

GRAYSHOTT'S WARTIME MEMORIES VOLUME 2

More Stories From Our People



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the second instalment of Grayshott's Wartime Memories. The publication of our original book in 2025, from now on referred to as Volume 1, brought forward such a wealth of further stories that this sequel quickly became inevitable. Printed records of the war are countless, and the durability of paper hopefully means that they'll survive indefinitely. Human memory though is finite and fallible; even when people carefully pass their family history on to their descendants, the stories dilute, mutate and can surprisingly quickly degenerate to hazy legends. We think it's important to preserve individual's memories of great events while we can. In this book we continue to describe the facts of wartime village life, but we lean more towards relating personal accounts.

Many people have contributed to this volume - we've listed them on the back page - and among them the Beard family make multiple appearances. John Stanley Coombe Beard (usually just 'Stanley'), an architect who specialised in designing theatres, cinemas and music halls, bought Grayshott Hall in 1938. With his second wife Evelyn and their young children Patsy and Robert, it was home until 1946. Stanley was a keen photographer with contacts in the movie world and he managed to obtain supplies of colour transparency and 16mm cine film, on which he captured local life. Patsy and Robert have kindly made



their personal memories and family archive available to us. Wartime colour cine film is incredibly rare and Stanley's footage, such as this of harvesting in the fields opposite Grayshott Hall (left), is a precious addition to our records.

To illustrate Grayshott's contrasting experiences of the

20th Century's two global wars, we've liberated some contemporary WW1 material from our archive. We also touch upon the immediate post-WW2 years, up to the introduction of National Service in 1949. Although the war nominally ended on 15th August 1945, it left the world in turmoil and many of our people's families found themselves caught in the chaos. It's a period often neglected in the context of the preceding global war and the following Cold War, so we attempt a little redress. Not everything within happened in Grayshott, but it's connected through the experiences of our people of then or now. The following stories are all part of Grayshott's collective memory bank.

THE WAR TO END ALL WARS

Although a war between Britain and Germany had been brewing for some time, when it actually started it came as a surprise to most people. Within a few weeks of its declaration Grayshott found itself home to dozens of wounded soldiers, incoming Belgian refugees and hundreds of troops.

Germany invaded Belgium on 3rd August, en-route to France, and Britain declared war on the 4th. By the end of September, 84 men of Grayshott had volunteered. By the war's end 280 villagers had served in uniform - a quarter of the population. Virtually every man of military age who wasn't in a reserved occupation put on a uniform, and so did many of the women. We know that 37 of them were killed and roughly the same number wounded, but there is no record of how many more returned with long-term mental injuries. Extrapolating the figures to today's population, about 800 of our younger people would serve, over a hundred would die and another hundred would be wounded.

The British Army's first serious scrap with the Germans was the Battle of Mons on 23rd August, which started the flow of black-edged telegrams and train-loads of casualties. Grayshott rose to the occasion by opening a private hospital for sick and wounded soldiers. The Mother Superior of the Cenacle Convent gave a wing of the building, sufficient to house 25 patients. The village GP, Dr Arnold Lyndon, was the doctor in charge and his wife Charlotte was Lady Superintendent of Nurses. Sisters of the Cenacle supplied much of the general and nursing labour and were helped by many local volunteers.

The Grayshott War Hospital opened on Friday 18th September, 1914, when fourteen patients were

ROLL OF HONOUR.

Brickwood, Arthur Cecil, 2nd Lieut., 1st Batt. Yorks and Lincs.
Bridger, E. J., 9th Royal Sussex.
Budd, Geo., Manchester Regiment.
Budd, Charles, King's Shropshire Light Infantry.
Ford, Arthur, 1st Grenadier Guards.
Hannant, C., King's Shropshire Light Infantry.
Harris, George H., King's Shropshire Light Infantry.
Hervey, G. A., Lieut. R.G.A.
Larby, A., Wilts Regt.
Laurence, Jonah, King's Shropshire L.I.
Levett, Loftus George, H.M.S. Good Hope.

Pickett, E. G., M.T., A.S.C.
Selwyn, Arthur, Lieut., Royal Flying Corps.
Selwyn, Christopher, 2nd Lieut., 5th Leicestershire.
Slater, Fred, W. H., 5th Oxford and Bucks L.I.
Symons, C. A., Gloucester Regiment.
Voller, Jack, Hants Regiment.
Voller, James, R.E.
Whitaker, Harold, Capt., 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade.
White, Albert, 6th Hants.
White, Alfred, Sherwood Foresters.
Wood, Chas. John, Queen's Own Surrey Regiment.

Prisoners of War :-

Bangs, Claude, 6th Poonah Division.
Bishop, A. E., Royal Sussex Regiment.
Crilly, S. C., 2nd Oxford and Bucks. Light Infantry.
Harris, Reginald, Queen's R.W.S.
Harris, Corpl. W., Northants.
Massey-Cooke, 2nd Lieut., Canadian Engineers.
Peasey, F. S., Dorsets.

Missing :-

Cresswell, Wm., 2nd Hants.
Norman, George, 6th Hants.
Parrett, John.
Rosier, A., Army Cyclist Corps.

Serving with the Colours.

Royal Navy.

Ansell, Mervyn, Royal Marine Artillery.
Arnold, John Henry, H.M.S. Queen.
Chegwyn, Arthur, H.M.S. Undaunted.
Clutton, Commander R. P., at the Admiralty.
Coombes, James, H.M.S. Iron Duke.
Crook, E. A., Surgeon.

Each month the Parish Magazine published the names of all those serving, killed, wounded, prisoner or missing. The lists in those latter categories grew inexorably longer, shown here an extract from December 1917.

3, 60, 61.

Prisoners of War :-

y. M. :

13, 62.

Bangs, Claude, 6th Poonah Division.

Bishop, A. E., Royal Sussex Regiment.



Staff and patients at the hospital. The patients were mostly convalescents. They wore blue jackets with white facings, so that when out in public they were identifiable as wounded servicemen.

Wounded soldiers at the Convent to be supplied with a dart board and darts.

Grayshott Social Club minutes, 22nd October 1914.

transferred from Cambridge Hospital in Aldershot. Most of them were casualties of Mons. By the time the hospital closed in January 1919 it had cared for 835 patients. The War Office paid two shillings per day per patient, everything else including beds, tables, lockers, crockery, cutlery, food and daily papers came from donations. Two villagers were honoured for their work – Dr Arnold Lyndon

with the OBE and Molly Baxendale, who worked there from start to finish, received the Red Cross.

As we saw in Volume 1, upon the outbreak of WW2 Grayshott became a temporary home for dozens of evacuees, mostly women and children from Portsmouth. In 1914 the guests were Belgian refugees, the first arriving at south coast ports within five days of Germany's invasion and over 100,000 by the end of the year. The public's response was massively supportive.

De Caritat, M. and Mme., Louvain; c/o Mrs. Tobias Matthey, High Marley, Haslemere. De Cock, M. and Mme., Antwerp; c/o Mr. H. Hutchinson, Moses Hill, Haslemere. De Jongh, M. Robert, Malines; c/o Mrs. Morris, Hatch Cottage, Kingsley Green, Haslemere. Deswaens, Mdlle. Marie, Antwerp; c/o Mrs. Whitaker, Bull's Farm Cottages, Grayshott. Dozo, M. and Mme., and M. Dornial, both of Huy; c/o Mr. Jelly, Holmbury, Marley-lane, Shottermill. Fabri, M. and Mme., and 1 child, Antwerp; c/o Mrs. Craik, Bramshott Chase, Hindhead. Faust, M. and Mme., Huy; Marley-lane, Shottermill.

The local newspapers listed hundreds of refugees and their hosts. Here, Mrs Whitaker took in Mdlle Marie Deswaens in one of the cottages at Bulls Farm.

Accommodation was found in private homes and there were collections for clothes, bread and potatoes. Eleven refugee children were registered at the school, and although there are few records of adults it seems likely that many parents also came. As well as Mdlle Deswaens, several members of the Wilms family of Antwerp lodged at Bulls Farm, staying until April of 1919. The Van Sevendoucks were in Glen Road, the Van De Puls at Homeside on Headley Road and the Van Nuffels at Bramshott Chase.

The depletion of Grayshott's male population was more than made up for by the arrival of thousands of troops in the area. Among the first to arrive was the 8th Battalion of the Rifle Brigade, in November of 1914. They came to Grayshott for field-training around the heaths and woods. Our small village found itself with over a thousand soldiers to accommodate. Most other ranks and the majority of officers were billeted at Grayshott Hall, which became the Battalion HQ. The remaining other ranks were put up in the Village Hall and the school.

1914 - 2014

ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE COMMENCEMENT OF
THE GREAT EUROPEAN WAR

THIS PLAQUE COMMEMORATES THOSE
WHO WERE BILLETED HERE AND AT
OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN THE PARISH
OF GRAYSHOTT BETWEEN NOVEMBER
1914 AND APRIL 1915 WHILST ON
ACTIVE SERVICE FOR THEIR COUNTRY
"THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE"

GRAYSHOTT VILLAGE ARCHIVE

Rifleman JE Taylor wrote this about his time here:

'Last Friday we left Blackdown and marched to Grayshott. They paraded us at 9am and, on marching off, we were joined by three more battalions. When we had all got into our stride it was a grand sight. On arriving at Grayshott at 5, after marching about 20 miles, we were marched to our billets.

'I was rather disappointed to find that ours was a schoolroom. We had to sleep on the floor the first three nights with only three thin blankets. For tea on Saturday and Monday we had no butter and on Sunday morning we had to go to church parade without breakfast, but now we are rather more comfortable, and we are getting better food.



