

NORWICH – A SHATTERED CITY REPRINT

Steve Snelling

During two nights of intense bombing in April 1942 Norwich suffered its worst ordeal of the war as Hitler targeted the cathedral city for destruction as part of his vengeance campaign designed to lay waste Britain's cultural centres.

Known as the Baedeker raids, the German bombers tore the heart out of the city, turning the commercial centre to a near wasteland, and leaving entire streets in ruins.

Yet, ironically, though there was heavy loss of life, with over 200 deaths caused by these raids alone, the majority of the city's most historic buildings, including its Norman castle and cathedral, escaped the bombs and the fires that ravaged so many shops, factories and homes.

The author has made much use of records in the National Archives together with Mass-Observation diaries held at the University of Sussex to tell the full story of a ruthless bombing campaign that continued into the summer of 1942. His research, combined with vivid eyewitness accounts, offers a fresh perspective on the raids as well as setting them in their proper historical context.

Illustrated with more than 170 photographs and other images, the book presents a graphic portrait of the suffering and the stoicism displayed during an assault from the air that changed the face of Norwich forever.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

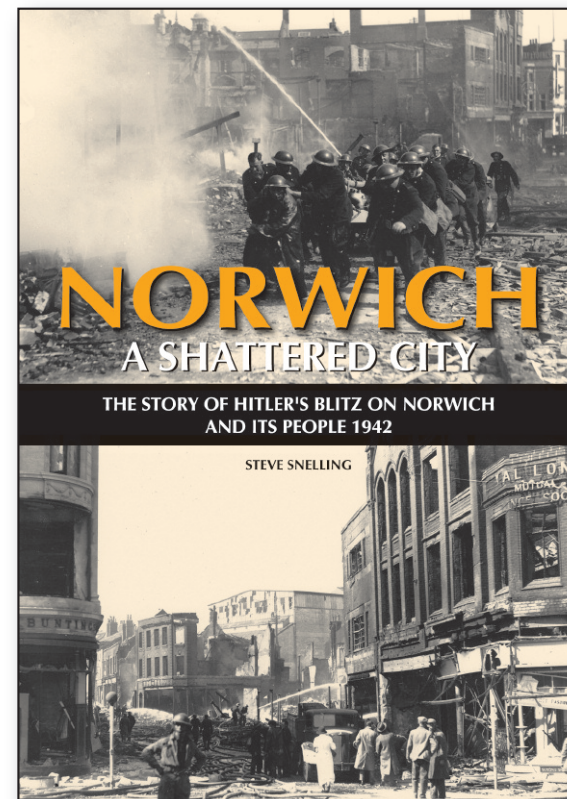
Steve Snelling is a freelance writer and journalist with more than 35 years experience of working on newspapers and magazines in Norfolk. For the past eight years he has edited and written for the *Eastern Daily Press* Sunday supplement and *Eastern Daily Press* Saturday magazines. He recently left the newspaper as an assistant editor in order to concentrate on writing books. His previous books include *Gallipoli*, *Passchendaele and the Naval VCs*, *Over Here: The Americans in Norfolk during World War Two*, and *Images of Norwich*.

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Right: UXB heroes. Insp Edwin Buttle, head of the city's Bomb Reconnaissance Department, on the left with his assistant, PC Neville Ball, on the right, with members of an army bomb disposal team (via Archant).



Left: Time for a break. Firemen enjoy mugs of tea at the back of their City Hall station. The fire fighters earned high praise for their efforts to tackle the blazes that engulfed parts of the city centre (Norfolk Fire Service archives).



Firemen damp down amid the tangled girders of Curls' department store (Archant).

Smoke pours from the Caley's site in the centre and from the devastated shopping area around Curls, bottom right, in this RAF photograph taken at 7am on April 30 (via Archant).



Example of a double-page spread.

