

Heritage of Hart

An Historic Environment Survey of the Village in World War II



A community based project to research, record and document the heritage of the village of Hart

The Heritage of Hart Project 2010

An Historic Environment Survey of the Village in World War II

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Front Cover Images: Model of RAF aircraft made by Italian POW

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Summary

The Heritage of Hart is a project to document the Historic Environment of the area as it stands today in order to better understand the heritage of the village, to provide a resource for further work and an archive for those in the future.

In 2009 the buildings of the village were recorded and in 2010 the project had two aspects; to document the three groups of 1938 smallholdings and to recover information about the village in the Second World War.

The World War II project took place between 27th September and 1st October 2010 and there was an Open Day at St Mary Magdalene Church on Saturday 2nd October. Information was obtained at the open day and subsequently Gordon Swain provided further information that has been included in the report.

The project involved volunteers from Hart History Group and elsewhere and staff of Tees Archaeology and Hartlepool Borough Council Landscape and Conservation Dept working together.

The results of the World War II survey have been grouped into four categories; Fighting the Invasion, Resisting an Occupation, The Threat from Above and Prisoners of War.

'Fighting the Invasion' examines the measures taken in 1940 to help protect the area from the threatened German invasion, these include the construction of a pillbox, anti-tank ditches and the anti-glider landing measures as well as roadblocks and a military presence.

'Resisting an Occupation' is based on the identification of two bases constructed for guerrilla type activities against any German forces that might have successfully overrun the area.

'The Threat from Above' documents the construction of air raid shelters as well the more pro-active measures taken to combat bombing raids.

'Prisoners of War' is self explanatory and sets out information about the Italian and German prisoners of War who were held in a small camp at Hart.

The overall intention of this short project was to try to re-create the geography of Hart during the Second World War. The intention was to focus on the physical aspects of the area that related to the war and to link these to the memories of local people. There is much still to be researched but it is hoped that this report will provide a starting point.

Introduction

This project follows on from one that took place in 2009 to create a snapshot in time of the historic environment of Hart. In 2009 Hart History Group and a wide range of volunteers worked with Tees Archaeology, the Landscape and Conservation Section and Countryside and Museum Services of Hartlepool Borough Council.

The same organisations came together between 27th September and 1st October 2010 in order to record aspects of World War II in Hart and to record the three groups of smallholdings of 1938. There is a separate report on the smallholdings. In addition to the recording work there was an Open Day at St Mary Magdalene Church on Saturday 2nd October. Further information about World War II in the area was obtained at the Open Day and from the recollections of Harry Moore and Gordon Swain and these have been included in the report.

The project was based at St Mary Magdalene Church, Hart and was carried out by a group of volunteers. It comprised the mapping of known features of the area that originated in military activity at the time. Alongside this, recording was carried out of a number of features and an oral history recording was made of the recollections of a member of an Auxiliary Unit.

The project has begun to define the geography of the area in the 1940s' but a great deal remains to be done.

Historical Background

The late 1930s and 1940s were a period of uncertainty and change throughout the country and Hart was no exception. The Great Depression had had a major impact on the area and moves had been taken to alleviate the impact of this by providing smallholdings for former miners in order that they could sustain themselves. In 1938 smallholdings were built at Burns Close, Nine Acres and The Fens bringing an influx of people to the village.

The darkening clouds that led to the outbreak of the Second World War resulted in early precautions being taken in respect of possible air raids and we can see this in the construction of the air raid shelter at Manor Croft as part of the project to build the present house.

The German successes of the early part of the war (1939 - 41) brought the very real threat of invasion which resulted in the construction of a range of defences around the country. This activity came to a head in 1940 following the fall of France and the evacuation from Dunkirk. The country prepared to fight an invasion building pillboxes, anti-tank and anti-aircraft defences and measures were also taken to recruit, train and equip civilian guerrilla forces in the event of a successful invasion.

The later stages of the war (1941 - 45) saw the gradual turning of the tide and this was demonstrated by the arrival of first Italian Prisoners of war and latterly German. The Italian prisoners were a result of the successful campaigns in North Africa while the German prisoners followed the Invasion of Europe.

Throughout the whole of the war the village was focussed on farming the land to provide the food that the country needed and assistance was provided by the Prisoners of War. The end of the war was marked in Hart by a large bonfire at Nine Acres and the local children were given confiscated fireworks to let off (G Swain pers com).

All of the known features of the village in the Second World War are drawn together in figures 1 and 2.

With the end of the war many of the temporary structures were swept away but the more substantial remained and some of these have been recorded as part of this project.

Methodology of Survey

The project took place between 27th September and 1st October 2010. The team worked together to record air raid shelters, anti-glider posts and Auxiliary Unit Operational Bases.

The sites were visited in the field and a written record of each was made using the Tees Archaeology Building Record forms and digital photographs were taken to complement these records.

As part of this process each structure was given a unique identifier, the project name being Hart 2010 while the unique identifier was a simple sequence of numbers.

Once this record had been completed a folder was set up on a computer for each site. The digital images were downloaded into it and a short report was produced using a template. In addition a map was marked up with the individual number for each building. The following gazetteer is based on those reports and images and the full archive is held by Tees Archaeology.

