them and expressed their appreciation with handmade American and British flags, dresses and everything conceivable showing the colors of France and the Allies.



The German Military Governor of Paris, Dietrich von Choltitz, ignored Hitler's order to destroy Paris. Below is one of the detonation devices set blow up a bridge across the Seine.

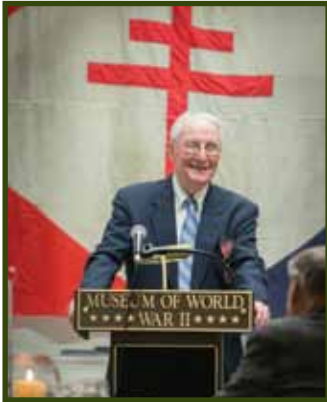
The liberation of Paris actually went on for several days allowing plenty of time for women to make dresses for themselves and outfits for their children (often using flags), children to put patriotic bows on their stuffed animals, and manufacturers and craftspeople to turn out Victory paraphernalia used joyously at the time and saved as precious memories.



Choltitz saved Paris from this and other detonators like it.



News from the Museum of WWII ★ Boston



MORLEY PIPER

Morley Piper, who landed on D-Day in the first wave of the 29th Infantry Division, spoke at a dinner in the Museum the night before leaving for France for the 70th anniversary commemorations. Morley, who was interviewed in the Dan Aykroyd documentary about the Museum, was riveting as he described that fateful day that changed the course of World War II. How soldiers managed to survive the withering machine gun fire and get off the beach was astonishing, and Morley told his own story in detail and with great emotion, neither diminished by the last 70 years. Almost unfathomable to everyone, except the other World War II combat veterans at the dinner, was how Morley and others survived emotionally and physically for the next eleven months as they fought across France and into Germany. Morley made it very clear when he said, *“Every night I slept in a shell hole or burned out building, and I shook and cried at what I had to do that day. And, I had to wake up the next day and do it again”*.



DORIS KEARNS GOODWIN

Pulitzer Prize winning historian Doris Kearns Goodwin spoke at a Museum dinner at the end of May about the importance of original manuscript sources in understanding the reality of history. Doris, who is a trustee of the Museum of World War II, and who has been very involved with the concept and approach of the Museum, spoke in detail about the importance of the Museum’s mission in “Saving the Reality of World War II” and about the opportunity for visitors to read the original words of those who led or were caught up in the war’s events and times. Doris said the Museum’s focus on displaying original documents so that visitors and researchers can see the actual words that people wrote at the time, and the propaganda and other information sources they read at the time, is unique. While historians can distill those words and filter them through their own views, Doris praised the Museum and its founder for presenting the World War II experience in its essential reality.



LEGION OF HONOUR

The 70th Anniversary of D-Day was commemorated in the Museum by the French Consul General in Boston, on behalf of the French government, awarding the Legion of Honour (Ordre national de la Légion d’honneur) to ten veterans of the Normandy invasion. The veterans, accompanied by family members, were interviewed by national and local media and were thanked by elected officials who presented additional recognitions for what they did and what they went through, seven decades ago.

CONTACT

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SPECIAL EXHIBITION

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE START OF WORLD WAR II

Germany's attack on Poland brought the inevitability that England and France had not wanted to face – the reality of a rearmed and united Germany. Political leaders had tried to ignore Hitler's words and actions as another war was unthinkable. War was not unthinkable to Hitler and other Nazi leaders; it was the chance to vindicate German honor and seek revenge against

France, Germany's arch enemy and architect of the hated Versailles Treaty.

In these three critical documents, never exhibited in the museum before, Britain's realization that war was imminent is seen in the draft of the King's Speech (August 25, 1939) and in the cipher message to British forces (September 1, 1939). The outbreak of

the greatest cataclysm in the history of the world is seen in the Admiralty's order (September 3, 1939) in only six words:

“Commence hostilities at once with Germany.”

