

Geologists at war, 1939-1945

From Earthwise

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Introduction

Like everybody else, geologists and their work were affected by the outbreak of World War II.



This page shows some of these effects and the contributions made by geologists to the war effort. In addition to the subjects covered the Survey was involved in a wide range of activities such as advising the on the siting of military camps, aerodromes and storage depots (surface and underground), surveying for minerals in the UK, giving advice on where to get sand for sandbags and providing geological information to assist the D-Day landings.

Preparing for war

As the prospect of war grew more likely, arrangements were made for what would happen to the Geological Survey of Great Britain and its staff.



File:
"Emergency War
Measures -
Disposal of
Staff",
1938-1943
[GSM/DC/W/13]



Memorandum
relating to
preparations for
the possible
outbreak of war,
1938
[GSM/DC/W/13]



Letter from [E B Bailey](#) to J Fox
relating to the
Survey's
chemical work in
the event of war,
1939
[GSM/DC/W/13]

Home Guard

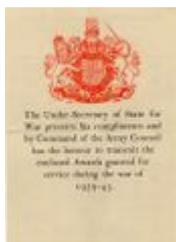
Like many others, members of the Geological Survey joined the Home Guard to defend Britain from possible invasion.



[Kingsley
Dunham's](#)
Defence Medal
[KCD/A/3/2/4]



Kingsley
Dunham's
Defence Medal
[KCD/A/3/2/4]



Citation that was
with the medal
[KCD/A/3/2/4]



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Citation that was with the medal
[KCD/A/3/2/4]



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Standing operational orders written by Kingsley Dunham, 1944
[KCD/A/2/5/1]



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Home Guard instructions relating to enemy airborne troops, 1941
[KCD/A/2/5/3]



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Geological
Survey and
Museum and
London Regional
Company of the
Home Guard.

The photograph
features Edward
Bailey and [C J
Stubblefield](#)
amongst others,
1944.

[GSM/DR/Sb/7/5
]



The Company on
parade and
being inspected
by Admiral Sir
Edward Evans,
1941 [No ref]

Secret and confidential

Geologists from the Survey were involved in a variety of confidential and secret working during the war.



Report on
Norwegian
Industries and
Mineral
Resources
produced by

MI10 (weapons
and technical
analysis) c1941
[no ref]



Photographs
from the report
showing the
Orkla and
Eitrheim Works,
Norway, c1941
[no ref]



Page from the
report relating
to Pyrites, c1941
[no ref]



File relating to
desert dust-
storms,
1941-1944
[GSM/DC/W/15]



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Notes on
Eastern
Mediterranean
dust-storms,
1941
[GSM/DC/W/15]



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Geological
Survey wartime
pamphlet on
water supply
from
underground
sources in the
East Yorkshire-
North
Lincolnshire
District, 1944
[no ref]



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Letter from [C F Davidson](#) to F B A Welch relating to a request by Naval Intelligence for

geological
information on
Greece, 1943
[GSM/DC/W/5]



Welch's reply to
Davidson's
letter, 1943
[GSM/DC/W/5]

Bomb!

At 11:47pm on 10 September 1940 a German bomb damaged the Geological Museum at Exhibition Road, London. Edward Bailey in his book *Geological Survey of Great Britain* records that the bomb "broke half the windows" and a later near miss in 1941 "completed out [sic, probably meant our] deglazing."



Shrapnel and
other debris
from the bomb,
1940 [2008.8]
[P711015]



Shrapnel from

the bomb, 1940
[2008.8]
[P711010]



Page from a
draft report of
the Geological
Survey Board
which mentions
the bomb
damage. This
was deleted
from the final
report. 1941
[GSM/BD/A/55]

The other side

The British were not alone in their use of geologists during the Second World War as these documents show.



'Technical Notes
and Tables for
Military
Geologists',
1944 [No ref]



- Pages from one of [Walther Klüpfel's](#) notebooks relating to the geology of Jersey, 1941 [GSM/GX/CK/1/3]



- 'On the Geology of the Island of Alderney' by Dr Kluepfel [sic], c1941 [GSM/GX/CK/7/1]

Aftermath

Even as the war continued, plans were drawn up for what work the Survey would be doing once peace finally came.



- Post-War programme and

staffing for the
Geological
Survey in
Scotland, 1943
[GSM/DC/W/3]



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Outline
programme of
work for the
Geological
Survey and
Museum in the
post-war years,
1944
[GSM/DC/W/3]

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