To accompany this recording a large scale map was marked up with the remembered location of features now gone and an oral history recording was made by Diane Marlborough of Hartlepool Libraries of Harry Moore, a former member of an Auxiliary Unit.

Following the production of the first draft of this report Gordon Swain, who grew up in the village just before and during the war, was able to confirm and add to the information available and this has been included in this report.

Fighting the Invasion (Figs 1 & 2)

A number of physical measures were put in place to fight the threatened German invasion. The north-east coast was classified as an area of secondary threat, where diversionary attacks might take place.

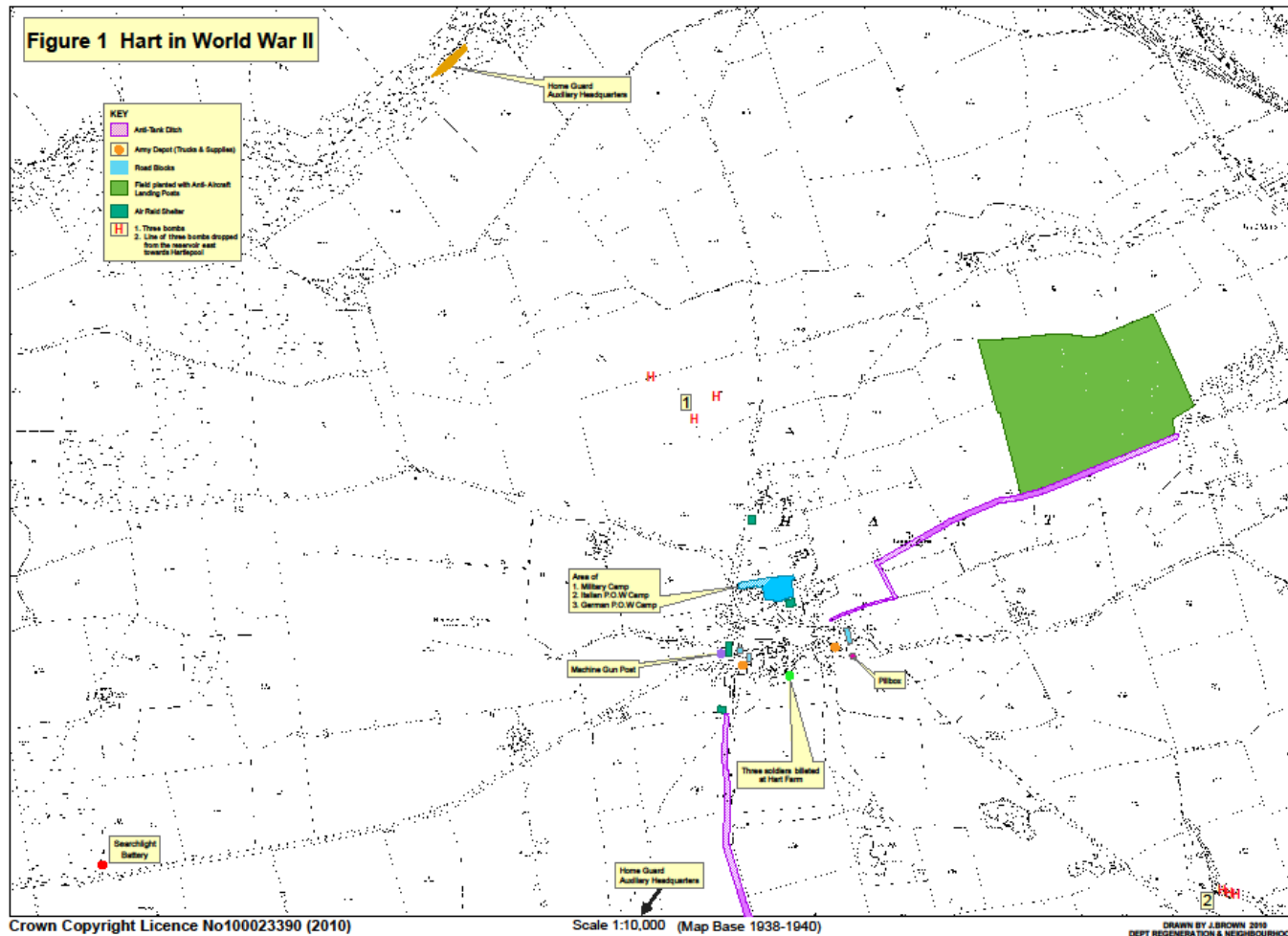
The defences mainly addressed the possibility of a coastal invasion supported by airborne landings. The main anti-invasion defences comprised a coastal 'crust' to try to hold and repel the initial attack. The secondary defences were sited inland at 'nodal' points, primarily areas that were on major communication routes. Hart fell into this category and was regarded as a Coastal Defended Locality (Wilkie unpub 42).

