

Rowland's Castle in World War Two



The King's Stone, Horndean Road, Rowland's Castle, is inscribed: *Here on 22 May 1944 His Majesty King George VI reviewed and bade God speed to his troops about to embark for the invasion and liberation of Europe. Deo Gratia*

Paul Marshman

ROWLAND'S CASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

£6

This booklet has been edited by Ralph Cousins to mark the 75th anniversary of D-Day and is based on: *Rowland's Castle 1944 to 1994, A Short Collection of Articles to Mark the 50th Anniversary of D-Day*, published by Paul Marshman. The war casualties have been researched by Jennifer Bishop.

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However, it is my friends in the village, who imparted the heart of this book to me. It is for them that I have written it, hopefully they are not disappointed.

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Rowland's Castle in the Second World War

A short collection to mark the 50th anniversary of D-Day

Paul Marshman

The village and village life changed during the war, the intense activity and involvement saw to that and whereas there is no recorded damage to a Rowland's Castle home by enemy action, action there was.

3 January 1938. Rowland's Castle Parish Council. (RCPC). *The chairman reported the present position in the Rural District and informed the Council that Comm'd May was the person responsible for the carrying out of the scheme in this parish.*

The chairman was Major A. F. Clarke-Jervoise, the rest of the Council being: Capt. Else and Messrs Bush, Cole, Harman, Miles, Mitchell and Royal. As early as 19 October 1937, the Major had called a special meeting to discuss Air Raid Precautions (ARP) and had put forward a plan to use Idsworth House as headquarters. By February 1938, Mr Miles was attending ARP lectures.

So how did the village look during the war? No street lights of course and no signs either. There were large pill boxes at the arches end of the Green and above Comley bend and smaller gun emplacements at the station, Comley arch and Eastleigh crossroads. There were larger Anti-Aircraft (Ack-Ack) guns and searchlights at Pyle Farm, in Tills Lane, off Woodberry Lane and at Wellsworth. There was a mass of buildings in Stansted Forest and in the woods along Woodberry Lane. There was a services canteen at the bottom of Castle Road and another in the Sling where there was also a cinema and a rifle range. The golf links was a maze of poles and the field at Magpie a blaze of lights. The village had its own Home Guard, Auxiliary Fire Service and Air Raid Precautions. We paid host to the Battersea Boys and later in the war to the troops. The Canadians were in Stansted, the Free French at Spencers Field, and numerous English regiments throughout the area. The Navy were at Stockheath and the RAF as near as Funtington. Stansted House was a Service Home, Idsworth House an Admiralty Hospital, Ditcham House a Naval Hostel and Leigh Park House the base of the Admiralty Mining Establishment.

29 September 1938. Redhill School Day Book. (RSDB). *The ARP representative visited the school and fitted the children who had not been fitted elsewhere with gas masks.*

The number was 116 and the date, 1938, is correct. Gas mask production began January 1937 and by the date above, 38,000,000 had been produced, everybody was to have one.

Major A. F. Clarke-Jervoise was the ARP Officer for area K and he issued a pamphlet, *Care of Respirators*, issued to the General Public, containing helpful hints such as: *Do not let the children play with their gas masks, Do not scratch or bend the window, A thin film of wet soap rubbed on the inside of the window will keep it from becoming misted by breath. Carbolic soap should not be used.*

5 December 1938 (RCPC). *The Chairman reported that he had given permission for the ARP Demonstration Gas Van to be placed on the Green on December 3rd for instructional purposes.*

4 January 1939. *It was agreed that a Whist Drive be run shortly before Christmas, approximate date fixed Friday, December 9th.*

H. J. Moir, from the Minute Book of the Rowland's Castle Football Club

28 July 1939. (RSDB). *The school closed this afternoon for the summer holiday.*

4 September 1939. (RSDB). *The school did not re-open this morning for instructional purposes owing to the Declaration of War against Germany.*

25 September 1939. *School re-opened this morning at 9.00 a.m. The 25 privately educated children admitted and one from the LCC attached to the Battersea boys school evacuated to this village.*

During the three weeks the school was closed the Head Teacher received a visit from Mr. Dann, His Majesty's Inspector, concerning the opening of the school and ARP shelter. *The piano was tuned on Friday. (RSDB).*

Records show that as early as 20 February 1939, a Jewish refugee called Walter Bein was admitted to Redhill School. He lived with Mrs King on the Green but was apparently soon transferred to Cowplain. The same record tells that Miss C. Stubbington was the secretary of the local branch, presumably responsible for finding him lodgings, but whether for Jewish or all children is not clear.

I was evacuated on Friday, September 1st, two days before war was declared. We were marched to Clapham Junction, each with our small bundle of spare clothes and each with a luggage label in our lapel for identification. We got off the train at Petersfield, were given refreshment and transferred by coach to Homdean and from there to the village hall at Rowland's and after more refreshments were sorted out and allocated billets.

Boy

Ted Walmsley, a Battersea

Ted was originally billeted at 19 East Durrants, but as the West's had a daughter of their own his sister Mae was allowed to stay and Ted was moved to North Lodge where he lived with the Tunnell's until both children were taken to Preston.

The evacuation of children began on 31 August, 1939. They were directed to take spare clothing, toothbrush, comb, handkerchief and food for the day. Billeting Officers were appointed nationwide but the children were often sent to places without their parents' knowledge. It is estimated that 1,500,000 were evacuated within the first two days. There was an allowance of 10/- (50p) for billeting an evacuee which dropped to 8/6 (42½p) each if you took two or more. Three quarters of those evacuated returned quite quickly.

29 September 1939. *The Government raise income tax.*

The placing of the evacuees needed some help from the Post Office as we knew more of who was in the village than anyone else. After a few friendly altercations we were able to help her place many in the right homes but the Battersea Boys did not take kindly to touching their hats and saying 'yes Miss Stubbington' or 'no Miss Stubbington or 'good morning Miss Stubbington' when they met her.

Extract from: A New Life, F. O'B. Adams

Letter from Mr A. Ling, the Headmaster of the Battersea LCC Central School for Boys on his own notepaper but with Surrey Lane South, Battersea Bridge Road, SW11, crossed out and Parish Hall, Rowland's Castle added. It is dated 20 September 1939.

Dear Major Clarke-Jervoise,

I understand from the Postmaster that you have generously offered us the use of the allotments, adjoining the entrance to the Recreation Ground. We shall be delighted to accept your offer.

I believe you would wish to see me relative to this. Could you suggest a time and place of meeting? Will it be possible to get a grant of some tools etc. from the Ministry of Agriculture, I wonder.

May I express to you and all those who have given us such a warm welcome at Rowland's Castle our most cordial thanks. I trust we may prove worthy of the generous treatment.

Apart from the Parish Hall and the Chapel Schoolroom the Railway Hotel was also used by the Battersea School for lessons.

*They were held in the room over the ground floor and we used to be made to march in file down to the cellar for air raid practise. This held far more terrors for me than any threat Hitler could have made, although he was bombing Portsmouth at the time and the fires of the same could be seen lighting the skies at night. The cobwebs and dust of that cellar promised huge black spiders and with the normal horridness of boys to encourage them out to tease us with, I look back and marvel that I survived it without a heart attack, though I was only ten years old. **Mae Walmsley, 19 East Durrants***

Mae was one of the very few girls to be evacuated with the boys from the Battersea Central School. She came with her brother Ted, it being a policy not to split families if it could be avoided. She stayed with Mr and Mrs West but for only ten months, after which her parents removed her and her brother to join them in Preston, where it was thought to be safer, away from the threat of Portsmouth. Her family had already been blitzed out of their home in Battersea, Mae tells also of the 'three maiden ladies' who were of course the Stubbingtons and of how marvellous they were to all the evacuees. She mentions that they even ploughed up the lawns of their house to grow vegetables. Mae fondly remembers the Wests and indeed the village, the shows put on in the Parish Hall and singing in the church choir.

Dear Sir,

I understand from a member of the Playing Field Committee that it is proposed to have a football match on the 29th inst., and as you are Secretary of the Football Club I must call your attention to Rule 4 of the Playing Field

Under the circumstances therefore, the proposed match cannot be allowed. You will understand I hope, that the ground should be prepared for the Cricket season which opens on the 1st May.

Yours faithfully,

This letter was written 11th April, 1939 by Captain Else, the Agent for the Idsworth Estate on whose notepaper it is typed. He was also the Secretary for the Playing Field Committee. It was addressed to Mr F. Marett, The Brickyards, Rowland's Castle, who in his return gives his address as 3 Locku Villas. He asks about a game on April 22nd, but this too is turned down. As soon as April 15th, Mr A. Coles of 8 Castle Road, is writing on behalf of the Cricket Club, asking for the goal posts to be removed.

Dear Sir,

I have been instructed by the Committee of the Rowland's Castle Flower Show to write and ask for permission to hold the show in the Playing Field as in former years and the water supply. The Show Day is Saturday 12 August.

Yours faithfully

Written 13 July by James Barnett of 5 Woodbury Cottages direct to Major Clarke-Jervoise. The reply non-the-less comes from Capt. Else, granting permission.

I came to Rowland's Castle in late September 1939 to be with the children evacuated from the Naval Services House on Southsea sea front where I worked as a children's nurse. I was, as I remember, three or four weeks late as I was recovering from a broken leg. I do remember being told to watch out for a tall chimney as the next stop would be Rowland's Castle. The first person I saw as I got off the train was Roly Griffiths. There was no taxi waiting for me so we chatted away till it turned up, driven by Harry Hall.

Only the infants were taught at the House by two teachers, a Miss Absalom and another who came from Petersfield.

The Countess Howe often visited the home, she came in a horse and trap accompanied by five labradors and gave books and comics to the children. I also remember a visit by the Queen.

The sirens seemed to sound most nights and each time we had to take the children and mattresses down to the basement, how we longed for an uninterrupted sleep. I recall the night the Heinkel came down and the children were taken to the basement. We, the staff, and others were watching however including the Doctor who was advancing towards the burning plane to see if he could help when it exploded, killing him. We then discovered that one small boy, nicknamed Dormouse, was missing. We found him in his bed, still asleep and covered in debris and broken glass. Later in the war there was the night the theatre burned down and we were all awakened and moved from our rooms as there was a danger of the fire spreading.

I remember the daily walks to Forestside with the juniors to school and Sunday school, the picnics in the East Park and the dances in the Forestside Hut. We were allowed one day off a month and I would return home by train, often seeing Roly again, but we had to be back by 10.00 p.m. to report to Matron. I had a cycle by then for the journey up the drive. The home stayed the duration.

Joan Keysell, Stansted House

10 October 1939. (RCPC). *Major Clarke-Jervoise reported to the Council the steps taken in connection with the provision of Air Raid shelters. In view of the outbreak of hostilities it was decided that the Chairman should use his discretion as to calling Council meetings in future.*

There was in fact a gap almost immediately, from December 1939 to March 1940. The Chairman now was a Mr A. B. Bush, since April 1939, but the Major was still a councillor. At the March 1940 meeting they were told about the Government scheme to increase food supplies. They informed the Allotment Association. The annual Parish Meeting was held on March 20th and lasted fifteen minutes as no one, apart from the Council, turned up (nor in 1941). The Major resigned on April 15th, soon followed by Captain Else.

By November of 1939 Rowland's Castle Football Club are playing again, a letter dated the 20th of that month, and now on their own headed paper, informs Captain Else that a window in the pavilion was broken and that the club will pay the bill. On the 27 November, Captain Else is himself writing to Mr Barnett of the Rowland's Castle Flower Show complaining quite bitterly that the Playing Field has not been repaired of the damage caused by traction engines at their last show. He asks for the surface to be put right or a contribution of £10, for others to do it. On the same day:

Rowland's Castle Playing Field

Dear Sir,

The Committee of the above desire me to bring to your notice that this field is now being used as a playground by the Battersea Boys evacuated in the village and being schooled in the Parish Hall opposite.

The Playing Field is supported entirely by voluntary subscriptions, and at the moment there are no funds whatever in hand to maintain the equipment and surface of the field.

It will, I think, be agreed that a playground for drill and recreation purposes is quite essential for the boys, and they have had full enjoyment of the field since they came to

the village, and may require the user for some time to come. The Committee regret that financial circumstances compel them to address this letter to you, and will be much obliged if you will kindly further this matter, with a view to a grant or otherwise being made by the proper Authority.

Yours faithfully

From Captain Else to the County Education Officer at Winchester. The answer came on December 12th, offering £5 per annum, a standard rate, which they accepted on 2 January 1940. In between a letter on 27 December from Mr Barnett, expresses regret at not having repaired the damage, blames the weather and, *since then the labour problem has been a serious one*. The Flower Show claim they were owed money by a third party, a fact which helped nobody, for by February, the Playing Field cannot meet their rates (£2 14s.) (£2.70) and are writing asking for 'compassionate consideration'. By 23 October, Captain Else is reminding Winchester about the £5, he had not received it yet. On 20 November, 1940, he writes again to Mr Barnett who has still not repaired the damage. Winchester write 26 November promising payment.

Monday, 25 March 1940. *Ford tender returned from Liss, received by C. O. Miles, taken to Rowland's Castle Tuesday evening. Two sections of ladder and cleaning materials sent with it.*

Day Book of Horndean Fire Brigade

Despite this, Rowland's had a fire brigade of its own, complete with engine. This was based in Winnicott's yard but by 1938 had been moved to a garage belonging to Mrs A. King at the chapel end of the Green. The 'new' tender then used this base and the old fire engine was put into Pitt's yard just off the Drift. It was sadly vandalised and the chassis only moved to Manor Lodge Road where it was to block the way in case of invasion. The Horndean Day Book tells that on 12 May 1940, the Rowland's Castle AFS started training. On 2 June they took part in an ARP exercise at Buriton.

The fire brigade was stationed in a garage at fifty-five the Green and a large hut was built at the back to house the firemen who were mostly from the Blackburn area. Outside of the wall a shelter was dug.

Every evening the Chapel entertained the troops stationed in Stansted Forest with sandwiches and with writing paper and helpers, about five a night on a rota basis, so the troops could write home.

Sunday evenings they came to the Chapel for the singing of hymns, among the troops were some very good soloists including a choir of American Negroes. The tanks were lined up along the wall and there were many Canadians.

The flag hanging in the Chapel was presented by the trustees of the Imperial War Commission to commemorate those who lost their lives, and to the religious and social services of the congregation towards the forces. The Rev. Carver was minister at this time.

Mrs. Vera Cooper, Trevena, The Green

*The outbreak of war brought many changes. As a pensioner of the Royal Navy I was liable to be called for further service but as a Sub-postmaster I was exempt. With the forming of the Home Guard in May 1940, I joined the local Company and was given the rank of Lieutenant. The Company was made up of old and young over sixteen-years-of-age, with Headquarters in an empty shop at the end of The Green and a disused beach hut brought from Hayling Island and erected at the rear of the Electricity sub-station next to the Post Office as a store. **A New Life, F. O'B. Adams***

The Local Defence Volunteers (LDV) was put forward as an idea by Anthony Eden on May 14th, 1940. It was for men aged 17 to 65 who were not already engaged in military service. Some 1,500,000 enrolled in the first month. Churchill re-named it the Home Guard, probably by June, the same year. It was disbanded 11 September 1944.

Soon after the war started, some village lads, we were all about 16-17 years old, joined the local LDV group. Cliff Miles, Alec Miles, the postmaster's son, Tom Yalden and others, all volunteered and joined the senior men led by Major Morris, Mr. Adams and Bill Barrett. We originally met in a building behind the old post office, but by the time we had become the Home Guard, we were meeting in a building at the end of the Green next to the Nook. It was completely occupied by the Home Guard and became their HQ, with bunk beds downstairs and a demonstration room and store upstairs. At this time we were dressed in dungarees with no uniforms and for the juniors no rifles either, but we were drilled as if we had. Our main observation point was at the top of the Drift, where we all took turns on night duty, as well as patrolling the village in pairs.

