

The Times Crossword

The War Years Collection – 1941

Sources: The Times Atlas of The Second World War

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The Times Archive

- January 1-22** First Washington Conference.
- January 1-2** British sea and air bombardment of Bardia.
- January 5** Australians capture Bardia: 48,000 prisoners.
- January 10** Lend-Lease Bill introduced to Congress.
- January 11** HMS Southampton sunk in the Mediterranean by Stuka attack.
- January 20** Roosevelt's third inauguration.
- January 22** Tobruk falls to British and Australians: 25,000 prisoners.
- January** Allied shipping losses: 76 ships of 320,200 tons, 21 to U-boats.
- February 1-14** German Pocket battleship *Admiral Hipper* sinks 7 ships in raid from Brest.
- February 3** German battle cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* break into North Sea in Operation *Berlin*.
- February 6** British and Australians take Benghazi.
- February 7** Italian collapse at Beda Fomm.

February 10 Mussolini accepts offer of a German armoured division. British forces advance into East Africa.

February 11 Darlan appointed deputy and successor to Pétain.

February 12 Rommel arrives in Tripoli.

February 14 German troops join Rommel.

February 19 Australian 8th Division lands in Singapore.

February 24 Britain agrees to send forces to Greece.

February 25 British forces occupy Mogadishu.

February 27 New Zealand cruiser sinks Italian ship off Maldives.

March 1 RAF 1,000-bomber raid on Cologne: first use of AI air-to-air radar. Bulgaria joins Axis and German troops enter country. Free French Forces capture Kufra Oasis.

March 4 Commando raid on Lofoten Islands (Norway). (Albania). 5 Italian warships, (2 cruisers, 3 destroyers) with strong Italian fighter escort began shelling coast road to Himare, Albania. RAF Flight Lieutenants, Ace South African, Marmaduke 'Pat' Pattle DFC and Bar and Australian Ace, Richard Nigel 'Ape' Cullen DFC and Bar intercepted the ships in their Hurricanes. Cullen's aircraft was 'jumped by a Fiat CR42, and last seen heading straight into the side of a mountain – my uncle aged 22 years, honoured yearly at Kefalonia by the good people of that island, along with his great friend, 'Pat' who succumbed a month later at the Battle of Piraeus Harbour against impossible odds aged 26 years – both lovingly remembered by family and friends and never Forgotten - DA

March 6 Churchill gives Battle of Atlantic Directive.

March 7 British and Australian forces land in Greece. HMS *Wolverine* sinks U-47 (N. Atlantic).

March 8 Senate passes Lend-Lease Bill.

March 9-25 Greeks repel Italian counter-offensive in Albania.

- March 11** Roosevelt signs Lend-Lease Bill.
- March 13** Devastating night raids on Glasgow and Clydeside leave two-thirds of the population homeless.
- March 16-17** U-99 and U-100 sunk.
- March 19** German ultimatum to Yugoslavia.
- March 22** End of Operation *Berlin*, Germans sink 22 vessels.
- March 25** Yugoslavia signs tripartite Pact.
- March 27** Coup in Yugoslavia.
- March 28-29** Battle of Cape Matapan (Mediterranean), RN sinks 3 Italian cruisers.
- March 30** Afrika Korps offensive in Cyrenaica. US Navy begins to patrol west Atlantic.
- March** Allied shipping losses: 139 ships of 529,700 tons, 41 to U-boats, 41 to aircraft, with 6 U-boats sunk.
- April 1** Raschid Ali seizes power in Iraq.
- April 4** Afrika Korps captures Benghazi. German raider *Thor* sinks armed merchant cruiser *Voltaire* (Atlantic).
- April 6** Germans invade Greece and Yugoslavia.
- April 10** Germans capture Zagreb.
- April 11** US Navy covers to 26° W, British cover to 35° W.
- April 11** Germans take Belgrade.
- April 13** Rommel's forces surround Tobruk. Japan and USSR sign 5-year neutrality pact, freeing Soviet forces to fight the Germans.