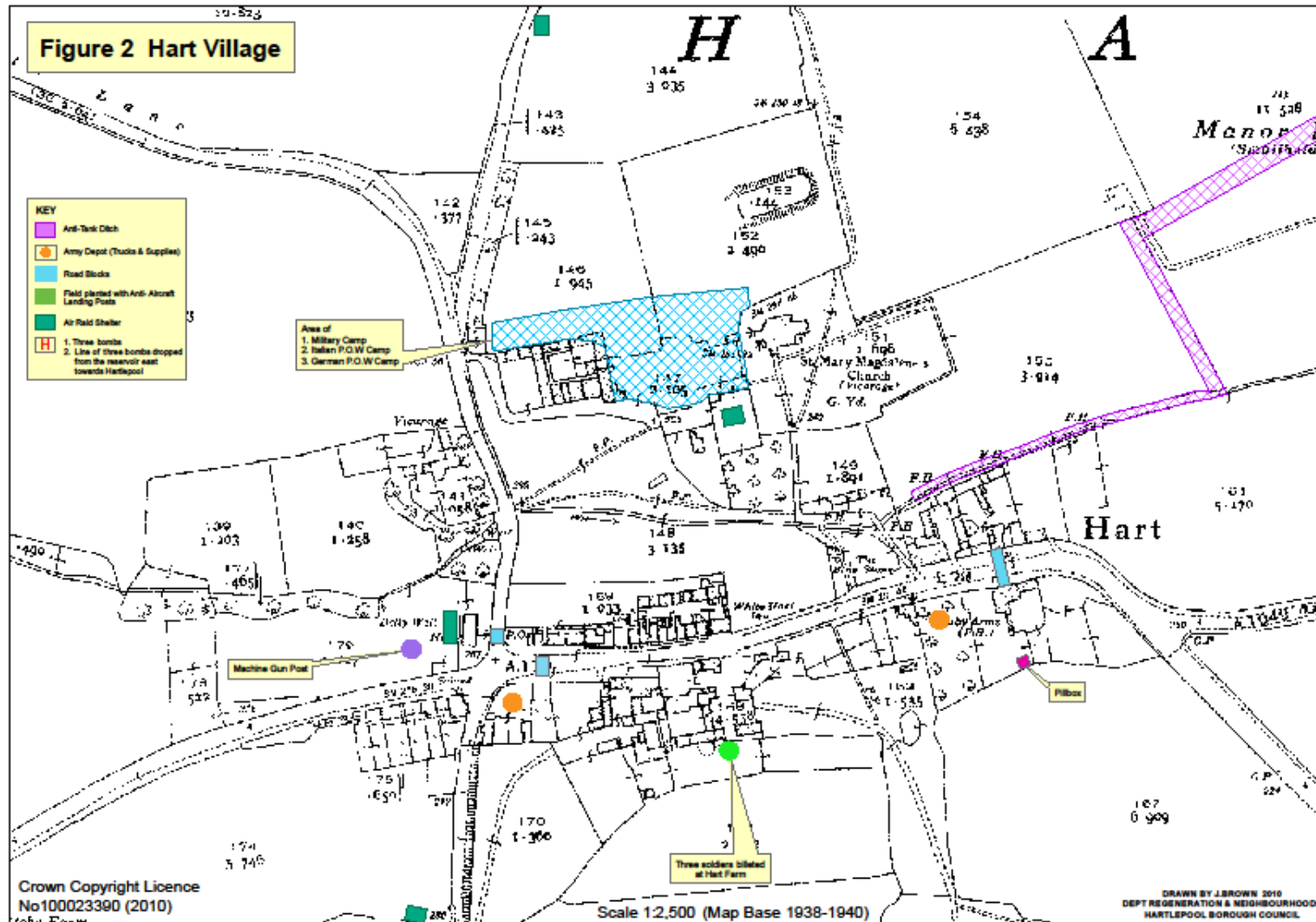
These locations were designed to support the beach defences and slow down any breakout from the beaches to allow a counter attack by mobile reserves. Beyond the secondary defences was the General Headquarters (GHQ) Line, otherwise known as the Ironside Line (Wilkie unpub 25-27). The strategy was expressed in a Southern Command Memo of 22nd June 1940 (PRO WO 199/1800):-

"The immediate object is divide England into several small fields surrounded by a hedge of anti-tank obstacles which is also strong defensively, using natural accidents of the ground where possible. Should A.F.V.s or airborne attacks break into the enclosures the policy will be to close the gate by blocking the crossing over the obstacle and let in the 'dogs' in the shape of armoured formations, or other troops, to round the cattle."

(<http://www.pillbox-study-group.org.uk/stoplinesspage.htm>)
(NB AFV is Armoured Fighting Vehicle)

Hart fell under Northern Command and was held by 176 Brigade which had responsibility for the Teesside area. In the case of 'Defended Localities' pillboxes were used to cover roadblocks, road junctions and other communication routes. Pillboxes would be supported by earthworks, barbed





wire entanglements and anti-tank traps. The locality was also intended to guard against airborne invasion that might attack the rear of the beach defences (Wilkie unpub 42). The information that is set out below suggests that the intention was to funnel any attack onto the village and its defences rather than to allow it to be outflanked.

Pillbox (NZ 47188 34929; HER 994) (Figs 1 – 4)

This was sited behind the Raby Arms and is no longer present. It was recorded by the Cleveland County Archaeology Section in 1984 as part of a general survey of pillboxes in the Hartlepool area (Appendix 1).

