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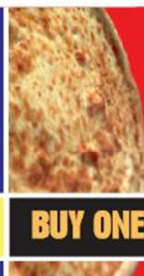
An edition of the Hull Daily Mail At the heart of all things local Monday February 27 2012 45p

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Former guerrilla fighter urges others to tell their stories

WAR SECRETS MUST NOT DIE WITH US

SECRET ARMY:
Claude Varley.
Picture: Peter Harbour



A MEMBER of East Yorkshire's guerrilla army during the Second World War is urging others to reveal their secrets before it is too late.

Soldiers in East Yorkshire's Auxiliary Units were given orders to assassinate senior community figures to protect Britain's infrastructure or kill German soldiers if the country was ever invaded.

However, they were made to sign the Official Secret Acts, forbidding them to talk, even to their closest relatives.

Now, researchers have discovered a network of underground bunkers used by the units including secret hide-

InShort

A secret army of guerrilla fighters were based in East Yorkshire during the Second World War. They are being encouraged to speak out.

by **Emma Wright**

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aways close to the villages of Rise, Middleton On The Wolds and Cottingham.

And as the Mail is granted exclusive access to one of the few remaining bunkers, the guerrilla fighters are being urged not to take their secrets to their graves

Hornsea farmer Claude Var-

ley, now 88, was a member of the Bewholme Unit and was trained to kill with his bare hands.

He said: "We're all in our 80s and 90s now - if we die without saying anything, the secret dies with us."

"People should be taught about this and made aware of what happened."

"When I signed the Official Secrets Act, there was sweat coming off my forehead - they were holding a gun to me, making me swear I wouldn't say anything."

"I think that is why some people have never spoken - even though the Act only las-

● **Continued on page 2**

Rare look inside guerrilla army's hidden underground bunker pages 8-9

'Secrets of guerrilla army must not die with us'

● Continued from page 1

ted 50 years. But it is important they do speak, so people know."

The Auxiliary Units hid out in underground bunkers and were prepared to sneak out and silently kill Germans.

If they were caught, they were prepared to kill themselves and had a list of people to shoot dead when an invasion was announced.

School teachers, police officers, game keepers and the home guard commanders were on their hit list to prevent the senior community figures revealing any vital information to help the Germans.

Mr Varley said: "Should the Germans have invaded, we had a list of ten people we had to kill straight away so they wouldn't go blabbing – including the school teacher, the local bobby, a game keeper and the home guard commander.

"If it had come down to it, I would have done it.

"It would have been important to my country."

The East Coast was a serious risk of invasion throughout the Second World War and bunkers were built

all over the East Yorkshire countryside to conceal members of the Auxiliary Unit.

The plan was that once the Germans invaded, the soldiers, who had fled to their secret hiding places in fields and woods, would crawl out of the bunkers to massacre the enemy, one by one, if necessary.

Three confirmed units based in Walkington, Bewholme and Aldbrough have been traced.

But it is thought there were 34 units and bunkers in East Yorkshire in total.

Claude Varley was one of 3,500 men trained at Coleshill House, near Highworth, Wiltshire, in guerrilla warfare including assassination, unarmed combat, demolition and sabotage.

Mr Varley, who still lives in Hornsea, said: "I was from a farming family, so I was a good worker, used to the outdoors and I knew the lay of the land.

"I wasn't someone who fussed and I knew that if I had to kill a man, I could have done it and gone home fine.

"People said what we did was

dangerous work, but I always just had the attitude of 'get stuck in and stop moaning'."

He remembers his training at Colehill and the instructions they received from senior command.

"I was given a rifle and a revolver and a tommy gun, but I hated the tommy – it was rubbish.

"We were also trained in unarmed combat.

"We were trained to kill, there were no two ways about it.

"The rifles could kill at a six-mile range. We were given all the best weapons and guns.

"I knew in my head how I would attack – I planned to go round the side and get them in the back."

Mr Varley was a member of the Bewholme Patrol – one of three confirmed patrols in the East Yorkshire area.

An estimated 214 men from East Yorkshire worked in the Auxiliary Units, with ages ranging from 16 to 54.

But Mr Varley was 18 when he was recruited into his unit.

He said: "I wasn't scared or frightened. I am not a panicky

person. I think even at that age, I didn't have a fear.

"The most important thing to me was to protect my country.

"I wouldn't have been captured, they wouldn't have got me. But if they did, I was prepared to shoot myself.

"They didn't expect we'd last long anyway – we were only given two weeks' worth of rations."

Despite the soldiers remaining at home instead of fighting overseas, and the bunkers being relatively close to villages, little was known of the work of the Auxiliary Units.

"I couldn't tell my parents, even though I was in the Bewholme Unit with two of my brothers.

"I think my father knew something, but he never said anything. You didn't, because you knew talking was dangerous in the war.

"If we had been invaded, we were told to leave our homes without saying goodbye and go to the bunker.

"It would have been hard for my mother to have three sons disappear overnight, but we just had to do it."