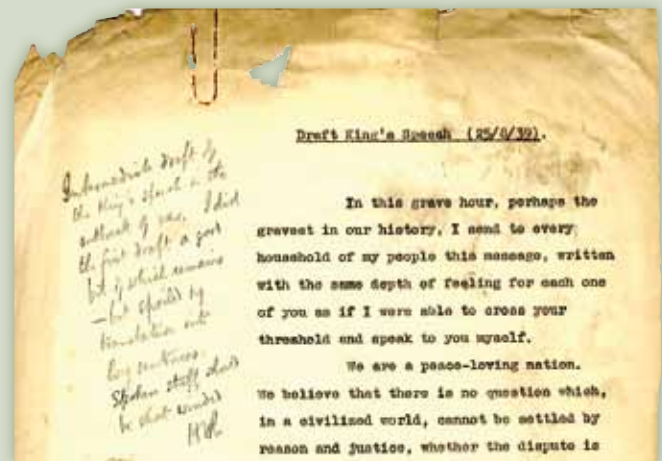
The exhibition opens on September 3rd and runs until November 29, 2014

THE DRAFT OF THE KING'S SPEECH

The King's Speech. Even before the Academy Award winning movie, *The King's Speech*, nearly everyone knew what those three words referred to. Seventy-five years ago, on September 3, 1939, King George VI told the British nation that what they all dreaded had happened; barely 20 years after the official end of the Great War (there was no need to number it) England was at war again with Germany. The nation that had lost an entire generation of young men had believed Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's proclamation of "Peace in our Time" when he returned from Munich only a year earlier.

The King's speech had to not only tell the English people that they were at war again with Germany, it had to also instill confidence in the nation. First it had to be delivered on the radio live (there was no pre-recording at the time) by a confident King who suffered from terrible stammering. Regardless of what personal understanding

The King's Speech continued on next page



Detail: The first of three pages of the draft of the King's speech.



A leader of deliberate conduct, Winston Churchill would attach a bright red sticker emblazoned with the words: "Action This Day" to his memos to prioritize and make clear to his subordinates that he expected specific action that day.



SPECIAL EXHIBITION

The King's Speech continued from page 1

people might have had, they needed, the nation needed, an unwavering leader in the months before Churchill became Prime Minister; King George VI had to be that person.

His personal story is well told in the movie and numerous books. The tragic announcement to the nation was a personal triumph for the King who showed the same mettle he expected of his people.

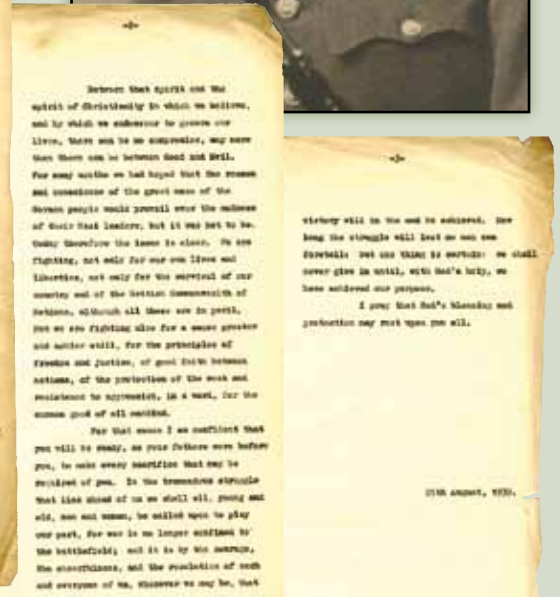
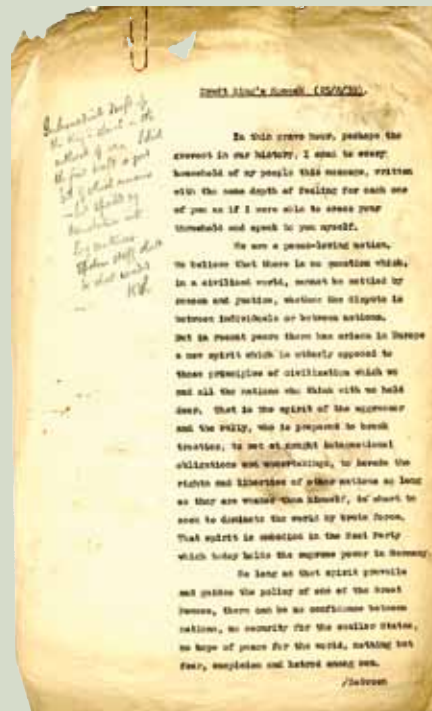
This three page carbon typescript has notation in pencil, "Intermediate draft of the King's speech on the outbreak of war. I did the first draft, a good bit of which remains -- but spoiled by translation into long sentences. Spoken stuff should be short winded. H[arold] V[ale] R[hodes]." (Rhodes played an important role in setting up the Ministry of Information in 1939.)