One summer evening, I took part in an exercise in which I played the part of a fifth columnist, on bicycle! I rode a circular route from the village via Magpie, the saw-mills, the Beeches and Chalton and got as far as Old Idsworth when half a dozen Home Guard lept from a hedgerow and arrested me. I had been seen coming down Chalton Down from the observation post in the signal box at Old Idsworth crossing.

They kept me until a message was received, via the railway telegraph, to let me go. Their leader was Sgt. Charlie Sansom, the father of my future wife.

Another summers day the Home Guard were practising in the Brickyard pits with a Molotov Cocktail thrower. They had some difficulty with the range, so I was sent to get Fred Marshall, the semaphore signaller, to make things easier for them as it was getting dangerous. Fred lived at 12 East Durrants and at the Staunton Arms crossroads I noticed a large lorry slowly grinding its way up Durrants Road. It followed me round the bend and as I gave it another glance, a Naval Officer jumped up out of the ditch right in front of me. 'Halt' he said raising his rifle which went through my drop handlebars (I rode a racer in those days). I halted alright, right over the top and into Mr. Barrie's privet hedge.

Suddenly, I was surrounded by sailors, they picked me up and my bicycle, put me inside the lorry which was towing an enormous gun. At Whichers Gate Cottage, I was taken off and led to a high ranking Officer at a desk covered in maps, who questioned me quite fiercely. I showed him my armband and the message from Major Morris. I was eventually released and got the message to Fred and then reported back to the Major who was most displeased. Apparently, I had stumbled upon an exercise in which the Navy had to capture Emsworth Square (they were a bit off route). In 1941, I joined the RAF.

J. Brown, 9 East Durrants

Charles Pitt joined the Rowland's Castle fire brigade soon after the outbreak of the war. He recalls how envious they were of the Home Guard who got 6d. (2½p) a night when called out.

29 January 1940. (RSDB). *Severe weather cut attendance down to 27.9%, = 38 out of 136.*

In fact the river Thames froze on 17 January.

16 February 1940. (RSDB). *2 tons household coal delivered this afternoon.*

20 February 1940. (RSDB). *A collection was made for Finnish children and 11s. 6d. (57½p) was sent to Lord Phillimore's fund.*

There was a prize bull kept by farmer Pescott and we used to enter into its stable and sit on his back. I often led farmer Pescott's cows from fields in East Durrants to his milking sheds and when Mr. West asked if he gave me anything, I said No! Mr. West said he wasn't surprised.

There was a short cut through a field and onto a path that skirted some allotments that came out in Durrants and across the road was a sweet shop. We often visited this shop, pinching carrots on the way.

At North Lodge I met an evacuated cousin of the Tunnell's, a boy from Norwood not with the Battersea school, and we used to explore forbidden gravel tracks up to Lady Fitzwygram's large house. The army were there training soldiers, it was 1940, crawling along on their bellies with Bren Guns and we used to playfully crawl along with them. I can remember how we pushed an old pram around the village collecting scrap steel and we stacked it up against the 'Castle' wall by the village green.

Ted Walmsley, North Lodge, Durrants

Ted remembers the old sewage works, the 'Planny' where he climbed trees and the Dearleap path to the village where he used to have his haircut by a resident in Elizabeth cottages. He also recalls watching two blacksmiths at work, one in Finchdean and the other 'backing into the Castle wall in the gravel track down to the green'. Ted used to play football on the Common and said he scored the only goal of his life there, it was disallowed for offside! With some prompting from his sister Mae, Ted also remembers being caned by a monitor, a 'non-friend' he calls him, for breaking rules and going in the 'pits', and of having to play the part of a girl in a village concert, borrowing a frock from Kath West and a hat from her cousin Dorothy.

14 May 1940. (RSDB). *Owing to hostilities schools re-opened today, after directions from Board of Education through BBC.*

3 July 1940. (RSDB). *Two air raid warnings were given and after the second 'all clear' the children were sent home according to instructions.*

July 4th, 1940. (RSDB). *A young man from Winchester came this afternoon concerning ARP. As this is supposed to be a safe area, no air raid shelters are to be provided.*

On my first day being drafted to Idsworth I alighted from the bus outside the front gates and lodge and a horse and carriage with a lady and a land army woman stopped, the latter was holding the reins. The lady asked if I was going 'to the House'. When I said I was, she told the land army woman to put my suitcase in the carriage and said for me to sit beside her. She chatted on the way up the drive and asked

where I was from. On my saying Huddersfield, Yorkshire, she said she knew it well. When I arrived and reported, I was sent to the Matron (our resident Officer). She had a look of horror on her face when she said to me, 'I hear you had a lift with the Countess Howe'.

Memory of a wren, now a Mrs Monica Grover at Grays in Essex

Apparently the Matron would not allow the wrens being on familiar terms with the patients or the Countess Howe who despite the Matron's belief did not own the House, but leased it from the Clarke-Jervoises (1924-49). However, the Countess often stopped and spoke to the 'wren from Yorkshire!' She recalls another occasion when the countess, at night, called the Medical Officer to attend to one of her dogs, much to his displeasure. Her days at 'Idsworth Royal Naval Hospital' were from 1941-43, when she transferred to Fraser Battery at Eastney.

Also at Idsworth House, was an ARP post, as early as March 1939. Miss Lush was paid 15/- (75p) a week, which was raised to £2 by 1943. Other members were: Miss Way, Mrs Armstrong and a Mrs or Miss Tracey.

It is for certain that life on the Estate went on, the tied houses were repaired, rents collected and some farms even changed hands.

Whilst on the subject of country mansions, we fared favourable, at least when compared to the one near West Marden, where Watergate House was burnt down completely by its Navy requisitioners.

10 June 1940. (RCPC). Formation of Pig Club. *Communications dealing with this were read, and the matter was deferred till the next meeting. The Council was informed that the work of painting- out the name Rowland's Castle on the Parish Noticeboard had been carried out.*

Discussed starting a savings club.

14 June 1940. (RCPC). *The Chairman stated that the meeting was called to consider the arrangements to be made by the Parish Council to salvage scrap iron for War purposes.*

There was also a request from Stansted Estate that the blocked paths be re-opened as soon as *Military needs no longer required their obstruction.* The councillors at the special meeting of June 14th split the village between them and arranged for collections and a central dump on The Green.

29 July 1940. (RCPC). War Savings. *Mr. Bush reported that he had been successful in starting a group at Finchdean. Mr. Bush reported that 9 tons 2 cwts of old iron had been dispatched by rail from the dump on the village Green.*

Also during 1940, the RDC suggested that an Air Raid Siren be erected (22 August 22) and they asked for co-operation in helping the Petersfield and District Spitfire Fund (September 17th). On November 9th, there was a second collection of old iron. The Order to collect iron railings towards the War effort (it was compulsory) was made during May 1940. The collections were intensified by December 1941.

In March 1941, women were called into the factories, by December of that year, single women aged 20 to 30 were called up, and in May 1943, work for women (30 hours a week) was compulsory for 18 to 45 year olds. In the village, ladies used to go to their 'nuts and bolts'. This was in Winnicott's old shop and they were led or managed by Mrs Townsley whose husband was a manager at the Aerospeed factory, where parts of the Mosquito aircraft were made. The task seemed to be just that, sorting out piles of mixed nuts and bolts into their correct and useable groups. Later on their work progressed, certainly for Mrs. Ingram of Durrants who used to take the work home, to making and stitching together canvas covers, again for the Aerospeed Company. Other women, Mrs Teal, Mrs Home, Mrs Wells and Mrs Barnes amongst them, worked in Stansted Forest, felling trees for the charcoal burners.

My son, Robin, was born at home in 1940, he was the last baby delivered by Dr. Southam before he went off to war. Despite our house being in Hampshire, the District Nurse from West Marden, was allowed to cross the border. My husband Harry was already called up and working on tanks at Aldershot so I ran the cycle shop and charged the radio batteries. During the war I made clothes to save on the rationing.

I remember the Canadians just over the wall in Stansted. The children used to go and visit them, have meals there and watch film shows at their picture palace. The soldiers gave the children chocolate bars which could be made into drinks.

There were three gun emplacements at the end of the Green, all facing towards Redhill, the Green was covered with tanks and all the roads for miles were packed with them. Yet they all vanished silently, overnight, after the King's visit which was kept very hush-hush. No one knew he was here.

I had evacuees and made the house into flats for them, one couple never liked it here at all and disappeared as soon as the war ended. At night people used to come from Portsmouth in their cars and park along the roads overnight to escape the bombing.

I remember Mrs. Royal used to let the children have bags of broken biscuits off ration and on one occasion when Harry was coming home by train, he met a couple of sailors who had just come into port. Hearing he had a small son they gave him a couple of bananas. Robin had never seen one before and didn't like them.

Jean Hall, 11 Finchdean Road

Rationing was part of the war and no list would be complete, nonetheless; Butter, bacon and sugar in January 1940, meat in March, Tea in July and eggs the same month. Clothes in June 1941, coal in July and in 1942, soap in February, sweets in July and milk in October.

In the early stages of the war Halls bought a plot of land at the end of the Green which had been used for grazing cattle. Nearby was the slaughterhouse belonging to Wiggington and Hern and some of their other out-buildings. All these were pulled down to make room for one of the gun emplacements which as Jean says all pointed towards Redhill, *they'd better come that way*, was remarked at the time.

The Minute Book of the School Managers tells us that they received and discussed a letter containing advice for teachers in the event of an air-raid on 1 May 1939. The same day that they appointed a new head teacher, Miss Bursey. By October 1st, the County Air Raid Precaution Committee advised the school that shelters were not necessary and that if trenches were provided, they would not be responsible. By June 1940, the upper windows were darkened. At a meeting held on 29 January 1941, the Rector reported that the children on the register had increased by 53 to 173, the extra children being evacuees. However, there appears to be some dispute over the facilities for older children, that is over the age of 14. The Major, Clarke-Jervoise himself, showed concern, pointing out that Cowplain was closed, as were many of the Portsmouth schools, yet there was a senior boys school in Rowland's Castle. He obviously meant the Battersea Boys School, which had by now established itself in the Parish Hall, to the extent of putting that address on notepaper. Miss Stubbington replied to the criticism, stating that obstacles to village boys came from Winchester, not the headmaster.

Early in the war I remember running from Redhill School, through the village and up Woodberry Lane to where a German plane had been shot down by an anti-aircraft

gun stationed there. As children we got through the hedge and we saw a dead German airman.

Grandad and father built an air-raid shelter in the garden and we used to have film shows on a projector inside. We used to sit on the roof watching dog-fights over Portsmouth and also witnessed German aircraft dive-bombing Thorney Island. We watched a damaged B17 flying over the golf links towards Horndean with bits dropping off.

I remember finding the bomb craters on the golf links and in the Holt, another two hundred yards south and Castle Road would not be here now. Also, the bomb craters alongside the Dearleap, towards Whichers Gate Road. We used to visit the gun-sites in Prospect Lane (concrete bases still there).

Towards the end of the war, I recall seeing a German fighter aircraft flying over the Drift and the pilot waving at us.

Peter Pitt, St. Catherines, Redhill Road

Dear Sir,

It is hereby agreed to let you the Grazing Rights on and over the field known as the Rowland's Castle Playing Field, being part Ord. No. 160 Idsworth Parish and comprising seven acres be it more or less for the period of six months on the First day of December, 1940 provided that no bulls or dangerous stock are turned out
The following items are excepted and reserved.....

1. The Tennis Courts.
2. The Pavilion.
3. The right to play Cricket, Football and other games on the land hereby let for grazing.

This deed is dated 23 November 1940 and is signed by Arthur F. Clarke-Jervoise and Frank Peskett, whose address is, The Royal Oak, East Durrants. The rent was £7 for a six month period.

In his own memoirs, the postmaster, F. O'B. Adams, recalls that the regiments in the area were the: Royal Engineers, Royal Signals, The Ox and Bucks and many Canadians, later nearer to D-Day there were more. He joined the local Home Guard with the rank of Lieutenant, being exempt from the call-up because of his job.

One item he and the authorities never knew of was the Sten-gun kept under the stairs by Mr Fry, a factory manager who lived in Links Lane. This memory is recalled by a Mr. Hadden who was an evacuee from London and who lodged with him from 1940 to 1944. Mr Hadden remembers delivering groceries for the shop at the end of The

Green on Friday nights and Saturdays. This job and the dates suggest he was a Battersea Boy and he also mentions that the older boys from that school were officers in a schoolboys cadet force.

I worked at the station as a shunter at the start of the war and we used to get four goods trains a day, mostly carrying provisions for the area. The brickworks was also in full operation with wagon loads of bricks being taken away and coal, for the kilns, being delivered. The station had a staff of eight. One of my duties was to man the station at Woodcroft, built during the war for Naval personnel using Ditcham House. This was a concrete, unlit structure and it meant cycling there to open it up for the 7.15 a.m. down train, coming back to Rowland's and then getting back for the 4.00 p.m. up train, these being the only two stops there during the day. Locals from Chalton were upset that they were not allowed to use it.

Later in the war, I worked in the marshalling yards at Aldershot.

Roland Griffiths, 1 Clarence Cottage, The Green

Working, as he did on the railway, it is strange that, amongst Roly's other memories of the war, was the hourly bus service from Portsmouth through to Horndean, stopping outside the Fountain Inn. Clifford Miles, an airframe mechanic in the RAF but home on home leave, clearly remembered the plane shot down in August 1940, and that it sprayed gardens along the Green with gun-fire as it fell.

10 October 1940. (RSDB). *Three air raid warnings in quick succession after 12.40 p.m. caused a very large number of children to stay home. (It was 97 out of 148).*

In the early years of the air-raids, the school children were all sent home as soon as the sirens sounded, because there were no shelters.

One morning, a stray German aircraft fired on a few of us who had a long way to get home, luckily no one was hurt. Every evening a mobile ack-ack gun arrived into the field between Woodberry Lane and Mays Coppice Farm, the noise was quite deafening to people living in that area. During one really heavy raid on London, the guns were firing at the bombers passing over and we heard what sounded like a large fire crackling. It was then we realised it was shrapnel hitting the stones on the freshly ploughed fields nearby. We soon took cover.

One day a week the Women's Voluntary Service (WVS) sold Telfer's pies at Rose Cottage, Redhill Road, each person allowed just one pie.

Ena Etherington, 10 Woodberry Lane

Undoubtedly, some people did have shelters, but others have recalled watching the dog-fights instead of taking cover. Barbara Alesbury mentions that the sounds of the planes were distinctive, you soon learnt to tell friend from foe. She, with many others, remembers the gliders, stating that the sky was quite black with them, their towing aircraft and fighter escorts.

Mrs Marshman, living at Finchdean, remembers pies also. They were brought round on Friday as part of the ration. They were not at all tasty.

19 February 1941. (RSDB). *Eight sandbags delivered by Clerk of Works.*

18 April 1941. (RSDB). *Owing to severe air attack which continued all through the night - less than 60% of the children were present this morning.*

23 May 1941. (RSDB). *During War Weapons Week, we have collected £56 14s. 5d. (£56.72) for savings.*

Dear Major,

As you know, we have enjoyed the use of the Recreational Ground for our Organised Games, and have appreciated the privilege.

Now our boys are disappointed to find that the field is occupied by cattle ... Since Friday the gates have been chained and locked.

Today I have had an enquiry from Winchester asking whether we are still able to use the field for games, since a grant was being considered.

My reply must now be in the negative, apparently.

This letter from Mr Ling was dated December 8th, 1940. He does add that if he had known about the letting, he would have urged Winchester to pay a similar fee. The Education Office write again, on December 30th, under a heading 'Government Evacuation Scheme', as indeed all their letters were, they say:

...The payment of this grant is, however, held in abeyance as it has come to my knowledge that the ground has been let for grazing.

and is signed by the County Education Officer. Captain Else replies straightaway, the grazing does not interfere with the playing of football and that the evacuated children have used the field for 15 months and that is the £5 he wants.

