



Veterans'
Voices

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VETERANS' VOICES - CHARLES HORNE

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Link to interview: learning.poppyscotland.org.uk/veday75/vv-charleshorne/



Veterans' Voices - Charles Horne Activities

1. Surprises, puzzles, similarities and settings

Before you watch the interview with Charles Horne:

<http://learning.poppyscotland.org.uk/veday75/vv-CharlesHorne/> prepare to take notes. Divide your page into four headings:

SURPRISES – In this section note down anything that you find particularly interesting or surprising in Charles' story.

PUZZLES – in this section, note down anything you don't understand or doesn't really make sense to you. Do you have any questions about what he has said? Are there any words that you don't understand?

SIMILARITIES – does any part of Charles' story remind you of anything? A book or a poem you might have read or a film you might have watched.

DIFFERENCES – how does Charles's story differ from other people's stories about the war or from what you have read in books or seen in films?

Once you have watched the film use your notes to discuss it with others who also watched the film with you.

The transcription of Charles' interview will help you to remember the details of the story he told.

2. Finding out more about Charles' story

Read the Teacher's Notes that provide background information and useful links about the topics Charles mentions in his interview.

Draw a timeline of key moments in Charles' life up until the end of WWII. Include the political and world events that were happening at the same time.

How does having background information about the period of history that Charles is talking about, help you to understand his story?

What information did you find most interesting and why?

Why do you think it important is it to record interviews with people who were in the war?

3. Write a page of Charles' diary

Select one of the events that Charles describes in his interview and write a diary entry to describe in detail what you imagine happened and how he felt about it.

4. Write a letter from Charles to his father and the crew on trawler about his experiences of D-Day.

Research what the public knew about D-Day. Think about what Charles could say to let his father and friends know what it was really like without his being censored.

If you have access to a video recording or audio recording device, record yourself reading out your letter.

5. What is the fishing industry like today?

Research what the fishing industry is like today. How have the lives of fishermen and women changed since the war? What role has technology played? How important fishing is to our economy? What environmental issues are involved in fishing today?

6. Visit a fishing harbour

Contact the Harbour Master to arrange a visit to a harbour. They will be able to tell you what days are best to visit if you want to see the trawlers and boats in the harbour and which of the skippers might be willing to talk about their work and their boat.

7. Make a cookery programme video about fish and the sea

You don't have to make anything with fish if you don't want to. You can make cakes and decorate them with fish-shaped icing or make biscuits that are shaped like creatures from creatures from the sea. Research recipes that are simple but tasty to make. Look at cookery programmes on TV or online and create your own format for your programme. You could include interesting facts about the sea, the wildlife it supports and the environmental problems it is experiencing.

8. Write a story about finding a WWII mine on a beach

Occasionally old contact mines from WWII wash up on beaches. There are a number of stories online of people finding mines and what they did about it. Imagine you are on the beach by yourself or with your friends. What would you do and how would you feel?

Veterans Voices – Background Notes to Charles Horne's interview

All of the interviews in the Poppy Scotland's VE Day Veterans Voices collection cover a wide range of interesting topics from what life was like between the wars to experiences in WWI through to VE Day and coming home. The following notes provide some additional background information about some of the topics raised in Charles Horne's interview <http://learning.poppyscotland.org.uk/veday75/vv-charleshorne/> as well as links to further information and related videos.

Charles Horne was born in Prestonpans, which is a small fishing town east of Edinburgh. His family originally came from Port Seton, which is another small fishing village, just two miles east of Prestonpans.

Prestonpans is famous for the Battle of Prestonpans that took place on 21 September 1745. It was the first important battle in the second Jacobite Rising and was significant because the Jacobite army defeated the English forces. This victory encouraged the Jacobites to continue to fight for the Stuart cause.

Head of the Family (44 secs)

Charles talks about being the 'Head of the family'. In the 1920s and 30s men and sons in a family were expected to work hard and earn a living for their families, while mothers and daughters stayed at home and looked after the children. In truth this didn't always happen. Women and girls also went out to work. In some industries such as jute, women rather than men worked in the factories while the men stayed at home with the children. Regardless of who the main wage earner was, males of a family were always expected to be in charge. Eldest sons would be given responsibility for the family when their father and older siblings were absent.

