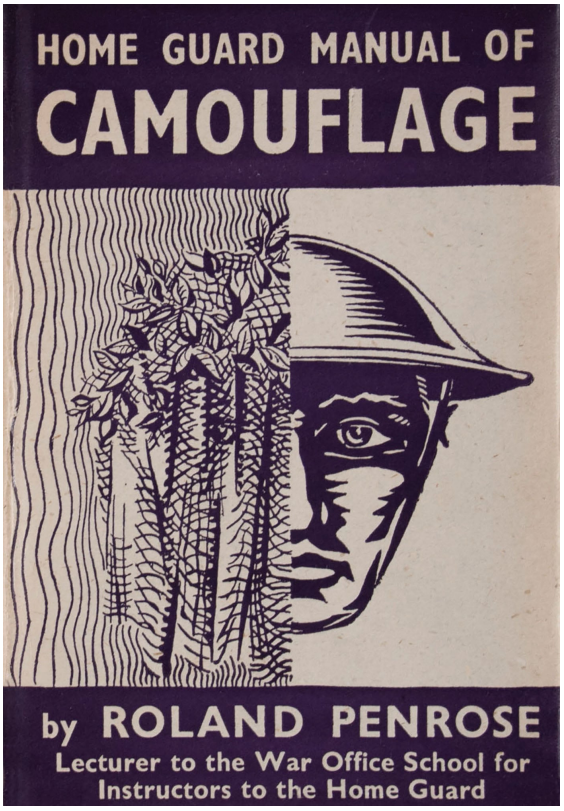
TITLE INFORMATION
Tel: +44 (0) 1394 389950
Email: uksales@accartbooks.com
Web: https://www.accartbooks.com/uk



Home Guard Manual of Camouflage

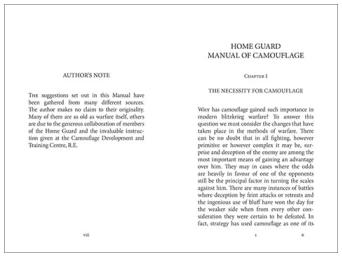
Roland Penrose

ISBN	9780953238972
Publisher	Lee Miller Archives
Binding	Hardback
Territory	World excluding USA & Canada
Size	190 mm x 132 mm
Pages	102 Pages
Illustrations	46 b&w
Price	£12.95

- A facsimile of the practical manual, discussing the necessity for camouflage
- Originally published in 1941 and "Officially approved by the War Office"

In 1941, Roland Penrose became a game changer when The War Office published this *Home Guard Manual*. Penrose shows how to accomplish seemingly impossible visual deceptions: While Penrose, a keen naturalist, drew on influences in the natural world, his Surrealist passion for mimicry is apparent throughout the book. Patterns, textures, shading: all these artistic devices now took on serious military currency.

Sir Roland Penrose CBE (14 October 1900 – 23 April 1984) was an English artist, historian and poet. He was a major promoter and collector of modern art and an associate of the key Surrealists in Europe. During the Second World War he put his artistic skills to practical use as a teacher of camouflage. He was Lecturer to the War Office School for Instructors to the Home Guard and also a Lecturer at the Osterley Park School for Training of the Home Guard.


HOME GUARD
MANUAL OF CAMOUFLAGE

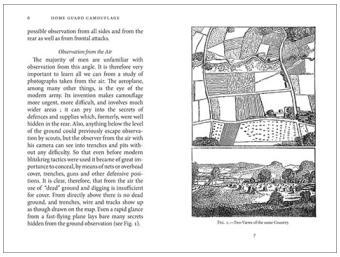
AUTHOR'S NOTE

Ten suggestions set out in this Manual have been gathered from many different sources. The author makes no claim to their originality. Many of them are as old as warfare itself, others are due to the generous collaboration of members of the Home Guard and the invaluable instruction given at the Camouflage Development and Training Centre, R.E.

CHAPTER I

THE NECESSITY FOR CAMOUFLAGE

War has camouflage gained such importance in modern blitzkrieg warfare? To answer this question we must consider the changes that have taken place in the methods of warfare. There can be no doubt that in all fighting, however primitive or however complex it may be, surprise and deception of the enemy are among the most important means of gaining an advantage over him. They may in cases where the odds are heavily in favour of one of the opponents still be the principal factor in turning the scales against him. There are many instances of battles where deception by feint attacks or retreats and the ingenious use of bluff have won the day for the weaker side when from every other consideration they were certain to be defeated. In fact, strategy has used camouflage as one of its


6 HOME GUARD CAMOUFLAGE

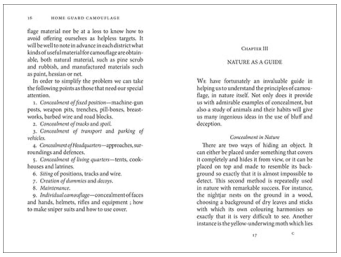
possible observation from all sides and from the rear as well as from frontal attacks.

Observation from the Air

The majority of men are unfamiliar with observation from this angle. It is therefore very important to learn all we can from a study of photographs taken from the air. The aeroplane, among many other things, is the eye of the modern army. Its invention makes camouflage more urgent, more difficult, and involves much wider areas ; it can pry into the secrets of defences and supplies which, formerly, were well hidden in the rear. Also, anything below the level of the ground could previously escape observation by scouts, but the observer from the air with his camera can see into trenches and pits without any difficulty. So that even before modern blitzkrieg tactics were used it became of great importance to conceal, by means of nets or overhead cover, trenches, guns and other defensive positions. It is clear, therefore, that from the air the use of "dead" ground and digging is insufficient for cover. From directly above there is no dead ground, and trenches, wire and tracks show up as though drawn on the map. Even a rapid glance from a fast-flying plane lays bare many secrets hidden from the ground observation (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1.—Two Views of the same Country.

7


10 HOME GUARD CAMOUFLAGE

flage material ever be at a loss to know how to avoid offering ourselves as helpless targets. It will be well to note in advance in each district what kinds of useful material for camouflage are obtainable, both natural material, such as gorse scrub and rubbish, and manufactured materials such as paint, hessian or net.

In order to simplify the problem we can take the following points as those that need our special attention.

1. *Concealment of fixed position*—machine-gun posts, weapon pits, trenches, pill-boxes, breastworks, barbed wire and road blocks.
2. *Concealment of tracks and spoil.*
3. *Concealment of transport and parking of vehicles.*
4. *Concealment of Headquarters*—approaches, surroundings and defences.
5. *Concealment of living quarters*—tents, cookhouses and latrines.
6. *Siting of positions*, tracks and wire.
7. *Creation of dummies and decoys.*
8. *Maintenance.*
9. *Individual camouflage*—concealment of faces and hands, helmets, rifles and equipment ; how to make sniper suits and how to use cover.

CHAPTER III

NATURE AS A GUIDE

We have fortunately an invaluable guide in helping us to understand the principles of camouflage, in nature itself. Not only does it provide us with admirable examples of concealment, but also a study of animals and their habits will give us many ingenious ideas in the use of bluff and deception.

Concealment in Nature

There are two ways of hiding an object. It can either be placed under something that covers it completely and hides it from view, or it can be placed on top and made to resemble its background so exactly that it is almost impossible to detect. This second method is repeatedly used in nature with remarkable success. For instance, the nightjar rests on the ground in a wood, choosing a background of dry leaves and sticks with which its own colouring harmonises so exactly that it is very difficult to see. Another instance is the yellow-underwing moth which lies

11

Published 1st Jul 2025