

Sir Winston Churchill: The greatest Briton?

1939 In time of need: video transcript

It came in 1939 – another war to add to the Churchill collection but a war to top all others. A national war that involved all of the nation. A war for survival. A war that changed the nature of Britain and set Churchill apart in history.

He returned as First Lord of the Admiralty – the choice was inevitable. A signal was sent to the Fleet ‘Winston is Back’. For the first few months the war was fought mostly at sea; the land waited. Churchill spoke with relish of his part of the plan:

Churchill’s voice:

But the Royal Navy had immediately attacked the U boats and is hunting them night and day. I will not say without mercy because God forbid we could ever part company with that. But at any rate with zeal and not altogether without relish.

Dimbleby’s voice:

In April 1940 the Germans fell upon neutral Norway and Denmark. The peacetime politicians could not meet the demands of the time. Neville Chamberlain’s government fell and Churchill achieved his ambition and his proper role. He became Prime Minister of his country and at a time of desperate war.

Extract from BBC obituary of Churchill narrated by Richard Dimbleby