Charles explains that he went to work on one of his uncle's trawler boats as soon as he was 14 years old so that he could help to support his family. After the First World War, the law regarding child employment was changed. Children now had to stay in school until they were at least 14 years old rather than 12 or 13 years of age. This change in the law was very unpopular with poorer families who relied upon the wages of their children.

Herring (1 min 25 secs)

Herring fishing

At the start of the 20th century fishing for herring was big business, with much of the catch being sent to Germany, Eastern Europe and Russia. Thousands of small fishing boats trawled the North coast of Scotland from Orkney and Shetland in spring and summer and then down to the East Anglian coast and Yarmouth in the Autumn. It was a hard and dangerous life.

The fishing fleets were followed from port to port by the herring lassies (also known as herring girls or fisher lassies.) These women came from all over Scotland to gut and pack the herring. It was hard work, with long hours and low pay and involved working out of doors in all weathers. The herring lassies had a reputation for being very hardworking,

reliable and fun-loving. The money they earned was sent home to support their families.

- Scottish Fisher Girls (1920) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpWEv9rCDmM>
- The Herring Girls <https://www.virtualheb.co.uk/herring-girls-stornoway-western-isles/>
- The Fisherrow Fishwives <https://www.johngraycentre.org/people/east-lothian-folk/the-fisherrow-fishwives>

After WWI, the herring industry began to decline because the market for herring dropped as a result of high inflation in Germany. In 1929, pioneering documentary filmmaker John Grierson made *Drifters*, a silent documentary about the herring fishing industry. This would be the first time the British public could see what the life of the trawlermen was like.

- *Drifters* (1929) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUOiNnNFvI>

In 1934 Grierson made a second more experimental film about the trawlers coming from Granton in Edinburgh to the fishing grounds in the North Sea.

- Granton Trawler 1934 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypHc95ac8b4>

The herring industry died out after WWII. Trawlers concentrated on catching other kinds of fish. The processing of the fish was done onboard by the boat crews rather than on the dockside. The herring lassies were no longer needed.

- Trawling 1940-1949 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5AbsV3eBm0>

Rationing

When WWII began Britain was not self-sufficient in food production. It imported a lot of its food and feed for animals. This made the country very vulnerable.

German fleets attacked supply ships bound for Britain in a concerted and sustained effort to starve the nation. In order to deal with the developing food shortages, the Ministry of Food introduced a system of rationing.

In September 1939, petrol was the first item to be rationed. In January 1940, bacon, butter and sugar began to be rationed. Gradually, meat, tea, jam, biscuits, breakfast cereals, cheese, eggs, lard, milk, canned and dried fruit became rationed although not all at once. By August 1942, almost all foods were included except for fruit, vegetables, fish, whale meat and bread. Although not rationed, supplies of fruit, vegetables and fish were very limited.

Fish was not rationed but it was expensive. Supplies were low because of a reduction in the boat numbers partly because crewmen being called up or joining up for the war effort and partly because of the Royal Navy requisitioned many drifters,

trawlers and whaling boats into naval service. There was also the real danger of being at sea in war time so the cost of the fish also had to reflect the hazards involved for the crews.

- The Great Fishermen of Britain - Feeding the Nation During WWII and Braving Mines and U-Boats <https://hubpages.com/education/The-great-fishermen-of-Britain-Feeding-the-nation-during-WW2>

To be able to buy rationed items each person had a ration book with coupons. They had to be registered at specific shops. The shopkeeper was provided with enough food for their registered customers. When buying any items, the customer would have to give the ration book to the shopkeeper and they would cancel the relevant coupons.

Non-food rationed items included clothing, soap, coal, timber, paper as well as items such as razor blades, pots and pans, alarm clocks and babies' bottles.

People in the military and Merchant navy had a higher ration allowance than civilians. However, people with specific health conditions were given additional food allowances and people working in key industries such as agriculture, railways and forestry were allowed an additional cheese ration.