Payments were made in or for December 1940, March 1942, November 1943 (£10) and September 1945 (£10 again).

11 November 1940. (RCPC). *The Clerk read a letter from Petersfield RDC acknowledging the receipt of £40 12s. 9d. (£40.64) from Rowland's Castle for the Petersfield and District Spitfire fund. In view of the fact that £108 12s. 0d. (£108.60) had been subscribed the previous week to the Hants Agricultural Executives Spitfire Fund the effort was considered very satisfactory indeed.*

In his book, *A Place in the Forest*, the Earl of Bessborough tells that General de Gaulle came to Stansted when he visited the Fighting French Naval Camp at Emsworth. Another guest at the house was General McNaughton, Canadian Commander in Chief in the early days of the war. The Earl recalls that children from Portsmouth occupied the north and stable wings of his home, using the theatre during the day. The Home Guard used the same theatre in the evenings, even having a small rifle range there. In 1942 the theatre was burnt down during a training film show.

Enemy action at Stansted during the war was considerable. Some eighty-five bombs, innumerable incendiaries and four aircraft fell on the estate. On one occasion during the Battle of Britain, incendiaries ringed the house. On another a German aircraft carrying a landmine fell at the south-west corner of the cricket ground and exploded, killing all the crew and mortally wounding Mr. Gilbert Elliot, a friend and helicopter pilot.

Earl of Bessborough, Stansted House

The same explosion blew out many windows in the House, the greenhouses and the chapel, causing that building to be closed till 1947.

10 February 1941. (RCPC). *The clerk was instructed to write to O.C. Marines Eastney to register a claim for damage done to the surface of the Green by vehicles of the Royal Marines during the period ending 4th February, 1941.*

7 April 1941. *Government raise income tax to 50%. Britain, herself, can only support 40% of her population from her own resources in spite of the attempts made to increase the amount of land under cultivation. If the war is continued until 1942, 60% of the population of Britain will starve.*

German propaganda leaflet dropped on Chalton Down, 1941

Official details from the war show that an extra 6,000,000 acres were added to the land under cultivation. Locally, Ray Trevis can remember that his father ploughed an extra 30 acres of his land under Government directives on Prospect Farm, the farmer, and certainly this one, wasn't always in agreement with the orders. Ray remembers that one five-acre field had to be cleared of rabbits as well as undergrowth, but that

the crop was an outstanding success. On another occasion, however, he was told to cultivate the swamp along Comely Bottom with dire results. To the north of the village P. Powell received a grant of £2 per acre to clear bushes and plough land at Heberdens North.

9 June 1941. (RSDB). *Major Clarke-Jervoise visited the school with regard to evacuees trespassing.*

16 October 1941. (RSDB). *Permit MK/PT/S2, Milk in Schools Scheme received for 50 gallons 3¹/₃ pints of milk per week.*

The Minute Book of the Ancient Order of Foresters for the years up to the end of 1942 is available. This Court, No. 3797 Idsworth & Stansted United, met monthly in the Castle Inn and in the period described had not missed a meeting nor is the war or any slightest hint that anything other than normal life was going on mentioned.

The Pavilion was requisitioned on 21 May 1941. At that date a report on its condition was made which runs to four pages and tells, briefly; two dressing rooms, corrugated iron, missing downpipe, poor paintwork and broken windows. Despite all this it was requisitioned for housing. A sum of £10 per annum as compensation was paid to the Rowland's Castle Playing Field by Petersfield Rural District Council, although this sum was not settled upon till March 1942. In the meantime the Playing Field Committee had asked for a reduction in their rates, which was turned down. At no time in this correspondence is the name of the family housed there mentioned, the last record of the rent being paid is October 1947.

My recollection of the Second World War is comprised of four separate incidents.

The first was being put to bed at the age of four, under a solid six foot square oak table in the living room. This was in case the house was bombed.

My second, which up to 1985, I thought was a dream I had. This was the feeling of being quite high up off the ground looking up to the underside of a big plane with crosses on it, also flashes from the wings and then falling down. Apparently this was no dream as I discovered. Mr. F. R. Andrews, known to most as foe or Snowy, had been carrying me on his shoulders through Stansted Woods when a Heinkel bomber flew over firing its guns and he and his friends, P. Mulry, B. House, J. Andrews, W. Ward and my brother had to dive for cover as the bullets were ricocheting off the trees.

The third account was of being woken up by a call for help by some unfortunate despatch rider who came down Links Lane on his motor-cycle. Now either he did not

see the bend or couldn't see it due to the use of no lights, he went straight on into the golf links and came off in the dell, (which has since been filled in), and broke his leg. No one approached him until it was daylight, why this should be I still don't know.

My fourth incident was of a good hearted nature and I was not able to thank the Canadians for the goodies they left on our window sill on the morning they all moved out of Castle Road, where they had been parked for weeks waiting for the invasion.

Also not long after, there was a doodle-bug which flew across the golf course, where it came to the end of its flight, the flame went out, I believe the bomb landed in Horndean.

Roger Harrison, 10 Castle Road

10 November 1941. (RCPC). *The clerk was instructed to ask the RDC to arrange for the removal of the Scrap Iron from the Green, (approximately four tons)*

The Chairman reported the formation of a Civil Defence Committee to function in the event of an emergency the Chairman asked members to assist in making a survey of iron railings in the Parish, and all agreed to give their services. I was in the Army Technical Corps, the RAOC, based at Aldershot when I was sent home for a brief pre-embarkation leave. Once back in the village, old Fob' Adams, jolly soon got hold of me and asked if I would teach some drill to the lads in the Home Guard. I took them up to B. B. Browns field in Bowes Hill and showed them the basics. They were all village lads, not much younger than me. **Gordon Jacobs, 'Hypatia', Castle Road**

In his history of the chapel, Jack Barrett mentions that the schoolroom was used during the day as a school for the evacuees and in the evening to provide *such refreshments as were possible, for the many soldiers encamped around the village.* This was presumably still in the early days of the war, but it obviously continued up to D-Day.

Services continued, with the aid of blackout curtains in the winter months. Elsewhere in the book he mentions that the Slate Club was still going in 1943 with 130 members.

Church services at St John the Baptist, Redhill, carried on much as normal. There is very little reference to the conflict in the Church records of the time apart from some concern expressed over the church's blackout in November, 1942 and again in July, 1944. I think they were concerned more with its suitability and efficiency than anything else as it had to be there of course. The PCC meeting of November 17th, mentioned above, also reported, via the treasurer, *that the contents of the Church Hall were now insured against war damage.* The sum was £200 for which the premium

was only £1 paid every six months. One effect the war did have on the Church, was the postponement, for ever I would guess, of two plans by the Rev. H. McKay. One was for a Lady Chapel and the other for a childrens corner. Both were very modest, both were drawn up and permission given. Whilst on the subject, the ringing of church bells was banned on 13 June 1940, their use being restricted to only in case of invasion. The ban was lifted once, on 15 November 1942, to celebrate victory at El Alamein and then finally on 20 April 1943.

During the Battle of Britain, a Hurricane and a German ME 109 had a dog fight in which both pilots were injured, they both landed their aircraft, the Hurricane on the downs at Chalton and the ME 109 at Forestside. A German bomber came in over Langstone Harbour, machine-gunned Havant station, followed the Waterloo railway line, missed the line with its bombs but hit a bungalow at Denvilles, killing an old couple. The bomber carried on to Petersfield, via Rowland's Castle, where it was caught up by a British fighter. The bomber turned for home but was shot down and crashed in front of Stansted House, lighting the sky for miles around with the bombs it had left on the aircraft.

A Junkers 88 bomber crashed on the left of Woodberry Lane, killing the crew, they may have survived if it hadn't hit a bank and hedge and cart-wheeled over and over.

A typhoon fighter crashed behind the first house on the left at Woodberry Lane, killing the Canadian Pilot who had been escorting bombers over Germany. The Typhoon was the only fighter aircraft at that time to go the full round trip.

Four bombs landed on the old seventeenth fairway of the golf course, parallel to Castle Road, no one heard them come down or explode, because they went down in the clay so deep.

Pat Mulry, One Hunga Villa, Castle Road

It would appear, with Pat's agreement, that none of these aircraft was the one from which a German parachuted into a field at Moteley Copse. A group of farm workers were there harvesting, it was late summer, during the Battle of Britain, and the airman had the honour of being taken prisoner by Walter Kent, armed with his pitchfork. The army arrived on the scene somewhat later and he was handed over. Walter lived in Ashcroft Lane, Finchdean.

Nearby there is a memory made, perhaps by the same farm workers or more likely by a bored 'member' on duty watch of some kind. Carved into a beech are a picture of a head wearing a tin helmet and the word 'wanted', the extollation 'join the home gaurd', (miss-spelt), an aeroplane and a horse and cart.

Dear Sir,

I was instructed at the last meeting of the Committee, held on 16th January, to report to you the fact that a small portion of the Playing Field has been requisitioned by the War Department in order that they may erect some small ammunition magazines for the use of the Home Guard, and the Playing Field Committee have agreed to waive any claim for rent.

Yours faithfully,

Written by Mr Prosser to Major Gould, the new Estate Agent, on March 7th, 1942, who in his turn wrote on the same day to the Land Agent for the War Department with the news. The requisition dated from January 26th and it took a reminder from the War Department to get the response.

15 April 1942. *Government bans embroidery.*

I remember a nasty experience in the war when my little girl Doreen, who was only a toddler, went up to feed the chickens. The hen houses were made out of orange boxes, Mrs. Peters, our local greengrocer saved for us, and Bert put some old tin on the top.

A German plane came over from nowhere it seemed and it started firing at us and the bullets rattled on the tin of the chicken house. I immediately threw Doreen on the ground and me on top to shield her, but unfortunately we fell on a bed of sting-nettles.

Another incident, I remember, was when the same plane came over, our next door neighbour who was in the ARP came running in to get his gun but he couldn't load it, so he ran over the fields with a pitchfork in his hand.

Mrs. Martin, 20 Bowes Hill

29 June 1942. (RCPC). *The Chairman reported that the tree-guards protecting the two trees planted to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V were scheduled for removal under the Salvage scheme. It was agreed that the Clerk should write protesting against their removal.*

One night a German bomber must have been hit before reaching its target, because it let its bombs go, seven bombs came down in Miss Stubbington's fields next to East Durrants Road. They made a very big crater. We were going to school when we heard about the bombs so several of us boys went over to see the craters, we got clay all over our boots. When we got to school late, Miss Burseley was not very pleased, she made us clean our boots off and then gave us all the cane, because she said it was 'very dangerous what we did'. There was a big gun in Leigh Park woods, when that

started firing at the German bombers, the noise of the gun was so loud it echoed through the woods. One night it fired a dud shell, it whistled over our houses in Castle Road and landed in the golf links.

John Mulry, One Hunga Villa

We lived in Redhill Road and like many others, housed Battersea Boys, one of whom stayed with us throughout the war.

Bombs landed in Miss Stubbington's field, about twelve of them, on the golf links and at Comley. The biggest problem was the shrapnel, we could hear it landing on our roof as the AA guns in the area, including a mobile Bofors which went round the village triangle firing as it went to make out that there were many more of them, engaged the enemy. In the mornings we could always find chunks of it and also lots of silver paper, which was something to do with radar.

I was at Redhill School and can recall the many activities we were encouraged to do. We collected conkers (1d. per pound), rose-hips (3d. a pound) and acorns (6d. a pound). Also old newspapers for the war effort, taking them to the Parish Hall, where on Saturday mornings we had film shows. Most of our time, however, we spent with the soldiers, I remember their kindness especially the Canadians, I also remember the sad time they returned from Dieppe.

One of our favourite pastimes was to run down to the arches and cadge a lift on a Bren-Gun carrier when they went up to Barrett's garage for petrol, we never gave a thought about the danger, for we were surrounded by live ammunition. As the war progressed, some of us children helped out, along with Quentin Moat I helped Corporal Jones in the services canteen at the bottom of Castle Road. We were often given jam, cheese and huge biscuits to take home. School lessons in 1944 were often taken in the Fuzz, not that it was safer, just a lot quieter.

The soft verges along The Green and the paths through Stansted Forest were laid with brick rubble, we thought from Portsmouth, and yellow markings appeared on the roads. These boxes were soon filled with vehicles of all types. It didn't do Redhill Road any good and I can remember heavy lorries and guns sunk up to their axles. All this activity was leading up to D-Day of course and as the troops moved on, they often threw their money for us kids to pick up.

I remember very plainly that as we woke on the sixth and they were gone, the few left made no secret of where and we knew well before the announcement on the radio that the invasion had started.

It was then so quiet, even though after the sixth troops continued to come through the village, taking up the parking positions before moving on.

I remember watching the waves of American bombers going over, the village lad knocked down but not badly injured by a staff car and sheltering in the Railway Hotel from a doodlebug.

Robert Farr, 23 Redhill Road

During the war, entries in the School Day Book, mostly in the hand of L. M. Bursey, mention the war far less than the everyday business involved in running a village school. As in 1940, early 1942 was noted for its severe weather, cutting attendances down to below 60% mark at which point a report had to be made. There was an outbreak of German measles in March 1940 and a case of Scarlet fever in October 1942. Household coal was delivered occasionally, more often it was coke. The piano tuner came regularly, the Medical Officer and Nurse for immunisation purposes when they could and in June 1940 a Health and Cleanliness Councils travelling cinema van showed films.

In 1940 the summer holiday was cut to two weeks and in December of that year school opened at 9.30 a.m., because of the blackout, but also the daylight saving. Later on in the war, there was apparently another, later, summer holiday to do with the potato harvest. The register showed 136 children in January 1940, 148 by October 1940 and 176 by April 1941. This last figure caused some concern and some reorganisation of staff, which at March of that year was; L. M. Bursey, Miss Murrin, Mrs White, Miss Bourne and Miss Baker. By March 1946, there were only 87 children and just two teachers. School meals, as an idea was put forward in September 1943, various planning and health concerns meant that the first school dinners (from Portchester) did not get served until 15 January 1945. Sixty-seven children took them. Relationships with the Battersea Boys School, seemed to be good, Mr. Ling, their headmaster, visited as early as 26 September 1939 to place some of his juniors there. By 1 November, 11 boys from Redhill went to a class of Mechanical drawing given by a Battersea teacher. On 4 June, seven Redhill boys went for a test for acceptance to the other school and on the following day three girls were tested for the same school at Petersfield.

The Canadian soldiers were in the woods opposite the Castle Inn and it was from here that many never returned from the Dieppe raid, long before D-Day.

I can remember the George Inn used to get full of Canadian troops, who shouldn't have been there at all, as it was out of bounds. Local rumour used to say that they crept along the Lavants ditch all the way from the Sling at Rowland's.

Most farm buildings were used by British troops but at Manor Farm, Chalton, there were some units from the Channel Islands. The roads in the Finchdean area were full

of tanks, Bren-gun carriers and other vehicles ready for the move to the boats along the south coast.

Many local people worked on the concrete landing stages in Portsmouth which were towed across to France on D-Day.

John Price, The Limes, Finchdean

22 March 1943. (RCPC)

Mr. Ling to be written to, to endeavour to prevent his pupils from mis-using the seats on the Village Green.

Joan and Roly married in Portsmouth on 1 May 1943 and have lived here ever since. The Naval Services House was a children's home, for such children of naval personnel who wanted, or needed to use it and as such took infants to fourteen year olds. As Joan recalls, only the infants were taught at the House, in the basement and dining room, the juniors went to Forestside and the seniors to Walderton. She remembers the butler, a Mr. Wells, a hall boy (John) a chauffeur who cut the boys hair and repaired their shoes, footman, pantry-maid, ladies maid and that they were all in livery. The men were sooner or later called up and some of the older boys used to help out in the gardens. The Queen who visited was of course the wife of George VI. As expected the dances at the Forestside hut were well attended by the troops and Joan recalls their hobnail boots and the noise they made. She also remembers the services in the chapel until it was closed as a result of the plane crash and that Lady Bessborough requested that the children learnt the Marseillaise.

