

# Oral History Project

By: Jessie Cooke

The image features a background of thin, vertical, light blue lines of varying lengths and positions, creating a textured, rain-like effect. A solid teal horizontal bar spans the width of the image, positioned in the lower half. The text 'Before the War' is centered within this bar.

**Before the War**

# Early Life

- Bill Campbell was born and lived in a small town in Scotland called Lossiemouth. He had two older brothers and was from a seafaring family.
- Before he enlisted he worked in the banking business.



Mr. Campbell and his two brothers.

# Enlisting

- Bill Campbell enlisted in the navy when he was just 19 years old.
- He already had two other brothers in various parts of the army and although his parents didn't wish him to go, they understood.
- There was no conscription but most felt that "it was the thing to do and they did it..."-Bill Campbell

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**During the War**

# Training

- All navy personal went through basic training or “boot camp” with everyone else.
- They had little special training but did learn how to tie knots and basic skills that would help them prepare for living on board a ship.



Boot Camp.

[http://www.ww2gyrene.org/boot\\_camp.htm](http://www.ww2gyrene.org/boot_camp.htm)

# Living on a Ship

- Living on a ship is very different than living on land, because you are constantly moving and rocking about.
- There was also very little space in the living quarters. You had a hammock, a hook and a locker. Lockers had to be kept clean at all times and inspections were frequent.



Living conditions on a ship.

[http://www.cityofart.net/bship/usn\\_crewmen.html](http://www.cityofart.net/bship/usn_crewmen.html)

# Weather in the North Atlantic

- Weather in the North Atlantic impacted the efficiency of both ships and missions.
- Mr. Campbell describes the waves in the North Atlantic as being as “as tall as houses” sometimes.



A ship riding into a huge wave.

<http://robinstorm.blogspot.ca/2008/12/scientists-find-evidence-of-tsunamis-on.html>

# Winter on Board a Ship

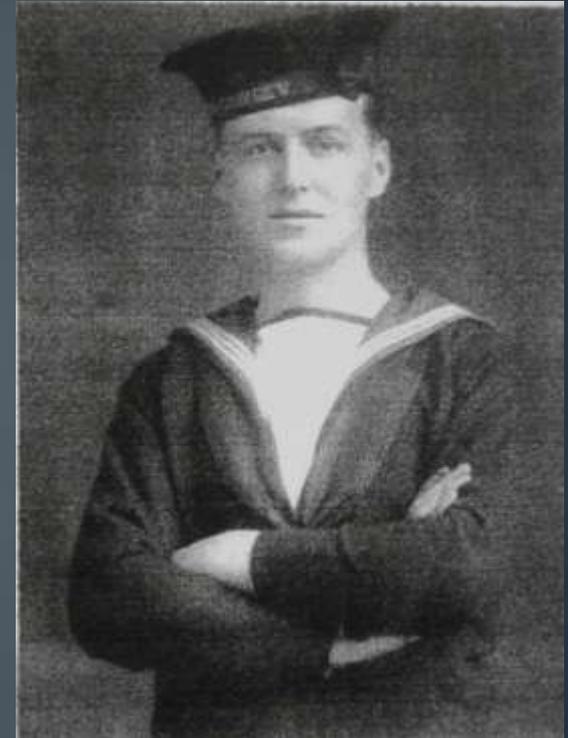
- In the North Atlantic winter is ferocious and terrifying. It also has a large impact on ships.
- The turrets on the ships have to rotate every 15 minutes so that they don't freeze in place.
- The ship's deck also becomes coated in ice.
- It is also very cold for the sailors who are on the ship.



Ice covering the guns and the deck.

# The Navy Uniform

- Mr. Campbell remembers the navy uniform being very uncomfortable but very traditional.
- Every part of the uniform had a story behind it. The three stripes on the collar were for Nelson's three victories and the black bow on the front of the uniform was in memory of Nelson's death.
- "Tiddly Jack" was when the sailors played around with the uniform a bit and personalized the way they wore it.



Bill Campbell in his navy uniform.