Gorsemount in The Avenue was temporary home to the family of Belgian army artillery officer Baron Frédéric d'Huart. Here, with this postcard to his oldest daughter Marthe, he sent four photographs, one for each child, including one of himself in his tin helmet.

'A sanitary cart was now sent to the parish three nights a week on account of the greatly increased population from the billeted troops. Between 60 and 70 pails are reported to be emptied.'

Parish Council, March 1915.

'We are training with the Battalion now, and the last three days they have fairly put us through it. On Wednesday we paraded at 6:30, and had marching and doubling till breakfast. After that the recruits had some more marching and doubling in a field four inches deep in snow, and also an hour's drill with the rifle. I thought my fingers would have dropped off with the cold, but we survived it all right. After that we had dinner. Afterwards we had a long march, and then we halted for tea. We had to make a fire in the wood, boil some water and make some cocoa. The tea was a success, bar one thing – we had no butter, only bread and 'bully'. After tea we had a skirmish, and then a night attack, arriving back at nine. It was a big day's work, – 6:30am til 9pm.'

If you are walking around Grayshott's countryside on a sunny day, please spare a thought for Rifleman Taylor with his frozen fingers and dry bully sandwich.

The 8th left Grayshott in March 1915, bound for the Western Front at Ypres. A strategic point at this time was the area around Hooze Chateau. The British decided to take it by a mining operation, a huge explosive charge placed at the end of a tunnel under the enemy lines. At 7pm on 15th July the mine was blown, making a crater 120 feet across. On Thursday 29th the 8th was called to defend the crater, marching into position under cover of darkness. Shortly after their arrival, the Germans attacked, with the first use of flamethrowers during the war.

A Lieutenant described the attack:

'About half-an-hour before dawn there was a sudden hissing sound and a bright crimson glare over the crater turned the whole scene red. I saw three or four distinct jets of flame, like a line of powerful fire-hoses spraying fire instead of water, shoot across my fire trench. Then every noise under Heaven broke out, trench mortars and bombs, machine guns firing, shrapnel falling and high explosive shells. Those who had faced the flame attack were never seen again.'

Most of the 8th was overrun. Of their 24 officers and 745 other ranks, within 24 hours 19 officers and 469 other ranks were killed, wounded and missing. Another officer wrote to Dr Lyndon that 'the worst casualties were in A Company, billeted in the village, and C Company, at the Hall. They were both in the front line and were simply enveloped in this flaming liquid'. C Company was described in the battalion's



This Rifle Brigade cap badge was found recently in a garden opposite Grayshott Hall. Its owner and whether he survived the horror of Hooze must remain unknown. The odds are against him. The crater at Hooze was filled in after the war, still containing hundreds of bodies.

war diary as non-existent. Following the battle, thirteen men of the 8th were awarded bravery medals – two VCs, two DSOs, two MCs and seven DCMs.

Thousands more soldiers were billeted in and around Grayshott throughout the war, but the Rifle Brigade's were among the first and they captured the villagers' affection before the novelty wore off. Jack Hayden Smith wrote of Marion Menzies, an otherwise notably avaricious shopkeeper:

'Miss Menzies stood in the doorway of her shop with tears streaming down her face and, as the Rifle Brigade – who had been billeted in the village – marched out, stripped her shop of sweets, chocolates and biscuits to give to the men.'

Sentiment only went so far. The Parish Council billed the 8th £5 for damage they'd inflicted on the Village Green's turf during their drill sessions. The KRRC were billed 9d per soldier per night for their billets in the Village Hall, totalling £366 7s 5d (equivalent to about £33,000 in 2026). Restoring damage to the Tennis Lawn (now the Fox and Pelican's garden) caused by a tented camp was billed at £24.

In neighbouring Bramshott, the Canadian Army had a huge camp on the Chase. The Canadians were well paid compared to their British comrades, and Grayshott's shops and pub offered many opportunities to lighten their pockets. The unknown sender of this postcard witnessed a sad but common event. The message on the back reads 'The little village where we often make purchases. There are only two streets. The place is about fifteen miles from Aldershot. A military funeral passed thru today while we were there. The coffin was on the gun limber. The poor fellow, a French Canadian of a battalion in our own lines in camp, was killed by a motor lorry while walking along the road in the dark.'



'We parted regretfully with the men of the 8th Battalion Rifle Brigade and the 7th King's Royal Rifles. After nearly three months we came to feel as if they were our own.'

Parish magazine, March 1915

Several Grayshott men were professional soldiers, members of the regular army. One of them was Alfred Claude Bangs, son of Emma Bangs and her husband Alfred, a market gardener of Hindhead Terrace (now the Chinese take-away opposite the Fox & Pelican). In 1906, aged 18, Alfie enlisted in the East Surrey Regiment for seven years and found himself posted to Rangoon in Burma. Not all soldiers were angels and he was once reprimanded for being caught out of bounds in a native brothel. His battalion moved to India, where, his seven years complete, he left the army and got a job, only to be recalled on the outbreak of war.

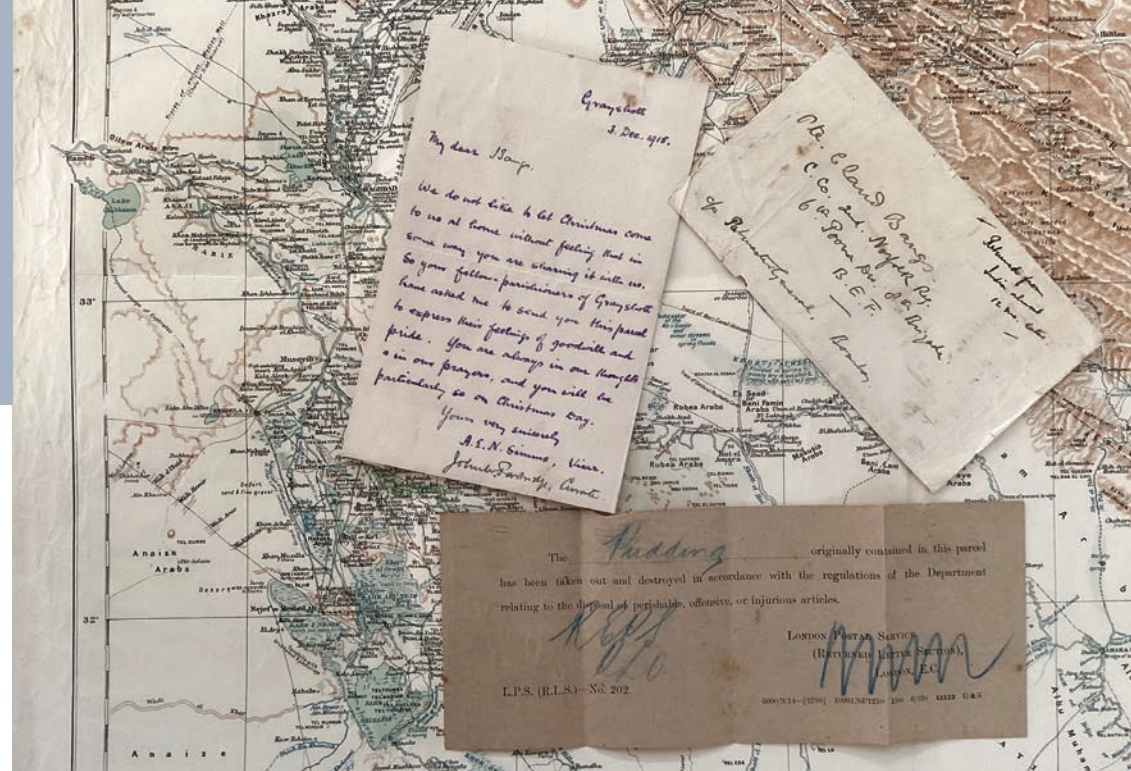
In British popular memory WW1 is typecast as the Western Front – mud, blood and trenches in Belgium and France. But it was fought on several other fronts, including northern Italy, north Africa, the Balkans and the Middle East. The latter was largely under control of Turkey – Germany's ally – as part of their crumbling Ottoman Empire. The British decided that it was essential to safeguard their oilfields in Iraq, then known as Mesopotamia, and in November of 1914 launched a campaign to take control of the region.

Alfie had the very bad luck to be among some members of his battalion who were seconded to the 2nd Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment, which was assigned to the British Indian Expeditionary Force. The BIEF (which consisted mostly of soldiers of the Indian Army) established a beachhead at Basra and from there attempted to advance up the River Tigris to take Baghdad. Despite Britain's experience of fighting in harsh climates, it all went horribly wrong.

After some initial success, culminating in stalemate at the battle of Ctesiphon 25 miles south of Baghdad, the British ran out of wind. The Army retreated to Kut-al-Amara, halted and dug in. The Ottoman force quickly surrounded Kut and laid siege. The short version is that things went from bad to worse – over a period of nearly five months the British were ground down by combat casualties, disease and malnutrition. The British surrendered on 29th April 1916 and 13,164 soldiers became captives, including Alfie Bangs of Grayshott.

The prisoners were forced to march hundreds of miles to various camps in Turkey, through the hot season, often being stripped, beaten and starved on the way. About 4,000 died on route. Alfie made it to Turkey, to the Yarbashi camp, where prisoners were forced to work on railway construction under brutal conditions. He is presumed to have died there during August of 1916.

An Arab proverb had it that after Allah made Hell he found it wasn't bad enough so he created Mesopotamia, and added flies.