This intermediate draft was written on August 25, 1939, two days after the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact was signed between Germany and the U.S.S.R., making war all but inevitable by paving the way for the invasion of Poland.

The final speech, while retaining the sentiment and structure of this draft, is characterized by shorter and less grammatically complex sentences than this draft. It was delivered by the King standing at a lectern in an anteroom, with the window open and his jacket off, and with his unconventional Australian speech therapist, Lionel Logue, at his side. Logue advised

the King to forget everyone else and just say the speech to him, as a friend. His delivery was calm, dignified and measured.

The King opened his speech with the first paragraph of this draft: "In this grave hour, perhaps the gravest in our history, I send to every household of my people this message, written with the same depth of feeling for each one of you as if I were able to cross your threshold and speak to you myself."



SPECIAL EXHIBITION

THE START OF WORLD WAR II

MOST IMMEDIATE
56554 Cipher (M.O.1) 1/9.

Warning telegram. Take all defence precautions to meet the likelihood of war against Germany and Italy. Italy's position has not yet been declared publicly and with reference to paragraph 3 of W.O. telegram 56455 Cipher M.O.1. 20/8 it is most important that no action should be taken which can be considered provocative by Italy.

C.4. (Telegrams)

Above: The Original Secret Cipher Telegram, September 1, 1939 from the War Office addressed to the Governors and Commanders-in-Chief in the Middle East and other areas, and British troops in China and Commonwealth countries.

Right: Hand-written Naval Message marked, "Most Immediate," on September 3, 1939 to "All concerned Home and Abroad from Admiralty": "Commence Hostilities at once with Germany."

NAVAL MESSAGE

5.13704

For use in Signal Department only

Character Impression (Most Immediate communication)

TO: General #23 from C. & P.

All concerned Home & Abroad from Admiralty

Commence Hostilities at once with Germany (117)

Tel TOR 1141. M. Hall 2/4/39



Like Smoldering Sparks, War's Ephemera

As autographed pictures go, there may be none so damning as the one that David Lloyd George, Britain's prime minister during the latter part of World War I, inscribed on Dec. 1, 1933: "To Chancellor Hitler, with admiration for his brilliant gift of courage."

**EDWARD
ROTHSTEIN**

**EXHIBITION
REVIEW**

By now the consequences of such brilliant gifts and the admiration they inspired are so well known, they hardly need retelling. But coming upon this photo at the Grolier Club, as part of a modest but potent exhibition, "The Power of Words and Images in a World at War," is startling. Its matinee idol image of a British leader, accompanied by that fawning tribute, leaves us unable to settle into passive absorption of familiar material.

In fact, with the Second World War slowly passing out of living memory — 70th-anniversary commemorations of D-Day



The Power of Words and Images in a World at War The exhibition at the Grolier Club, top includes posters with images, from left, of Hitler, Churchill and Uncle Sam. The show, from the collection of Kenneth W. Rendell, a rare book and manuscript dealer, also includes signs, leaflets and other artifacts around which Mr. Rendell has constructed *The Museum of World War II*. Photos by Gavin Ashworth. The exhibition closed on August 2, 2014

are now taking place – it is the ephemera that ends up reviving the past, jolting us into more vivid understanding. And much of what we see in this exhibition does just that. Objects of everyday life during World War II – the posters, the signs, the leaflets, the newspapers, the letters – land on contemporary senses like sparks still smoldering.

They were selected by Kenneth W. Rendell, a rare book and manuscript dealer, from his private collection of some 7,000 artifacts around which he has constructed the Museum of World War II just outside Boston. The Grolier show's displays, which chronicle the war from various posts and periods, consistently unite the familiar with the unexpected.

So while we are acquainted by now with the "Degenerate Art" exhibition that Hitler staged (its guide is here), there is also an enameled sign created by the Reichskulturkammer, the Nazi bureau overseeing cultural life. "Swing tanzen verboten," it reads: "Swing dancing forbidden." And while the graphic brilliance of Nazi propaganda posters is widely acknowledged (and all too disturbing), the miniature books we see celebrating the Führer, equipped with loops of string that let them be carried by children, deliver an understated wallop.

Want to know something about the atmosphere in London as German bombs fell in 1940? Look at the British leaflet "If the Invader Comes: What to Do – and How to Do It." "You must not be taken by surprise," citizens are warned. Lessons have been learned from the Nazi overrunning of Belgium and the Netherlands. "Stay put," readers are told. Also: "Do not believe rumors and do not spread them." Another leaflet has instructions on "how not to get gassed": Masks should be carried at all times along with jars of "No. 2 anti-gas ointment (price 6d.)."