# Personal Hygiene

- “Sailors are some of the cleanest people I have ever met.”-Bill Campbell
- The sailors on the ship kept themselves very clean and policed each other to do so.
- “Make’n Mend Clothes” was when all the sailors would get together, sit in a circle and wash or mend their clothes. This gave them both a chance to talk and take care of their clothes.
- The sailors also kept their lockers and space very clean so hygiene on board ship was rarely a problem.

# Mail and Food

- Mail and food were two things that Mr. Campbell felt were well looked after on board ship. The officers understood that in order to keep a soldier happy they had to look after those two things.
- Meals were bland but there was always enough to eat.
- Also there was always mail waiting for you as soon as you finished your shift.

# HMS King George V

- The King George V was one of the ships that Bill Campbell served on. It is also the main ship that he served on.
- It was a battle ship and the main job of battleships in the North Atlantic was to protect the convoys from attacks from German U-Boats.
- The King George V is also very famous because it was involved in the sinking of the German ship the Bismarck.
- The King George V was also the flag ship of the British fleet.



HMS King George V.

[http://www.maritimequest.com/warship\\_directory/great\\_britain/battleships/king\\_george\\_v/hms\\_king\\_george\\_v.htm](http://www.maritimequest.com/warship_directory/great_britain/battleships/king_george_v/hms_king_george_v.htm)

# The Sinking of the Bismarck

- The Bismarck was a large and terrifying German battleship.
- It was sunk by the HMS King George V and the other ships in the convoy at the time.
- Mr. Campbell was not on the King George V when it sank.



The German Battleship the Bismarck.

<http://www.secondworldwar.org.uk/bismarck.html>

# The Murmansk Run

- The Murmansk Run went to Murmansk Russia carrying vital supplies for the war effort in Russia.
- Multiple convoys of ships would carry supplies over through the rough and cold North Atlantic seas.



Convoy in the North Atlantic.

<http://houseofrandom.tumblr.com/post/15504396736/killtheinternet-a-british-convoy-from-the>

# The Sinking of the Punjabi

- The HMS Punjabi was a destroyer that traveled in the same convoy with the HMS King George V.
- Once when they were travelling the Punjabi crossed in front of the King George and the King George ran straight through it.
- Roughly 210 of the 250 people on board the Punjabi were saved.
- Mr. Campbell remembers American ships traveling with them reacting very quickly. They covered the sea in life rafts.



HMS Punjabi.

<http://www.secondworldwar.org.uk/punjabi>.

