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A Discovered WWII Diary Reveals a 27,000-mile Journey Through the Persian Corridor

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After eighty years lost in a family archive, the wartime diary of Corporal Alwyn Day has been recovered and reconstructed by his grandson, investigative journalist Philip James Day.

The result is *Empire's Witness: A Soldier's Secret War Diary 1942-45*, a work of historical investigation built from the diary and military records. It traces an extraordinary journey across three continents and thirteen countries to one of the Second World War's least understood pressure point.

The Persian Corridor

After Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, Churchill and Roosevelt backed the movement of Allied aid through the Persian Corridor, the supply route running from the Persian Gulf through Iran to the Soviet frontier.

Along this route moved millions of tons of trucks, fuel, food, ammunition and machinery, much of it supplied under American Lend-Lease. The corridor was initially secured and organised by British forces already operating in the region, but as the war intensified the United States expanded the system dramatically. Within a year some 30,000 American logistics troops were working along the route, helping transform it into one of the largest supply operations of the conflict.

It was into this vast theatre of war that Corporal Alwyn Day travelled in August 1942. He recorded fragments of it in his diary, filling its pages with photographs, prayers, certificates, small maps and even a leaf from a tree said to be sacred.