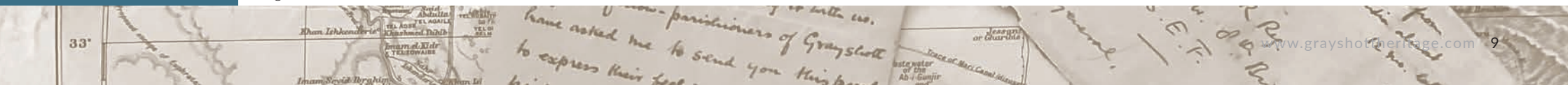


Meanwhile, for Christmas 1915 the good people of Grayshott sent food parcels to every one of their serving soldiers who could be traced. On 3rd December, four days before the encirclement of Kut, Alfie was sent a Christmas pudding. The postal system wasn't up to the challenge and, despite attempts by the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service to re-supply Kut by air-drops, Alfie never got his pud. Twelve months later notice was received back in Grayshott that it had been destroyed, although more likely scoffed by a postal clerk.

News of Alfie's capture didn't reach Grayshott until October 1916, by which time he'd perished. In a terrible final twist, even as late as January 1919 the Parish Magazine noted 'We shall be glad to hear when Mr Bangs can welcome his son home from Turkey'. His death wasn't confirmed until May of 1919. The dread, then hope, then heartbreak to his family must have been crushing.

After the war Alfie's body was exhumed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and re-buried at the Baghdad (North Gate) War Cemetery. He is also remembered on Grayshott's war memorial.

With Alfie's story standing for the tragedy of The War to End All Wars, we'll move on to the next war.



VILLAGE LIFE IN WW2

Even for those of us who didn't experience them, rationing, Dig For Victory and land girls are sealed into our collective memory. Obtaining and growing food became a national pastime. Before the war over 60% of Britain's food was imported, 55 million tons every year, including 90% of our grain. This worked out at roughly 1.2 tons per person per year, equivalent to six bathtubs full to the brim. The nation's farmers and gardeners rose to the challenge and by war's end the imports had fallen to 12 million tons.

In Volume 1 we met Bet Simmonds and her beloved spuds, and others in Grayshott did their bit too. There was still proper farming in Grayshott then, on Grayshott Hall's farm and at the smallholdings in Whitmore.

'Grayshott Hall had a five-acre front lawn which was normally mown with gang-mowers pulled by a pony wearing leather boots. As part of the war effort, my father left it for hay. After mowing with a horse-drawn mower, it was rowed up by a horse-drawn rake and I was allowed to ride on the horse, clinging to the saddle pad.'

Robert Beard, Grayshott Hall.

'I recollect various wartime measures to deal with 'mowing' our immense lawn – sheep one year with a movable pen, and glorious haymaking days most other years with me aloft on one of our pair of towering Suffolk Punches who replaced the petrol-starved tractor, to the delight of Mr Chadwick the farmer. He always called me Miss Patsy. At the farm I recall meeting Sylvia, the land girl, and being terrified by the hissing geese in the yard. Together we inspected the immense kitchen garden, and I marvelled at the warmth of the fruit in the range of glasshouses.'

Patsy Roynon (nee Beard), Grayshott Hall.



Haymaking on the lawn of Grayshott Hall, with Patsy I/C horse, Robert holding the hay-frame and Sylvia the land girl in brown overalls.

Harvesting on Grayshott Hall's farm. This had been productive arable land for centuries, and for several years after the war was used for growing grain.



Boys from Amesbury School helping with the potato harvest at Grayshott Hall's farm. Children from the village school did likewise at the Land of Nod.



Elizabeth and Fred Coleman came to Grayshott in 1932 and set up a smallholding at their home of Dingley Dell, down in Whitmore. Elizabeth wrote about wartime rationing in her book *Hot Water, Please*.

'Poultry, pig and other animal food stuffs would be rationed too, and from what we heard on the radio Fred and I realised we would get just half the quantity of food stuffs that we had been buying. That meant we would have to cut down on our stock too, by about half.

'By government order, all our eggs had to go to the packing stations; we were not supposed to sell half a dozen to our neighbours and regular customers; I believe our poultry also had to go to the packing stations or the butcher, and so did the pigs. The government gave jobs to people who, I think, were retired army men – captains and such – to go round and inspect any stock, particularly pigs and cattle etc, and from the way

these people talked, they knew nothing at all about pigs or cattle! But they had got a job, with a car and all the petrol they needed, and no doubt a very good salary – snoopers, we called them. They would call and ask if you would sell them half a dozen eggs – ‘My wife



Timber was a strategic national resource, as raw material for construction, mines, railways and aircraft manufacture. Imported supplies were hit hard by U-boats, and domestic production had to fill the gap. Here, we think in Flat Wood, some of Grayshott's trees are called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice. The logging was all done by hand.

is ill, she would be so grateful’ – and you would hear over the radio that someone had succumbed to the sob story, when the snooper would produce a card from his pocket and say, ‘I’m sorry but I am going to have to report this,’ because you were not to sell eggs from your house. I had one such person call one day. He was a total stranger, and I was fully aware of the danger. To this day I am sure he was one of those government snoopers!’

At the time of writing, Grayshott's oldest resident is Gladys Beer, at a wonderful 103 years. Gladys spent her early life on her family's small farm in Cheshire, and as a teenager she ran it almost single-handed.

‘We had to take some evacuees of course, from the slums of Liverpool. All they wanted to do was mess around, I couldn't get any work out of them at all. And they were filthy – verminous and full of scabies. One day I filled a tin bath with Lysol and dunked them in it, like sheep-dip. The WVS lady was horrified – so I said to her ‘They squealed a bit but there's no more scabies!’

For those without land, Grayshott had plenty of allotments – 16 plots at Stoney Bottom, 25 at Beech and a newly ploughed-up patch on the north side of the Rec. All the plots were cultivated eventually but take-up was initially a little slow. Major Wessel of Apley House was a busy chap; as well as being Chief Warden of the district's ARP he

was also Chair of Grayshott Parish Council. In his annual report of March 1940 he wrote ‘The allotments at Stoney Bottom are being well used, as usual, but I am sorry to say that the ‘Digging for Victory’ has not brought the allotments behind the Recreation Ground

into service. I like to think that the principal reason is due to the fact that over 80 of our young men are busy digging elsewhere and ‘Somewhere’, and our old soldiers are too busy keeping the village flag flying on ARP, AFS and all the rest of the mysterious initial associated with the war, which rather prevents their using their spare time for digging.’

Whilst the extra hours consumed by war-work could be onerous, growing food became a way for Britain's civilians to fight back. Most of them never saw a living German, but millions were directly exposed to enemy assault from the air. Elizabeth Coleman recalls the German bomber that crashed in Windy Gap:



‘We had bombers coming over, looking for the Army bases at Aldershot and Bordon, and our own windows were all broken at once from the blast of a damaged German plane which collided with the hillside across the stream. I felt the impact as I stood in my bungalow; for a moment the walls seemed to shudder and go back into place; the plane went on fire and the sky was lit up for a great distance around while bangs and explosions could be heard.’

‘With my grandfather, whom I adored until he died about 25 years later, I played every day, mostly in the enormous and glorious garden. Our favourite activity, I recollect, was collecting up the shredded aluminium foil dropped by German planes almost every night, apparently to distort the British radar. This could become dolls’ ‘hair’ or clothes, currency and Christmas decorations. I still use some on our Christmas tree to this day.’

Patsy Roynon

‘The countryside was littered with strips of foil which I believe was something to do with radar, but the children found it great fun to collect, and most folk collected it to decorate the Christmas tree.’

Elizabeth Coleman

The foil strips were Düppel, a radar countermeasure which created false echoes to mask bomber formations. The British codeword for it was Window.



'In the latter months of the war, I was getting old enough to be frightened rather than excited by nightly air raids. We used to sleep in the cellar when the siren went off. I had a green sleeping bag I was still using for camping holidays a decade and more later! My final wartime memory was the night before VE Day, 8th May 1945, when a plane clipped the top of a radio mast at Hindhead, a couple of miles away. I was amazed next day to see the aeroplane upended like a wounded bird in a deep crater, powerless and undignified.'

Patsy Roynon

The radio mast at RAF Gibbet Hill was part of a 'Gee' station, a long-range navigation system. The aeroplane was a USAAF Curtis Commando which was repatriating wounded US soldiers. All thirty of its occupants were killed, along with one person in the hut upon which it crashed.

'One day during haymaking on the lawn, I was with my mother and I was told I said to her 'Look up, there's a plane without a pilot'. It was a V2 rocket plane which just cleared the top of the house and crashed into one of our fields across the road, leaving a huge crater where it exploded.'

Robert Beard, Grayshott Hall.

Robert was only four years old at the time so his plane-spotting error can be forgiven, but it was actually a V1 Doodlebug that he saw. Nobody saw the true rocket V2s apart from a few pilots who spotted their exhaust plumes at launch. In Volume 1 we reported Grayshott's actual V2, no parts of which have yet come to light. Very disappointing – metal detectorists, please try harder. Trevor Hill of Frensham is so far the nearest we have to a local witness.

'I was woken with a very large bang and, on opening the window, I heard what sounded like a train rushing towards us. It was the only V2 that landed in our locality although I do not know where it hit the ground; the sound like the train was in fact the rocket motors that were heard after the actual explosion.'

City-dwellers often had a closer experience with the V-weapons than our villagers. Alison Orchard has had her art studio at Applegarth since 2014 and she introduced us to her parents, Rosemarie and Wilf. Wilf got in first.

