

# Audio file

[RobinSidebottom.m4a](#)

## Transcript 1

Speaker 1

OK. That is a letter from. The War Office. My father was. Promoted to major in July 45, and that is just authorization from the War Office. Dated February 46. Giving him permission to use the honorary title of major in civilian life.

Speaker 2

But you said he never did.

Speaker 1

No. He just wouldn't.

Speaker 2

Why do you think that was?

Speaker 1

I think knowing him. He wanted to forget.

Speaker 2

I think you're right.

Speaker 1

Because he was. He was in the. Latterly was in Yugoslavia with the partisans. With the titos lock. And some of the things he saw there. One of the things he'd never told me, he told my sister, actually. That he was with a group of. The. Resistance. People's partisans in the inner village in Yugoslavia, in northern Yugoslavia. And they got word that the Germans were going to invade this village looking for the resistance. So he and all the men from the village had to go up into the mountains and they had to watch while the Germans went into the village. Hoarded all day women and children. Into a church. Set fire to the church. And then had to me had to to watch that, you know. And I think that's that's really affected my dad, things like that.

Speaker 2

That's the kind of thing she don't. Yeah, she yeah. OK.

Speaker 1

But.

## Transcript 2

Speaker 1

This is an interview with Robin Sidebottom on The 23rd of November 2023 and we're talking about his father Harry. Can you tell me about that first object?

Speaker 2

Yes, this is an authorization which was given to my father. At Dunkirk, or as they left Dunkirk, he was in the Royal Engineers and not too sure what his rank would be at that time. I think it was a Lieutenant authorizing him and 166. Ordinary. Soldiers, which he had. What's the word I want? Command of yes to embark on a boat at Dunkirk. I don't know any details of the. Of the boat or anything like that. But I do remember my father saying that. If he hadn't had that. He would not have been allowed on a ship from Dunkirk or any of his men.

Speaker 1

Right. So you've got to have that that piece of paper, piece of paper.

Speaker 2

You had to. You had to have authorisation and I think this is one of the things that. Most people don't realise because I didn't realise till I found out. I thought they just flat scrambled on precisely yes, but evidently not. And and in a way similar to that in the channel during the war. Some time my father was ship torpedoed.

Speaker 1

No, I thought they just. Scrambled.

Speaker 2

And the ship sank. And he was in the water, as were loads of others, and they were rescued by another warship. And I remember him telling me that afterwards that he was lucky to have been rescued. Because soon after that incident. A command came through that warships weren't allowed to rescue soldiers from the water.

Speaker 1

Oh.

Speaker 2

Because the Germans were releasing prisoners of war. From you votes.

Speaker 1

Yes.

Speaker 2

Bringing in the the other warships.

Speaker 1

Sort of kind of bait, really there.

Speaker 2

Yeah, using Miss Bates. I don't know when that was, but I thought, yeah.

Speaker 1

Yeah, right.

Speaker

Yes.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

So he's lucky to be alive anyway. Yeah. Yeah, that's great. That's really interesting. And he's dated it on the back as he was the 30th. Of May 19.

Speaker 2

May 1940 yes. Well, it says June 1940, evacuated from Dunkirk on that other one, yeah.

Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah. That's great. And we have a list of his war records on one of the documents. Yeah. Where was eventually made a major. Yeah, and. Dean Moulton, January 19 voices.

Speaker 2

Demobbed in 46 January 46 and I remember. Going to Piccadilly station. In Manchester. With my mother and sister in a taxi from Hatfield, where we lived at the time, and I can tell you the spot where the taxi. Waited when my mother went into the station, came back with my dad and went home, and we got back home and eventually it was time for me to.

Speaker 1

Right.

Speaker 2

Go to bed. And my mum said right Robin. Time. I'm not going home until that man leaves.

Speaker 1

Yeah. Yeah, it's a strangers, yeah.

Speaker 2

And luckily, my mother's aunt and her cousin lived next door. So I believe my dad just went next door till my mother got me to bed and sleep. And then came there. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1

I know it's a lot of hard times, doesn't it?

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1

Alright, that's great. Thank you.

Speaker 2

And.