

ROWLANDS CASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

STANSTED TAPES

**Mrs GRIFFITHS
24 UPLANDS ROAD
ROWLANDS CASTLE**

Interviewed 4-11-04

I was working at a Naval Children's Home in Southsea. When war was declared, before war was declared, we were evacuated to Stansted House and stayed there all through the war. I was a Children's Nurse. The rest of the home came out before me. I had had an accident in Portsmouth and had a broken leg and was still attending the hospital. I couldn't come to Rowland's Castle. When I came later, the first person I met at the station was my husband he was on duty at the station. I asked him if there was a taxi there for me, which should have been waiting to pick me up, so he was the first person I spoke to when I came to Rowland castle

(Tell me more about the children. How many were there?)

I can't remember the numbers, they were from babies until they left school and some got jobs on the estate and others went into the services or went off doing other things. They stayed until they were ready to go off and earn their living.

(Did they go to the local school?)

We had a teacher who came up from Portsmouth every day and there was a Miss Absalom, who lived in the Finchdean Road, I believe, and she came up daily.

We had the young children, the big Servants' Hall under Stansted House was given to us while we were there. And it was a schoolroom during the day for the little ones, and it was a Nursery other times. In the evening, the staff got down there and then at nights we took all the mattresses down there and the children slept there when there raids on. We had to take mattresses down and we all slept down there.

(How many staff was there?)

Oh, quite a lot, kitchen staff, domestic staff and children's nurses. We were not qualified we did not pass any exams, we were just children's nurses

(Were the children trained in any skill?)

Just normal, just like living at home really, taught different things at school, some went to do different jobs, not trained. It was like a home.