

# **Fortrose Academy History Department**

## **S2: Second World War Home Front Research Project**

### **The Home Front**

Most Scottish pupils have studied the British Home Front by the time they have reached S2. Fortrose Academy has always taught this as a research project but we felt that our approach to this topic was becoming dated, and therefore came up with a new concept for 2007.

### **Our New Approach**

We created an imaginary wartime family, which our pupils would become a part of and create a diary for. The family consisted of two sets of grandparents, parents, two siblings and the pupil's character. We provided the pupils with photographs, a lineage, birth and marriage dates, places of birth/residence etc and hoped they would take this information into account when researching what might happen to them during the War.

### **Researching**

Pupils undertook their own research in many different ways: internet-research; using primary and secondary sources; reading books; watching the film "Goodnight Mr. Tom". This took a total of 12 lessons (six weeks). Once the research was finished pupils were given 3 weeks – including the Easter Holidays – to complete their diary.

### **Diary Format**

Pupils were given the following instructions:

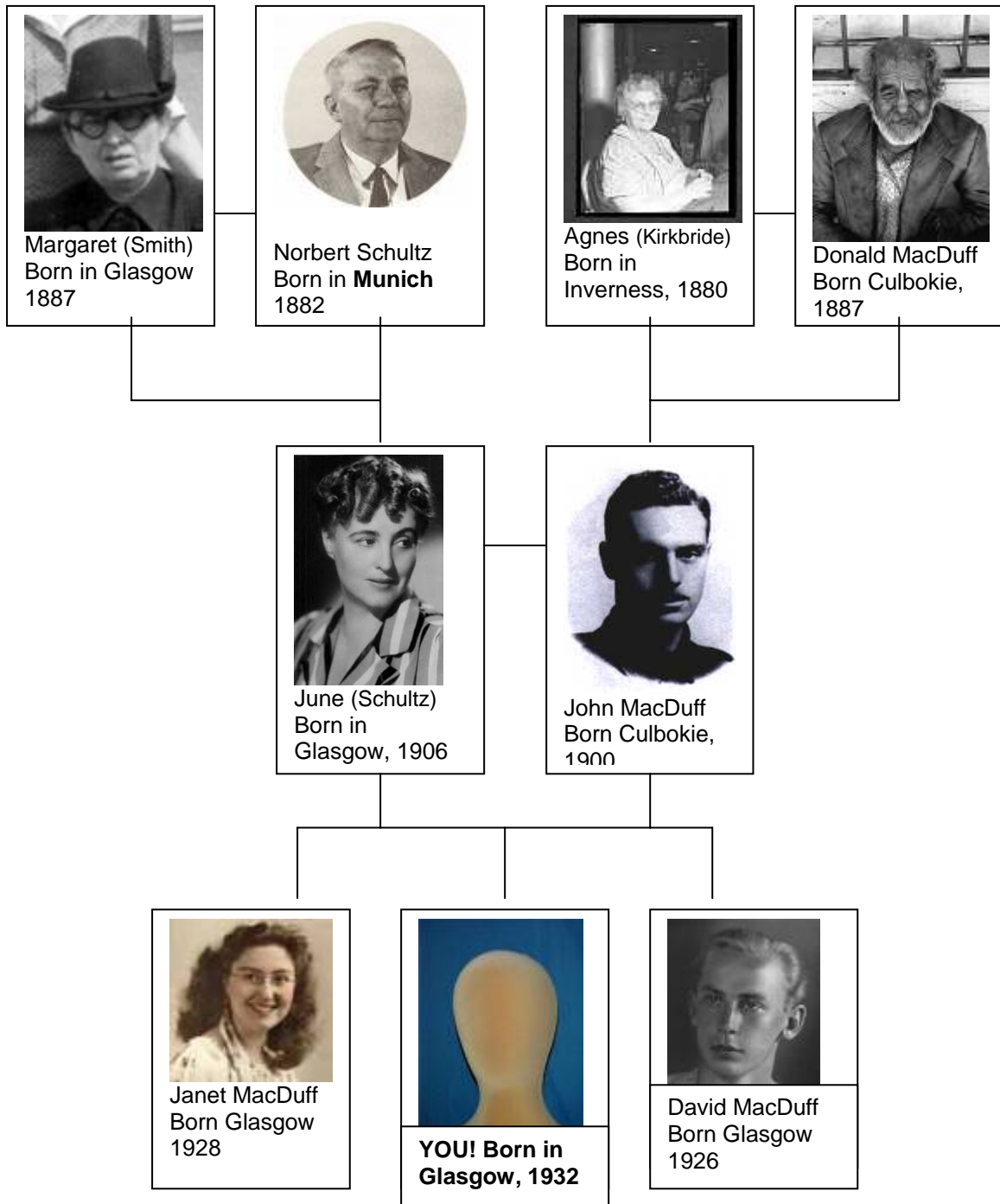
The diary should be between 5 and 10 pages long and must have a front cover and bibliography. Pupils should write between one and two pages of information about what happened to each set of grandparents, one to two pages on their parents' lives and one to two pages of information about their siblings before writing the same amount of detail about what they believe would have happened to themselves if they were part of the MacDuff family in the 1940s.