She remarks that despite the blitz on Portsmouth, the Services House at Southsea survived the war unscathed.

1 July 1943. (RSDB). *Answered a letter to County Architect enquiring re-shelter supposed to have been delivered here in April, 1941.*

One item not often mentioned but much sought after, and it is difficult to believe it was only here, was old cotton reels. They were collected and passed to the troops who found them ideal for the field telegraph wires needed for communications.

Mrs Ethel Overy remembered that on Thursday evenings, she cycled with another, to the pavilion on the golf links to 'man' the emergency aid station there. Their duties seemed to be of an organising and co-ordination nature, in case of bombing.

There is a book published by *The News*, Portsmouth called *Smitten City*, which states:

As an insurance against the danger which this early raid indicated, an emergency office was built a few miles from Portsmouth in a copse deep in the countryside, yet close to a good road junction.

This was of course in the Twitten, the plant being equipped with sufficient machinery; a stereo foundry, linotypes and a press, to print the paper if needed, which it wasn't. Basil Cole, who worked there shortly after the war when it was Pink's warehouse, is in no doubt that the *News* built it. However secret the paper thought it was, the village knew, most boys in that area having had a peek through the windows.

24 April 1944. (RCPC). *The clerk was instructed to write to the Commons Preservation Society giving details of the occupation of the Village Green by the Military and asking for advice as to procedure after the War.*

Despite the Parish Hall being the base for the Battersea School records show that it was still fully used by and for the village.

1943 begun on the seventh with a Red Cross meeting, a group which met there regularly during the war. On 6 March, Miss Stubbington gave a rehearsal, whether this was a concert or a practise is not obvious, the list continues:

9 March, Womens Fellowship. 12 March, Mrs Hipkin Whist Drive. 2 April, Mr Butcher, Social. 3 April, Mrs Townley, Red X Dance. 16 April, Tennis Club. 4 May, ARP. 20 May, British Legion Social. 31 May, WFV Cinema. 5 June, Dance. 19 June, Mr Royal, Dance. 3 July, Mr Royal, Dance. Mr Royal held dances on the 17th and the 31st also. 24 September sees the first mention of the Badminton Club which by October met 10 times and then 12 in November. In the meantime it had been used on the 25 September, Mr Watts, Wedding. 1 January 1944, Mr Royal, Dance. He now pays an extra 2/6d. (12½p) for the piano, the large hall cost 3/6d. (17½p) and the small one 6d. (2½p). The Badminton Club still met regularly but not at all from May to October. 21 February, Miss Fowles, Rehearsal. 28 February, Leigh Park, Play. 15 March, Cadets Social. 18 March, Conservative Dance. 20 March, Police Concert. 27 March, Badminton Concert. 2 April, Home Guard. 13 April, Miss Baker. 13 April, Mrs. Townley, Dance. 20 April, Army Lecture. This lecture was given on four successive days. 25 April, Pictures for Soldiers. 28 April, Miss Stubbington, Concert, this one was preceeded by a rehearsal. 5 May, Soldiers Film. 10 May, Mr Carver Congregational. 18 May, Miss Stubbington, Dance. 20 May, Miss Stubbington, Concert. The record stops here until 13 June, the following months of 1944 are given here in full: 13 June, Mrs Handcock. 15th, Mr Dimsdale. 16th, Mr W. Hern. 26th,

Soldiers Dance. 29th, Mr Dimsdale, ARP. 7 July, Mr Dimsdale. 8th, Soldiers Dance. 12th, Soldiers Dance. 14th, Soldiers Dance. 15th, Mrs Noble, Wedding. 19th, Soldiers Dance. 22nd, Soldiers Dance. 28th, British Legion Social. 14 August, British Dance. 23rd, Soldiers Dance. 28th, Mrs Gupps, Dance. 30th, Soldiers Dance. There were no more Soldiers Dances until 8 June 1945.

2 October, Mr Woods, Concert. 21 October, Red X Film Show. 1 November, Choral Practise. 24 November, Miss Martin. 1 December, Home Guard. 15 December, Leigh Park Dance. 1 January 1945, British Legion Dance. 12 January, Home Guard Dinner. 15 March, Tennis Club Meeting. 24 March, League of Nations Meeting. 20 April, Boys Club Social. 26 May, Miss Maynard. 8 June, Ration Books. 8 June, Soldiers Dance, the first of four that month. 5 July, Polling Day. 15 August, Southsea School. 7 September, Victory Dance. 13 September, United Dairies Dance. 15 September, Victory Tea Party. 21 September, Infants Welfare. 24 September, Cadets and Scouts. 11 October, Mrs Day. This is only a small extract; the Parish Hall was booked on 219 occasions during 1945.

The King visits Monty's Head Quarters

The King began his day by walking a mile and a half along a road lined with troops, including men of several county regiments. **The Evening News, 23 May 1944**

We befriended two soldiers stationed in Stansted Park who used to come in for supper and a game of cards, for money. They told me the King was coming along the Horndean Road the next day, but it was all very hush, hush. I decided to go, and with my son John, aged three, walked up to the Staunton Arms and as we went round by the War Memorial I was stopped by the Army. So I went through the churchyard and walked up the road past Redhill House and met a group of people who were: the Rev. McKay, Mrs. R. Skinner, the Meredith's, Mrs. Martin and Miss Martin. The troops were lined three deep along one side of the road from here as far as we could see, facing the Thicket. The King was walking towards us, occasionally stopping and speaking to a soldier. When he got to us he stood in the road, turned to the troops, waved and said, "God speed". He then acknowledged and smiled at us, got into his jeep and was driven away towards Havant.

Mrs B. Alesbury, 2 Wyndham Villas, The Green

This factual account, written by one of the seven only people who actually saw the King gives us the location of the Stone as being true. Mrs. Alesbury mentions that the King looked pale, almost yellow, and that he was accompanied only by his aides.

However, F. R. Andrews, (Joe) a stoker in the Navy, was home on leave that day and unbeknown to the group had walked across Miss Martin's field from his home at 2 Locku Villa and was watching the whole event from a nearby hedge. He by word of mouth only had confirmed the day's happenings to the author at the time the King's Stone was in danger of being moved.

During the war years, we lived in Castle Road, I remember waking up one morning and thought the golf links had been ploughed up, but it was where four bombs had dropped in the links in line with our road.

We did not have a shelter so we went into the garden and watched the dog-fights and at night the searchlights pick up the German bombers.

I remember watching workmen striping all the metal gates and cutting the railings from the front garden walls.

It was a sight I will never forget when the sky was full of planes pulling gliders with fighter escorts. We were going to school one day and the troops were all lined up in Redhill Road in their lorries in battle-dress, the soldiers gave us children pennies.

John Mulry, One Hunga Villa, Castle Road

My memories of D-Day began when, as children attending St. John's school, we were taken through the churchyard to the Horndean Road. After waiting for what seems like hours, a car came by, with the King in. He had been driven from Horndean, inspecting troops on the way. On going home at lunch time I was told off by Mum and Dad for saying that I had seen the King. Afterwards she saw the headmistress and was told it was true, it was top secret.

Troops were stationed all around Rowland's and Stansted. Numbered bays were painted on most roads and each contained lorries, tanks and army vehicles. The number on one brick pillar in Redhill was visible for many years after the war. We used to run down to Woodberry Lane to have rides in Bren-gun carriers up to Barrett's garage for petrol.

At the bottom of Castle road by the letter box on the spare piece of ground, a kitchen was set up to feed the troops, a source of tinned butter, jam and fresh bread for us children.

My mother allowed several soldiers in for baths at different times and some even had wives down to stay. We heard from some afterwards although a few were killed in France.

The village green was completely covered with stores and was fenced round and well-guarded. The Dearleap footpath from the Green to the Drift was an ammunition dump but although well-guarded we were allowed through.

About two days before D-Day all the parked lorries and tanks suddenly vanished and we knew something was happening.

Peter Pitt, St Catherines, Redhill Road

The aerodrome at Funtington had a short life, from September 1943 to December 1944. It was an Advanced Landing Ground (ALG) and was used by Mustang 111, Typhoon 1b and Spitfire IX aircraft. Their task was to escort the bombers to Germany and back. The list of squadrons show that few stayed longer than a month and the RCAF, RNZAF and the Belgium Air Force used the base as well as the RAF. They would have provided cover for the D-Day landings. The airstrip itself was either side of the road, laid on a metal framework laid on the field. There was very little else there, a Canadian pilot said it was the worst station he had been posted to.

I was with my regiment in Scotland, we were part of the 3rd Division, when one spring day the Officers and NCOs (including yours truly) were called in for a briefing. We were told to entrain that night, we were going south. The men had to pack everything up and get ready to go. Where? everyone was saying. After a long journey, during which we had to get across London we caught another train and on we went. The countryside looked lovely and the places we passed through were very familiar to me although all the station names were blacked out. We stopped at last and got out at this little station. I looked around and saw I was in a place known to me. I have been here before I thought, it wasn't long ago that we were all coming here for days out. Rowland's Castle, a little country village that was going to be our home, how long nobody knew. We were all marched up to Stansted Forest to put up tents, bivouacs etc., the activity was intense but at least we were settled.

The people of Rowland's Castle were tremendous, we were welcomed on all sides and although they must have suspected something momentous was going to happen not a word was breathed outside the village. There were troops everywhere, soldiers and their equipment behind every tree. I looked towards Portsmouth and thought of my family down there.

One morning I was going to the village to buy a paper and passed my Commanding Officer on the way. Once there, what should I see, a train standing in the station. There weren't many trains running then and on the spur of the moment I enquired where it was going. I was told Portsmouth, in a minute I was on it, arriving at Portsmouth (all devastated with bombing) I made my way quickly home, my only fear was that they would be out. I hoped not, it was still quite early and luck was with me, there they were. I had to return almost in minutes so I quickly kissed them all and

rushed back to the station. Returning was sad but at least I had seen them all. I left the train and strolled back to the forest, all intense activity still and bumped straight into the aforesaid C. O. who looked at me quizzically and said, 'you have been a long time going for that paper Mr H'.

Soon after came D-Day, atrocious weather, the people of Rowland's Castle very quietly saw us go, not a whisper of this got out. No one knew what was in front of us, but the men never forgot the kindness of the people there.

As we were getting into the boats, I looked back and thought of my family, only a few streets away and I was glad that I had that chance to see them.

Company Sergeant Major A. Hastie, 1st Battalion, Middlesex Regiment, and Brougham Road, Southsea.

Charles Pitt remembers his son Peter coming home one day and saying he had seen the King. It transpired that the Head Teacher had indeed taken all the children out to the roadside, but there is no mention of it in the school's day book.

For some days or so the troops were not allowed to speak to us, nor did they come into our homes. There were suddenly many more of them with lorries parked down all the roads in the area. Then one morning, we woke, looked out of the window and they were all gone, and we never heard a sound. All except one small tank over by the wall. Two REME came back and repaired it and after this the village was empty and very quiet.

Mrs B. Alesbury, 2 Wyndham Villas

From 1 April 1944, people were banned from going within ten miles of the coast, unless of course if they lived there, in the area from Lands End to the Wash. Troops were in fact confined to camp, probably to stop the rumours, and at the last moment D-Day itself was postponed for 24 hours.

I was ten when I went into Petersfield Isolation Hospital with scarletina in early April 1944. The trees were bare and it was to all intents still winter. I came out on Saturday, 13 May, to a green world as all the leaves had appeared.

My mother collected me and we travelled home by bus, changing at Horndean, but the route was not along the Rowland's Castle Road, but through Manor Lodge to the Staunton Arms.

Because of the invasion preparations, Rowland's Castle was closed to all through traffic except bikes, prams, pedestrians and deliveries. The main reason was that the road through the village had army vehicles along one side and was marked off with yellow painted boxes, each with its own number.

My brother told me of a Typhoon fighter which had crashed the Sunday before (the 7th), behind the brick houses along Woodberry Lane and off we cycled to see just a dent in the ground, all that was left.

Whilst I was away, the woods behind our house had become full with troops, mainly Northumberland and Durham Light Infantry, but they had gone by my return. They had left behind plenty of evidence of their residence in old emergency rations, the best of which was a soup tin with a wick in the centre which when lit with a match, heated the contents. Unfortunately most of the tins seemed to be mock turtle which was not my favourite. There were many waxed packs around, but usually all the good stuff like chocolate, fags and tasty items had gone and all that was left were hard tack biscuits.

Because of my illness, I was not required to attend school for a couple of weeks, so when the King inspected the troops on the 22nd, I was a free agent and rode my bike about, unlike the children from St John's school, who were marched across the road with their little Union Jacks waving.

The King arrived in army uniform with lots of attendants and was soon gone.

Rowland's Castle was in effect a large ammunition dump, the Green having been reinforced with tons of brick rubble from Pompey's blitzed houses to hold the tanks and Priest 105mm self-propelled guns. The ammunition for these fighting vehicles was in piles on the houses side.

Opposite Redhill School were some half-tracks which my best mate Bob Broad and I played on, becoming friendly with the soldiers who often gave us large mugs of steaming sweet tea, made with evaporated milk which was rationed to us and a luxury. We were often late home for dinner and late back to school as we spent lots of time sitting in these vehicles.

The weather in early 1944 was dull and misty and there was a false alarm D-Day, but one morning going to school, Bob and I found that 'our soldiers' had overnight disappeared and all that was left were the yellow numbered boxes.

R. L. Ingram, 5 Durrants

I was in charge of a searchlight detachment at the Ferry end of Hayling Island. On the other side of the water (Eastney) was another. We worked closely together, our job was to illuminate any German plane that flew over the area, and so protect the concrete caissons being built for the Mulberry Harbour in Langstone.

Prior to D-Day, single German fighter planes would fly in low machine gunning. We would immediately stand to action and illuminate with diffused beam, also mount machine gun and return fire, we were lucky and had no casualties, so were able to

drive off these lone raiders who must have been blinded by the intensity of two searchlights with a two million candle power beam.

It was a wonderful but sad sight to see all sorts of craft proceeding to the Greatest Invasion the world had ever known. Soon after D-Day, all searchlights in the area were withdrawn and many personnel joined other searchlight regiments and joined the invasion, their job was to illuminate the areas of battle, a very dangerous appointment, quite a number of personnel lost their lives during this action.

Where I was on D-Day, J. R. Levett, 19 Ashcroft Lane

By June, 1944, Mr Peskett is complaining about the state of the fence in the Playing Field, he is still grazing his cattle there and is concerned about them wandering onto nearby crops. The Playing Field pass his comments on to the Idsworth Estate, who agree to send *estate workmen to put up a good wire fence*, but that the Playing Field will pay.

The Second Front. Invasion of France. Monday, 5 June, 0700hrs.

Masses of landing craft, including LCF36, left Southampton Waters for France. Everything was OK on the trip over, except for three LCTAs who had to return owing to engine trouble. Everybody was keyed up for the big moment which was dawn on the 6th June.

Battleships, cruisers and destroyers started the fun with broadsides on the shore, followed by LCG and rocket ships. At 7.15 a. m. LCF 36 went in, bombarding shore positions, the gun positions being of heavy, medium and light coastal guns. Several shells were exploding around us, three came very near on our port side, I don't think anyone took any notice, because they were too busy firing. All through the night of 5th June, until mid-day 7th June, the sea was very rough, which made things very difficult for the small craft going in on the beaches.

After coming from the beach there were three big explosions one after another, we thought they were ammunition dumps, instead they were LCTs. They were blown up by mines which were tied to logs of wood.