The box was built of brick with a concrete roof and comprised a six



Figure 3: Demolished Pillbox to the rear of the Raby Arms (Tees Archaeology Archive)

sided lozenge. It was of the same type (FW/22) as surviving examples at Elwick and Dalton Piercy and had a single entrance to the rear protected by an external blast wall. Comparison with that at Elwick indicates that it would have had an internal blast wall and ricochet wall. The pillbox had an

embrasure for a light machine gun, such as a BREN gun at the front and eleven embrasures for rifles (Wilkie unpub, fig 148).

Sandbags and barbed wire were placed around the pillbox to help protect it (G Swain pers comm.).

This pillbox might have protected against a flanking move around the village and helped to cover the entry of the road from Hartlepool into Hart.

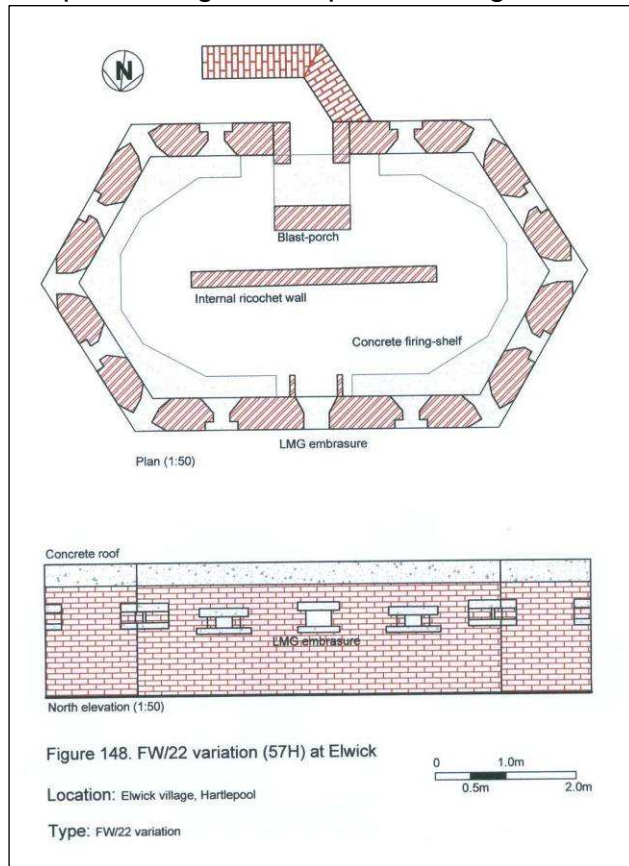


Figure 4: Plan of Elwick Pillbox from Wilkie unpub

Spigot Mortar Emplacement (Figs 1, 2, 5 & 6)

Harry Moore recalled that there was a weapons emplacement in the garden of what is now 12 South View, Hart (Fig 2); the houses at South View post date the war. Gordon Swain confirmed that this was for a Spigot Mortar and looked exactly like the figures below. It is believed that this still present in the garden and can be seen as a mound of earth.

Otherwise known as the Blacker Bombard the spigot mortar was a crude anti-tank weapon issued extensively to Home Guard and Auxiliary

Units. This required a steel pin set in a concrete block to anchor it in place. It was designed to fire a 20lb anti-tank bomb and had an effective range of 100yards. This emplacement was presumably intended to guard the rear of the village.



Figure 5: Spigot Mortar mount, Elvetham Heath, Hampshire (Wikipedia: British Hardened Field Defences of WWII)



Figure 6: Spigot Mortar and Crew (Imperial War Museum)

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Roadblocks (Figs 2 & 7)

Local recollections (Harry Moore & Gordon Swain pers comm.) are of



Figure 7: One side of Concrete Roadblock, Woodend Bridge, near Thorpe Thewles, Stockton-on-Tees (Tees Archaeology HER 6898)

roadblocks in the main street outside the Raby Arms and on Vicarage Bank off the High Street (Fig 2). Harry Moore describes

these as large concrete blocks, this type of roadblock involved concrete blocks with sockets for steel girders to span the road. Apparently the road block was not normally manned. There is no surviving trace of these blocks.

In addition Gordon Swain recalled a roadblock across the main road near the present Post Office. This comprised concreted sockets set in the ground into which steel girders were set to create a set of vertical barriers. When not in use the girders were left at the side of the road and the sockets were capped with wooden plugs.

Gordon Swain also recalled a weapons point being established at Home Farm, which belonged to Frank Darling; this comprised a wooden framed horizontal slot cut into one of the buildings. This was protected externally by sandbags must have been to help support the road block outside the Post Office.

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Anti-tank ditches (Figs 1, 2, 8 – 11)

A number of people recalled anti-tank ditches around the village. These seem to have been in two locations. One set was to the immediate east of the village, running east to west towards Hartlepool, while the second ran north-south along the west side of the road to Elwick. The positioning of these ditches may have been to channel movement onto the defended locality at Hart, preventing attempts to bypass it. None of these are now extant, however their location can be clearly seen on the RAF photographs of 1948 (Figure 8).

Anti-tank ditches often comprised the re-digging of existing drainage ditches using mechanical excavators. They were usually 14 - 20 feet wide and at least 5 feet deep and had three basic forms; 'V' shaped, one side sloped and one vertical and both sides vertical, the latter required revetting but made it difficult to recover vehicles (<http://pillboxes-suffolk.webeden.co.uk/#/tank-ditches/4537159718>).