Rationing continued after the war and was eventually stopped in 1954.

- Seaman's Ration book <https://talesfromthesupplydepot.blog/2019/02/26/seamans-ration-book/>
- What You Need To Know About Rationing In The Second World War <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/what-you-need-to-know-about-rationing-in-the-second-world-war>
- WWII Rationing Worksheets <https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/ww2-rationing-worksheets-11050720>

The Engine Room (2 min 42 secs)

Money

Charles talks about his pay in shillings and pence. In Britain before 1971, a pound was divided into 20 shillings or 240 pennies as follows:

2 farthings = 1 halfpenny (also known as a ha'penny, 1/2d) 2

half pence = 1 penny (1d)

3 pence = thruppence (3d)

6 pence = sixpence (also known as a tanner) (6d) 12

pence = 1 shilling (a bob) (1s)

2 shillings = 1 florin (also known as a 'two bobbit') (2s) 2

shillings and sixpence = 1 half crown (2s 6d)

5 shillings = 1 Crown (5s)

1 pound = 20 shillings (£)

1 guinea = one pound and one shilling or 21 shillings

On the 15 February 1971, the British currency was decimalised. It was much simpler. One pound was divided into 100 pennies.

When Charles joined up his pay, as a first-class stoker, was 12 shillings and sixpence. That would be the equivalent of £24.59 in today's money. It doesn't sound like much but remember everything was much cheaper in 1940 than it is today.

Getting your papers

By the time Charles tried to volunteer for the Navy, he was already an experienced trawlerman and the Royal Navy were keen to recruit fisherman with more than one year's experience at sea, especially to work on minesweepers. However, at 17 and a half years old, Charles was too young. He was told to go home and that he would "get his papers soon". To 'get your papers' meant that you were 'called up' or conscripted into the one of the military forces.

In 1938, the British government began to prepare for war. The Emergency Powers (Defence Act) in August 1938, allowed the government to start recruiting and training volunteers as Air Raid Wardens and reservists for the military. Around half a million people volunteered. However, many more people would be needed for the military when the conflict began. So, when it became clear that Hitler wanted to go to war, the government began to give six months military training to all British men aged between 20 and 21 who were fit and able.

As the threat of war increased so did the need to recruit more men. The government introduced the National Service (Armed Forces) Act which made all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 41 available for conscription (i.e. compulsory enlistment for military service). Single men were called up before married men.

Men were registered by age group, beginning with those aged 20 to 23, who had to register on 21 October 1939. It took until June 1941 to register 40-year-olds. By the end of 1939 more than 1.5 million men had been conscripted to join the British armed forces. Of those, just over 1.1 million went to the British Army and the rest were split between the Royal Navy and the RAF.

By 1942 all male British citizens between 18 and 51 years old and all females 20 to 30 years old resident in Britain were liable to be called up, with some exemptions:

- British subjects from outside Britain and the [Isle of Man](#) who had lived in the country for less than two years
- Police, medical and prison workers
- Northern Ireland
- Students
- Persons employed by the government of any country of the British Empire except the UK

- Clergy any denomination
- Those who were blind or had mental disorders
- Married women
- Women who had one or more children 14 years old or younger living with them. This included their own children, legitimate or illegitimate, stepchildren, and adopted children, as long as the child was adopted before 18 December 1941.

Many men were not released from military service once the war was over and conscription continued. Some releases did begin in June 1945, in particular all women and those men in trades. However, it took until 1949 before all those who were conscripted during the war were able to return to civilian life.

National Service, as peacetime conscription, was enacted through the National Service Act 1948. From 1 January 1949, healthy males 17 to 21 years old were expected to serve in the armed forces for 18 months, and remain on the reserve list for four years.

Call-ups formally ended on 31 December 1960, and the last National Servicemen left the armed forces in May 1963.

- The Story of Conscription <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XROrVLPuZY>

D-Day (5 mins 2 secs)

On the 6 June 1944 Allied Forces landed on the beaches of Normandy, on the northern coast of France. The Normandy Landings were the first part of Operation Overlord, a massive, co-ordinated invasion of northern France by the Allies in order to establish a stronghold from which to push the Germans back. The amphibious phase of the invasion was codenamed Operation Neptune or D-Day. It was the biggest seaborne invasion in history.