About two minutes later a tank was hit by shell fire, the turret blew off the caterpillar, leaving just the wheels tearing along the beach. We didn't see any German aircraft until the night time, then they came in waves, none of their bombs hit any shipping but they were very close.

G. W. Foster, Royal Marines, X3431

September 6th, 1944. (RSDB). *I reported the danger of the presence in the school field and copse of Miss Stubbington's goat.*

12 December 1944. (RSDB). *Sergeant Plowman of Police and a Sergeant of the Army came and gave children a talk on explosives and the finding of strange objects.*

12 January 1945. Rowland's Castle Home Guard Entertained

The Rowland's Castle Company of the 16th Battalion Havant (Hants) Home Guard were entertained to supper by the residents of the village, and 130 guests were present.

In proposing the toast of the evening, Major A. F. Clarke-Jervoise, J.P., said the people of Rowland's Castle desired to express their sincere thanks and appreciation to the Home Guard throughout the country, and to all those resident in Rowland's Castle in particular, for the services they had rendered to the nation during the critical and dangerous period of the last few years.

Colonel C. B. Fowlie, in command of the Battalion, and Major J. N. Morris, Company Commander, responded.

The supper was followed by an entertainment given by the 'Hurricanes' to which the wives of the local Home Guard were invited.

The Evening News

16 April 1945. (RCPC). *The clerk was instructed to write to the NFS asking that the Static Water Tank on the Green be removed as soon as possible.*

On May 5th, 1945, the Playing Field received a letter from a Mr. G. Ive, asking if his team can use the cricket pitch. In their answer, the Playing Field state that the ground is booked for Saturday and Wednesday to existing village clubs till the end of the season. Mr. Ive, no rank is given, worked at the Mine Design Department, Leigh Park House, near Havant, Hants.

8-9 May 1945. (RSDB). *VE, VE + 1 day so school closed for two days general holiday.*

30 May 1945. (RSDB). *P. C. Green called regarding children under 13 years buying fireworks.*

Mrs. Alesbury remembers that as the news of the surrender came through, the Green filled with people. Audrey Noble played the accordion and people sang and danced.

16 August 1945. (RCPC). *The clerk was instructed to write to O. C. Naval Camp, Stockheath, asking for the use of naval personnel at the camp to paint the flag staff on the Village Green.*

The same clerk at the same meeting also wrote to the Fire Force Officer about the immediate removal of the static water tank, to the RDC about removal of the fire-bell, to Major Gould about the condition of the Green, to the Police about controlling parking in the village, to Stockheath Camp asking for a naval patrol each evening in the village, to Stansted Estate about overhanging branches in Woodberry Lane and to Mr. Barrett congratulating him on being 100.

16 August 1945. (RCPC). *...that the council expends if necessary a sum up to the limit as will be authorised by the Ministry of Health for V. J. Day Celebrations.*

Dear Sir,

As you will remember, I told you last May that wish to use the Playing field for what it was really intended, i.e. cricket and football and I would remind you that your grazing tenancy will terminate on the first of December.

Yours faithfully

To Mr. Frank Peskett and dated 23 of August, 1945 with a request that he cuts the weeds down. On 27 June 1946 his request to graze cattle was refused but he was allowed, if required, to cut the grass for hay.

We were then living in a small cottage at Finchdean known locally as 'Rats' Castle', for obvious reasons, it was very primitive and remote, but more or less safe from danger. We had lots of evacuees who came and went, I think the rats frightened them. One girl who stayed with us lost her husband at Dunkirk. Then my husband was posted missing, my girl was two then and was at school when her father came home. We did have a radio and when the news came over about the surrender of the Japanese there was great joy. Later on I said to my sister, who was staying with me at the time with her small son: 'There must be some celebrations somewhere, the war's over, let's go out'. It was three o'clock in the morning, but we dressed the kids and walked to Dean Lane End and came upon a crowd of people round a bonfire eating sausage rolls and pies. We had a lovely feast and I don't remember going back to bed. Later there was a party and welcome home for my husband Len, but memories grow dim except for people who suffered during that awful time, but everybody suffered.

Mrs I. Marshman, 66 Murrants Cottage

Dear Sir,

It is noted that your committee do not intend to make any claim for Compensation, but I understand that the huts had already been removed by the Military authorities. If this is so, then the land will not be reinstated any more than it has been and it is up to you to make any claim for making good.

Yours faithfully

To the Playing Field from the War Department, Land Agent, dated 5th July, 1946.
Both Compensation forms are with the letter so no claim was made.

Celebrations

Victory celebrations were held at Rowland's Castle on Saturday, when the children and old folk were entertained. A fancy dress parade started the proceedings and the children marched from the Village Green to the playing fields, where a long programme of sports was held. Tea took up the interval, 274 children, over 100 adults and naval ratings invited from a nearby hospital participating. A Punch and Judy show and ventriloquist and conjuror pleased the young folk. As the children left the Parish Hall, each one was presented with a shilling. A number of donkeys provided rides during the afternoon, and a donkey Derby caused a lot of fun.

A grand torchlight procession heralded the arrival of Mr. W. J. Barrett, who recently celebrated his 100th birthday, and escorted him to the large bonfire, which he lit. Dancing and a fireworks display ended a very exciting and enjoyable day

The Committee consisted of Major Gould (Chairman), Mr. J. Hern (Secretary). Mr. Preston (Treasurer), Mr. and Mrs. Fry, Mr. Miles, (supervising the firework display and bonfire). Mr. W. Coles and W. Martin (sports). Mr. and Mrs. N. Rickard (teas). Mr. C. Royal (dance). Mrs. C. Pitt, Mrs. Burt, Mrs. Anthony, Mrs. Bristoe, Miss Radmore. Mrs. Fairbrother, Mr. Barchard. Mr. A. West, and Mrs. Bullingham. The public subscribed £150 0s. 8d., and it was decided at a later meeting to allocate a sum of money to be used to purchase furnishings for a children's corner in the playing field.

Evening News, 5 October 1945

Some Apocryphal Tales

Apparently a soldier from the North of England was here with his regiment, but because of the secrecy, had no idea where in fact he was. However, whilst walking through the village he met his father. All was revealed, too much apparently, for both found themselves in a bit of bother.

Men, either on top of Slant Hill or Compton Down, heard a recognisable sound, but were puzzled when they could not see its source. Until they looked down and a German aircraft was flying along the valley well beneath them.

A family, with a suspicious name, were generally thought to be spies at the very least. Their crime seemed to be showing a light more often than was thought proper. They left the village very quickly as soon as the war was over.

A family in the area often had visits from their father, posted in Stansted, with rabbits he had poached in the forest.

Lorries used to come to the village and collect the girls and take them away to dances on Thorney Island, village boys were not invited.

The village Home Guard were given instruction in navigating by the stars but on the night of their test it was completely cloudy. A wily recruit suggested they remain quiet until they heard a train stop and they walked towards that spot, arriving at the station, and therefore the Green, in some style.

To the Memory of the Men of Rowland's Castle who
Gave their Lives during the Second World War 1939-1945

Researched by Jennifer Bishop



Frederick John Amor

Service: Royal Navy, HMS *Fiji*

Rank: Stoker 1st Class

Service No: P/KX 119064

Died: Friday 23 May 1941, aged 35

Cemetery: PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL, P54, C3.

Family: Born on 7 April 1906 in Berwick, Huddington, Scotland, to Frederick and Ruth Amor, then of 5 Council Houses, Whichers Gate Road, Rowland's Castle. Frederick married Phyllis Maud Nicholson in 1932 at Islington.



HMS *Fiji*

HMS *Fiji* was named after the islands the only ship to be named thus. Built by John Brown on Clydebank, first launched May 1939, she was a Crown Colony light cruiser. The ship sunk in the Mediterranean whilst taking part in the Battle of Crete. Fighting off enemy aircraft and running out of ammunition she was already hit several times before Jagdgeschwader 77 dropped a bomb near the port side which holed the ship causing her to list.

Having lost power she came to a standstill and was a sitting duck for a Junkers 88 which dropped three bombs causing her to sink. Of her crew, 523 men survived, 241 were killed.

<http://www.naval-history.net/xGM-Chrono-06CL-Fiji.htm>

Allan James Barnett

Service: Royal Navy, HMS *Hythe*

Rank: Chief Stoker

Service No: P/K 62101

Died: Monday, 11 October 1943, aged 38

Cemetery: PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL, P77, C2.

Family: Born 24 March, 1905, at Petersfield, one of three sons born to James and Eliza Barnett, of 5 Woodbury Lane, Rowland's Castle. Allan married Violet May Campbell at Portsmouth in 1928. They lived at 6 The Green, Rowland's Castle.



HMS Hythe

In 1929 Allan is listed on the absent voters list as a Leading Stoker on HMS *Barham*, having already enlisted in the Royal Navy. HMS *Hythe* was a Bangor-class minesweeper, commissioned in March 1942. She was based in Malta as part of 14th/17th Minesweeper Flotilla and was sunk on 11 October 1943 by U-boat U371 off of Algeria.

Jesse Bentley

Service: Royal Navy, HMS *Halstead*

Rank: Leading Seaman

Service No: P/JX 130064

Died: Sunday, 11 June 1944, aged 32

Cemetery: PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL, P81, C2.

Family: Born in 1912, son of George William and Edith Bentley, of 7 East Durrants. Jesse married Dorothy May Levett at Petersfield in 1935, they had one child. We can deduce from the notice in the newspaper below that Jesse was not killed in the incident of 11 June, but mortally wounded, dying of his wounds eight days later.

Roll of Honour

BENTLEY—In proud and loving memory of my beloved husband, Jesse Bentley, R.N. died of wounds 19 June — from his loving wife and little daughter, Diane, Rowland's Castle.

Portsmouth Evening News, 22 June 1944



HMS Halstead

HMS *Halstead*, K556, was a frigate built in the U.S.A. The ship transferred to the Royal Navy in 1943. She was at the Normandy landings on D-Day and stayed in the channel to protect convoys. On 11 June 1944 whilst fighting off several enemy motor torpedo boats (E-boats) near Cherbourg, she was hit by a torpedo which exploded in the bows and blew off the forward part of the ship. She was towed back to Portsmouth and eventually scrapped.

[/wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/ships/](http://wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/ships/)

Nelson Victor Farr

Service: Royal Navy, HMS *Eagle*

Rank: Leading Stoker

Service No: P/KX 93651

Died: Tuesday, 11 August 1942, aged 22

Cemetery: PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL, P68,C1

Family: Born in 1920, son of George and Rose Farr of 20 Redhill Road, Rowland's Castle.



HMS Eagle

HMS *Eagle* was an Aircraft Carrier equipped with Fairey Swordfish Torpedo Bombers. In the early part of the war she served in the Indian Ocean. Eagle transferred to the Mediterranean in 1940, escorting convoys to Malta and Greece. After a re-fit in 1942 she was employed delivering fighter aircraft to Malta. She was torpedoed and sunk by submarine U-73 seventy miles south of Cape Salinas, Majorca, whilst escorting a convoy. Of a complement of 1087 crew, 160 perished.



Fairey Swordfish Mk II

John Alfred Harrison

Service: Army, 5/3 Maritime Regiment, Royal Artillery

Rank: Lance Bombardier (DEMS Gunner)

Service No: 736924

Died: Friday, 16 October 1942, aged 40

Cemetery: CHATHAM NAVAL MEMORIAL, P67, C1

Family: Born in Lincolnshire during 1902 to John Alfred Harrison, John married Dorothy Charlotte May Pitt during 1927. They lived at 'Daisydene' 10 Castle Road, Rowland's Castle. On the 1929 absent voters list John is shown as already enlisted in the Royal Artillery. He was a gunner on board the *Newton Pine*, Merchant Steamship, sailing from Hull to New York, when it was torpedoed by a German submarine U-410.



MS Newton Pine

At 10.29 hours on 15 Oct 1942 the *Newton Pine* (Master Evan Owen Thomas), a straggler from convoy ONS136, was hit aft by one of two torpedoes from U-410 and sank quickly by the stern about 500 miles south-east of Cape Farewell. The ship had been missed by a first torpedo at 10.25 hours. The master, 39 crew members and seven gunners were lost.

[/www.uboaat.net/allies/merchants/ship/2277.html](http://www.uboaat.net/allies/merchants/ship/2277.html)



Henry Douglas Hurst

Service: 156 Squadron, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

Rank: Sergeant, Wireless Op/Air Gunner

Service No: 921818

Died: Tuesday, 11 August 1942, aged 29

Cemetery: COUTISSE CHURCHYARD, BELGIUM, COL1-6.

Inscription: **UNTIL WE MEET**

www.ww2cemeteries.com/coutisse-churchyard.html

Family: Born 5 March 1913, in the registration district of Romsey, son of Octavius Henry Payne and Annie Selina Hurst of 5 The Firs, Redhill Road, Rowland's Castle. He married Hilda Kathleen Kay in 1941. Before the war Henry was an Engineer.

When war broke out in 1939 the Air Ministry employed the RAFVR as the main means of entry to serve with the RAF. A civilian volunteer on being accepted for aircrew training took an oath of allegiance and was then inducted into the RAFVR. Normally he returned to his civilian job for several months until he was called up for aircrew training.

Henry was in 156 Squadron Bomber Command one of a six man crew of Wellington III, Z1595-CT based at Alconbury, shot down by a German fighter over Belgium.



RAF BRIDEGROOM

On Saturday last the marriage took place at the Congregational Church, Emsworth of H. Douglas Hurst, RAF, only child of Mr and Mrs O. H. Hurst of Redhill, Rowland's Castle and Miss Hilda Kathleen May, only child of Mr and Mrs A.E. May of The Gardens, Emsworth.
Hampshire Telegraph, 7 February 1941

Thomas Henry Jacobs

Service: 3rd Battery, 6 H.A.A. Regiment, Royal Artillery

Rank: Gunner

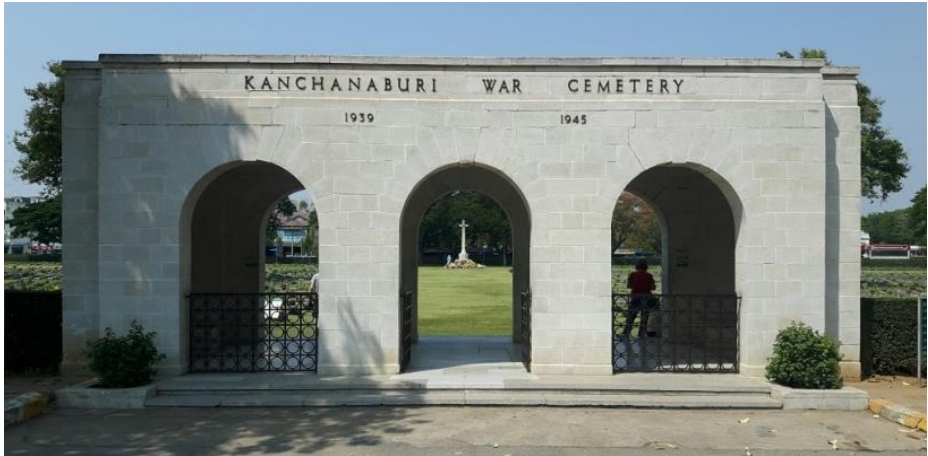
Service No: 1580786

Died: Sunday, 26 August 1945, aged 33

Cemetery: KANCHANABURI WAR CEMETERY, 6.B.58 THAILAND

Inscription: **AS THE YEARS GO QUIETLY BY, MY MEMORY OF YOU DEAR,
WILL NEVER DIE. MOTHER**

Family: Born 7 August, 1912 at Catherington, son of Harry and Rose Ellen Jacobs (née Foster). In 1939 Thomas was living with his widowed mother at Wellwood, Wellsrovel Lane, Rowland's Castle. His occupation is given as a labourer. His grandparents lived at East Durrants, Rowland's Castle. When Thomas was killed he was serving in the Indian Ocean in Malaya operating heavy Anti-Aircraft guns.