'We lived in Raynes Park, next to the John Innes Allotments. There were searchlights in the allotments and at night I used to look out of my bedroom window and see them making a giant X in the sky, with a German bomber caught in the middle. Then the guns would start up *pom-pom-pom-pom pom-pom-pom-pom*. In the mornings there was shrapnel all over the place and one day a bomber wreck as well.

'One night the local toy shop was hit by incendiaries. We went along to scavenge but all the goods were totally blackened beyond use. Another time, a house down the road took a bomb and there, spreadeagled on the apex of the roof, was a dead man still in his pyjamas. As I child I didn't absorb the true horror of it all.

'We heard that several Doodlebugs had fallen on Kings Cross. My brother and I left a note for our mother and caught the 77a bus up there, to get closer to the action. You can guess what she thought about that!

'We had a cat, a bit of a stray. Sometimes he would dodge past the thick blackout curtains, jump out of the window and disappear. Then we'd hear the drone of a Doodlebug going over, then the splutter as the engine cut out, then 'boom' and a few minutes later he'd jump back in. We called him Doodle; obviously he could hear the bomb's engine before us and decided he was better off outdoors.'



Wilf Orchard, Doodlebug Spotter.

Rosemarie then recalls:

'We lived in Feltham at the time, in Florence Road, and just beyond our road there was a huge aircraft factory. My aunts worked there, sewing the fabric covering onto the planes. At the end of the road there was some open land where my grandfather kept his chickens, and also a big communal air-raid shelter. We preferred to use our kitchen, which we thought was safer.

'One night when the sirens went I was sharing a bed with my sister and she said we should stay put. Well, there was a terrific explosion, the ceiling came down, there was dust everywhere and we could only pull our pillows over our heads. It was pitch dark, we

couldn't see anything, and as we made our way out I tripped over a fallen door, which was my only injury that night. My grandmother appeared and put her arms around me, then said I was covered in blood, but it was actually her blood that was dripping onto me. There were no ambulances but luckily some Americans turned up in a Jeep and took her to hospital.

'Then we went to the communal shelter, where the rest of the road were sleeping in bunk beds and had to shuffle up to make room for us. In the morning grandfather got a bonfire going to cook one of his chickens whilst we made our way to the WVS centre. The WVS was right by the bus stop, which had a queue of people waiting to go to work, and there we were barefoot and still in our nightclothes. They had racks and racks of clothes and supplies; they gave us a new set of clothes, better than our old ones, then we went to the school over the road to wash.

'When we got home we saw the bomb crater in the garden. Half of our house was down, chopped in half, and in the remaining part there was still the furniture and pictures on the wall.'

'The gas man came that morning to empty the meter. Grandfather told him that he couldn't go in to the house, it was condemned and liable to fall down at any moment. If he had gone in, he'd have found the meter had already been emptied.'

The aircraft factory was Hanworth Air Park, which was a factory and repair centre operated by General Aircraft Ltd. It was bombed several times. The one that did for Rosemarie's house on the night of 1st/2nd August 1944 was a Doodlebug. The neighbourhood was lucky, there were no fatalities other than Grandpa's chicken.

Finally, Tony Stockdale recalls his childhood in Sheffield:

'One night the bombing was heavier than ever. We were sat in the shelter and there was a quiet moment between the bombs then – brrrrrrrrr – came a huge noise that sounded like flicking through a pack of cards. We got out in the morning and our whole terrace was down, everything collapsed inwards with just the row of rooftops sat on top and the chimneys still poking up.'

Volume 1 reported some of the inconveniences suffered by Grayshott's civilians – rationing, blackout, road accidents, war-work and occasional attentions from the Luftwaffe. Generally though, the village got off lightly, far more so than communities on the south coast or in industrial cities.

Minor casualties included the iron railings of the War Memorial, Lyndon Green and Philip's Green, along with the fence chains of the Village Hall and Grayshott Hall – all sacrificed for scrap metal. The footpath alongside Whitmore Hanger was blocked by barbed wire, a security precaution to protect an army searchlight in the field now Waggoners estate. Plans to build more council cottages in the Beech Hanger area were shelved for the duration; they were eventually built in 1947. The recently installed electric streetlights had to remain off due to blackout, Major W reporting: 'I am glad to say that the lamp posts are standing very proudly in the new sites, and I am sure they are all longing, like we are, for the nights that they can illuminate the village and prevent local inhabitants from running into each other, and thus eliminating the ensuing strong language.' Worse than all those put together, the war stopped the scheme to install mains drainage, which had been knocked back and forth for thirty years and was on the verge of enactment. Grayshott's people can thank Hitler for having to endure a further fifteen years of earth-closets, buckets and cess-pits.

There was a lighter side to life as well. After his country was invaded by Germany, the King of Norway, Haakon VII, lived in Headley Down. Robert Beard recalls: 'The Norwegian government and Royal family had been rescued and brought to the UK ahead of the Nazi invasion of Norway. The Norwegian Prime Minister had rented a house for weekends away from London in Grayshott and sometimes the Norwegian King used to join him. They would come to play tennis at Grayshott Hall. I do remember watching a doubles game when the Prime Minister came round the net and told my father that the King did not like to be beaten, so my father had to ease off and let him win.'

GRAYSHOTT'S HOME GUARD

The first Commanding Officer of Grayshott's Home Guard was Stanley Beard, who'd served in WW1 as a captain with the Royal Field Artillery. In April 1918, during the German Spring Offensive, he'd taken his gas mask case off and tied it to his saddle. When a mustard gas shell landed nearby the horse went one way and Stanley another. Without protection he was gassed - temporarily blinded and put out of action for the remainder of the war. He had bad lungs for the rest of his life.



This lovely old finger-post at the head of Hammer Lane was a victim of war, removed either for scrap iron or to confuse enemy invaders.

**NO. 15 PLATOON,
24TH. BATTALION,
HAMPSHIRE HOME GUARD.
MAY 1941**

**COMMANDING OFFICER :
LIEUT. J.S.C. BEARD.
SECOND IN COMMAND :
SECOND LIEUT. SLATER, D.C.M.
SERGEANT-MAJOR BRANDALL.
Q.M.S. FALKUS.
SERGEANTS : WILSON,
HANNANT, AND LALOR.**

In real life Quartermaster-Sergeant Frederick Falkus, a former Life Guard of the Household cavalry, was Stanley's chauffeur. Sergeant-Major Brandall was the gardener and Sergeant Jock Wilson was Chief Fire Officer.



On parade in the stable yard at Grayshott Hall. Note the drummer on the right, who doesn't seem to have a neck-strap for his instrument.



The Home Guard wasn't full of grandfathers. A significant proportion were younger men who were either in reserved occupations or had been notified of their call-up but were awaiting enlistment. 'They started off armed with pitch forks and were later given .303 rifles.' Robert Beard.

Lieutenant JSC Beard. Although he was a captain in WW1, Grayshott's Home Guard was a platoon and platoons were commanded by lieutenants, so Stanley had to take a demotion. He captured his men's training on cine film.



The appalling effect of poison gas in the first war made it the source of government and public dread in the second, to the extent that the nationwide issue of gas masks was one of the first civil defence precautions. It was profoundly feared. Nonetheless, veterans such as Stanley, men who had already suffered it once, stepped forward again to protect their homeland.

In his profession as an architect Stanley had skills that were more useful to the wider war effort than to the Home Guard. He was soon 'requisitioned' by the Air Ministry to survey bomb damage and design factories. Thereafter he spent much of his time in London, although his departure from the Home Guard didn't leave him bereft of occasional excitement:

'My father was called one night in 1943 to go down to the Express Dairy building in Fulham, which had been hit by incendiary bombs. He drove down in the pitch darkness from the Hallam Street flat where he had been staying to find the building on fire. The milk floats were housed on the ground floor but the horses were taken up a ramp to bed upstairs. He managed to get the horses out to safety before the roof collapsed. His experience with horses in the First World War gave him the know-how.

'There were also times when he spent the night as a volunteer on the roof of St Paul's Cathedral with the

Architects' Group, armed with a long-handled shovel to reach the lead gutters. Their job was to scoop up any incendiaries which had rolled down the roof and throw them down to the street below, before they could burn through the lead gutters.' Robert Beard

Stanley passed command of Grayshott to his 2i/c, another WW1 veteran, 2nd Lt JW Slater DCM.

Some of our veteran warriors may have been creaky in the joints but they weren't short of experience. Elizabeth Coleman wrote of her husband Fred:

'He joined the Home Guard that was started for the older men who were not able to join the Army. As he had experienced the First World War as a stretcher-bearer (and had been awarded the Military Medal for bravery), he had experience and was soon helping to instruct men in the use of firearms, having taken training courses to update his knowledge in the subject.'

The British Army's experience of defeat in the Blitzkrieg of May and June 1940 left it in a state of acute shock. The Allies had simply not adapted to the German tactics, which had been tested in the Spanish Civil War and refined during their invasion of Poland. However, they soon learned.

The Blitzkrieg method used concentrated force to achieve a quick breakthrough. Rather than attacking on a broad front, WW1-style, several coordinated attacks were made at weak points, aiming to achieve deep penetration followed by pincer movements to encircle the defenders. In his book *New Ways of War* the author Tom Wintringham, who had faced German tanks in the Spanish Civil war, wrote 'It does not hit like a fist, but like long, probing fingers with armoured finger-nails. Each separate claw seeks a weak spot...' The keys to this strategy were motorised mobility, with tanks as the



The Guard's official enlistment age was 17 but it wasn't strictly enforced. We think these lads at bayonet drill are Boy Scouts. They are equipped with WW1-era Lee-Enfield No1 MkIII rifles and the formidable-looking Pattern 1907 bayonet.