Figure 8: Aerial Photograph showing backfilled Anti-Tank Ditch beside road from Hart to Elwick (RAF 58/B/59/5561) English Heritage (NMR) RAF Photography

Harry Moore and Gordon Swain recall the anti-tank traps having a large



bank on one side and Gordon Swain described how they were 'V' shaped and excavated by a unit of the Royal Engineers using a Ruston – Bucyrus Dragline.

Figure 9: Ruston Bucyrus Dragline Excavator

The beck was dug out as part of these defences and became large enough to swim in (G Swain pers comm). The difference between the beck in the centre of the village where it was not dug out and at the east end of the village where it was dug out as an anti-tank ditch can be clearly seen.



Figure 10: Hart Beck in centre of the village



Figure 11: Hart Beck, dug out as anti-tank ditch to the east of the village

The Anti-tank ditches were complemented by blocking field openings with explosive charges. These comprised 3 inch diameter pipes filled with explosive and set vertically in the ground with a sealed fuse at the top of the pipe.

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Anti-Glider Defences (Fig 1 & 12)



The effective use of airborne troops in gliders had been demonstrated by the Germans at the Belgian fort of Eben Emael, this led to a widespread concern about the possible use of this method of attack as part of any invasion. Such landings could take defending forces in the rear, as indeed was successfully demonstrated by the Allies in Normandy in 1944.

Possible landing fields were therefore identified and measures taken to make them

Figure 12: Anti-glider landing posts

unusable. One such field lay to the east of Hart and it was defended by planting vertical reinforced concrete posts in the field. These were later removed and re-used at North Hart Farm for a variety of purposes.

The posts were fourteen feet long and measured six inches square, they contained four steel reinforcing rods. It is not known how many were deployed in the field.

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Local Forces (Figs 1, 13 - 14)

While there was a Home Guard section in the village it is clear that there were regular forces based here for some time as well. A small camp was established adjacent to the church, using farm buildings and Nissan Huts. This extended from the present site of the school to the churchyard wall and can be clearly seen in RAF photographs taken in 1948 (H Moore pers comm).



Figure 13: Military Camp adjacent to church (RAF/58/B/59/5611) English Heritage (NMR) RAF Photography

The organisation of the camp is not clear but it seems to have been relatively open with a few huts and a guard house. It is known that four (?) soldiers (officers?) were billeted at the Raby Arms. While a cottage opposite the White Hart pub served as the sergeants' mess (H Moore pers comm.)



Figure 14: View of site of former military and POW camp

In addition to this there are reported to have been two depots on spare ground on the southern side of the main street. These probably provided a base for transport and stores.

There is no local knowledge of the size or identity of the units involved, however this area was held by 176 Infantry Brigade of 59 (Staffordshire) Division during much of 1940. 176 Infantry Brigade comprised 7 Btn, The South Staffordshire Regiment and 6 & 7 Btns, The North Staffordshire Regiment. These were all territorial battalions with a core of regular officers. It is therefore likely that the unit at Hart was a detachment of one of these battalions. There is a great deal still to be discovered about the units and nature of the military presence at Hart.

http://orbat.com/site/ww2/drleo/017_britain/39_org/div_mot.html#div-50

In addition to the military unit based within Hart, 115 Field Ambulance unit was based at Naisberry Farm, to the south of the village. This was a casualty clearing station and was only there during the height of the invasion scare in 1940. As well as taking over most of the buildings a big tented complex was created around the farm and Gordon Swain particularly remembers that the cart/implement shed was to be used as a morgue and was sandbagged.

The unit left in late summer of the same year and the farmers received a letter of thanks for their hospitality from Captain David Miller, indicating that the unit was being sent abroad, probably to North Africa.

Resisting an Occupation

In addition to creating defences to fight any invasion thought was also given to how any successful invasion might be resisted. As well as the regular forces that would be deployed inland it was decided by Churchill that irregular forces should be developed. These forces were to be distinct from the Home Guard, which would fight in uniform and would therefore be accorded the protection of the Geneva Convention. The new irregular forces would not fight in uniform and were therefore illegal under the convention. This and a number of other reasons have meant that the nature and personnel of these forces were extremely secret. Their existence was denied and their members were not released from the terms of the Official Secrets Act until 1990.

The organisations covered by this have become popularly known as the British Resistance Organisation. There were in fact two discrete organisations; a military one, known as Auxiliary Forces, and the personnel of this were trained in guerrilla warfare, relying heavily on lessons learned from the Ireland in the 1920s and 30. The second aspect was information gathering. People were trained to infiltrate the German military through collaboration and then pass information via wireless to the Secret Services. Neither organisation knew of the other's existence (Warwicker 2008).

There is now some information available about the Auxiliary Forces in the Hart area, but we know nothing about the intelligence gathering operations that may have been planned in this location.

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Auxiliary Forces

The Auxiliaries were organised as six man units and originally operated as a self contained cell with no awareness of other cells in the area. They were drawn from those who were active and knew the area well. This often meant that boys from 16 upwards were used before they joined the forces or

others in reserved occupations such as farming. All were 'invited' to join often having been spotted while in the Home Guard.