KANCHANABURI WAR CEMETERY

Walter William Kimber

Service: Royal Navy HMS *Tamar*

Rank: Petty Officer Motor Mechanic

Service No: P/MX 67981

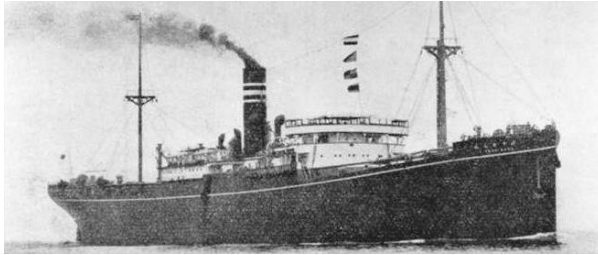
Died: Friday, 2 October 1942, aged 30

Cemetery: PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL, P69, C1.

Family: Born in 1912 to Henry Earnest and Elizabeth Kimber, Thomas married Violet Minina Parker in 1939, they lived in Castle Road, Horndean.

HMS *Tamar* was a Royal Navy shore base on the north side of Hong Kong. Walter was captured and declared missing on board the ship *Lisbon Maru*, after being taken prisoner by the Japanese on 25 December 1941.

http://www.royalnavyresearcharchive.org.uk/HMS_Tamar.ht



Lisbon Maru

The *Lisbon Maru* was originally a Japanese cargo liner; during World War Two the Japanese used the ship as an armed troopship. On her last journey she was transporting approximately 1,800 British and Canadian (some reports say Australian) prisoners to Japanese prisoner of war labour camps when, just south of Shanghai, she was torpedoed by the American submarine *Grouper SS214*; the human cargo unknown to the Americans. Before the Japanese abandoned ship they battened down the hatches leaving a small complement of guards. It had been decided to evacuate the Japanese troops on board leaving the prisoners in the holds with a view to the ship being towed to shallow water. As conditions deteriorated the allied troops tried to escape but were met with machine gun fire from the guards. Some prisoners were picked up and taken to labour camps, 338 were rescued up by Chinese fishermen who sailed out to save the swimmers and 846 men died whilst trying to escape.

www.warhistoryonline.com/war-articles/lisbon-maru-allied-prisoners.html

Sidney Robert Lloyds

Service: Royal Navy HMS *Royal Oak*

Rank: Stoker 2nd Class

Service No: P/KX 95856

Died: Saturday, 14 October 1939, aged 19

Cemetery: PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL, P35,C2.

Family: Born in 1920 son of Mr and Mrs E. W. Lloyds of Woodberry Lane, Rowland's Castle.

ROYAL OAK VICTIM

Much sympathy is felt with Mr and Mrs N.E.L. Lloyds of Beechwood, Woodberry Lane, Rowland's Castle, upon the loss of their eldest son, Stoker Sidney R. Lloyds (19) who was among the missing from the Royal Oak. He had been in the Royal Navy ten months, and it was only on Saturday that a letter had been received saying he was alright. Before joining the Service he had been employed at Rowland's Castle Brickworks. His father has been employed as a postman at Rowland's Castle for the past nine years.

Hampshire Telegraph, 20 October 1939

LLOYDS – S.R.N. Rowland's Castle, lost his life on HMS Royal Oak, on 14 October 1939. Our loving thoughts are always with our dear one; we shall never forget. From Mum and Dad, and brother Ted.

Portsmouth Evening News, 14 October 1940



HMS Royal Oak

HMS *Royal Oak* was built by Devonport Royal Dockyard and commissioned for the First World War. At the start of World War Two she was considered no longer fit for front line duty. She was torpedoed by German submarine U-47 whilst at anchor at Scapa Flow, Orkney. The crew numbered 1,234 of which 834 were killed or died of their injuries. It had a great effect on allied morale as this harbour was thought to be impregnable.

Bernard Norman Phillips

Service: Royal Air Force

Rank: Flight Lieutenant (Pilot)

Service No: 45885 (formerly Flight Sergeant 560672)

Died: Saturday, 8 July 1944, aged 33

Cemetery: CHIPPENHAM CEMETERY. Sec 1, Row G, Grave 5.

Family: Born in 1910, at Portsmouth to Harry and Francis Phillips (née Spiller) a naval family from Portsmouth. Harry was an Officer's Steward in the Royal Navy. Bernard lived with his wife Ruth Helen Phillips at Oxford Road, Banbury, Oxfordshire. Bernard was granted a commission for the duration of hostilities.

Norman Jack Pitt

Service: Royal Navy, HMS *Dunedin*

Rank: Stoker 1st Class

Service No: P/KX 110338

Died: Monday, 24 November 1941, aged 19

Cemetery: PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL, P55, C2.

Family: Born 14 April 1922 to George Albert and Charlotte Mary Pitt (née Smith) of 2, Kinlock Cottages, Castle Road, Rowland's Castle. In 1939 when the war started Norman's father, George was a widower, Charlotte died in 1936, aged 55.



HMS Dunedin

HMS *Dunedin* operating out of Freetown, South Africa was engaged in a search for enemy ships when she was torpedoed by German submarine U-124 and rapidly sunk. Out of a complement of 483 only 67 survived.

<http://ww2today.com/24th-november-1941-hms-dunedin-sunk-in-the-south-atlantic>

Harry Arthur John Powell

Service: Royal Air Force

Rank: Flight Sergeant

Service No: 508137

Died: Wednesday, 23 June 1943, aged 35

Cemetery: ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCHYARD REDHILL, ROWLAND'S CASTLE. ROW 5 GRAVE 11. Harry is buried in the family plot

Family: Born 11 June 1908 at Buriton, to Mr and Mrs H. Powell (née Clark) before Harry joined the Royal Air Force at 19, he was a bus conductor. The family lived at 5 Leigh Cottages, North Havant. In 1936 Harry married Gertrude Graham at Havant. Harry had left the R.A.F when he married Gertrude so we might assume he was recalled in 1939 when the war started.

***WEDDING-** A pretty wedding took place at St Joseph's Havant, where the Rev. F.W. Bailey, Ph. D., officiated. The Bridegroom was Mr Harry Arthur Powell (formerly of the R.A.F., and now of the City of Portsmouth Electricity Dept.), only son of Mr and Mrs H. Powell of 5, Leigh Cottages, Havant, and the bride was Miss Gertrude Graham, youngest daughter of the late Mr and Mrs R. Graham, of 19 St Colman's Square, Cobh, County Cork, Ireland. Portsmouth Evening News, September 1936*



Peter Frank Radwell, DSC

Service: Royal Navy, HM Submarine *Stonehenge*

Rank: Lieutenant

Died: Monday, 20 March 1944

Cemetery: PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL, P81, C1.

Family: Son of John and Edith Maud Radwell (née Stubington) who married in 1920 at St Faith's, Havant. Peter's mother lived at Oaklands, Redhill, North Havant, before she married. His father, the late Major Radwell who, for many years, was a master at Churchers College Petersfield, and his maternal grandfather was Col. Stubington DL of Rowland's Castle. The newspapers reported his acceptance into the Royal Navy College at Dartmouth. *The Western Daily News*, 3 May 1944 reported: *Lieut. Peter Frank John Radwell of Sturminster Newton has been awarded the D.S.C.* It was awarded for having taken part in successful patrols against enemy shipping in northern waters. At the time of Peter's death their address was Sturminster Newton, Dorsetshire.



HM Submarine *Stonehenge*

HMS *Stonehenge* P232 sailed from Trincomalee, Ceylon and arrived in her patrol area between Northern Sumatra and the Nicobar Islands on 25 February 1944. She was reported overdue on 22 March. The cause of loss with all hands is unknown.

<http://rnsubs.co.uk/boats/subs/s-class/stonehenge.html>

Edward Albert Redsull

Service: Army Royal Engineers

Rank: Sapper

Service No: 2038588

Died: Wednesday, 3 July 1940, aged 39

Cemetery: BROOKWOOD 1939-45 MEMORIAL, SURREY, P7, CI.

Family: Born 1901 in Stratham, Surrey, son of Alfred and Elizabeth Redsull of 22, Redhill Road, Rowland's Castle. In 1930 Edward married Elsie Rose Cox at Hambledon, Surrey. They lived at 10, Castle Road, Rowland's Castle.

During World War Two the Royal Engineers maintained the railways, roads, water supply, bridges and transport etc. From 1940 they also disposed of bombs.



BROOKWOOD 1939-45 MEMORIAL

Melvyn William Sheppard

Service: Army 11th Royal Tank Regiment, R.A.C.

Rank: Lieutenant

Service No; 189809

Died; Wednesday, 15 November 1944, aged 35

Cemetery: NEDERWEERT WAR CEMETERY I I. NETHERLANDS. C. 1.

Family; Born 1909 in Devonport, Devon. His mother was Lilian Sheppard. Melvyn married Edna M. Vine in the registration district of Petersfield in 1940.



NEDERWEERT WAR CEMETERY II

SHEPPARD – Melvyn William, Lieutenant Royal Tank Regiment, dearly loved husband of Curley Sheppard, of Dearleap, Rowland’s Castle, and only son of Lieut. Cmdr. and Mrs W. Sheppard of Cowplain – killed in action November 1944.

Portsmouth Evening News, Friday, 24 November 1944

The 11th Royal Tank Regiment was formed in January 1941, due to the invention of the tank and trained in Cumbria. Initially stationed in the Middle East, and then going to France in August 1944.

Samuel George Trodd

Service: Navy, Royal Marines, HMS *President III*, (SS *Creofield*)

Rank: Marine (Gunner)

Service no: PO/215947

Died: Wednesday, 31 January 1940, aged 40

Cemetery: PORTSMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL, P43, C3.

Family: Born 27 October 1899, son of Sidney and Carletta Trodd, living at 2, Elizabeth Terrace Rowland's Castle; in 1927 Samuel married Ivy V. Cole, at Portsmouth. They lived at 3 The Green, Rowland's Castle. On the 1929 absent voters list, Samuel is already enlisted in the Royal Navy H.R.M.B. on HMS *Tiger*, he enlisted 10 October 1917 at the age of 18.

Unfortunately Ivy also died young:

DEATHS – TRODD – on the 19th inst. at 3 The Green, Rowland's Castle, Ivy, daughter of Mrs Cole and the late Mr Cole of Hampshire Street, Fratton. From her loving mother. Portsmouth Evening News, 26 February 1941

President III was not a ship but an accounting base where men from the Royal Naval Reserve and Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve would be used to defensively arm Merchant Ships.

SS *Creofield* was a steam tanker manned by Merchant Seamen; Samuel was the only marine on board. The crew numbered 17, At 06.24 hours on 2 February 1940 the unescorted *Creofield* (Master Charles Carlin) was hit amidships by one G7a torpedo from U-59, exploded and sank east of Lowestoft. The master, 15 crew members and one gunner, Samuel George Trodd, were lost.

Frank Hutton Tubb

Service: Army, 1st Battalion, Sherwood Foresters (Notts. and Derby Regiment)

Rank: Private

Service No: 6094261

Died: Monday, 17 August 1942, aged 25

Cemetery: ALAMEIN MEMORIAL, EGYPT, C66.

Family: Born in 1917 to Charles and Florence Tubb of Redhill, Rowland's Castle.



ALAMEIN MEMORIAL, EGYPT

In June 1940 the 1st Battalion was moved from Palestine to reinforce the Garrison of Cyprus, where they suffered their first war casualties in an air-raid. Early in 1942 the Battalion was moved to Egypt, converted to a motorised role and joined the Desert Army. The Battalion was ordered to surrender when the Garrison in Tobruk surrendered.

bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/66/a5298366.shtm

George Henry Yalden

Service: Army, 474 Searchlight Battery, Royal Artillery

Rank: Gunner

Service No: 2080751

Died: Saturday, 2 June 1945, aged 23

Cemetery: REICHSWALD FOREST WAR CEMETERY, GERMANY, 54 D13.

Inscription: **HE LIVED AS HE DIED, GALLANTLY. HIS DUTY NOBLY DONE**



REICHSWALD FOREST WAR CEMETERY

Family: Born in 1922 one of twin boys, his twin brother was Thomas J. Yalden. Parents, George and Mary Anne Yalden (formerly Levett, née Massey) lived in Whichers Gate Road, Rowland's Castle. Unfortunately George died as a result of an accident, which was a tragedy as the Germans had surrendered on 7 May 1945.

At the beginning of 1939 the regular and Territorial Army (TA) strength of the Royal Artillery totalled about 105,000. When the RA reached its peak strength, it was 700,000 strong and represented just over a quarter of the total Army's strength. This included 130 regiments converted from TA infantry and yeomanry often retaining their regimental title as part of their artillery unit designation. However, the strength of the field branch (including anti-tank) in mid-1943 was about 232,000. The Regiment having suffered some 31,000 killed during the war.

The 474th searchlight battery was formed in 1940, originally an anti-aircraft battery it served in the Blitz and the Battle of Britain. It provided night time illumination in the North European theatre of war in 1944-45.

While not listed as a Rowland's Castle casualty Ivor Leyshon early had a close link here.

Ivor Leyshon

Service: Royal Navy 1st R.M. Mobile Naval Base Defence Organisation

Rank: Marine

Service No: PLY/X 100214

Died: 28 May 1941, aged 20

Memorial: PLYMOUTH NAVAL MEMORIAL

Family: Born 1921 to George and Rose Leyshon from Glyncoirwg, Glamorgan. Ivor married Betty Beryl Noble from Rowland's Castle, in the first quarter of 1941. This shows they had only been married a few months when Ivor was killed in Crete. Although on the records their address is shown as Bedhampton, when Ivor left to join his division Betty was still living with her parents at Rowland's Castle.

The Marine Naval Base Defence Organisation was approved in 1939, when it had 78 officers and 2150 other ranks. In February 1941 they sailed to South Africa and then to Tahal in Egypt, from there they were sent to Crete where they acted as infantry when they came under a German Para troop attack. This is where Ivor was killed.

Royal Marine's Death in Crete

Married last January Mrs Leyshon has received news that her husband, Royal Marine Ivor Leyshon, has been reported killed in action during the Crete campaign. He was one of the youngest Marines to sacrifice his life in that area of the war.

He had a likeable personality and his death will be will be deeply mourned by his many friends in Rowland's Castle, where his widow and her parents Mr and Mrs Noble live.

In a letter to the widow a corporal, who was serving with marine Leyshon, revealed how he fell fighting, and pays a high tribute to his brave and manly bearing.



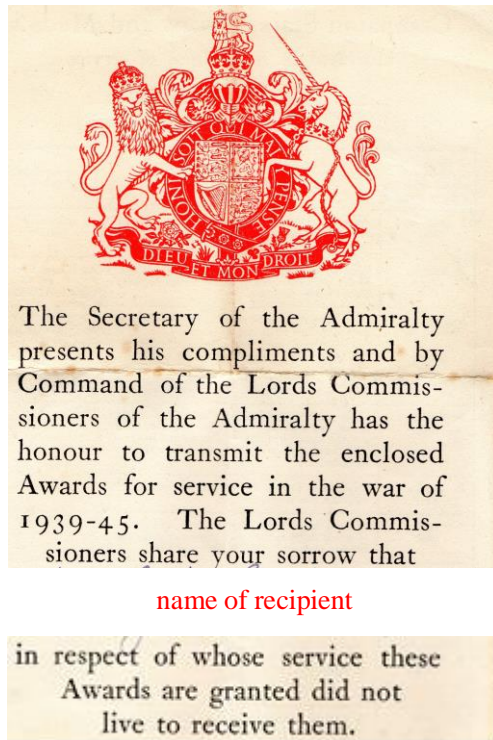
1939-45 War Medal



France and Germany Star



1939-45 Star



After the war Awards were sent to the next of kin of those who did not survive.