- April 15** RAF Coastal Command under RN control increases cover.
- April 16** German troop convoy wiped out of Kerkennah Islands.
- April 17** Yugoslav army capitulates.
- April 20** Battle of Piraeus Harbour, Athens. RAF v. Luftwaffe encounter. RAF South African Ace, Squadron Leader Marmaduke 'Pat' Pattle DFC and Bar (mentioned earlier), ignoring medical orders deeming him unfit for duty, chose instead to join the conflict and engage German aircraft over Piraeus on this day. He was last seen battling Messerschmitt 110s. His Hurricane crashed into the sea against hopeless odds. Lovingly remembered by family and friends – DA.
- April 21** Japanese occupy Foochow.
- April 22** Greek army surrenders to Germans at Thessaloniki; British withdrawal begins. Germans break through at Thermopylae.
- April 25** Germans occupy Halfaya Pass.
- April 27** Germans enter Athens. British evacuate Greece.
- April 28** Germans take Sollum.
- April 30** Iraqi troops surround RAF base at Habbaniya.
- April** Allied shipping losses: 195 ships of 687,000 tons, 43 to U-boats, 116 to aircraft.
- May 1-9** Liverpool Blitz.
- May 1** German attack on Tobruk repulsed.
- May 2** Iraq demands British withdrawal.
- May 5-9** *Tiger* convoy carries tanks to Alexandria.
- May 6-10** British forces defeat Iraqis and march on Baghdad.

- May 7** Captured German ship provides secret *Enigma* code papers.
- May 8** RN cruiser *Cornwall* sinks German raider *Pinguin* near Seychelles.
- May 9** Thailand and French Indo-China sign peace treaty in Tokyo.
Captured U-boat provides British with *Hydra* naval code.
- May 10** Climax of London Blitz. Hess flies to Scotland.
- May 14** British reinforcements land in Singapore.
- May 15** Gloster E28/39 flight powered by Whittle jet engine. Operation *Brevity*, British retake Sollum and Halfaya.
- May 18-27** Voyage of the *Prinz Eugen* and *Bismarck*.
- May 20-31** Operation *Merkur*: German invasion of Crete. 6,000 paratroops dropped.
- May 24** *Prinz Eugen* and *Bismarck* engage *Hood* and *Prince of Wales*. *Hood* sunk.
- May 27** *Bismarck* sunk after a torpedo from an RN *Fairey Swordfish* bi-plane from the Aircraft Carrier HMS *Ark Royal*, piloted by RN Lieutenant John Moffat which disabled one of her screws. Leaving her vulnerable and helpless, unable to manoeuvre, except in a circle. HMS *Rodney* was called in, and just one shell was enough to disable her command. HMS *Dorsetshire* was called in to scuttle her with torpedoes. These tragic encounters resulted in just 114 survivors from her crew of 2,100, contrasted with HMS *Hood*'s earlier loss of 1,415 souls from a complement of 1,418.
- May 27** Newfoundland Escort Force accompanies convoy HX-129.
- May 30** Iraqi revolt ends.
- May 31** British thrown out of Crete.
- May** Allied shipping losses: 139 ships, 58 of 325,000 tons to U-boats.
- June 1** British enter Baghdad. *Prinz Eugen* reaches Brest. US Coastguard begin patrols of southern Greenland.

- June 2** Vichy government orders census of Jews.
- June 5** Germans claim 15,000 prisoners on Crete.
- June 8** British, Australian, Indian and Free French forces invade Syria.
- June 11** Italians occupy Greece. USSR-Japanese trade pact.
- June 13** 12,000 Jews 'interned' in France.
- June 14-17** British Operation *Battleaxe* fails to relieve Tobruk.
- June 17** Japanese-Dutch negotiations fail.
- June 21** Free French occupy Damascus. Auchinleck replaces Wavell as Commander-in-Chief in Middle East.
- June 22** Germany invades USSR. Italy and Rumania declare war on USSR.
- June 23** Hungary and Slovakia declare war on USSR. Germans cross River Bug. Destruction of Soviet Air Force.
- June 23-29** Battle of convoy HX-133, 5 ships lost for 2 U-boats (out of 10)
- June 26** Finland declares war on USSR.
- June 27** Japan declares 'Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere'.
- June 28** Germans capture Minsk.
- June 30** Germans encircle Russian forces in Bialystok 'pocket'.
- June** Allied shipping losses: 109 ships of 432,000 tons, 61 ships of 310,000 tons to U-boats.
- July 1** Germans capture Riga. US Navy aircraft start anti-sub patrols from Newfoundland.

