

# Le Jour Où La Guerre A Pris Fin

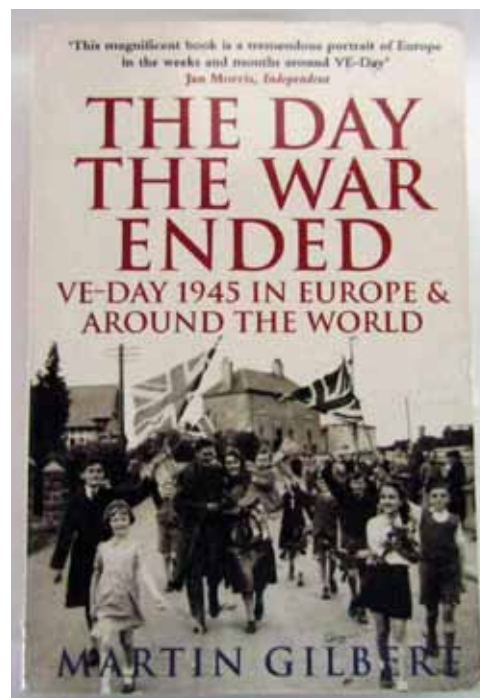
Commenté par Allan Bacon

En planifiant ce livre très lisible, fascinant et richement détaillé, Martin Gilbert a invité dans le monde entier tous ceux qui avaient assisté au Jour de la Victoire en Europe (8 mai 1945) à lui écrire pour lui faire part de leurs souvenirs. Plusieurs centaines de personnes lui ont répondu : combattants et civils, jeunes et vieux, prisonniers de guerre et partisans, libérateurs et libérés, et vaincus. Gilbert tisse habilement ces souvenirs en un récit qui s'appuie sur des sources d'archives, ainsi que sur des récits de journaux, pour raconter non seulement l'histoire du Jour de la Victoire en Europe, mais aussi les mois qui l'ont précédée et ceux qui l'ont suivie. Dans son chapitre d'introduction, il écrit : « En un seul volume, seule une petite partie de la trame historique peut être présentée ». Comme il le fait magnifiquement.

La fin de la guerre en Europe est survenue à des moments différents, en des lieux différents, pour des personnes différentes, alors que les Alliés avançaient en Allemagne depuis l'ouest et les Russes depuis l'est. L'Europe s'est transformée en un chaos de réfugiés, de privations, de punitions, de vengeance, de recherche d'une nouvelle vie, de personnes déplacées, d'anciens prisonniers de guerre, de travailleurs forcés libérés, de civils allemands essayant de fuir les Russes, de soldats allemands essayant de rentrer chez eux, de survivants des camps de concentration – « immense et incontrôlable flot d'humanité ». Parallèlement, les tensions se sont accrues entre les Alliés et les Soviétiques sur l'avenir de l'Europe. La reddition allemande aux Alliés occidentaux à Reims n'a été reconnue par les Soviétiques qu'après une seconde reddition au maréchal Joukov à Berlin. En conséquence, le Jour de la Victoire en Europe occidentale a eu lieu le 8 mai, et en Russie le 9 mai.

La grande force du livre est sans doute la pléthore de souvenirs cités,

dont beaucoup provoquent les larmes du lecteur. Gilbert met en contraste l'euphorie des capitales occidentales à la fin de la guerre avec les réalités de la vie de ceux qui ont été libérés. Pour beaucoup, ce fut un moment de tristesse et de désespoir, en particulier pour les survivants juifs des camps de concentration, car ils ont réalisé qu'ils n'étaient « désirés nulle part » et qu'ils étaient confrontés à un antisémitisme persistant. « Je n'avais pas de maison, pas de pays et personne pour m'aider », a déclaré un juif polonais. En découvrant les horreurs des camps d'extermination, les soldats ont été profondément touchés, car ils ont « respiré la puanteur de la mort et la cruauté barbare et calculée ». Pour ceux qui, dans les pays alliés occidentaux avaient perdu des êtres chers, il y avait de la tristesse et de l'amertume, et beaucoup de prisonniers de guerre revenus au pays avaient du mal à s'adapter à la liberté. Pour les femmes allemandes, il y a eu l'agonie des viols massifs par les soldats soviétiques et le suicide qui



Par Martin Gilbert



s'en est suivi, et la prise de conscience que « tout cela n'avait servi à rien ». Il y eut une dévastation totale, Berlin étant décrite comme « la capitale de la défaite, un squelette de ville carbonisée, puante et détruite ». Il y avait aussi l'ironie amère que la nourriture pour beaucoup de prisonniers libérés était le coup de grâce et qu'ils périssaient. Les descriptions des fêtes de rue et des feux de joie sont juxtaposées à celles des Lancaster qui distribuaient de la nourriture aux Néerlandais affamés, alors que les combats se poursuivaient dans certaines régions d'Europe jusqu'aux 8 et 9 mai. En Extrême-Orient, la guerre sanglante contre le Japon se poursuivit.

