

How criminals and killers used the dark days of WWII

Murder rates during the war years increased by 22%; killers used Britain's bombed-out houses to hide bodies.

Pictures appear in *Crime In The Second World War: Spivs, Scoundrels, Rogues And Worse* by Penny Legg.

5 There was easy money to be made from racketeering as the bombs fell on Britain during the war - and the scenes of devastation would also provide fertile ground for murderers to hide the bodies of their victims.

Now, a fascinating new book reveals how the upsurge in crime on home soil during the Second World War contradicts the popular belief in Britain's 'Blitz Spirit'.

10 Incredible pictures reveal the way crafty murderers took advantage of the country's bombed-out houses to hide corpses, while others took it as an opportunity to steal from their neighbours.

Further photos in the book - *Crime In The Second World War: Spivs, Scoundrels, Rogues And Worse* by Penny Legg - show a crowd gathered to buy cigarettes from a black-market seller.

15 Murder rates during the war years increased by 22 per cent and the book looks at the cases of serial killer, John Christie who served in the First World War but started his string of eight killings on home turf during WWII; and the 'Acid Bath Murderer', John George Haigh, who was hanged for his crimes in 1949.

'Ruthless criminals caught out during burglary thought nothing of driving over anyone who tried to stop them. In short, it was a time when the norms of polite behaviour were often put to one side and the demons inside many of us were let out.

20 'Rationing created want and this was catered for by a thriving black market. Just about anything was available if you were prepared to pay for it, no questions asked.

Nick Enoch, *Daily Mail*, April 27th 2017