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HOME GUARD "STAND DOWN"
PARADE

Seven thousand Home Guards from all parts of Britain and Northern Ireland march in their stand down parade before the King, in Hyde Park. His Majesty who was accompanied by the Queen and the two Princesses takes the salute.

The procession takes 40 minutes to pass the saluting-base....7,000 men - in 29 sections, 11 Home Guard Bands. The honour of leading the great column went to the men of the A.A. Units who helped fight the flying-bomb. They were loudly applauded by the crowd.

To all these civilians in battledress goes the Nation's heartfelt thanks. Their readiness to answer the country's call when invasion threatened, saw us through an anxious time, and in four years we have seen the birth and formation of a well-equipped and capable force which, in many ways, has played a great part in the defence of Britain.

Hyde Park Corner is reached and the Khaki column turns into Piccadilly. The heart of London is tightly packed with onlookers, largely composed of proud wives and children come to watch Daddy in the Big Parade.

The skirl of the pipes swings the feet of men from moors and mills, factories and offices down towards Piccadilly Circus.

Round the bearded-up statue of Eros, the crowds pack closer than ever. From doors and roofs and windows, and clinging to ledges and lamp posts, the crowd pays its tribute to the men whose sacrifices to duty had enabled regular soldiers to relinquish home duties and go overseas....These Patriots who, after their work, would don their uniforms and stand guard on windswept beaches and desolate moors....who were ready when the enemy threatened, to meet him wherever he

might be found....This is their final parade - The youngest branch of the armed Forces is the first to stand down....Homeguardsmen have done a fine job.... and, though they cease to exist as a force in being, from now they will remain ready to answer any emergency.

Drawing towards the end of the 3-mile march, the procession approaches Marble Arch. A day to be remembered in the fine history of their comradeship in arms....The feelings of all are summed up in these words broadcast to the Nation - His Majesty the King:

"Officers, and non-commissioned officers, and men, you have served your country with a steadfast devotion. I know that your country will not forget that service."