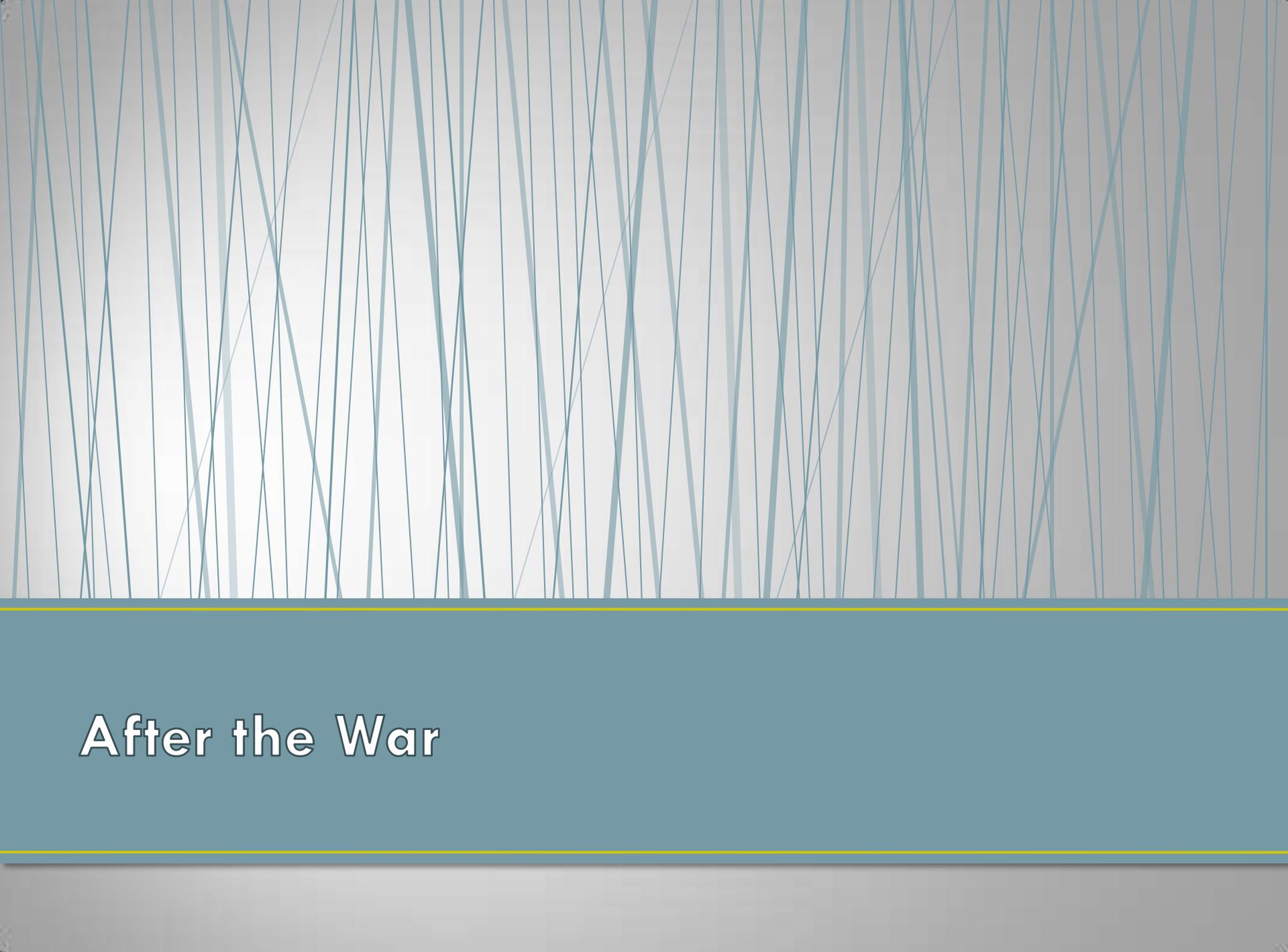
# The Americans

- Mr. Campbell worked a lot with the American Navy.
- He remembers the Americans having a PX Store for their servicemen. Sometimes the British sailors would be allowed to use these PX Stores as well.
- PX stood for Postal Exchange.
- The American PX Store is a store where you can buy equipment or anything you might need or want. These stores had some items that even American citizens were unable to get.



American PX Store.

<http://www.ipernity.com/doc/57114/@/page:522:36?view=1>

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**After the War**

# V-E Day

- On V-E Day, Mr. Campbell was actually asleep at home. His brother came running in, woke him up and told him the war was over.
- He remembers a large parade that took place. When people found out, everyone ran into the streets in their pajamas or with curlers still in their hair and celebrated on the streets with everyone else.



News Paper Headline of a V-E Day Parade.

<http://gjnashen.wordpress.com/tag/ve-day/>

# How WWII Effected Peoples Lives

- WWII had a huge effect on everyone's lives.
- As Mr. Campbell said, "You look at the young people in your office today and think they couldn't be trusted with too much responsibility, and then you remember that you were when you were that age."
- Also during WWII many people lost family members and friends which would have changed their lives as well.

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# The Importance of Oral History

# Why is Oral History Important?

- Oral History is important for many reasons. In my opinion it provides a person's specific experiences and their views on these experiences. In a textbook they provide an overview of a situation that lacks the emotion and detail that one person's story might have. Also the oral history project recognizes an individual's contribution and makes sure that it will never be forgotten.

# Thank You



Thank you to Bill Campbell for sharing his experiences with me so that I might share and learn from them!