



HIDDEN PAST
Dillwyn now, and, inset, at the age of 17

CRUCIAL TARGET
Port Talbot was to be destroyed

My secret mission to blow up my home town

Farmer's wartime role revealed

BY LUKE TRAYNOR

A SHEEP farmer has broken his 70-year silence to reveal the orders he was issued... to destroy his home town if the Germans invaded during the Second World War.

Dillwyn Thomas, 88, was part of a top secret Army unit that was ready to blow the area "to smithereens" to stop the Nazis getting their hands on key sites.

The tiny covert team was also prepared to fight a guerrilla war against Hitler's mighty forces if they had made their way to the town.

Dillwyn was an 18-year-old farm boy from the Margam suburb of Port Talbot when he joined the secret crew, the Auxiliary Units, which were created by Winston Churchill.

The teams, each of between four and eight men, were spread across Britain as a last line of defence.

The orders Dillwyn's band of brothers were prepared to carry out included destroying the steelworks in the town.

He said: "We were told to blow Port Talbot to smithereens."

"We had access to every weapon you could imagine - daggers for prodding the enemy, guns for shooting the enemy, explosives for blowing up the enemy. The

weapons were kept in a secret underground bunker that only we knew about - ready for us in case of invasion.

"If the Germans had landed and it looked as though they were making inroads we were to blow the steelworks, oil refinery, train line, and anything else which could have been of any use to them - then lay low in the countryside.

"We weren't meant to fight the Germans head-on - there were nowhere near enough of us. The hope was we could tie them up with ambushes."

After the war, Dillwyn kept quiet about his mission but became known as a stalwart of the Royal Welsh Show where he has rubbed shoulders with the Queen and Prince Charles.

Dillwyn has revealed his Army secrets in an autobiography called *A View From the Main Ring*. Like many of the

roughly 3,500 Auxiliaries, he was recruited from the Home Guard.

Ex-Labour leader Michael Foot is also thought to have been in the secret force.

Dillwyn, who still farms near Port Talbot, is one of the few Auxiliaries still alive.

Recalling his days in the Margam Auxiliary Unit, he said: "As a young dimwit I never appreciated the magnitude of what we were asked to do."

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ROYALTY With Charles at show