Instruction on the Vickers machine gun. A fearsome weapon, a long way from carving knives tied to broomsticks.



'Ow me knees!' Rifle drill, defending Grayshott Hall's ha-ha.

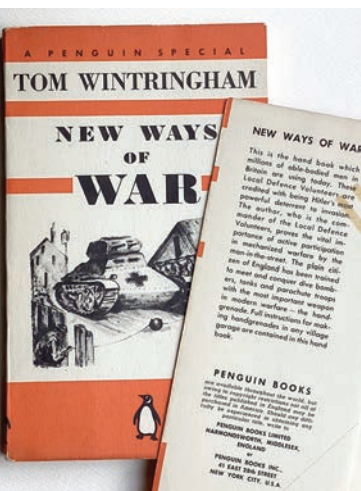


armoured finger-nails, and the use of aircraft as airborne artillery to quickly smash points of resistance.

The landscape of southern England didn't lend itself well to Blitzkrieg. Motors need roads, and even tanks struggle when faced with rivers, wetlands, steep hills, and thick woods. The designers of Britain's anti-invasion defences therefore very quickly put in place a system intended to deny rapid motorised movement, by fortifying routes of communication. Railways, road junctions and river crossings were made into strongpoints. If you take the train to London you can still see arrays of concrete tank-stoppers in the cuttings, especially under bridges. The defenders didn't have to hold out forever,

just long enough for reinforcements or air cover to arrive. Blitzkrieg relied upon the Luftwaffe having air superiority, so it could demolish those strongpoints before the reinforcements got there. That's why, in the summer of 1940, Hitler was obsessed with destroying the RAF and why the Battle of Britain was exactly that.

So how was Grayshott affected? The principal fortified stop-line was the GHQ Line, which ran from northern Kent to the Bristol Channel, looping to the south of London. Locally, it followed the river Wey from Godalming to Farnham, then off towards Alton. The nearest it came to us was Tilford, where you can still see some cracking good pillboxes and artillery emplacements. This meant that Grayshott was in the battle zone – the area that was expected to be overrun.



Tom Wintringham helpfully included instructions for home-made hand grenades.

If the RAF hadn't held the Luftwaffe at bay in 1940, and if Hitler had invaded Britain instead of Russia in June of 1941, how would Grayshott have fared?

The top of Gibbet Hill is the highest point for miles. An invader would need to occupy the position, which gives a panoramic view across the Wey Valley – and the GHQ Line – and over the Weald from the North Downs to the South, and as far as London. The only feasible route for a motorised assault from the south coast was up the A3, which would certainly have been defended by regular Army troops, from Longmoor and Bordon for example.



Having smashed through Petersfield, Liss and Liphook, the Panzer commanders would have sought out the next weak spot. They had high quality maps – copies of our own Ordnance Survey sheets – and would certainly have noted the B3002 as a parallel route to their main advance. Grayshott's defenders would have expected an armoured spearhead to flank northwards at Bramshott and push up over Ludshott to our ridgetop. The Canadian tank units hadn't arrived in the area by then and those open areas were pretty much undefendable. Confined by Stoney Bottom on one side and Whitmore on the other, the tanks would have come our way. Just like today's commuters up Headley Road.

We don't have a record of the Home Guard's defence plan for Grayshott, but we know their general strategy. They would have set up a Defended Locality based upon an Anti-Tank Island. This would typically have been a crossroads, in our case most likely Crossways. Here they would have set up mines, mortars, gun positions and various home-made devices. One such was a sledge loaded with grenades and pulled across the road by a wire, intended to break a tank's tracks. It was a suicide mission for the wire-puller. The spire of St Luke's would have been home to an Observation Post and a few snipers.

Realistically the Grayshott Home Guard were not going to stop the Panzers on their own. They were part of a layered defence system intended to slow down and weaken the German advance. Our men would have been slaughtered and Grayshott flattened by Stukas. In the summer of 1940 this seemed a very real prospect and the men and women of the Home Guard and Civil Defence services volunteered in the full knowledge of what might be asked of them.



The Great Wall of Whitmore. We don't know exactly what this structure was for. It's made of brick, camouflaged, has ventilation pipes coming out of the roof and blocks the exit from Whitmore Vale Road. It's presumed to be part of a system intended to defend Crossways, although a single tank shell would have blown it to smithereens. The photo was taken by Stanley Beard.



Lt Slater leads the Home Guard past the War Memorial....



.... followed by the Fire Brigade ...



.... and the Special Constables ...



.... then Major Wessel leading his ARP team of ...



.... First Aid Nurses ...



.... And WVS ladies followed by ARP Wardens.

Another of Stanley's reels, this time of the Civil Defence Remembrance Day parade.

Fortunately Grayshott's part-time soldiers weren't required to face Panzers. Robert Beard recalled the actual duties of our gentlemen:

'The Home Guard used to turn out at night to round up German aircrew who had survived being shot down and then they were held overnight to be collected the next morning. My abiding memory of these men was their absolute relief to have surrendered. Most of them were conscripts who didn't want to be up there anyway.'

In the next chapter we look at some of our men and women who wore their uniforms full-time.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

Graham Yarborough – Merchant and Royal Navy
In Volume 1 Graham told us his stories of village life. In 1942, aged 16, he became an apprentice Merchant Navy officer and joined his first cargo ship at Avonmouth. This is what he had to say about it:

'There was no time for 'new boy' niceties — you were expected to learn and learn fast. My memories of Atlantic convoys were mixed. Very rough weather, carrying war cargoes for starters. An American tracked army vehicle lashed on a hatch by bottle screws broke loose in thirty-foot waves, partially slipped down on the deck, inches from crushing me against a bulkhead. While sailing east up the Channel by Lyme Bay one night, I remember being called up on deck, virtually naked, to assist the Navy gunners with our one twelve pounder gun. German E-boats had been reported lying in wait for shipping inside Lyme Bay. I had gone through a course using machine guns but they were never fitted to our

ship. Instead we had two PAC (parachute and cable) rockets which when fired trailed a steel cable. The idea was the cables could get entangled in the propellers of low flying Focke-Wulf Condor aircraft. As we steamed towards the Isle of Wight by daylight, we had an engine room fire and were making so much smoke, we were lucky not to attract the German bombers who were being attacked in the sky above us. We had some near misses though, when moored in London's dockland.

'I was next on a tanker bound for New Jersey. We were amazed at the normality of the USA and made a quick trip to New York for 'goodies' to take home. I also rescued a pathetic, badly treated kitten in the dockyard. I smuggled it aboard and luckily secreted it ashore in my uniform jacket when we docked in the UK. We called it 'Happy' and it lived at home long after the war years. I preferred the life on a tanker but thoughts of ending in a fire-ball were always there.

'Having seen the carnage U-boats caused, and an aged tanker take a large wave full on the well deck in a force 9 gale in the Bay of Biscay and disappear with all hands, I decided to have a change. The Merchant Navy never received the accolades they deserved and without them the UK would have been in serious trouble. My original intention had been to join the Royal Navy and I was now old enough to do so. I did some training at HMS Ganges, where I was awarded a silver boatswain's (bosun's) whistle, which I have retained to this day. Following this I trained at Chatham on electrics, torpedoes and mining. From then on I served mostly on destroyers in the Mediterranean, East Indies and Pacific fleet. I felt more at home on destroyers, it was much easier to get to know your fellow crew.'

The minimum enlistment age for the Royal Navy was 18, but the Merchant Navy took on 14-year-olds as galley boys and 16-year-olds like Graham for deck duties. They were exposed to the same risks of war as everyone else on board. The Merchant Navy kept Britain fed, fuelled and armed and over a quarter of its seamen and women died in the process.



Graham whilst serving on the destroyer HMS Penn, 1945.

Lt Commander John Bruce Murray – Fleet Air Arm
Keith Cox has lived in the village since the early 1970s and has owned and run his shop Business Connections (Bizcon) since 2008. He once casually told us that his grandfather, John Bruce Murray, was a Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm Swordfish pilot who flew in the Battle of Taranto.

'He used to joke that he secretly built a motorcycle in the loft and used it when he ran away from home at sixteen to go and join the RAF.'

Of course, we had to find out more.

John did indeed join the RAF and qualified as a Pilot Officer. In 1937 he transferred to the Royal Navy as a Sub-Lieutenant (Air), and at the outbreak of war was serving as a Swordfish pilot with 824 Squadron on the aircraft carrier HMS Eagle.

The Eagle at that time was stationed at Singapore, and was sent to search for German warships in the Indian Ocean. This involved John and his comrades flying search patterns over the featureless ocean and hoping to spot something. Then finding their way back to the carrier, which would have steamed on several miles in the two or three hours since they'd taken off. In May of 1940 Eagle joined the Mediterranean Fleet, where 824 saw action against Italian shipping.

In November of 1940 the Royal Navy decided to attack the Italian Navy's fleet whilst they lay at anchor at Taranto in southern Italy. Six of Eagle's Swordfish and crews, including John, were detached to HMS Illustrious to join the first wave of attackers. The plan was to attack on the night of 11th November.

The first wave consisted of two flare bombers, six torpedo bombers and four dive bombers. John flew a dive bomber, Swordfish E5Q, with Sub-Lt S Paine as his navigator. The flares were to be dropped beyond the ships, to make them visible as silhouettes to the torpedo bombers, who, flying at wavetop height, would themselves be concealed against the dark sea.

The Italians detected the incoming raid and by the time the Swordfish arrived their defences were blazing away. The flare bombers did their job, which caused the Italian gunners to divert their fire upwards. Meanwhile the torpedo bombers dodged in beneath



Swordfish Attack at Taranto by Robert Taylor © Military Gallery www.militarygallery.com

the flak, right down on the water, so low that the Italian gunners aiming at them were hitting their own ships and the town itself.