Planning for the invasion began in 1943. A 50 mile stretch of coast in Normandy was identified as being suitable for landing over a million British, Canadian, American, Polish and French troops all under overall British command. The coast was divided into five sectors: Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword. American forces were assigned to land on Omaha and Utah beaches, the Canadians on Juno Beach and the British on Gold and Sword beaches.

The invasion fleet, was drawn from eight different navies, and comprised 6,939 vessels under the overall command of British Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay. Getting The timing of when to start was essential to getting troops successfully to the beaches. This was determined by the tides, the phase of the moon, the time of day and the weather. Incoming spring tides were desirable so that landing craft could get close to the beaches and minimise the time that the troops were exposed to enemy fire. A full moon was necessary so that aircraft pilots would be able to see their targets and provide air cover for the troops. There were only a few days each month when conditions would be suitable. The 5th of June 1944 was originally chosen but, on the 4th June, it became clear that weather would not be suitable. High winds and heavy seas meant that landing craft with their flat bottoms and shallow drafts would not be able to land. Moreover, low cloud would make it impossible for aircraft to provide support. So, the

invasion date was changed to 6th June. The weather was still not ideal but with so many troops and ships gathered and ready to go, it was thought to be impractical to postpone for another fortnight.

In his interview Charles notes that his minesweeper had already set out on the 3rd June and that for the next two nights they were in the English Channel. The size and shallow draft of his ship would have meant that they would have been tossed about in the stormy seas far more than the bigger warships. No wonder everyone was seasick!

Minesweepers would have been sent out early because they were crucial to the success of the whole invasion. The Normandy coast was protected by long lines of naval mines and routes through them had to be cleared so that all the vessels of the Allied Forces could get through as quickly and safely as possible.

Naval Mines and minesweeping

A naval mine is an underwater explosive device that explodes when it is close to a ship or submarine, causing the vessel to be damaged or destroyed. Mines are laid in areas of water either to protect or create safety zones for friendly vessels or to prevent or reduce the movement of enemy vessels.

There are three main types of naval mine – contact, remote and influence mines.

Contact mines have to be touched by a vessel before they can detonate. They are very cheap to produce and very effective so they are still in use today.

Most common are the **moored contact mines**, that float on or under the surface of the water and are anchored to the bottom by a steel cable, which stops them from drifting away.

Drifting contact mines were occasionally used in WWI and WWII but they were a danger to both allied and enemy vessels since their whereabouts were generally unknown and they were much more difficult to remove. Drifting mines were actually banned after WWI for this reason.

Remotely controlled mines are detonated by a signal. They are used to protect or block important shipping routes and harbours and worked in conjunction with coastal artillery and hydrophones.

Influence mines – these mines can be detonated just by a ship or submarine getting close to them. The fuses on these mines can be detonated when they detect magnetic, acoustic and/or pressure changes in the water around them.

In WWII mines were laid in a number of different ways including from submarines, converted merchant ships, aircraft, divers, combat boats and from shore.

Minesweeping

Locating and destroying mines is called minesweeping. There are two methods of minesweeping. A **contact sweep** involves dragging a wire through the water between one ship and a buoy or between two ships in order to cut the mooring cable of a floating mine. When the mines are cut free and at a distance from the minesweeper, they are usually shot and so detonated safely.

A **distance sweep** mimics the magnetic and acoustic signals of a ship to detonate the mine.

Minesweeping was a dangerous business. Not only was there the chance of a mine exploding and damaging the ship, the process of sweeping was slow and precise and made the ship and its crew vulnerable to enemy fire.

- Minesweeping WWII <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9r1-RHk5vM>
- Facing Danger with Men Of The Minesweeping Flotilla (1940) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lt2L5sb6hkQ>

Charles' ship was helping to clear the way for the American troops to land at Omaha beach. They worked with five other ships to clear the mines.