● A rare look inside secret underground bunker: pages 8-9

Second World War stories unearthed after many years buried underground

Rare look inside hidden bunker used by secret band of men trained to fight and kill invading German soldiers

InShort

The Mail went deep down a bunker in East Yorkshire, used by Second World War and used by units trained to attack German invaders.

by Emma Wright

STANDING in a woodland, surrounded by trees, a glimpse round will reveal nothing but nature.

But just below the earth and fallen leaves lies one of the Second World War's best-kept secrets.

The secret is a bunker, camouflaged with foliage and camouflaged by those who know what to look for.

This was the base for the Auxiliary Units in East Yorkshire – a secret band of men trained to fight and kill German soldiers invading the UK.

Only in the past few years have details about their lives been revealed after the Official Secrets Act they signed came to an end.

And now, the underground bunkers hidden by trees are being researched by dedicated soldiers, uncovering the units to find out where they were located and what they did.

The Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team (Cart) was formed in June 2008. Cart's mission is to research the lives of Auxiliary Units, which were set up in 1940 to fight German soldiers invading the UK.

They were issued with special equipment, including a special type of night vision goggles which were imported to England from the US.

Brought to life by the Auxiliary Units, the units were used to fight German soldiers invading the UK.

These were a type of anti-tank weapon, which were used to fight German soldiers invading the UK.

They were also given special equipment, including a special type of night vision goggles which were imported to England from the US.



SECRET SOLDIERS: Spectator Auxiliary Unit Patrol, Dossel. Pictures provided by Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team

the location of a number of Auxiliary Unit bunkers, known as OBs (observation posts). He said: "I have always had an interest in the Second World War and while doing some research on the subject, I came across the name of the Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team. I was very interested to hear that many people didn't know their father or grandfather was in an Auxiliary Unit.

And unfortunately, we are at the time of writing, a lot of them are still alive. We have what we believe is a complete list of everyone involved, taken from the National Records – the jobs they did.

when the Auxiliaries were first established, many used their own weapons, including rifles, shotguns and even their own motor cars.

Many look at things being relatively quiet. The resistance men who received 22 rifles were used to fighting in the front lines, but those who survived have told Cart they were also for use on the home front.

They were also given special equipment, including a special type of night vision goggles which were imported to England from the US.

According to Cart, the units were used to fight German soldiers invading the UK.



Even today, more than 70 years after the war ended, people are afraid to go down there. The bunker is a maze of tunnels and rooms, built into the side of a hill. It was used by the Auxiliary Units to fight German soldiers invading the UK.

Corrupted metal was fashioned into an arch to form the roof of the bunker. Today, the metal has rusted and buckled out of shape under the weight of the soil above.

And now, the underground bunkers hidden by trees are being researched by dedicated soldiers, uncovering the units to find out where they were located and what they did.

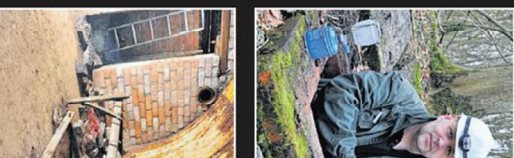
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HIDDEN HISTORY: Left, Mail reporter Emma Wright explores the Second World War bunker located in woods just outside the village of Coleshill, East Yorkshire. Above, the remains of the bunkers inside the bunker. Pictures by Emma Wright. For more information, visit www.coleshillauxiliaryunits.co.uk or contact Emma Wright on 08444 060 9110



View on video
See the Mail go underground to explore the bunker at www.thisishull.co.uk

Historians now believe the references to the fields and streets was in fact referring to battles that could have occurred in England.

And although Churchill had vast amounts of information on the units, he did not know the full story.

Andy Gwynne said: "It is questions like what the other tunnel at Ris was used for that need answering, so it is not just the hand to fall as it has been."

Andy wants to collect stories from the streets. We shall fight in the streets, we shall fight in the streets, we shall fight in the streets.

Research team wants to hear from Auxiliaries

Coleshill Auxiliary Units (Cart) researchers and volunteers are all seeking documents all aspects of the British Resistance movement in the Second World War.

It is a non-profit organisation that receives no financial support from the government.

People in East Yorkshire who were in the Auxiliary Units to find out how they were recruited, what they did, and what the names of people they worked with.

For example, one of the people on the list the Bewtholme unit was to shoot in the event of attack was a game warden.

They were also given special equipment, including a special type of night vision goggles which were imported to England from the US.

According to Cart, the units were used to fight German soldiers invading the UK.

Bunker life

match interest in the growth and development of the new guerrilla formations ... known as Auxiliary Units.

From what I hear, these units are being organised with thoroughness from the Auxiliary Units.

Because soldiers in the units were ordered to sign the Official Secrets Act, their work has never been recognised.

They were also given special equipment, including a special type of night vision goggles which were imported to England from the US.

When I visit the bunkers, I know I am walking in the footsteps of heroes.

They were also given special equipment, including a special type of night vision goggles which were imported to England from the US.



BUNKER LIFE: Coleshill Auxiliary Research team re-enact a scene inside an operational base.