Stansted Officer P.O.W. Returns

Among the released prisoners of war who have just returned to their homes is Flight Lieut John Wooffies of Stansted, Rowland's Castle. An Old Churcherian, he is well known in sporting circles. He joined the R.A.F. in 1939, and as a fighter pilot has seen active service in the Middle East, Palestine and the Sudan, Libya (El Alamein campaign), Crete and Italy. He was one of the first fighter pilots to land on the beaches of Normandy at the time of the D-Day invasion. Later he took part in the shooting down of flying bombs. Eventually he was posted to an air base in Holland and whilst operating over Germany last February was shot down north of the Ruhr. He was liberated from a German prisoner of war camp near Munich by the American forces.

Like all other returned prisoners of war Flight Lieut Woolfries spoke with warm appreciation of the Red Cross.

'A marvellous organisation, without the food parcels it gave us we should have starved' he says.

Hampshire Telegraph, 25 May 1945

Prisoner in Japanese Hands

Mr and Mrs Brown of Holme farm, Stansted Park, Rowland's Castle, have, after two years, received a card from their son, La.-Bdr J. W. Brown, R.A., saying he is well, and a prisoner of war in Japanese hands. Brown was in Havant Territorials, and afterwards transferred to the Royal Artillery. He went overseas in 1941, and was reported missing after the capitulation of Singapore in 1942.

Hampshire Telegraph, 12 April 1945

Wounded in Action

Private E. Cobb, of Links Lane, Rowland's Castle, has been wounded in action on the Western Front. He was serving with the Highland Division, and crossed the Rhine on March 23. He was hit by a Spandau-gun two days later while house-fighting in the town of Rees. He is now in a Belgium hospital.

Hampshire Telegraph, 26 April 1945

Missing

F/Sgt John Victor Roper has been reported missing. Information would be gratefully received by his wife, 2 Uplands Road, Rowland's Castle, and his parents at 40 Taswell Road, Southsea.

Portsmouth Evening News, 3

April 1943

IMPORTANT WAR DATES

1939

- Sept 1 Germany invades Poland.
3 Great Britain and France declare war on Germany: the British Expeditionary Force began to leave for France
Dec 13 Battle of the River Plate.

1940

- Apr 9 Germany invaded Denmark and Norway.
May 10 Germany invaded the Low Countries (Holland and Belgium).
June 3 Evacuation from Dunkirk completed.
8 British troops evacuated from Norway.
11 Italy declared war on Great Britain.
22 France capitulated.
29 Germans occupied the Channel Islands.
Aug 8 to Oct 31 German air offensive against Great Britain (Battle of Britain).
Oct 28 Italy invaded Greece.
Nov 11 to 12 Successful attack on the Italian fleet in Taranto Harbour.
Dec 9 to 11 Italian invasion of Egypt defeated at the Battle of Sidi Barrani.

1941

- March 11 Lease-Lend Bill passed in the United States of America.
28 Battle of Cape Matapan.
April 6 Germany invaded Greece.
Apr 12 to Dec 9 Siege of Tobruk.
May 20 Formal surrender of remnants of Italian Army in Abyssinia.
May 20 to 31 Battle of Crete.
May 27 German battleship *Bismark* sunk.
June 22 Germany invaded Russia.
Aug 12 Terms of the Atlantic Charter agreed.
Nov 18 British offensive launched in the Western Desert.
Dec 7 Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour.
8 Great Britain and the United States of America declared war on Japan.

1942

- Feb 15 Fall of Singapore.
April 16 George Cross awarded to Malta.
Oct 23 to Nov 4 German and Italian army defeated at El Alamein.
Nov 8 British and American forces land in North Africa.

1943

- Jan 31 The remnants of the 6th German Army surrendered at Stalingrad.
May Final victory over the U-Boats in the Atlantic.
May 13 Axis forces in Tunisia surrender.
July 10 Allies invaded Sicily.
Sept 3 Allies invaded Italy.
8 Italy capitulated.
Dec 16 German battleship *Scharnhorst* sunk off North Cape.

1944

- Jan 22 Allied troops landed at Anzio.
June 4 Rome captured.
6 Allies landed in Normandy.
13 Flying bomb (V1) attack on Britain started.
June Defeat of Japanese invasion of India.
Aug 15 Paris liberated.
Sep 3 Brussels liberated.
8 First rocket-bomb (V2) fell on England.
17 to 26 The Battle of Arnhem.
Oct 20 The Americans re-landed in the Philippines.

1945

- Jan 17 Warsaw liberated.
Mar 20 British recaptured Mandalay.
23 British crossed the Rhine.
Apr 25 Opening of Conference of the United Nations at San Francisco.
May 2 German forces in Italy surrendered.
3 Rangoon recaptured.
5 All the German forces in Holland, North West Germany and Denmark surrendered unconditionally.
9 Unconditional surrender of Germany to the allies ratified in Berlin.
June 10 Australian troops landed in Borneo.
Aug 6 First atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.
8 Russia declared war on Japan.
9 Second atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki.
14 The Emperor of Japan broadcast the unconditional surrender of his country.
Sept 5 British forces re-entered Singapore.

The Battle of the Atlantic is being lost!

The reasons why:

- 1. German U-boats, German bombers and the German fleet sink and seriously damage between them every month a total of 700 000 to 1 million tons of British and allied shipping.**
- 2. All attempts at finding a satisfactory means of defence against the German U-boats or the German bombers have failed disastrously.**
- 3. Even President Roosevelt has openly stated that for every five ships sunk by Germany, Britain and America between them can only build two new ones. All attempts to launch a larger shipbuilding programme in America have failed.**
- 4. Britain is no longer in a position to secure her avenues of supply. The population of Britain has to do with about half the ration that the population of Germany gets. Britain, herself, can only support 40% of her population from her, own resources in spite of the attempts made to increase the amount of land under cultivation. If the war is continued until 1942, 60% of the population of Britain will starve! All this means that starvation in Britain is not to be staved off. At the most it can be postponed, but whether starvation comes this year or at the beginning of next doesn't make a ha'porth of difference. Britain must starve because she is being cut off from her supplies.**

Britain's losing the Battle of the Atlantic means Britain losing the war!

German propaganda leaflet dropped on Chalton Down, 1941.

Paul Marshman

Aeroplane Crashes



Robert Edmund Patten
Service: 1st Fighter Squadron R.A.F. (Tangmere)
Rank: Pilot-Sergeant
Service No: 562244
Died: 17th December 1937 aged 26
Grave: St Andrew's Churchyard, Tangmere

Born 14th December 1911 in Paris, France, Robert joined the R.A.F. 14 December 1929. Whilst serving in the R.A.F. he lived at Eartham, West Sussex.



Harry Hamilton Peck
Service: Royal Canadian Air Force, 1st Fighter Squadron R.A.F. (Tangmere)
Rank: Flying Officer (acting Flight Lieut.)
Service No:
Died: 17th December 1937 aged 26
Grave: St Andrews Churchyard, Tangmere

Harry Hamilton Peck was from Montreal, Canada. He was one of two officers selected in 1935 from the Royal Canadian Air Force to qualify for permanent commissions with the Royal Air Force. Both pilots were flying the Hawker Fury Mk1, K2901 and K2902. An inquest held at Tangmere, West Sussex returned a verdict of 'Accidental Death'.

CRASH AT STANSTED, Planes Collide, TANGMERE PILOTS KILLED

Two R.A.F. planes crashed after a collision at tremendous speed in the beautiful grounds of Stansted Park, the Earl of Bessborough's estate, shortly before noon on Friday, both pilots being killed instantly.

They were Flight Lieut Harry Hamilton Peck and Sergt Robert Edmund Patten.

Both planes were Hawker Fury single seater fighters, stationed at Tangmere.

A limp parachute hanging from the low branches of one of the trees told its own tale of how one of the pilots made a last minute, but unsuccessful, effort to save his own life.

THREE PLANES MANOEUVRING

This was born out by an eye witness Mr W.H. Glue who was working in the woodland at the time. He said to a 'Hampshire' reporter. 'I saw three planes manoeuvring at a fairly good height. Shortly afterwards I saw two of them collide. One of the pilots got out of his plane and attempted to open his parachute, but he was too low to use it effectively, and he fell among the trees. I rushed to him but found that he was dead. The machines fell some distance from each other. The other pilot was also killed on the spot'.

Mr Glue's son ran to the aid of the other pilot, who is also believed to have attempted to use his parachute, but found that he was dead.

Major Max Bollam, Estate Bailiff to the Earl of Bessborough, also rushed from his office nearby to render what help he could.

MACHINES' TAILS TOUCHED

A kennel boy, Albert Aylward said: 'I saw three machines over the park at very high altitude. Someone said they were over 2,000 feet. They started in a loop, going upwards and spreading outwards like the Prince of Wales's feathers. Then the tails of two of the machines touched, and immediately both went down in a spin. They crashed in the woods. The third machine turned round straightaway and went back towards Tangmere'.

A person who was on the scene of the crash very shortly afterwards said he had never seen such a sight. The planes were embedded in the ground. Both pilots were only a few yards from their machines, and had apparently tried to jump out. Both parachutes had failed to open, probably because they were much too low when they tried to use them.

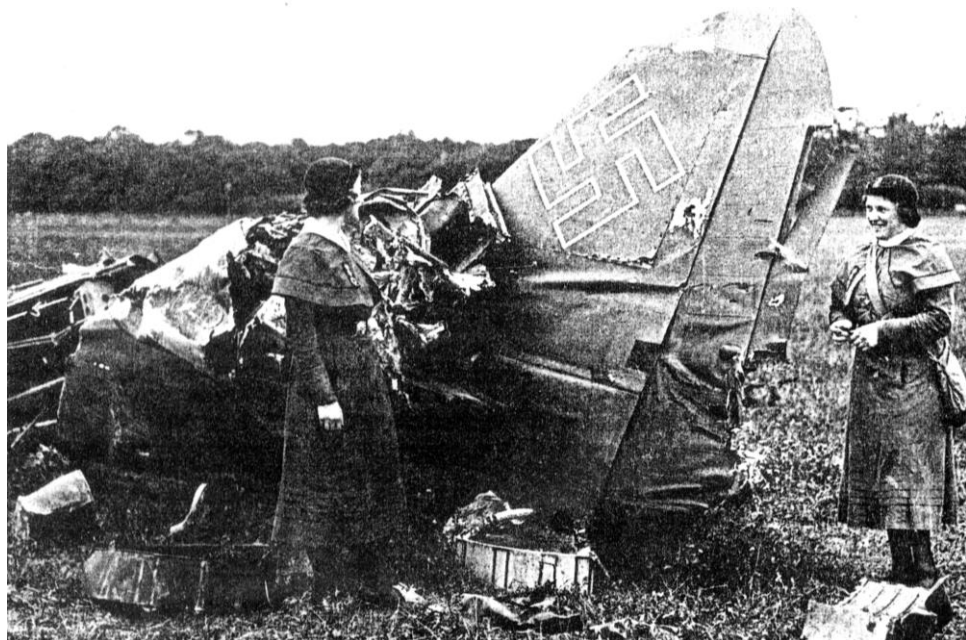
The Tangmere Ambulance and Medical Officer, and other officials were immediately rushed to the scene of the accident, which is about 200yds from the mirror, a well-known spot on the road running through Stansted Park.

Lord and Lady Bessborough are away from home at the moment.

Hampshire Telegraph, Friday, 24 December 1937



Three of the crew of this German Junkers 88 were killed instantly when it crashed near Woodberry Lane on 12 August 1940



These nurses were called out could not be of any assistance.



Junkers 88

The German plane, a Junkers JU-88A-1 Werk 3134, had been hit by fighters over Portsmouth on Monday, 12 August 1940. It had exploded in the air over Thorney Island and crashed on the Stansted Estate at Horse Pasture Farm near to Woodberry Lane. Three members of the crew were killed but one of the crew, Gunther Fleischmann, Gefreiter (Gunner), had bailed out and landed at Hayling Island where he was taken prisoner. Those killed were:

Horst Guenther Czepik. Gefreiter (Radio Operator), aged 21. Born, 26 August 1918, Frankfurt, Germany.

Walter Floeter. Unteroffizier (Pilot), aged 28. Born 1 June 1912, Breslau, Germany.

Hans Graf. Oberleutnant (Observer), aged 33. Born 2 September 1916, Hochst, Germany.

These three crew members are buried in the war graves section of St Nicholas church, West Thorney. Two other crew members were killed but not identified

<http://aircrewremembrancesociety.co.uk/styled-15/styled-17/styled-382/index.html>

Mission: Thorney Island Aerodrome, Sussex

Date: 8 October 1940

Time: 7.30 p. m.

Unit: 8 Staffel./Kampfgeschwader 55

Type: Heinkel 111P-2. Werke/Nr 1715. Code: G1 + MS



Erst Ens and Heinkel 111 bomber.

Killed: Pilot: Feldweber. Ernst Ens. Observer: Lieutenant Ulrich Flugge. Radio Operator: Unteroffizier Johannes Ehrensberger. Fl/Eng: Unteroffizier Ernst Herber. Gunner: Hans Rawlik.

EXPLOSION IN NAZI BOMBER

R.A.F. PILOT KILLED

Machine gun bullets flew from the wreckage of a German plane which crashed in Stansted Park, Sussex, and Pilot Officer Gilbert Elliot R.A.F. has received severe wounds from which he has died.

The pilot officer was a guest of the Earl of Bessborough at Stansted Park and as soon as the plane crashed he ran out to see if he could render help.

He was then not aware the machine was a German bomber which as it crashed in the open park land, had been blown up by its own bombs.

He went close to the debris to see if there were any members of the crew needing assistance and he received body wounds as a result of bullets being discharged from the debris.

He was taken to hospital for treatment but efforts to save his life failed.

Hampshire Telegraph, Friday, 18 October 1940



Sigurd Gerhardt Jenssen (Norwegian)

Service: RAFVR, 129, Spitfire Squadron

Rank: Flight Sergeant

Service No:

Died: 19 August 1942, aged 24

Cemetery: Kristiansand Cemetery Norway (re-interred)

Family: Born at Kristiansand on 17 May 1918. Sigurd was the son of Thomas Gerhardt Jenssen and Sigrid Kristine Jenssen. Siblings: Hjordis Viktoria Ronnaug Refsahl-Jensen; Evelyn Sophia Jensen; Anne Jenssen (His Twin); and 2 others.

129 squadron based at Thorney Island were returning from a raid to Dieppe, Sigurd in his Spitfire AR339 suffered category B (serious) damage he managed to return but crashed in poor weather in Stansted Park Grounds.

Justin Gerard Clermont

Service: Royal Canadian Air Force, 175, R.A.F. Squadron

Rank: Pilot Officer

Service No: J/ 14545

Died: 7 May 1944, aged 23

Memorial: BROOKWOOD MILITARY CEMETERY, SURREY

Inscription: **“WE THINK OF HIM IN SILENCE NO EYES CAN SEE US WEEP, BUT WITHIN OUR ACHING HEARTS HIS MEMORY WE KEEP”**

Family: Son of Joseph Agapit Clermont and Delima M Clermont, (nee Lalumiere) of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Pilot Officer Justin Clermont, 1939/45 War Medal, 1939/45 Star, Canadian Volunteer Medal and Clasp, was killed when his Typhoon (call sign:-JR257/HH-W) crashed on the Stansted Park Estate, Rowland’s Castle, Hampshire on 7 May 1944 when, according to an eyewitnesses, his engine caught fire a few minutes after taking off from RAF Tangmere (unfortunately a well-known phenomenon with the Napier engine fitted to the Typhoon). Justin’s RAF Squadron was based at Holmsley South Airfield in the New Forest. His body is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Grave reference 49.A.3). <https://nfknowledge.org/contributor/63201/>



Typhoon fighter plane... *My brother told me of a Typhoon fighter which had crashed the Sunday before (the 7th), behind the brick houses along Woodberry Lane.*
R. L. Ingram



Hawker Fury single seater fighter



Rowland's Castle Home Guard





Rowland's Castle Home Guard



There were larger Anti-Aircraft (Ack-Ack) guns and searchlights at Pyle Farm, in Tills Lane, off Woodberry Lane, and at Wellsworth.