- D-Day: 3 Clear the Mines <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HLBUljMw83o>

Naval mines remained a threat even after the war ended, and minesweeping crews were still active long after VJ Day, removing both friendly and enemy mines from the seas and oceans to make them safe again.

Omaha Beach

Omaha Beach was an 8 km section of the coast that was to be taken by the US Army troops with sea transport, mine sweeping and naval bombardment to be carried out by the US Navy and Coast Guard, with support from British, Canadian and Free French Navies. Of all the beaches, Omaha was the most heavily defended and fortified. The above and behind the beach were trenches, minefields, barbed wire, nests of machine guns, artillery batteries, pillboxes and concrete emplacements and battalions of German and Italian soldiers.

Unfortunately, the level of defence was much more than expected and this combined with poor weather and rough seas meant that the Allied attack did not go as planned.

Firstly, the German defences were supposed to be destroyed by air and naval bombardments before any landing took place. However low cloud meant that this key part of the plan could not happen.

Rough seas meant that landing craft were swamped with water and many of the soldiers were violently seasick. Tanks were sunk before even getting to shore and many of the crews were lost through drowning and enemy fire. Strong currents and winds meant that land craft were blown off course and troops and equipment ended up in the wrong places. Some were grounded on sandbars some distance from the shore. Those soldiers had to disembark and wade 50–100m through neck deep water to get to the beach. By the time they got there, their kit was soaked through and very heavy. It made running up the beach out of the range of the German artillery, impossible.

One of the key defences of the troops was supposed to be the continued naval bombardment of the German strongholds. However, some of the initial bombardments had set light to the grassland in the area and the smoke made it difficult, not only for the land craft to see where they were going but also for the Naval ships to be sure of their targets. The bombardment from the battleships and cruisers was reduced for fear of hitting troops on the beach.

The combination of all these factors led to large numbers of casualties, the loss of vital equipment and troops ending up in the wrong places, under heavy fire from the Germans and few commanding officers to organise and lead them out of the situation. Incoming landing craft were set alight, pounded with mortars and artillery. Wounded men drowned as the tide came in and overwhelmed them.

It is not known exactly how many men died or were wounded on Omaha Beach that day. Sources vary from 2000 to 5000 killed, wounded and missing. Losses of equipment and supplies were very high. Despite it all the troops did manage to incur losses on the Germans and to gain a small foothold on Omaha Beach.

Over the next few days, the troops fought back the remaining German battalions and eventually secured the beachhead. Thereafter the area was used to land supplies, vehicles, soldiers and equipment and to evacuate the wounded, as the Allied Forces fought back the Germans in Europe.

The losses on Omaha Beach were much higher than on the other beaches which weren't so heavily defended. D-Day would eventually lead to the liberation of German-occupied France and later Western Europe.

- Omaha Beach, D-Day (June 6, 1944)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3P11ENBZyc>
- The Brits Who Stormed Omaha Beach, D-Day 1944
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UZU79tAzMU>

VETERANS' VOICES CHARLES HORNE TRANSCRIPTION & GLOSSARY

My name is Charles Horne. I was born in November 1925 in Prestonpans, but my people originate from Port Seton actually.

Head of the Family: 44 secs

I did okay at the school, I had French and Latin for three years, that was a big help at the fishing. But whenever I was 14, I was the eldest of eight children and my dad had a berth for me. Whenever I was on one of my uncle's boats, whenever I was 14 to help to support the rest of the family.



He actually, my father, sailed the trawlers and do ten to 14-day trips. So, I was the head of the family when he was away.

When my mother was pregnant and that, I used to have to run in the middle of the night, to get the doctor or the midwife. I'd get a shake, run Charlie and get the midwife!

Herring: 1 min 25 secs

I went to sea in a fishing boat called the Thorntree and eh, I sailed as cook, which wasn't a very good job, because, I was violently seasick, and eh, they all smoked thick black tobacco you know, the five of the crew smoked black tobacco and spitting on the stove, which used to trail down the ribs and that way and the smell. So that made me violently sick. I was sick for ages but there was one good thing that came from that, I've never smoked.