The dive bombers followed a few minutes later, with John in E5Q as the last man. Flying steadily at 3,000 feet he dropped his bombs on a line of moored ships. One hit the destroyer Libeccio but it failed to detonate. Then it was time to head home, to an early breakfast of whiskey, eggs and cake. A second wave followed, after which the Italian fleet had lost half of its capital ships in one night.

John returned to HMS Eagle which, following several months escorting convoys to Malta, deployed to the South Atlantic to hunt for German ships. There, northwest of Cape Verde, John sank the blockade runner Elbe, which was transporting war materials from Japan to occupied France. He left HMS Eagle at the end of 1941, having received two Mentions in Dispatches, and took a shore role training other Swordfish pilots.

'He was a lovely granddad. After the war he worked at the Admiralty Surface Weapons Establishment up on Portsdown. He liked to bring his work home with him, which could get a bit lively. When there were moles

in the lawn, instead of getting the mole-catcher in he made bombs out of cigar cases and popped them down their hole to blow the whole lot up. He did it once when there were people round, sitting out in the garden. He also built a tractor out of an old Reliant Robin.'

Keith Cox.

The family adventures weren't the sole preserve of John. He was engaged to Keith's gran, Jean Willis, having flown under the Clifton Suspension Bridge to impress her. In October 1940 Jean was a passenger on the Empress of Britain, with her father Frank, a Naval

Sunk Liner Casualties

Chief Officer H. Davies, of the 12,000-ton Canadian Pacific liner Empress of Britain, is now in hospital suffering from machine-gun bullet wounds and other injuries.

This was revealed in the casualty list issued by the company yesterday. The liner sank after being bombed and set on fire in the Atlantic. Chief Officer Davies lives at Great Meols, Cheshire.

Chief Engineer E. Redmond, whose home is at Wallasey, Cheshire, is among the missing. The list also includes:—

DEAD

S. Miller, Stoker; J. Allen, Asst. Stoker; A. Curran, Sec. Stoker; A. Hill, Wtr.; A. Powell, Ldr. Boy; J. Wallis, Warden Man; J. Wilkin, Ldr. Boy

MISSING

S. Bradley, Jr., 4th Engrt; G. Linn, Jun. 1st Engrt; J. Redmond, Engrt; W. Weston, 2nd Bar-Skr; C. Macdon, 2nd Bar-Skr; M. Bayard-Bar-Skr; A. Kilgus, Barber; N. Reading, Ldr. Stwd; J. Allen, Wtr.; J. Atkinson, Wtr.; D. Boston, 4th Bar; J. McPherson, Asst. Stoker; J. Roberts, Ord. Man; M. Macdon, Boiler Att.; A. James, Boiler Att.; A. Knight, Grnd; A. Russell, Grnd

IN HOSPITAL

S. Keay, 1st Officer; G. Potts, 2nd Radio Officer; H. Arnold, Stoker; L. Casswell, Wtr.; E. Jones, Wtr.; P. Beck, Ldr. Boy; J. Fielder, Ldr. Boy; J. Delaney, Ldr. Boy



Blanket-clad Jean, safe ashore on Gourock pier.



John and Jean's wedding, November 1st 1941. At Jean's left shoulder stands Vice Admiral BC Watson CB DSO, Flag Officer in Charge of Greenock Royal Navy base.

commanded by Lt Francis Warrington-Strong. One of Lt W-S's indelible memories was that the first survivor up the scrambling net and over the side was a young lady with painted fingernails - Jean. Sixteen nights later John was heading towards Taranto.

Stores Officer from Cape Town. The Empress was a luxury trans-Atlantic liner that had been requisitioned as a troop transporter, and in October 1940 she was returning from a mission to Suez, via Cape Town. On the 26th, about 70 miles north-west of Ireland, she was bombed by a German Condor long-range bomber.

Badly hit, the Empress caught fire and appeared to be sinking. The passengers and crew abandoned ship, whilst the Condor continued its attack by strafing the decks. Jean and her father descended from the Empress's forecandle by rope ladder; when telling her story many years later she would still remember the machine-gun bullets plinking all around them. They then swam several hundred yards in a rising sea to the Captain's lifeboat. One of the ships that came to their rescue was Royal Navy destroyer HMS Echo,

Henry Thomas Stevens – Royal Artillery

Taranto was a bright star in an otherwise dark year for Britain. By the end of 1940 Germany had occupied Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and most of France. Italy had declared war in June whilst British and French troops were evacuating from France. U-boats had sunk over two million tons of allied ships and the Luftwaffe's Blitz against London, ports and cities was straining the nation's morale and industry. The RAF's victory in the Battle of Britain prevented the Luftwaffe from gaining air superiority over the English Channel, but by the end of the year the threat of invasion still seemed very real. It was perhaps for this reason that on 12th December Henry Stevens of Whitmore signed up.

'My granddad 'Harry' lived in Headley and in 1933 he married Minnie Mullard from Hindhead. They bought a patch of land down in Whitmore, and as a plumber he was handy enough to build a little bungalow there, Moor Haven. Their daughter Sylvia – my mum – was born on 3rd September 1939, the very day Britain declared war on Germany.



A 3.7" HAA gun in action against the Gothic Line.

'Harry enlisted voluntarily and joined the Royal Artillery Heavy Anti-Aircraft batteries. At first he served in the UK, around Birmingham and Teeside. Then in March of 1943 he was posted to the 1st Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, and in July they were sent to the Med for the invasion of Sicily, as part of the Eighth Army. He went ashore just after the first landings. His guns protected the beachheads and airfields, where they were heavily strafed and dive-bombed.

'From Sicily he fought all the way up through Italy, 1944-45, including the terrible battles at Monte Cassino and the Gothic Line. At Cassino he fought beside

Polish soldiers and he used to say to me 'Whenever you meet a Polish man treat him with respect for what I witnessed'. His big 3.7" guns weren't just used against high-flying aircraft, they were used as anti-tank and field artillery too, close to the enemy. Dozens of his comrades were killed.



'Harry didn't talk very much about it. I think he had shell-shock – he stuttered and his hands shook. After leaving the army he came back to Whitmore and had a more or less normal life. He worked for Coxhead and Welch in Grayshott – he always thought of Grayshott as home – and he was proud of having helped repair the lead roof on St Luke's church.'

Martin Wood.

Harry was a brave man – he didn't have to volunteer. As a qualified plumber he was in a reserved occupation, exempt from conscription to help keep the country running. At most, he'd have been expected to join the Home Guard or ARP. In the uneasy days of invasion anxiety and Blitz he may have thought he could do more to protect his family and country by shooting down enemy bombers rather than clearing up after them.



Garnett Myers – Canadian Army

People volunteered for many reasons – patriotism, ideology, escapism, adventure and in the case of many Canadians, who were notoriously lively, just for a bit of fun and a fight. Not many were looking for love, although its adjacent activities were popular, but plenty found it. Of the 370,000 Canadian soldiers that came to and through the UK in WW2, over 10% of them married local girls. One of them was Garnett Myers, a carpenter and son of a boat-builder from Nova Scotia. Ann Myers, founder of Grayshott Community Library, told us her father-in-law's story.



Harry's Medals. From left to right: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal and War Medal. The 1939-45 Star was awarded for at least 180 days operational service overseas, and the Italy Star is a proud token of a relentless, attritional campaign.

'Garnett, known as Garth, was stationed in Bramshott. He met Dorothy Blakeway of Headley Down whilst she was nursing at Waterside House Rehabilitation Hospital in Passfield. Dorothy was a young widow; her husband Lawrence, a tanker with the 10th Royal Hussars, had been killed near Benghazi less than nine months after their wedding. This failed to put her off soldiers and Dorothy and Garth were married in July 1945. (Front cover photo).

'Most war brides emigrated to Canada, but on this occasion Garth went home to de-mob and in 1946 returned to England and Dorothy. They lived at Etheldene in Headley Down, where Dorothy's parents had once run a small laundry, and had two children, Harvey then Roland. Garth worked for the local building firm Chapman, Lowry & Puttick as a labourer and scaffolder until he retired.

'I married Garth's eldest son Harvey, and our children Glenn and Kim – Garth's grandchildren – both work at Grayshott Pottery.'

Richard Beard – RAF

In Volume 1 we wrote of the tragic accidental death of Pilot Officer Richard Glendenning Beard, son of John Stanley Beard of Grayshott Hall and his first wife Amelia. Through information kindly provided by his family we can now tell more of his story.

Richard joined the RAF immediately after leaving school, aged 18, and volunteered as aircrew. It was the summer of 1940 at the height of the Battle of Britain, and every young man dreamed of being a fighter pilot. Richard was a brilliant games player but had never passed an exam in his life until he learnt to fly; he was obviously totally committed to succeed. Upon completion of his basic pilot training in July 1941 he was granted his commission as a 'Pilot Officer on Probation'. This meant that he'd received his 'wings' but his officer status was subject to the successful completion of further training. For this he was sent to No 54 Operational Training Unit, where he learned to fly twin-engined Blenheims as a night-fighter pilot. On passing out from OTU in November he was assigned to 1452 Turbinlight Flight at West Malling, Kent.

The Turbinlight system was a dual aircraft night-fighter concept, whereby a powerful searchlight installed into the nose of a Douglas Havoc would supposedly illuminate an enemy aircraft, thus enabling a following fighter to shoot it down. It was a tricky business and the searchlight made the Havoc cumbersome to handle.

