

LIVERPOOL BLITZED

SEVENTY YEARS ON

Neil Holmes

The Liverpool of early September 1939 was a thriving port and bustling city of over 800,000 people. World War Two changed this forever. Between the 27th June 1940 and the 10th January 1942 Hitler's Luftwaffe rained down death and destruction on the city, reducing many fine buildings to either burnt out shells or piles of rubble. During the first week of May 1941 alone the raids killed 1,453 people and seriously injured around another thousand.

The intervening 70 years have seen the city undergo drastic changes: docks that no longer have ships berthed there, terraced streets that have been cleared to make way for modern housing and grand old buildings that have been demolished in the name of progress. For many people wartime images of Liverpool are almost unrecognisable, such is the facelift the city has undergone.

By comparing the wartime image to the modern viewpoint this book gives the reader a link to the city's experiences that mere statistics can never convey. The book covers not just famous landmarks like the Liver Buildings but also ordinary houses, churches and pubs. It will inspire anyone, whether local or not to reflect on the sacrifice and bravery of Liverpool people in the city's darkest hour.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

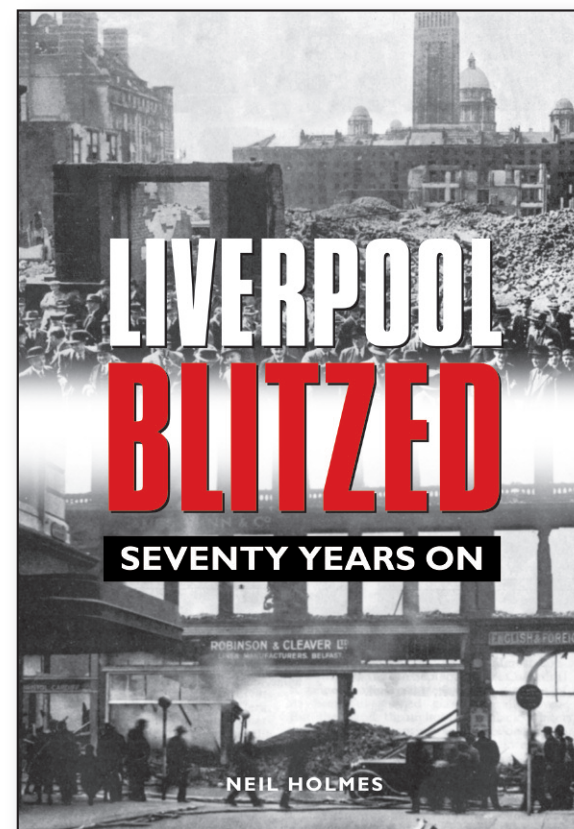
Neil Holmes was born on the Wirral in 1979 but now lives in Liverpool where he also works as a civil servant. He has studied military history for fifteen years and the history of Liverpool for five. His interest in local history and photography led him to research Liverpool's wartime experiences at the city's record office. He has spent the last two years gathering wartime photographs and travelling around the city taking modern comparisons. He is the author of an article on the Liverpool Blitz which was recently published in the *After the Battle* magazine.

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LIVERPOOL BLITZED – SEVENTY YEARS ON



This photograph shows the Three Graces in the background on the right and in the foreground a part of the Overhead Railway that has been demolished by a high explosive bomb.



Liverpool's Head Post Office was located in Victoria Street between Stanley and Sir Thomas Streets.



St George's Crescent and Derby Square area from Castle Street, a part of the city badly hit during the war. The "specks" in the upper half of the photograph are not marks on the negative but part of the tram system's power lines.



The modern view shows a sign of the times, with the railway being replaced by a widened dock road (known in this area as the Strand).



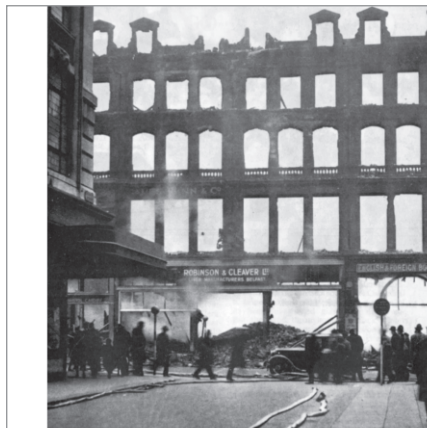
Modern view. Recently converted into an indoor shopping centre known as the Metquarter which opened in March 2006.



The modern view.

Example of a double-page spread.

The steps of St George's Hall (known as St George's Plateau) have long been the focus of mass meetings.

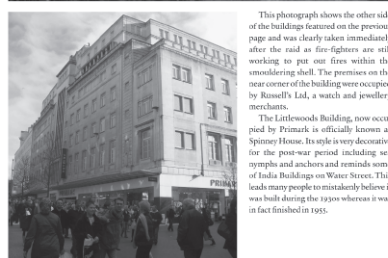


This photo was taken in Bunnet Street looking across Church Street. The presence of the hoses and rubble in the foreground suggests this was taken shortly after the attack and shows that the buildings were badly gutted by high explosive bombs and fire.

A quick check on the buildings in this photo confirms how important a shopping area Church Street has been. The building on the left was once the department store George Henry Lee's but is now occupied by a clothing store. Opposite is now the Primark store, but the building was originally built in the early 1930s for Littlewoods. To the right covered in scaffolding stands Marks and Spencer's.



DERBY SQUARE TO CHURCH STREET



This photograph shows the other side of the buildings featured on the previous page and was clearly taken immediately after the raid as fire-fighters are still working to put out fires within the smouldering shell. The premises on the near corner of the buildings were occupied by Russell's Ltd, a watch and jewellery merchants.

The Littlewoods Building, now occupied by Primark is officially known as Spinney House. Its style is very decorative for the post-war period including sea symbols and anchors and reminds some of India Buildings on Water Street. This leads many people to mistakenly believe it was built during the 1930s whereas it was in fact finished in 1955.