Les dernières sections du livre examinent les conséquences du jour de la Victoire en Europe. Pour les prisonniers de guerre russes de retour au pays, il n'y a pas eu d'accueil de héros, mais des années au goulag; en Europe de l'Est, l'imposition de gouvernements communistes fantoches; la partition de l'Allemagne; la lutte des Alliés occidentaux pour équilibrer vengeance et magnanimité; les nombreux membres de toutes les armées pour qui l'après-guerre a été une vie de cauchemars; la poursuite du rationnement et des bouleversements politiques en Grande-Bretagne avec la défaite de Churchill aux élections; les derniers mois de la guerre contre le Japon et les futurs points chauds qui se développèrent dans le monde entier.

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FOR CANADIAN FORCES IN ACTION



THE MAPLE LEAF



WEEKLY CANADIAN PRESS NEWS SERVICE

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WEEKLY EUROPEAN EDITION

Tuesday, May 3, 1945

DOENITZ SURRENDERS WHOLE OF HIS FORCES

Holdout Huns Still Battle In Czech Sector

Continued in Czechoslovakia, following the peace declaration...

Over the German-controlled radio station in Prague they announced that the German commander in Czechoslovakia did not recognize the high command's surrender...

Another German broadcast from Prague declared the unconditional surrender was only in the western powers and did not apply to the Soviet Union...

Arms of Marshal Malinovsky and General Truzhnev are being used in Prague...

However, the enemy is still fighting and committing atrocities in the streets of Prague...

Naughty Movie is Discovered In Hitler's Bavarian Hideout

WITH BRIVENTH U.S. AGENT—(UPI)—The search about Hitler having an underground movie studio is mounted in the Thaur Alps...

Allied Comrades In Arms



Canadian and British paratroopers of the 1st British Airborne Division...

Canadians Find Surrender News Almost 'Too Good To Believe'

BY CAPT. JACK GOLDING (Staff Writer, The Maple Leaf)

The small grey-haired general stepped from his staff car as if he were in front of his own headquarters...

It meant a lot of Canadian soldiers were not going to be killed the next day...

was an elaborate view of Hitler's life in a Bavarian hideout...

Hitler's cave can be reached by three entrances, one behind which the kitchen of the chateau was...

Conquering Nations Proclaim Today VE-Day, Celebrations Okayed On World Wide Basis

VE-DAY HAS COME—IT'S TODAY!

In the little red school house at Rheims which is Gen. Eisenhower's headquarters...

Germany announced the news first over the Flensburg Radio. The broadcast, quoting an address by German foreign minister Count von Krogh...

They'll Make It Official

The surrender had not been officially announced by the "Big Three" powers when The Maple Leaf went to press...

Churchill's speech will be broadcast at 3 o'clock, and the King will broadcast to the British Commonwealth of Nations at 9 o'clock (BDST) tonight.

Conspicuously absent was Gen. Eisenhower when the capitulation was signed...

Germany, which showed no mercy to the people she conquered, surrendered with an appeal in the victorious for mercy to German people and armed forces...

U-Boats Ordered Home

In von Krogh's radio announcement to the German people telling of the capitulation, he said: "After almost six years of struggle, we have succumbed..."

This broadcast followed announcements by continental radio stations that the Germans in Norway had surrendered and all troops in that country would probably be interned in Sweden...

Before Britain's Ministry of Information announced that the capitulation would be proclaimed by Churchill, Truman and Roosevelt...

Stolid Dutch Go Wild With Joy At The Sight Of British Troops

UTRECHT—(UPI)—The 17th Infantry Brigade of British troops was completely wild when the British 49th West Riding Regiment entered Utrecht...

# Daily Mirror

MAY 8

Tuesday, May 8, 1945  
No. 12,911 ONE PENNY  
Registered at G.P.O. as a Newspaper.

# VE-DAY!

## IT'S OVER IN THE WEST

**T**ODAY is VE-Day—the day for which the British people have fought and endured five years, eight months and four days of war.

With unconditional surrender accepted by Germany's last remaining leaders, the war in Europe is over except for the actions of fanatical Nazis in isolated pockets, such as Prague.

The Prime Minister will make an official announcement—in accordance with arrangements between Britain, Russia and the U.S.—at 3 o'clock this afternoon. **ALL TODAY AND TOMORROW ARE PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN BRITAIN, IN CELEBRATION OF OUR VICTORY.**

We also remember and salute with gratitude and pride the men and women who suffered and died in making triumph possible—and the men still battling in the East against another cruel enemy who is still in the field.

### War winners broadcast today

You will hear the voices of the King, Field-Marshal Montgomery and Alexander, and General Eisenhower when they broadcast over the B.B.C. Home Service to-night.

After the King's speech, at 9 p.m., and separated from it by the news bulletin, comes "Victory Report," a special programme which will contain the recorded voices of Ike and Monty, and other famous personalities of the war.

Additional features of the B.B.C. Home programme, which will end at 2 a.m. to-morrow, include, at 8 p.m., an address by the Archbishop of Canterbury at a Thanksgiving Service for Victory, and at 8.59 a tribute to the King.