It was made clear that the diary could be word processed or handwritten but that every attempt should be made to create an authentic piece of work: e.g. the pages could be tea-stained, any photographs/pictures should be in black and white and, if typed, an old-fashioned font should be chosen.

**The pages below are some of the resources we have made and used**

# 1) The Family Tree

## The MacDuff Family During the Second World War



## **2) Information about the family**

### **Your Family Tree**

Read the information given about your fictitious family. Some of the details will give you ideas as to what might happen to them during the Second World War. Consider things such as evacuation, conscription or the Home Guard. What else might be in store?

#### **Maternal Grandparents:**

- Margaret (Smith)\* Schultz (born 1887):  
Retired seamstress, born and bred in Glasgow – still living there  
Married Norbert in 1905
- Norbert Schultz (born 1882):  
Has his own joinery business, born in Munich – moved to Glasgow with his parents to escape poverty in 1890  
Married Margaret in 1905

#### **Paternal Grandparents:**

- Agnes (Kirkbride)\* MacDuff (born 1880):  
Primary teacher, originally from Inverness  
Married Donald in 1898
- Donald MacDuff (born 1877):  
Owns a dairy farm in Culbokie  
Married Agnes in 1898

#### **Parents:**

- June (Schultz)\* MacDuff (born 1906):  
Housewife, born and bred in Glasgow – still lives there  
Married John in 1924
- John MacDuff (born 1900):  
Civil Engineer, originally from Culbokie but left to study engineering at University in Glasgow where he now lives and works  
Married June in 1924

#### **Siblings:**

- Janet MacDuff (born 1928):  
Schoolgirl, born and bred in Glasgow
- David MacDuff (born 1926):  
Just about to leave school, born and bred in Glasgow
- YOU (born 1932):  
School pupil, born and bred in Glasgow

\* Maiden name

### 3) Instructions and timescale given to pupils

#### **Life in Britain During the Second World War 1939 – 1945**

Over the next 12 periods you will be learning about what life was like in Britain during the Second World War. This period is also known as the Home Front. Your task is to investigate and report on many aspects of family life between 1939 and 1945.

You will be given a family tree of the MacDuff family; there is a space left for one other family member... YOU! Your finished piece of work will comprise of a diary, which shows how you and your fictitious family were affected by the War. In the information given to you about the family there are clues, which you should use to find out what might have happened to them. You will have to do a lot of research so that you gain a full understanding of the period. Your teacher will give you a deadline for the completed diary extract to be handed in by. Here are some points to remember:

- This is a major piece of work and you will need to do a lot at home. During this period no other History homework will be given
- You should be prepared to do things like research, write up notes and make illustrations at home
- You may have a relation who lived through this period; they will be an excellent source of information. If you can, ask them about *how they felt* about events rather than the history of the time – e.g. don't ask them about *what* was rationed (you can find that out yourself!), rather ask them *how difficult or easy* it was to stick to their new diet.