In the spring of 1942 Richard's Commanding Officer was Squadron Leader James

Marshall DFC, a Battle of Britain veteran who was famed for once ramming a Heinkel bomber with his Hurricane's wing after his ammo ran out. On 18th April Richard was with Marshall during a visit to his C/O's former squadron at Hunsdon, Hertfordshire. For the return flight Marshall was at the controls of their Turbinlite Havoc. It was reported by eyewitnesses that shortly after take-off, whilst performing and aerobatic beat-up of his girlfriend's home nearby, the aircraft flipped on its back, dived to the ground and crashed in flames. Richard and Marshall were killed, along with Sergeant CW Allen.

It was an awful waste of young lives and Richard's family were devastated. Their grief was compounded by a version of events put forward by the RAF at the time that Richard was

the pilot. We know not why this was said – perhaps it was an effort to preserve the reputation of a war hero when the Battle of Britain was still pretty much the only victory to Britain's credit – but it was untrue. Contemporary documents now available prove categorically that Marshall was the pilot.

'When Dick got his wings he celebrated by flying low up Hammer Lane and buzzing the tower of Grayshott Hall. He was

my darling big brother. On his very rare visits home on leave, he would come upstairs in his elegant RAF uniform and wish me goodnight. We were all heartbroken.' Patsy Roynon.

Frank and Geoff Burwood - RAF

Frank Burwood and his wife Marj moved to our area in 1963. Marj passed away in 2023, age 99, and Frank at 103 years joined her in 2025. Frank was in the RAF and his proud grand-daughter Sarah passed his story on to us.

'Frank was walking along the street in London one day when he saw an RAF recruiting stand and he joined up, just like that. He volunteered for aircrew and was posted to Canada for training. He was selected to be a navigator and flew on Avro Ansons, Fairey Battles and Hudsons. Whilst in Canada he met up with his younger brother Geoff, at Niagara Falls. It was probably the last time they met.

'Geoff was also in the RAF and became the pilot of a Halifax bomber. He was shot down and killed, along with all his crew. After the war Frank spent a lot of time researching Geoff's death, the facts of which he did manage to establish. He enjoyed his time with the RAF and kept many mementos, which we still have, and treasure.'

In his diary Frank wrote of a ditching in the Gulf of St Lawrence. 'Dusk patrol this evening. Took off at 6pm. At 9pm our plane crashed into Tracadie Bay. Starboard engine was U/S. No-one hurt. All four of us climbed out on to the wing with the dingy and inflated it. Salvaged



(Top) Frank (left) and Geoff at Niagara Falls, February 1943; in the cockpit of an Anson; his Observer's wing, taped into his souvenir album.

plane crashed into Tracadie Bay.
Starboard engine was U.S.

the Aldis & battery & parachutes etc. Shoved off and headed for the shore. Took us 2½ hours, using a parachute as a sail & half the navigator's desk as a paddle. W/C Petrie met us on the shore with a bottle of rum and congratulated us. After chatting with various spectators we were taken back to camp in the ambulance. All the rest of the crew were tight – too much rum.'

Frank's patrol was probably searching for German U-boats, which liked to stalk Allied convoys in the Gulf, though it's unlikely they'd have torpedoed his dingy. Frank often retold this story whilst laughing heartily, but his jolly recollection belies the composure needed to fly over freezing seas for hours on end.

Frank's brother, Pilot Officer Geoff Burwood, served with 640 Squadron, based at Leconfield in Yorkshire. On the night of 2nd/3rd June Geoff and his crew took off in Halifax MZ541 to bomb railway yards at Trappes, south-west of Paris. This was part of the campaign to disrupt German transport systems prior to D-Day, so it was an important mission. On the return journey they were shot down by a night-fighter and crashed just outside the village of Epernon. All on board were killed.

The people of Epernon believed that Geoff steered the stricken aircraft away from the village and, at the expense of himself and his crew, saved the lives of many civilians. The villagers retrieved such remains of the crew as they could and placed them in two coffins which, after being briefly taken away by the Germans, were returned and buried in a shared grave the village cemetery, where they remain. Geoff's remains were identified by his identity disc and gold cygnet ring. In 1947 the village erected a memorial in their honour, which is maintained to this day.

Audrey Penfold – WAAF

In Volume 1 Chris Vardy told us about her mother, Gwen Cole, who was a Fire Watcher and ambulance driver. The story continues:

'Audrey Penfold, Penny as we called her, was a younger school friend of our mother. I remember her as a handsome, intelligent, fun and rather formidable lady. I was told that she flew in planes during the war. My sister Frances remembers her as being very fit. We shared a beach hut with her and swam almost every day in the summer. Her husband Sydney was a pilot. The story was that she proved women were anatomically safe to parachute.'

Audrey Penfold wasn't the first female parachutist, but she was the RAF's first female parachute instructor. Having left school at 16 and joined the Civil Service as a clerical



Audrey, on the left, adjusts a trainee's harness.

assistant, when war came she joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force. In 1944 she trained military nurses, who flew in RAF transport planes to evacuate the wounded from the battlefields of Europe. These were the so-called 'Flying Nightingales' and they safely brought back thousands of wounded soldiers. On their outbound flights the aircraft carried supplies and ammo, so couldn't carry the Red Cross marking for protection. On their return, the Nightingales' parachutes were taken from them and stowed under lock and key. In a crash situation they were forbidden to jump and ordered to stay with their patients come what may. Not a single patient died whilst in their care.

After the war Audrey instructed nurses of the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service of the RAF Medical Parachute unit, who were intended to jump down to treat casualties beyond the easy reach of ground parties. To qualify, the Para-Nurses did one less training jump than men, which excluded them from wearing the coveted Parachute Jump Wings badge. How mean and rotten!

In 1949 Section Officer Audrey Penfold was awarded the MBE.

THE WOMEN'S SERVICES

The combined brains at Heritage HQ have been unable to compile a full list of Grayshott's women who served, largely because organisations such as the Women's Voluntary Service and ARP have left no definitive roll-call of their members. However, we offer here what can only be a very incomplete list.



Women's Land Army:
Miss Dorothea Duggan



Women's Voluntary Service:
Elizabeth Peskett.

St John Ambulance:
Katherine Fisher,
Phyllis Graham.



Women's Auxiliary Air Force: Kathleen, Evelyn and Betty Grout,
M Gosling, JW Lovett, B Read, ME Skeet.



Women's Royal Navy Service:
Viva Blomfield,
Mary Groves,
sisters Joan and Lillian Mustill,
Evelyn Duggan,
MS Banfield,
A Bulley,
F Reynolds,
AMJ Tuke,
A Wilkinson,
Mary Groves.



Air Raid Precautions: Alice Blyth, Grace Leuchars, Jane Reoch

ARP First Aid: Hilda Yarborough, Kathleen Wessel, Julia Bell, Louise Parker, Mrs Dorothea Duggan, Mabel Lowther-Crofton, Elsie Johnson, Hilda Rozzell, Winifred Hartwell, Muriel Hartwell.

Voluntary Aid Detachment: Mary Wessel, Kathleen Turner.

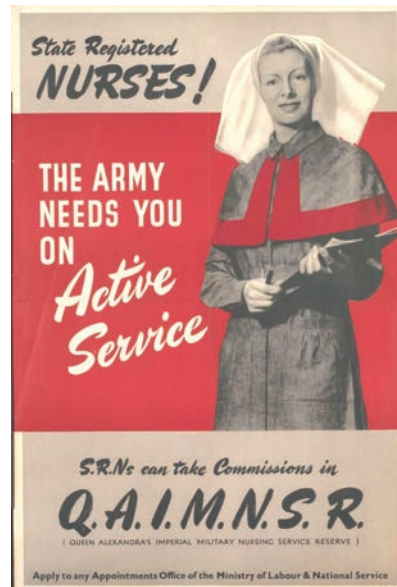


Auxiliary Territorial Service:

CM Falkus,
M Hill,
M Richards,
W Sawkins,
B Soderburg.

In their tribute we can do no better than to quote Major Wessel:

'I would like to express, on behalf of the council, my gratitude to the women of Grayshott for their unbounded generosity to all the services – the Red Cross workers, and the workers for the Navy, Army, Air Force, minesweepers, distressed sailors etc. Grayshott women, we are proud of you!'



Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve: Maria B Hammond.

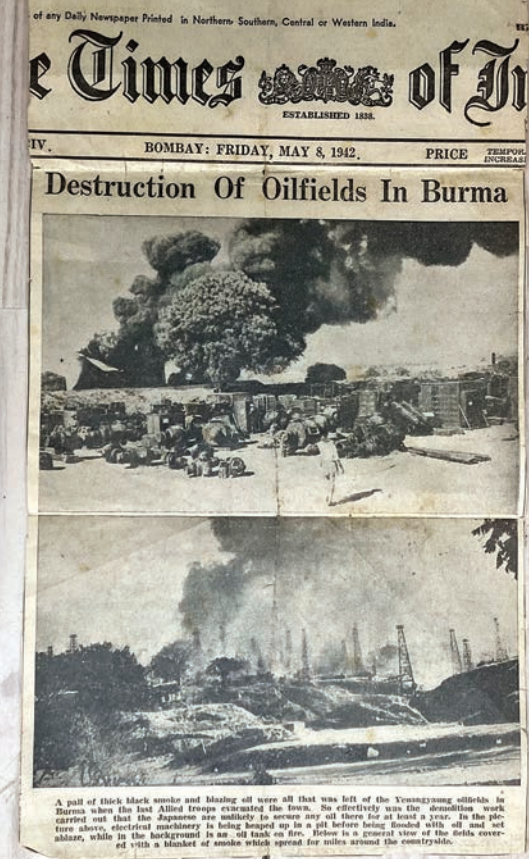
GREAT ESCAPES

We've all seen the film – Steve McQueen, heading for the freedom of Switzerland, jumps his motorbike over the frontier's first barbed wire fence only to become ensnared in a second. McQueen famously did his own stunts, including that brilliant sequence, but although the film was based on a real story that event never happened in real life. Here, some of our villagers tell their family tales of escape and survival. We think they're the equal of anything conjured up by a film studio, and what's more they're true.