### VE-SCENE TRAFALGAR SQUARE

It was a high old time in Trafalgar-square last night. Everybody wanted to climb something. This party of Wrens and Allied soldiers celebrated by clambering on to the lions. Army policemen present—like Nelson on his column—turned a blind eye.

## London had joy night

"Daily Mirror" Reporter

PICCADILLY CIRCUS, VE-EVE.

THIS is IT—and we are all going mad! There are thousands of us in Piccadilly-circus. The police say more than 10,000—and that's a conservative estimate.

We are dancing the Conga and the jig and "Knees up, Mother Brown," and we are singing and whistling, and blowing paper trumpets.

The idea is to make a noise. We are. Even above the roar of the motors of low-flying

bombers "shooting up" the sky.

We are dancing around Eric in the black-out, but there is a glow from a bonfire up Shaftesbury-avenue and a news reel cinema has lit its canopy lights for the first time in getting on for six years.

A huge V sign glares down over Lejosser Square. And gangs of girls and soldiers of all the Allied nations are waving rattles and shouting and climbing lamp-posts and swarming over cars that have become bogged down in this struggling, swirling mass of

celebrating Londoners.

We have been waiting from ten o'clock to celebrate. We went home at six when it seemed that the news of VE-Day would never come, but we are back now.

And on a glorious night we are making the most of it. A paper-hatted throng is trying to pull me out of this telephone box now. I hold the door light, but the din from Piccadilly Circus is drowning my voice.

It is past midnight. We are still singing. A group of men liberated from German prison

camps are yelling—"Holl out the Barrel!"

"We sang it when we went to France in 1939 and we sang it as we tried to get out in 1940," they told me. "Now we sing it for victory."

Amid terrific cheers a New Zealand sailor climbed on the bonnet of a bus and from there to the roof.

He stood there swaying above the crowds as the American army swarmed on

Continued on Back Page

**Daily Mirror** TUES. MAY 8

**HEAD OFFICE:**  
 Geraldine House, Fetter-lane, E.C.4, London  
 4321.  
 And at  
 42-48, Strand, Street,  
 Manchester, 2, Black-  
 Friars 2345.

How Many May It  
 MIDDLETOWN 4.27 a.m.  
 MIDDLETOWN 4.31 a.m.



# Last night's scene in Piccadilly



## AND A BRASS BAND!

Continued from Page One

after him, but the police fought through the crowd and pulled them down.

Traffic tried to push through the crowds, but was held up and came out with civilians, soldiers, airmen and sailors.

and their girls—clinging to the running boards.

Down in the East End, too, celebrations are terrific. When fireworks ran out they used staves, which "popped" alarmingly as they hit the ground.

But the biggest fun is in Piccadilly Circus.

There is a brass band here now. They are leading out all the songs that saw this war through—and they are even trying amid the smoking chimneys to be heard, the song that did not see Germany to victory—'Deutschland Awake'!

And the news goes on...

### TRUST

Dr. Schmidt, news Hitler's medical ward, found by the Allies in Italy yesterday, said, "I wouldn't believe Hitler was dead if he told me so himself."

The great news, Londoners called for had come—VE day had been announced. Like a magnet, Piccadilly drew the cheering crowds. With the prospect of ten whole days' holiday in front of them, people let their post-up feelings go. Traffic stopped—taxi became islands in the surging sea of happy, thankful people.

## SPEND VE IN CAMP, C.O.'s SAY

Commanding officers of Army and RAF camp at over Britain told their men yesterday: "Spend VE Day how you will, but PLEASE spend it in camp."

Thanksgiving services, concerts and later "closing time" for the canteens and sergeants' and officers' mess bars were some of the arrangements

## New York went wild

From JOHN SAMPSON

New York, Monday.

NEW YORK went wild today over the news of Germany's unconditional surrender. Cheering thousands packed Times Square soon after 10 a.m.

Streams of paper floated from skyscrapers and the harbour was lost with whistles.

In Washington, Congress led the people on the street called for White House congratulations before beginning celebrations. But in New York the news set off a contagious outbreak of rejoicing unqualified since Armistice day, 1918.

Paper streamed down into the streets in one continuous shower with radio announcers frantically appealing to people, "Don't throw paper; it's necessary in the war."

## DAVID WALKER CABLES FROM SHAEF:

I can't tell you it's over

Monday night.

THROUGH no fault of the censorship, which must obey higher orders, I cannot even tell you whether the war is over or not—and coming from Supreme Headquarters tonight, I suppose that's funny.

This must be the greatest single Press fiasco of all time. While the peace news has been broadcast all over the world, British and American newspapers' copy still has been pending the permission of officialdom.

Even in their defeat, the Germans can laugh at us for our confusion, and for those who have been abroad of war stories since 1938 and 1939, this is the final humiliation.

It is a pity that Shaef looks the courage of Lord Jellicoe, who put his telescope to the blind eye; the only advantage they seem to have over Nelson is that they are more at sea.

## 6,000 U.S. troops leave India, Burma

Six thousand American troops have left India and the Burma theatres for the United States by air.

"The remainder may go by plane or ship."

## LATEST NEWS