When set up in 1940 they were given priority for equipment and were provided with sub-machine guns, explosives and hand fighting equipment. They were tasked to draw up lists of physical targets such as railway lines, roads and bridges that could be blown up, they were also tasked to not allow people with important knowledge to fall into the hands of the Germans.

The intention was that at the invasion they would disappear into purpose built hideouts, known as 'Operational Bases', with one person remaining in their normal occupation. Once the German front line had passed by the location, the member outside would let the unit know and they would then wage war behind enemy lines. This would support counter attacks by regular forces further inland. The life expectancy of an Auxilier on active duty was two weeks (Warwicker 2008).

There was an Auxiliary Unit based at Hart, the Hart patrol was part of No.2 Area, North Riding Yorkshire, 202 Bn. Home Guard GHQ Reserve. The other patrols within this unit were based at Aislaby, Bishopton, Billingham and Elwick and their Commander was Captain T.H. Robson of Stony Flatts Farm, Bishopton (pers comm Stephen Lewins CART County Information Officer for Northumberland).

Frank Darling was the sergeant in charge of the Hart patrol and the other members were H. Darling from Home Farm, Hart; G.A. Robinson 4, Palace Row, Hart Village; C. Watson of Thorpe Bulmer Farm, Hart, W. Fawcett of Hart Village and Harry Moore. Harry Moore was interviewed as the part of the project and the following are his recollections.

Mr Moore was recruited to the 'specials' as he called them by a Major Allison following an interview and had to sign the Official Secrets Act. The members of the unit were drawn from a wide area, including Hart Station, Billingham and Stockton and he recalls twelve people. They met up every

weekend and their training took place on the North York Moors with regular army units and they had little to do with the Home Guard. The unit was in being throughout the war and ammunition, a Thompson sub-machine gun and a revolver were kept at home for instant readiness (H Moore pers comm).

In recent years the location of a number of Auxilier operational bases has come to light and two have been detected in the Hart area. It is probable that both of these bases were used by the Hart patrol and it is possible that the one in the Dene had been abandoned by the time Harry Moore joined the patrol. This certainly happened elsewhere and bases might be abandoned and new ones established for a variety of reasons ranging from flooding to discovery by member of the public.

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Thorpe Bulmer Dene (Figs 1, 15)

The Auxilier operational base at Thorpe Bulmer Dene was built against the face of an old quarry and like many of these bases appears to have been deliberately destroyed, probably shortly after the war ended (Figure 1).

It is visible as a large hollow in the ground that measures c. 5m x 5m and the base of the hollow is c. 4m below ground level. The southern end of the hollow is against a high bank that is made of waste from the quarry. This bank is only 1 – 1.5m wide at the top and there is a distinct hollow where an escape tunnel from the hollow into an adjacent stream may have collapsed. This was probably also used by the Hart Patrol.

Information about this base was provided by Shirley Brown, whose father was briefed to carry messages between Auxiliary Units, using the excuse of driving a cow from one farm to another as a reason for his journey, should it be necessary.



Figure 15: Remains of Auxilier base at Thorpe Bulmer Dene

When built an Operational Base was set about six foot underground, with a disguised entrance hatch. Inside the base were bunk beds for the six men and places to store ammunition and explosives. Each base was always equipped with an emergency escape. In the first instance units built their own bases, but after some accidents the Royal Engineers were drafted in to build them.

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Darlings Wood (Figs 1, 16 - 17)

Mr Moore also described an operational base in Darlings Wood to the south-west of the village. Mr Moore says that when he was first recruited to the unit he and a number of others were challenged to find the base in the wood. They could not find it until it was pointed out to them, with the entry hatch marked by a fallen tree.

Gordon Swain recalls entering the operational base, when as a boy he and a group of friends followed one of the patrol, Mr Robinson, to the wood and watched him disappear down a hole in the ground at the end of a clear

path in the undergrowth. They later investigated and found a trapdoor covered in branches. When they went inside it was about six foot down and the sides were shuttered with timber. They found some plastic explosives, but they did not realise what it was at the time. Nor did they linger!

A search was made of Darlings Wood, which is smaller now than in the Second World War and lies in the centre of a large arable field. This search identified a group of small concrete beams with a little brick towards the centre of the wood. This did not constitute the type of rubble tipping one could expect in a wood and in any case was towards the centre rather than at the edge and there is no access road. There is therefore a probability that this represents material from the operational base, perhaps derived from a destroyed entrance.



Figure 16: Darlings Wood, Hart



Figure 17: Possible site of entrance to Auxilier Operational base, Darlings Wood, Hart

The small concrete beams were 'U' shaped, 60mm thick, 180mm wide and at least 1.1m long. Each one contained two reinforcing rods.

The Threat from above (Figs 1, 18 – 19)

While the bombing of North-East England was not as intensive as in other parts of the country it was nevertheless a serious threat and a number of measures were taken to guard against it. These took two forms, attacking the enemy aircraft and protecting the civilian population.

The enemy aircraft were engaged by fighter aircraft from Catterick that had a forward base at Greatham and more locally by anti-aircraft guns. There was an anti-aircraft battery of Bofors guns and a searchlight based at the lane end of Hart Moor House at one time, although this type of gun would be moved around the locality to avoid being targeted by bombing (Figure 1).