But what, the routine, food, was boiled herring in the morning which was like cardboard to eat, actually, wet cardboard. And we usually had a bit of soup with a bit a' mutton or something at lunchtime and teatime of course, fried herring, at teatime, a change! So that was what every day, that's what we did. So we were lucky because we had herring to eat course the people ashore didn't have that you know and then we had an extra ration with the seaman's ration book.

So, we were fairly well fed compared to the rest of the population, you know. And every week we left one of the extra fishing booklets ashore for one of the wives to take advantage of.

The Engine Room: 2 min 42 secs

When I was sixteen the chap that looked after the engine, he packed in. Previous to that, I was on what they call the half share, I got half of what the men got. My uncle said to me, "if you look after the engine laddie" he says, "you'll get a full share." Which I did, eh, I could stop and start it, you know and that was about all, and oil it and I got a full share when I was sixteen.

So, looking after the engine, became, stood me in quite good stead when I joined the Navy because eh having eh been at sea for four years which I had been and eh, and having looked after the engine, I didn't get a choice of career they just bunged me as an engine room stoker. But I was a first-class stoker due to having been at sea before. Which meant I got twelve and sixpence a week. Had I been an ordinary stoker I would have only got ten bob, ten shillings.

I went to join up when I was seventeen and a half. I went up to George Street and I saw the petty officer and he says to me, "away go home laddie you'll be getting your papers shortly!" he said and I did, get them not long after that so that's how I got into the Navy, and, eh, I was quite enjoying the fishing when I left, actually and my mother and my dad didn't want me to leave the fishing. My mother was getting wages from me, you see, it was helping to provide for the rest of the family. And she was starting to lose that you see but what I did do when I got my wages in the Navy, which was 12 and sixpence I sent ten shillings a week home to my mother and she drew that every week as a form of a pension and I kept two and sixpence.

And I flogged my duty-free cigarettes so that gave me a bob or two extra. We used to get 200 cigarettes duty free every week.

Into Uniform: 4 min 34 secs

I joined the Navy just in January 1944. Well I joined the ship in Birkenhead. I actually spent about a month in the barracks previous to that and I was glad to get from the barracks to a ship you know because I didn't like the barracks at all but you had to do that originally so they could eh instil some form of obedience in you I suppose.

D-Day 5 min 2 secs

I was on a minesweeper, an MMS motor minesweeper 291. We left Birkenhead and went down to Plymouth, which was more or less occupied by hundreds of American ships. That's where the main American crowd came from and all leave was stopped two weeks before D-Day. You didn't get ashore and any letters that you wrote were eh, looked at by the officers before they were posted. And eh, so, that gave us a good indication that we were going to France you know. And eh, we left on the third actually. And we dodged all night in the channel, it was a bad night, everybody was sick, seasick.

And the next night was a wee bit better. And then of course then the D-Day landings came along. The ship I was in was a shallow draft ship, which meant we were meant to go close in, in front of the landing craft you know. So, eh I was at Omaha Beach head really. A lot of people have said how were you at Omaha when you were in the British Navy?

Well the British minesweepers, the British shallow draft minesweepers swept in front of both American landings. We swept in and cut mines adrift. Two ships behind us, the other two minesweepers, they were disposing of the mines and another two ships were laying buoys to mark the passage, the safe passage, and then the landing craft went in. That's what we did at D day, under fire of course, although we got fairly well in before they started to fire upon upon us.

We lost a ship, the 229 to a, I think it was a mine she struck actually, she blew, she blew her bow off I think, she went down in about a couple, three minutes, she sunk very quickly. As we were shoving these mines, I was in the engine room and if one went off close to the boat, I always used to stand quite near the ladders going down to the room and my mate he'd be standing at the other end, there were steps down at that end and whenever a mine went off, it close to the vessel I was up that ladder, up to the deck. It was very, it could be quite nerve wracking I suppose at the time, at that particular time. But of course, it was pandemonium on D-Day at Omaha. When you looked round about you there were hundreds of ships you know, all that gunfire you knew it was important ok. But at Omaha they got an awful battering at Omaha.

