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## CORNWALL AT WAR REPRINT

1939–1945

*Peter Hancock*

A traditional view of Cornwall is of a land apart. For many it conjures up images of idyllic summer holidays with wide sandy beaches lying under blue skies. All such images of Cornwall were shattered during the years of the Second World War when Cornwall's position as the guardian of the Western Approaches thrust it into the front line of that global conflict. Across the county men and women were put on a war footing: farmers were exhorted to produce more food, existing servicemen went off to fight, others joined up in their thousands, and women flocked to join the auxiliary services or took over the working roles of the menfolk who had gone to war.

As the war years passed so the county became a fortress: beaches were sealed off with barbed wire and mines, waters off the coast itself were mined, and much of the fishing fleet was commandeered for active service. In order to take the fight back to the enemy, new airfields were built and harbour facilities constructed for clandestine operations and, later, to shelter vessels of the invasion fleet destined for the liberation of Europe. Meanwhile, against a background of air raids and rationing, life for civilians in Cornwall went on under the dark and uncertain clouds of war.

This book draws into focus the picture of Cornwall during the war from 1939–45. Using historical photographs, along with many recently taken images showing the remains of military structures and the surviving paraphernalia of war, the author provides a vivid picture of the vital role played by Cornwall in those turbulent years.

**Peter Hancock** was born and brought up in Cornwall. He was educated at Poltair School, St Austell, the local sixth-form college and at the University of Exeter. He has taught at a prep school in Truro for over fifteen years, his subjects including History and Art.

This book was inspired by his interest in local history and the curiosity aroused by the neglected coastal defences dotted along the Cornish Coastal Footpath, about which there was clearly a dearth of information.

A life-long car fanatic, he has been a member of the Triumph TR Register for over twenty years, and writes a regular column for *Triumph World* magazine. He has also had published a number of short stories.



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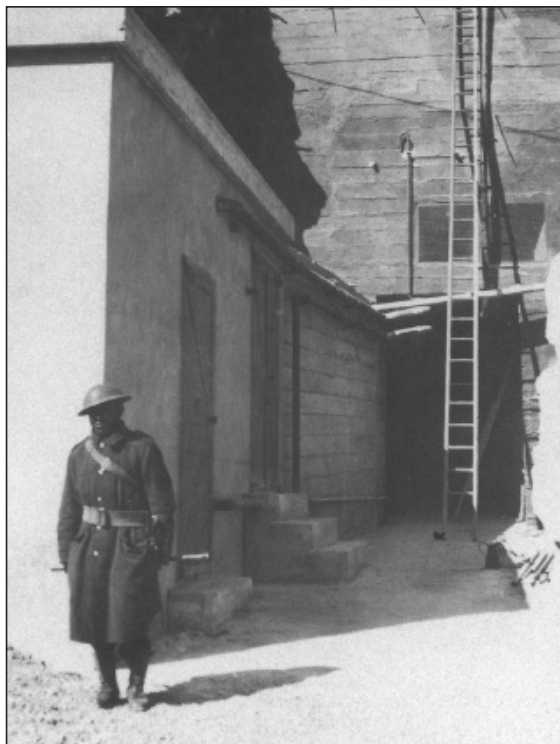
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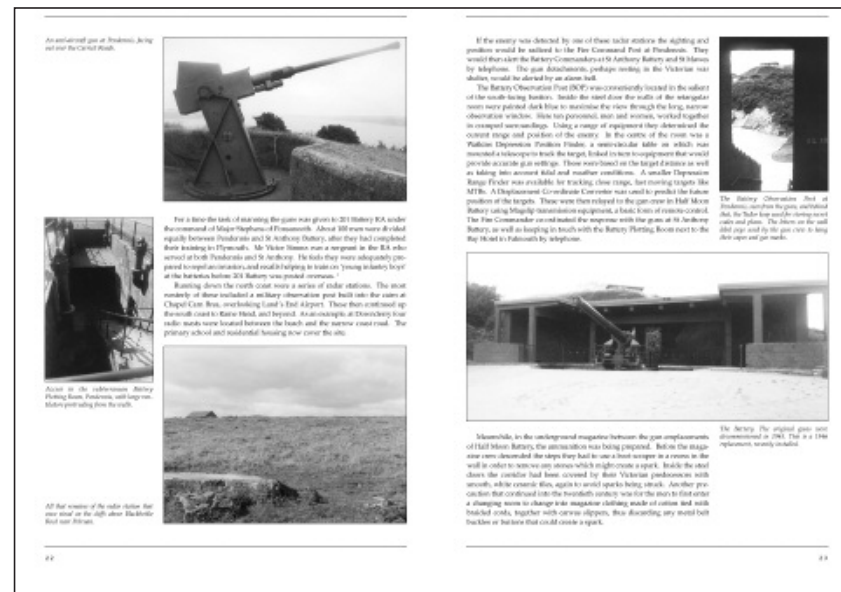
A sentry outside 'The Tunnel' underground telegraph station, Porthcurno, 1941.



A precariously sited pillbox guarding the coast to the west of Loe Bar. For how much longer will it survive coastal erosion?



The shell lift remains in remarkably sound condition. Only the ingress of rainwater from above prevents the chains which operate it from functioning.



Example of a double page spread.



The daymark on The Gribbin near Fowey. The railings, removed during the war, are finally being replaced in October 2001.



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