



We Remember Dunkirk

Frank Shaw, Joan Shaw

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'Yes we were scared. It could be seen on the faces of the men. No food didn't help. We stopped to suck pebbles during the day as our tongues began to swell through lack of water ... We had an order come through to us one day. Every man for himself. And then the soldiers – Belgian, French and British – were side by side in silent soddy ranks in columns, zig-zagged across the beaches. I still believe this was done to minimise casualties. We had to wade out up to our necks in water to get onto a boat, ducking under the water when the Germans tried to mow us down. Eventually I managed to grab a chain hanging off a Naval motorboat, and it was fully loaded but I hung on ...'

Arthur Thomas Gunn, Walsall

Between 27 May and 4 June 1940 over 900 vessels rescued 338,226 people trapped at Dunkirk. Cut off by the advancing German Army hundreds of thousands of Allied troops gathered on the beaches – exhausted, hungry and scarred by war. Operation Dynamo saw British destroyers and the hundreds of 'little ships' bring these men safely back to England, where they were welcomed back by the locals with tea and sandwiches, and hailed as heroes.

In We Remember Dunkirk we hear stories from the soldiers who made the perilous journey to Dunkirk and came under constant attack from Nazi aircraft as they boarded British ships and attempted to cross the Channel. But we also hear from the nurses who tended the many returning wounded; the young women who, along with the rest of their communities, rallied to make food and gather whatever they could to give the soldiers; and what it was like witnessing all this through a child's eyes. Above all, we see how the solidarity of the British people gave rise to the unfailing 'Dunkirk Spirit'.



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