It was a bad landing I think and there was nobody picking up bodies at all for two or three days. And I think eh that was just put aside till things got settled a wee bit but there were loads of Americans eh, dead Americans around just off the beach you know. And the Americans floated in a funny manner, sort of, sort of back up. They had a life belt which contained two little cylinders of air. We had a lifebelt which we blew up like a balloon. Or we had a jacket like an ordinary cork life jacket. Americans had a compressed air thing when they, when they burst these little canisters the air went through and blew up their actual lifebelt so they floated with that lifebelt, they floated with back up you know, that's how they actually floated.

Better Days 8 min 28 secs

The one time I enjoyed myself in the Navy was at Ostend cause we got to shore every second night and eh we used to go to the dancing there ken and that was good, we met some girls and it was good aye.

And on VE Day they had a sort of parade through the street and I was a member of the parade and we were assaulted by all these girls who took my silk away and they stole my hat and everything that was loose they pulled at.

So that was, I enjoyed, I enjoyed my stay and that I think it was the only time I enjoyed being in the Navy actually.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Trawler – a trawler is type of fishing boat. It operates by actively dragging its nets through the water behind it.

Midwife – a midwife is someone who helps a pregnant woman and their baby before, during and after birth. In the 1920s and 30s when Charles was young, midwives were often called when the family couldn't afford to pay for a doctor.

Seaman's ration book – During rationing, people were registered to specific shops to get their allowances of food and restricted items. However, seamen were at sea and could not easily return to the same shop each week. So, each seaman was issued with a special ration book that was authorised by the captain or master of the boat or ship they were on. Each port had a number of shops that were registered to supply seamen's rations and sailors were expected to pick up rations ashore and bring them back on board for the cook to prepare.

Full share – fishermen were paid a percentage of the profits their boat earned from a catch, known as the crew share. Once the cost of fuel, food, and other expenses had been deducted from the sale of the fish, the captain took his share (about 40%) and the remainder was divided amongst the rest of the crew. To begin with Charles only got a half share, i.e. half of what the each of other crew members earned probably because his job was less skilled and didn't involve as much physical work as the rest of the crew.

First class stoker - Stokers were responsible for transporting and shovelling coal to the furnaces on ships. The lowest rank was Stoker 2nd Class, then Stoker 1st Class, then Petty Officer Stoker, then Chief Petty Officer Stoker.

Petty Officer – In the Royal Navy, crewmen who are not officers are called **ratings**. There are several ranks of ratings: Able Seaman, Leading Rate, Petty Officer, Chief Petty Officer, Warrant Officer 2nd Class, Warrant Officer 1st Class

Duty free – items that are duty free have not been taxed and are therefore cheaper than they would normally be. During WWII most people smoked and non-smokers, like Charles, could take advantage of this by selling or bartering their own unwanted cigarette rations.

Barracks – a large building or buildings that are used to house soldiers.

Minesweeper – a minesweeper is a small naval ship that is used to keep waterways clear of mines so that other ships can move about safely. The MMS minesweepers were made of wood to prevent them triggering magnetic influence mines, that could be detonated just by coming close to metallic hulls.

D-Day – On 6 June 1944, D-Day, the Allied Forces landed on the Normandy beaches in order to invade northern France and push back the invading German forces.

Shallow draft ship – a ship with a shallow draft sits high in the water and so is able to get into shallow waters without being grounded. The disadvantage of a shallow draft is that it makes a ship less stable in stormy conditions.

Omaha Beach – this was the code name for part of the coast that the Allied Forces landed on during the D-Day landings. For the purposes of the invasion, a 50 mile stretch of coast was divided into five sectors: Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword. American forces were assigned to land on Omaha and Utah beaches.

Mines - A naval mine is an underwater explosive device that explodes when it is close to a ship or submarine, causing the vessel to be damaged or destroyed. It is a very effective and cheap weapon and/or means of defence.

Lifebelt – a life belt is a piece of safety equipment that a person wears to keep them afloat in water. There are many different kinds of life jacket. The most effective are those that keep the face of an unconscious casualty out of the water.

Ostend – Ostend is a city on the coast of Belgium.

Link to interview: learning.poppyscotland.org.uk/veday75/vv-charleshorne/