There are twelve lessons scheduled for this project in class. They will be divided as follows:

- 3 taught lessons on the causes of the War
- 4 lessons using the school resources\* for research
- 2 lessons watching a video-resource on the Home Front
- 2 lessons in the computer suite
- 1 lesson for planning/writing up

\*Resources include:

- Fortrose Academy WW2 Booklets (contain information about Home Guard, Evacuation, Rationing, Blackouts and the Blitz etc)
- "The Home Front in the Second World War" by Paul Fincham
- "Oor Wullie Goes to War" and "The Broons on the Home Front" – a Sunday Post Souvenir Special (includes real newspaper footage and cartoons from the War)
- Some primary sources from the Imperial War Museum

## **4) Instructions continued**

### **Areas to Research**

Here are some of the things, which would have affected people living in Britain at the time of the Second World War:

1. Precautions taken to keep people safe from Air Raids and possible gas attacks
2. Rationing food to ensure that no one died because of starvation and that what food there was had to be shared out to everyone
3. The Home Guard (Dad's Army)
4. Evacuation – keeping Britain's children and vulnerable communities safe from bombing
5. Employment during the war
6. The role of women during the war
7. Entertainment
8. Government action and information, including propaganda

YOU WILL FIND INFORMATION ABOUT THESE TOPICS AND MORE ON THE WEBSITES BELOW. THESE ARE ALSO ON THE SCHOOL NETWORK

### **The Home Front – computer research**

**These are the websites from the hyperlinks at school:**

<http://www.learningcurve.gov.uk/homefront/default.htm>

<http://www.wartimememories.co.uk/scotland.html>

[http://www.historyonthenet.com/WW2/home\\_front.htm](http://www.historyonthenet.com/WW2/home_front.htm)

<http://www.sparacus.schoolnet.co.uk/2WwgermansBR.htm>

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/2Wwdig.htm>

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/2Wwco.htm>



## 5) A page of hyper-linked websites

### Home Front Websites

Click on the links below to find out more about the Second World War and the Home Front.

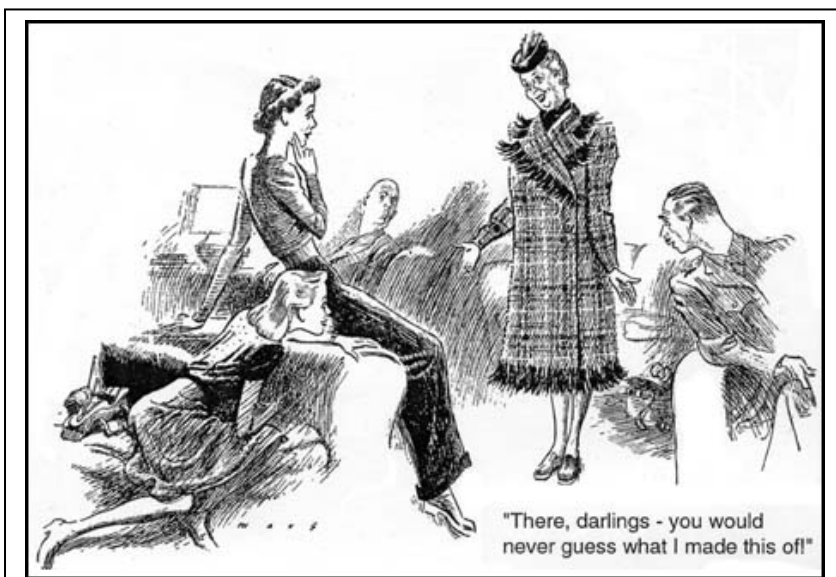
[Scottish Memories of the War](#)

[General Information and Internment Camps](#)

[Learning Curve](#)

[Germans in Britain](#)

[Dig For Victory](#)



## 6) Example of Our Mark Scheme – pupils receive a sheet like this

### S2 Home Front Investigation

All areas are marked out of 5.

<b>Content</b>	4
<b>Presentation</b>	4
<b>Effort</b>	5
<b>5 – 14 Level *</b>	E

#### **Areas of real success**

Well done! This is a very thoughtful and authentic piece of writing. You show a real understanding of difficult it was to be a teenager during the War – this is called empathy. You also show a solid understanding of the practical areas like what was rationed and why the blackouts happened. I like your detailed assessment of the accidents involving lack of lighting!

5 = Excellent

4 = Very good

3 = Good

2 = Needs more work

1 = Disappointing

\* To be consistent with AifL we are considering not providing pupils with a 5 – 14 grade for this piece of work

#### **Areas to focus on next time**

If you were to do this again, it might have been useful to read over your character information more carefully; then you might have noticed one of your grandfathers was German. I would have liked to read about the internment camps for foreigners.

Try to remember that proper names always get capital letters!