Illustrations of Ack-Ack guns and a searchlight.





Rowland's Castle Home Guard give a display on the Green with their Northover projectors and spigot mortars.



Rowland's Castle Home Guard show how an old milk churn can be used as a tripod for a light Aak-Ack (Anti-aircraft) gun to deal with low-flying enemy aircraft.



*B17 Flying Fortress... We watched a damaged B17 flying over the golf links towards Horndean with bits dropping off. **Peter Pitt***



*Idsworth signal box... I had been seen coming down Chalton Down from the observation post in the signal box at Old Idsworth crossing. **J. Brown***



A half-track... *Opposite Redhill School were some half-tracks which my best mate Bob Broad and I played on.* **R. L. Ingram**



Bren-gun carrier... *One of our favourite pastimes was to run down to the arches and cadge a lift on a Bren-gun carrier when they went up to Barrett's garage for petrol.* **Robert Farr**



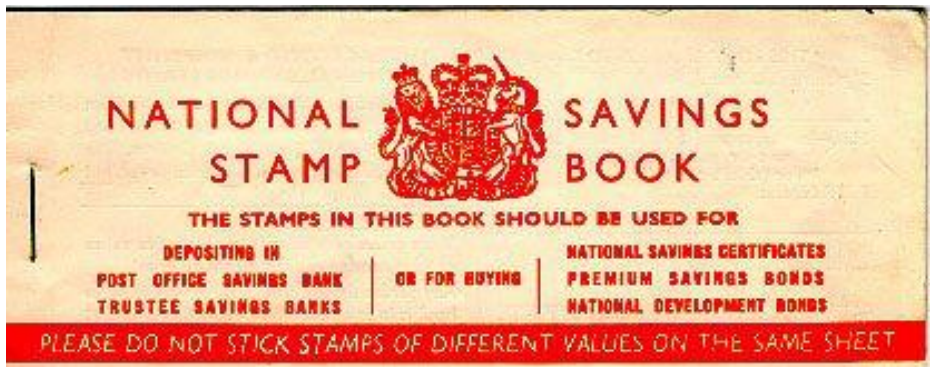
Crurchill tanks would have been here... *the Green was covered with tanks and all the roads for miles were packed with them.*



A troop carrier of which there were many.



During War Weapons Week, we have collected £56 14s. 5d. (£56.72) for savings.



National Savings Stamps



Hawker Hurricane

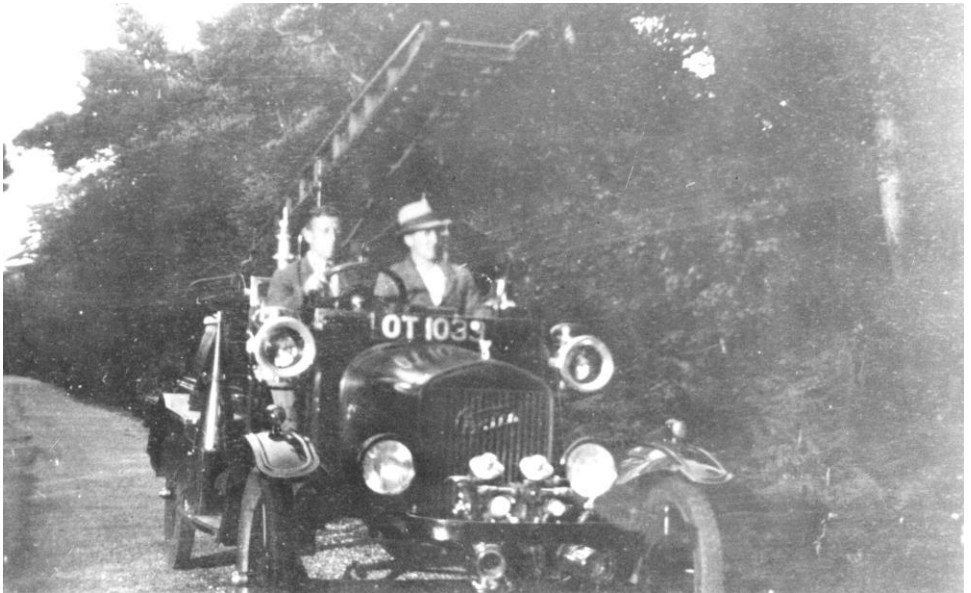
During the Battle of Britain, a Hurricane and a German ME 109 had a dog fight in which both pilots were injured, they both landed their aircraft, the Hurricane on the downs at Chalton and the ME 109 at Forestside.



Messerschmitt Bf 109



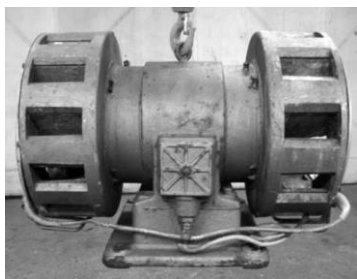
*Lorna, the Countess Howe, often visited the home, she came in a horse and trap accompanied by five labradors and gave books and comics to the children. I also remember a visit by the Queen. **Joan Keysell, Stansted House***



The Havant Ford Baico fire engine, which was probably the one sent to Rowland's Castle.
Monday 25 March, 1940...*Ford tender returned from Liss.*

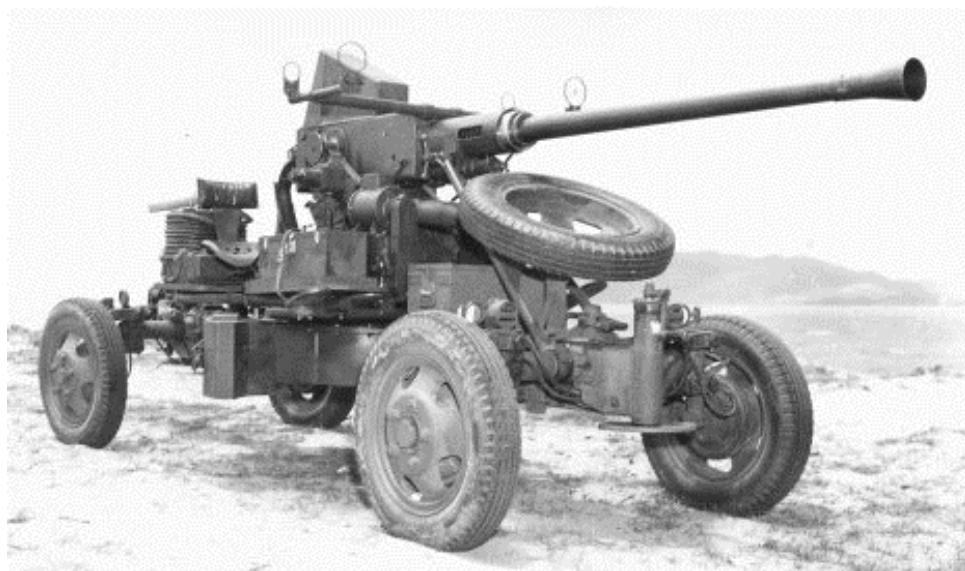


Bombers towing Horsa gliders, parts for which were made at an Airspeed factory in Langstone High Street... *Barbara Alesbury, and many others, remembers the gliders, stating that the sky was quite black with them, their towing aircraft and fighter escorts.*



... also during 1940, the RDC suggested that an Air Raid Siren be erected (August 22nd).

Earl of Bessborough tells that General de Gaulle came to Stansted when he visited the Fighting French Naval Camp at Emsworth.



A mobile Bofors gun... The biggest problem was the shrapnel from a mobile Bofors which went round the village triangle firing as it went to make out that there were many more of them engaged with the enemy.



M7 Priest self-propelled gun... *the Green having been reinforced with tons of brick rubble from Pompey's blitzed houses to hold the tanks and Priest 105mm self-propelled guns.* **R. L. Ingram**



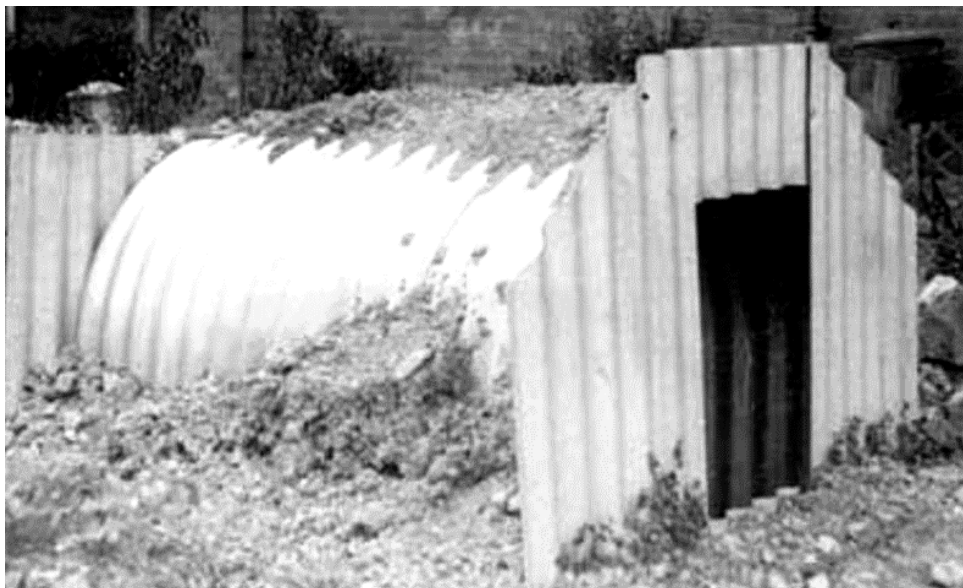
This pillbox is still in place at the junction of Horndean Road and Emsworth Common Road... *There were large pill boxes at the arches end of the Green and above Comley bend.*



V-1 Flying Bomb (Vergeltungswaffe-1, Retaliation Weapon-1)... *Also not long after, there was a doodle-bug which flew across the golf course, where it came to the end of its flight, the flame went out, I believe the bomb landed in Horndean.*
Roger Harrison



Children being evacuated from London... *I was evacuated on Friday, September 1st, two days before war was declared. We were marched to Clapham Junction, each with our small bundle of spare clothes and each with a luggage label in our lapel for identification.*
Ted Walmsley



Anderson air-raid shelter... *Major Clarke-Jervoise reported to the Council the steps taken in connection with the provision of Air Raid shelters.*



Hawker Typhoon fighter plane... *A typhoon fighter crashed behind the first house on the left at Woodberry Lane, killing the Canadian Pilot who had been escorting bombers over Germany. The Typhoon was the only fighter aircraft at that time to go the full round trip. Pat Mulry*



*A German bomber came in over Langstone Harbour, machine-gunned Havant station, followed the Waterloo railway line, missed the line with its bombs but hit a bungalow at Denvilles, killing an old couple. The bungalow next door was 26A Fourth Avenue, the newly built (1939) home of Mr and Mrs Reginald Vince and their 10-year-old son Reginald (Bunny), bombed at 18.45 on 10 October 1940. **Bunny Vince***

The ARP representative visited the school and fitted the children who had not been fitted elsewhere with gas masks...



Gas masks for children, Mickey Mouse and ordinary



... Apart from the Parish Hall and the Chapel Schoolroom the Railway Hotel was also used by the Battersea School for lessons.





The Green in more tranquil times.



The 48a Southdown bus service still ran after the war.



The station before electrification shows the trestle foot bridge. It can be seen that the design is different from the one in the previous photograph. Also the 'full-size' canopy to the shelter.



The present concrete footbridge and the former concrete lamp posts. Note the concrete milepost indicating 63 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Waterloo and the cut-out of the canopy. Concrete sections were made at the Southern Railway's concrete works at Exmouth Junction.



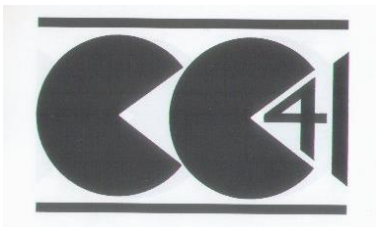
1938. 2-Bil stock on a stopping Waterloo to Portsmouth service at Rowland's Castle. 2-Bil (Bi-lavatory) meant 2 carriages each with a corridor and lavatory. The photograph shows the extra clearance for the canopy. *Alf Harris*



The signal box – the goods yard was behind.



Don't take the Squander Bug when you go shopping



Utility Mark: 'CC 41'
Civilian Clothing 1941



Mr Chad was a popular cartoon figure



R.B.1
16

MINISTRY OF
FOOD

1943-1944

RATION BOOK

Surname *Thaxton* Initials *T.G.*
Address *East Walton H.R.*
Stings Lane

SERIAL NO. 1
BP 380280

MF
of

IF FOUND RETURN TO ANY FOOD OFFICE	F.O. CODE No. E 1 B 3
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CLOTHING BOOK
1943-44 *General* **CBI**
6

This book must not be used until the holder's name and full postal address have been written below.

HOLDER'S NAME *NEELES, ORLANDO*
(in BLOCK letters)
ADDRESS *145 WATFIELD AVENUE*
(in BLOCK letters) *WATFORD*

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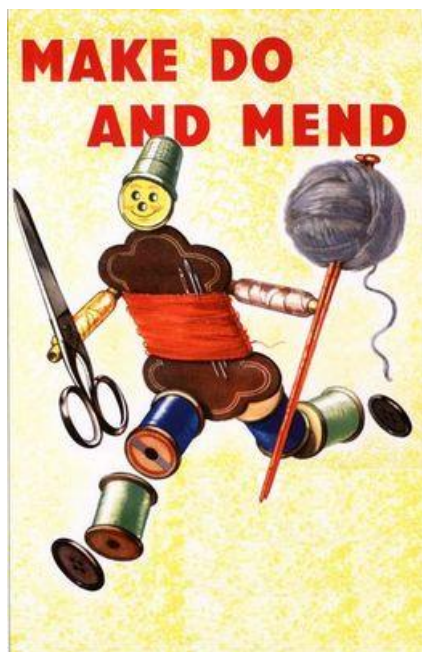
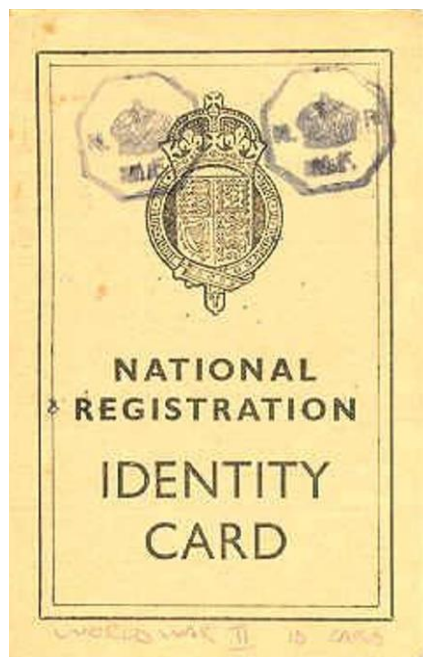
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PAGE 1





8th June, 1946

TO-DAY, AS WE CELEBRATE VICTORY,

I send this personal message to you and all other boys and girls at school. For you have share in the hardships and dangers of a total war and you have shared no less in the triumph of allied nations.

I know you will always feel proud to belong to a country which was capable of such supreme effort; proud, too, of parents and elder brothers and sisters who by their courage, endurance and enterprise brought victory. May these qualities be yours as you grow up and join in the common effort to establish among the nations of the world unity and peace.

George R.I.

King George VI's message to schoolchildren for the London Victory Celebrations Day, 8th June, 1946.