- July 3** Stalin calls for ‘scorched earth’ policy in broadcast. End of Vichy resistance in Syria.
- July 4** Tito announces resistance in Yugoslavia.
- July 7** US Marines arrive in Iceland.
- July 8** First daylight raid by RAF ‘Flying Fortresses’ on Wilhelmshaven. Germany and Italy partition Yugoslavia.
- July 10** Germans cross River Dnieper. Germany urges Japan to fight USSR.
- July 11** Ceasefire in Syria.
- July 12** Anglo-Soviet Mutual Assistance Agreement.
- July 14** Acre convention between Allied and Vichy forces.
- July 15** Germans capture Smolensk.
- July 16** RAF bomb shipping in Rotterdam. Japanese Cabinet resigns.
- July 19** BBC broadcasts ‘V’ for Victory declaring Resistance in occupied Europe. US Navy TF I protects all ships sailing to Iceland.
- July 21** Moscow bombed.
- July 22** German advance halted through exhaustion of supplies.
- July 26** Italian E-boats attack Valetta harbour (Malta). Japanese assets frozen in US and UK.
- July 28** Japanese troops land in Indo-China to occupy Vichy bases.
- July 31** Hitler’s ‘Final Solution’ order. *Style* convoy reinforces Malta garrison (to 2nd Aug)
- July** Allied shipping losses: 121,000 tons, 22 of 94,200 to U-boats.
- August 1** US oil embargo against ‘aggressor’ states.

- August 5** Siege of Odessa begins. US and Great Britain impose embargoes on sale of raw materials to Japan.
- August 7** RAF fighter sweeps over northern France begin. Stalin becomes USSR Supreme Commander.
- August 8-13** Japanese air-raids on Chung-king.
- August 9-12** Placentia Bay Conference.
- August 12** Atlantic Charter signed by Roosevelt and Churchill.
- August 16** Germans take Novgorod.
- August 18** National Fire Service formed in Britain.
- August 19** Germans surround Leningrad. British Spitzbergen expedition (to 3 Sept).
- August 24** Finns surround Russians at Vipuri.
- August 25-28** British and Russians enter Persia to secure oil supply.
- August 27** U-570 captured by Coastal Command bomber.
- August 29** Russians evacuate Karelian Isthmus.
- August** Allied shipping losses: 41 ships of 130,700 tons, 23 of 80,300 to U-boats.
- September 1** Russians counter-attack at Gomel.
- September 2** Three Power Conference in Moscow (to 29th)
- September 3** First use of Auschwitz gas chambers.
- September 4** Heavy raids on Malta. USS *Greer* attacked by U-boat.
- September 5** Germans occupy Estonia.

- September 9** RAF raids Turin. Persian government accepts Anglo-Soviet terms.
- September 11** US Navy told to 'shoot on sight'.
- September 12** First snows slow German offensive.
- September 15** Siege of Leningrad begins. Hitler orders U-boats to operate in the Mediterranean. U-boats diverted to Mediterranean.
- September 16** Germans to shoot 50 to 100 hostages in retaliation for the death of one of their own.
- September 18** Japanese prepare Southern Area operation.
- September 19** Germans take Kiev and Poltava.
- September 20** Italian 'human torpedoes' sink 3 ships at Gibraltar. First successful shooting-down of German plane from escort carrier HMS *Audacity*. (OG-74 still loses 6 from 27).
- September 23-28** *Halberd* convoy to Malta.
- September 25** German paratroops land in Crimea.
- September 28** Japanese occupy Changsha.
- September 29** British convoy PQI Reykjavik to Archangel, 84 ships of 285,900 tons lost, 53 to U-boats.
- September 30** Massacre of Jews at Kiev.
- October 4** RAF night raid on Benghazi.
- October 5** RAF night raid on Tripoli.
- October 6** RAF night raid on Piraeus.
- October 7** Panzers seal off Briansk and Vyazma pockets.