Despite the precautions some bombs did fall in the area, two sets are particularly remembered, one in the area of the reservoir and the other in the fields to the north of the village.

The local people protected themselves from bombing with air-raid shelters. The most common type was the Anderson Shelter, named after Sir John Anderson who was in charge of air raid precautions. These comprised sheets of corrugated, galvanised iron bolted together with a curved roof and a door in one end. They were intended to hold up to six people and were set about four feet into the ground



Figure 18: Anderson Shelter, Hart Station



Figure 19: Interior of Anderson Shelter, Hart Station

. None of these are now known at Hart; however one does survive in good condition at Hart Station, now with a decorative stone wall around the entrance.

Gordon Swain also reported the use of Morrison Shelter which came as a flat pack and comprised a sheet of steel with iron supports and a sprung base. This was intended to be placed in a room in the house and could be slept under.

In addition to the household shelters listed below there were two shelters for the school. One in what is now the car park for the village hall and the other at the end of the garden of 1 Palace Row. This was accessed from Naisberry Lane and was about 40 feet long, brick built with a concrete roof.

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Air Raid Shelter North Hart Farm (Figs 1, 20 – 21)

An air-raid shelter survives in a field to the immediate south of North Hart Farm and is built against a stone field wall and covered in soil. The entrance is 0.77m wide and 1.24m high and faces towards the front door of the farmhouse which is no more than 10m away. The possible remains of a steel sheet door blocks the entrance to the shelter. The mound that covers the shelters rises 0.85m above the surrounding ground level.

The shelter has walls of brick and a concrete roof 0.24m thick with 0.35m of earth and grass on top of the roof. It measures 6.1m north-south and 4.9m east-west. It was not possible to get into the shelter to record the interior.



Figure 20 Air Raid Shelter, North Hart Farm, showing door and concrete roof



Figure 21: Air Raid Shelter, North Hart Farm

Air Raid Shelter, Manor Croft, Hart (Fig 1, 22 – 27)

At Manor Croft, Hart an existing cellar was converted into an air raid shelter when the existing building was constructed in 1939. At this time there was a clear threat of war and air raid shelters were built as part of the construction of a number of larger new buildings.

Access into the shelter is from outside the house, through a manhole



Figure 22: Air Raid Shelter Manor Croft, Hart, Cast Iron Cover



Figure 23: Air Raid Shelter Manor Croft, Hart, Entrance

with a cast iron cover, measuring 0.68 x 0.64m, and down ten steps. The converted cellar had brick walls and there is a clear transition about mid way up the walls from 19th century brick to the mid 20th century brick of the air raid shelter. It is probable that the original 19th century structure was barrel vaulted and there is evidence of the stone shelving used for storage.



Figure 24: Air Raid Shelter Manor Croft, Hart, Roof with Steel Reinforcing Beams

The original roof has been replaced by one of concrete slabs 0.28m thick, supported by I section steel beams 200mm thick and 100mm wide at the southern end. The internal height of the shelter from the floor to the roof is 2.57m.

The shelter measures 4.95m north-south and 3.75m east west and is effectively divided into two long narrow parts by the central steps. The area to the west of the steps is 1.18m wide and that to the east 1.37m.



Figure 25: Air Raid Shelter Manor Croft, Hart, west side of shelter, note scar of previous barrel vault on end wall

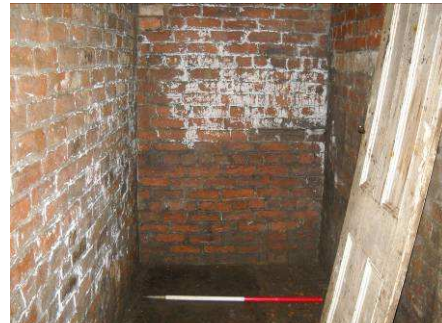


Figure 26: Air Raid Shelter Manor Croft, Hart, east side of shelter

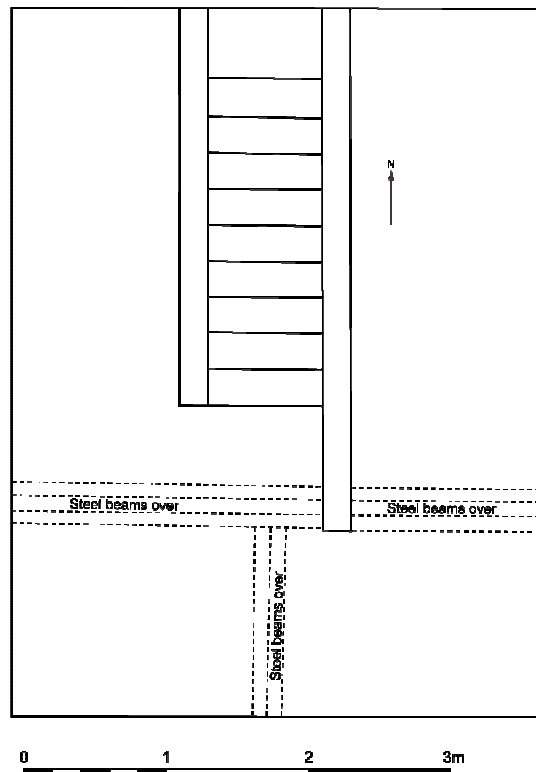


Figure 27: Plan of Air Raid Shelter, Manor Croft, Hart

Prisoners of War (Figs 1, 2, 28 – 29)

One of the most common memories of the Second World War in the village is the presence of Prisoners of War. These were housed in the former military camp near the church. It is reported that first Italian and later German POWs were housed here. The Italians would have been captured during the desert campaigns and most of these would have been re-patriated by 1945, following the surrender of Italy in 1943. The German POWs probably dated from after D-Day in 1944 when large numbers of German prisoners began to be taken, most of these were re-patriated by 1948, although a significant number chose to stay in the UK following the partition of Germany. The camp at Hart was closed in 1948 and at least three of the German inmates made their life in the area afterwards.