Even a photograph that seems inconsequential takes on resonance. A railway car, incongruously parked at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, is the same car in which Germany signed the armistice ending World War I. Hitler

served his revenge hot: After conquering Paris, 22 years later, he had the car removed from a French museum and brought to where Germany was once forced to surrender, turning it into a site for French submission. It was the shipped to Berlin in triumph.

As for France after the fall, its character becomes clear with the display of two Paris guides written in German, along with a set of 1942 posters in French and German, outlining reprisals against any suspected saboteur: All male relatives will be shot, all female relatives pressed into work, all children sent to a supervised school.

There are examples of sentimental propaganda, including posters of Norman Rockwell's paean to the Four Freedoms, but also of virulent propaganda. In one Japanese poster, "American demons" have bound Filipino soldiers to bamboo stalks for use as human shields.

There are examples, too, of subterranean currents: An American Army sign for showers sends "white" enlisted men in one direction and "colored in another. A 1939 announcement of a "mass demonstration for true Americanism" at Madison Square Garden organized by the German American Bund promises support for "100,000,000 Aryan (WHITE, GENTILE) Americans."

So while the overall history is familiar, these artifacts give sharp, incisive glimpses of passions and experiences that can be missed in the larger currents of the war's history. But we also see the war itself unfolding, and in many instances are amazed that we are seeing these artifacts at all.

In a conversation, Mr. Rendell described how in the early decades of his collecting, there was often little interest in such material at auctions, even from government libraries and archives. He would readily (and inexpensively) buy entire collections.

So here are six detached pad-size sheets, scrawled with German notes: Hitler's outline for his speech to the Reichstag

on Jan. 30, 1939, with phrases, fragments, allusions to German genius and to a new age being ushered in, though the speech itself was later spun out in an oratorical trance; it became most famous for Hitler's announcement that any coming world war would lead to "the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe."

As if in response, the adjacent display contains a typewritten manuscript for a 1946 speech by Churchill. The English Channel is described as a "strip of salt water" that in the Battle of Britain may be said to have "saved the freedom of the world" by giving allies time to prepare and Hitler "the time to make his fatal mistake."

One aspect of that mistake can be glimpsed in a case devoted to the Soviet Union, which includes a book of German invasion plans for Ukraine, a German invasion map for the area around Leningrad and a map of approaches to Moscow. We read: "The phrase spoken to all surrendering soldiers in

the European theater, 'For you the war is over,' had a different meaning for Germans surrendering to the Russians – for 95 percent of them, life was over." But German defeat in the East helped make defeat possible in the West. Here, too, are the original plans for the Normandy invasion, with red and blue pencil marks showing the hoped-for positions after the first day of fighting.

And given prominent display is one of nine bound copies of the Instrument of Surrender by Japan on Sept. 2, 1945, created for Gen. Douglas MacArthur's personal distribution.

If the exhibition were focused more particularly on its theme – word, image and propaganda – it would have more coherence, but had it done that, it would have also given a more restricted picture of the war. Instead, it manages to give a powerful compact survey, while suggesting how much of that epochal conflict yet remains beyond easy understanding.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I have long considered Ed Rothstein to be the most perceptive and intelligent museum critic anywhere. His article, "New Insights into History May Skew the Big Picture," which appeared in *The New York Times* on March 19, 2014 lays out in detail what is wrong with history museums today and should be the guiding light for museums to find their way back to what their missions were originally. It is a brilliant contribution to the lessons that history museums need to understand in responsibly representing their subjects.

It was with great anticipation that I learned he was going to review my exhibition "The Power of Words and Images in a World at War". The documents and artifacts are drawn from the Museum of World War II and represent my concepts of illustrating all aspects of the world at war in the original words of those who were there. I have always carefully worked on the pacing of artifacts and exhibits in order to avoid precisely what he describes as a "passive absorption of familiar material". In language, and in magic, the mind anticipates and skips over what may or may not be there, and I want the viewer to always realize they need to look at each artifact and document carefully and discover for themselves information that brings them as close to the reality as possible.

He understood with great perception exactly what is behind my exhibition designs and my belief that history should be conveyed directly from the participants to the museum visitor without the filters of curators and historians who far too often make judgments knowing how history unfolded. They apply the social values of today to a very different world 75 years ago, a time when people didn't know what was going to happen. I consider his review a great honor.