- October 8** Germans take Orel.
- October 10** Britain to supply USSR on Lend-Lease terms.
- October 14** Deportation of German Jews to Poland.
- October 16** Germans take Odessa. Soviet government moved to Kuibyshev.
- October 16-17** U-boat damages US destroyer *Kearney*
- October 17** Konoye resigns. Tojo takes over.
- October 20** German commander of Nantes shot by Resistance. 50 hostages shot in reprisal. Germans take Briansk. Japanese prepare Pearl Harbor attack.
- October 21** General Zhukov takes charge of Moscow defence.
- October 24** Germans take Kharkov.
- October 26** Japanese carrier fleet sets sail.
- October 27** Russians counter-attack at Moscow.
- October 29** Germans break through in Crimea.
- October 31** U-boat sinks US destroyer *Reuben James*, first American loss.
- October** Allied shipping losses: 218,300 tons, 156,500 tons to U-boats.
- November 1** Germans take Simferopol. Marshal Shaposhnikov becomes Soviet Chief of Staff.
- November 2** Tito's partisans and Chetniks war with each other in Yugoslavia.
- November 3** Germans capture Kursk. HMS *Indomitable* carrier intended for Far East damaged at Bermuda.
- November 6** Roosevelt announces \$ 1 bn loan to USSR.
- November 8-9** British force K from Malta destroys Italian convoy.

- November 9** Germans take Yalta.
- November 14** RN Carrier *Ark Royal* sunk by U-boat.
- November 15** German advance halted by extreme cold.
- November 16** Germans take Kerch.
- November 17** Keyes Raid – abortive Commando raid on Rommel’s HQ.
- November 18** Sir Alan Brooke appointed Chief of the Imperial General Staff. 8th Army launches Operation *Crusader*.
- November 19** HMAS *Sidney* intercepts German raider *Kormoran*. Both vessels sink.
- November 20** Tank battle at Sidi Rezegh.
- November 22** Germans take Rostov. HMS *Devonshire* sinks German raider *Atlantis* off West African coast.
- November 23** Afrika Korps destroys S. African 5th Brigade but is forced to retreat.
- November 25** German attack on Moscow, Panzers get within 20 miles of city. US Navy begins compulsory convoying of merchant ships.
- November 27** Mass Italian surrender at Gondar, Ethiopia.
- November 28** Germans lose Rostov. HMS *Prince of Wales* and HMS *Repulse* arrive at Colombo.
- November 29** Rommel counter-attacks. Japan decides on war.
- November 30** British bomber sinks U-206 using ASV radar.
- November** Allied shipping losses: 104,600 tons, 13 ships of 62,200 tons to U-boats.

- December 5** Germans abandon attack on Moscow.
- December 7** Japanese land in Siam and Malaya, bomb Singapore. Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor, declare war on US.
- December 8** Allies declare war on Japan. USSR remains neutral.
- December 10-11** Siege of Tobruk raised: Rommel retreats to Gazala.
- December 10** Japanese sink *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales*. Japanese land on Luzon, capture Guam.
- December 11** US declares war on Italy and Germany.
- December 14-23** Convoy HG-76 reaches Malta. Gibraltar to London fights off 12 U-boat attack (5 sunk) for the loss of escort carrier *Audacity*.
- December 15** British forces fall back in Burma, Malaya and Kowloon.
- December 16** British advance to Gazala; Rommel retreats to El Agheila.
- December 17** Hitler issues 'Halt Order' on general offensive. Japanese land in North Borneo.
- December 18** Japanese land in Hong Kong.
- December 19** Hitler assumes direct command of armies in field.
- December 22** (to 7 Jan) Churchill and Roosevelt decide strategy at the Arcadia Conference in Washington.
- December 22** Japanese land in Lingayen Gulf.
- December 24** Japanese capture Wake Island.
- December 25** British retake Benghazi. Hong Kong surrenders. Allied shipping losses: 430,000 tons.
- December 29** Russians retake Kerch.

December
4,300,000 tons.

Allied shipping losses: 153,000 tons, year total: 1229 ships of