The POWs would have been detachments from a larger camp, possibly that at Wolviston Hall. All POWs except the most dangerous were offered the opportunity to work and were paid at the then current rate for the job. In the

case of Hart the prisoners worked on the farms. Few stories about the POWs are known however Shirley Brown possesses a model of a British aircraft carved out of wood and sold as a toy by an Italian POW. This was a common practice to earn extra cash.



Figure 28: Model of RAF aircraft made by Italian POW (S Brown)

Gordon Swain also possesses an object, made by a German prisoner, again carved out of wood and with the date 1947 painted on it.



Figure 29: Model made by German POW at Hart

Project Outcome and Future Projects

The project was successful in pulling together a range of information about the village and the surrounding area during the Second World War. This is however a base of information that could be built on and a number of areas that could be developed are set out below.

Fighting the Invasion

Attempts could be made to identify the specific military unit that was based at Hart and identify its specific tasks; this might be done through research into the three possible units, particularly looking at War Diaries and investigating the resources of the Imperial War Museum and national Archives.

The precise character of the gun emplacement at 12 South View, could be investigated perhaps through obtaining permission to survey the site.

Resisting an Occupation

The most obvious action here might be limited investigation of the suspected entrance to the Operational Base in Darlings Wood as well as seeking more information about the Hart Patrol.

The Threat from Above

Further work could take place to identify any further air raid shelters in the village both remembered and extant and a more thorough search for Anderson Shelters could take place.

Prisoners of War

It may be possible to gather further reminiscences about the Prisoners of War and to find out if any remained in the area after the war. It may even be possible to identify German and Italian POW organisations that might be able to link to former inmates.

There is much further information to be drawn out about the village in the 1940s and using a structured approach that addresses specific themes as has been done in this report may be a reasonable way to do it.

Acknowledgements

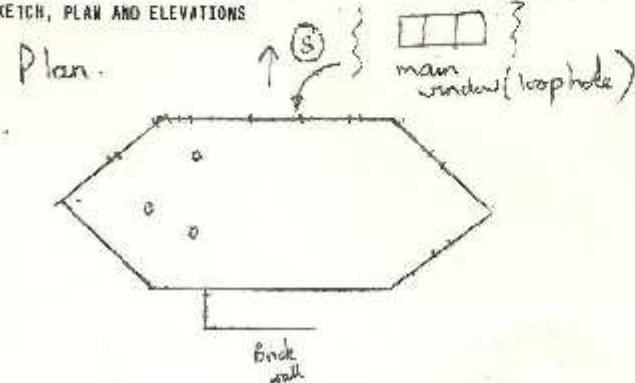
Hart History Group provided the bulk of the volunteers for the project, ably assisted by Sarah Scarr and Peter Graves from the Landscape and Conservation Section of Hartlepool Borough Council. The financial assistance of Renaissance money from the Museum of Hartlepool is gratefully acknowledged.

The Project was greatly helped by being allowed to use the Church of St Mary Magdalene as the base and thanks are due to the churchwardens and the vicar the Rev J Burbury.

In parallel the school worked on a project documenting the trees of the village and this was led by Deborah Jefferson, Ian Bond and Tony Dixon of Hartlepool Borough Council. The Open Day took place in the church and staff of Hartlepool Museum service kindly provided a display.

Those members of Hart History group who took part during the week of the survey comprised Shirley Brown, Carol Brown, Joan Carroll, David Wall, Anne Johnson, Bob Johnson, Margaret Rickatson and Chris McLoughlin.

Appendix 1: Cleveland County Archaeology Section Record of Hart Pillbox

CLEVELAND COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY				BUILDING RECORD			
PARISH HART		ADDRESS BEHIND RABY FARMS.			BUILDING No. 51		
FUNCTION Pillbox					DATE OF BUILDINGS 1960-2		
WALLING MATERIAL BRICK				WALLING TECHNIQUE E.C.B.			
ROOF MATERIAL CONCRETE (18")		ROOF PROFILE Flat		No. OF STOREYS 1			
CHIMNEY	MATERIAL	STACK DESCRIPTION			No. OF POTS		
WINDOWS Slit, loophole.							
ENTRANCES		SINGLE 1		OTHER			
OTHER FEATURES 3 pipes on roof (ventilation). Concrete shelf around wall under windows. Large plinth under main window.							
SKETCH, PLAN AND ELEVATIONS Plan. 							
RELATED BUILDINGS		LISTED	NAME NM + IB	DATE OF SURVEY 19/3/84	H.	C.	P.

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