Burma – Holly Russell

Within a few hours of their attack on Pearl Harbour, Japan attacked Hong Kong. On Christmas Day of 1941 the Allies surrendered. It was an unbelievable defeat. The Japanese kept going and within a couple of days invaded southern Burma. With the strategic base of Hong Kong gone and the British caught almost totally on the hop, it was obvious to the government, even at this early stage, that Burma was indefensible. This set the scene for Holly Russell's family – Philip and Ursula Price and their daughter Caroline.

'My father was an engineer with the Burmah Oil Company, he ran an oilfield, and the family lived at Yenangyuang, in central Burma. When the Japanese invaded he was ordered to blow up the company's oilfields to stop them falling into enemy hands. He went off to do that, starting in the south and working north, ahead of the Japanese. His job was to tell the army engineers where to put their charges, to do the most damage.



The burning oilfield at Yenangyuang, Holly's dad's handiwork and part of the British scorched earth policy.

'Meanwhile he told my mother to get the family out. She had my older sister Caroline, aged 4, and she was pregnant with me in her womb. There was no official plan at this stage, everyone had to fend for themselves. She heard rumours of a plane coming in to Lashio airfield and bound for India, so she decided to get to Lashio and get out.

'Well, Lashio is over two hundred miles from Yenangyuang, on the far side of Mandalay, and mother had to get there by her own means, pregnant and with a toddler, by hook or by crook. She made it too, well done her! She didn't want to go through Mandalay so she had to go the long way, around it, getting get lifts, taxi rides and whatever. When she got to Lashio she was told 'There's a plane coming to take women and children'. There were already several mothers and children, and the plane didn't come. The next day more women and children arrived, and still the plane didn't come. Then they were told to halve all their luggage. This went on for a week, halving it, halving it, halving it... The plane was supposed to carry 18 people but it eventually carried 36 women and children plus the crew. We were lucky, it got us out and we flew to Calcutta.

'My mother was big with me, and my sister had to perch on the end of her knees. She carried two pairs of knickers and a blouse for herself, a clean dress, knickers and a pair of shoes for Caroline, two dozen terry nappies - in case there was no flight and she had to walk and I was born on route - and a photo album. Caroline carried out two teddy bears and a panda. That was it.

'My mother was what was then called an upper-middle class woman, and educated at university. She met my father in Burma and before they got married she had to be vetted by the oil company to make sure that she was 'the right stuff' for an oilman's wife. By golly she was tough!

'From Calcutta we got a train to Bombay, which is where I was born. From there we went to live in Kashmir, on a houseboat on Lak Dal. I slept in the bottom drawer of a chest of drawers. Eventually we came to Britain by ship. It stopped in the Suez Canal to pick up several hundred Italian Prisoners of War. They put one squaddie either side of the steps coming up from the hold. As we went through the Med my mother thought 'My God, if we're torpedoed there's no way two squaddies are going to hold back all those PoWs - it won't be women and children first!'

'While all this was going on my father was walking out. He was originally in Mandalay and he had to go all the way down to Prome [now Pyay] to blow up the southern oilfields, then he had to walk. He walked all the way up through Burma; the places he came through are underlined in blue on his map.

'He was caught up in a mass exodus, hundreds of thousands all fleeing north. It was a long walk, trying to find enough to eat and water to drink. It was hard going, Burma is no joke. He was carrying new-born babies, he was carrying pregnant women, he was burying the dead in the jungle beside the road, and other people were trailing along with him. Eventually he made his way up to Assam. He got back to Bombay in June, 1942 just in time for my birth.'

Holly Russell

Lashio was the terminus of the Burma Road, the main route to China. It was a buzzing boom-town full of military and civilian comings and goings, where half a dozen languages could be heard at any one time. The RAF used the airfield as a base, and so occasionally did the American Volunteer Group (better known as the legendary Flying Tigers). It would have been a splendid place for a plane spotter to have been stranded for a few days, but Holly's mum obviously had other things on her mind and forgot to jot down her aircraft's type and registration number. We know from her ticket that it was of the China National Aviation Corporation.

CNAC was a joint venture between Pan-Am and the Chinese government, and had operated in the region since 1929. They were a tough bunch with a 'get through' mentality. Much of their fleet was destroyed at Hong Kong, and by February 1942 they were left with just six aircraft, three each of Douglas DC-2 and DC-3 type. One of their DC-3s was riddled with over 3,000 bullet holes but they patched it up and it flew, albeit with an eerie whistling noise. The Prices probably flew in the smaller DC-2 type, which CNAC regularly overloaded by 100% or more.



The Price Ladies' ticket out. It's dated 22nd February but they didn't leave until several days later. The Japanese started bombing Mandalay on 19th February. On the map, Holly's father marked his waypoints in blue underline.



The album and Panda survived (as did both teddies) and are treasured. The knickers and nappies were not preserved.



A CNAC DC-2. Despite wearing civilian markings, the Japanese still shot at them.

There are no reliable figures for the civilian evacuation from Burma. The estimate of 500,000 refugees and 100,000 deaths is generally accepted. The route north

from Rangoon became known as the Long March or Road of Death. Holly's father walked it, albeit as an engineer on a mission rather than a refugee. The distance from Prome/Pyay to his arrival at Dimapur, Assam, on 25th April is 500 miles as the crow flies and considerably more by his zig-zag route between oilfields. There were few decent roads, and those were clogged by civilians trudging north against the flow of army trucks heading south. It was a chaotic and brutal trek through hilly jungle terrain, infested by malaria and cholera. The government, companies and missionaries did what they could, where they could reach, but their impact was minimal. It's largely forgotten by history, overshadowed by the emerging military crisis and with very few survivor's accounts.

Dunkirk - Edward Russell, by his son Mike

The evacuation of Dunkirk in May and June of 1940 was the culmination of a calamitous military humiliation for the Allied armies, which, through the brilliant oratory of Churchill's 'We shall fight them on the beaches' speech was turned into a focus of national resolve. Holly's husband Mike recalls the adventure of his father, Edward Lloyd Garfield Russell.

'Edward was a driver-cum-chauffeur before the war, and a Territorial with the Sussex Engineers. He was called up into full time service and became the batman to his C/O, Colonel Glanister. He became great friends with the Colonel but always refused to take promotion. This was with the British Expeditionary Force in Belgium, during the German Blitzkrieg.

'They made it back to the beach at Dunkirk, where they were heavily shelled. At one point he was knocked over and feeling his trousers were soaked thought 'Oh my God, I've been shot'. But it was a bottle of brandy he'd hidden down his trouser leg, smashed.

'He made it back to Britain and stayed with the Sussex Engineers. He went back to France two days after D-Day. The back of his Jeep was loaded with food made by his mother, his wife and the Colonel's wife. He went right through France and finished the war in Holland.'

The Death Railway - George Stevens, by his niece Rosemarie Orchard

The fall of Singapore in February of 1942 was another catastrophe for Britain and led to our largest defeat in history. About 80,000 Allied troops were captured, additional to the 50,000 or so already taken in Malaya - over three times as many as at Dunkirk. Rosemarie Orchard continues her family's story.

'My uncle, George Stevens, was a sapper in the Royal Engineers. He was captured at Singapore and taken to a work camp in northern Thailand. This was No 4 PoW Camp at Kanburi, and with thousands of others he was put to work on the infamous Death Railway.

'The men were forced to work 16 hours a day and were fed just three bowls of rice. One of George's worst tasks was when he was made to build a funeral pyre to burn the bodies of his comrades who'd died of cholera. There was no medical care in the camp other than what the men could do for themselves. Uncle George wrote a list of his diseases - beri-beri, dengue fever, ring-worm, malaria, hearing loss and nervous disorders.

'By good luck he got a job in the cookhouse. He managed to strike up a rapport with the Japanese cook and for several weeks was able to sneak food out to his mates. That kept him going for a while, until a new cook was brought in who would beat him twice a day, then he was sent out to work on the rails.

'In 1944 George and 2,100 others were sent to work in the copper mines in Japan. They were packed in the holds of two ships, both of which were torpedoed by the American submarine USS Pampanito. This was another of George's lucky moments - relatively. Before the war, living in Isleworth, he'd learned to swim in the Thames. He would occasionally earn pocket money by retrieving bodies from the river, where he learnt that the Surrey authorities paid a shilling or two more than their Middlesex colleagues. At the age of 14 he started work as a cabin boy on the Thames sailing barges, so he was at home on and in the water.



'Of the PoWs on board, 1,159 died, of which 350 were in lifeboats and killed by the Japanese navy as they made for land. George, a strong swimmer and less emaciated than most others, was one of the 600 survivors who spent 2½ days in the water. They were pulled out by a Japanese ship, black with diesel oil, and paraded through the streets of Tokyo, wrapped in blankets, as a morale booster for the Japanese civilians.

'At Sakata No 22 PoW camp in Japan Uncle George got lucky yet again, with another cookhouse job. The Japanese didn't eat offal so he managed once more to sneak out vitamin-rich scraps. By then he'd learned a bit of Japanese. One day Emperor Hirohito was talking on the radio, and the guards were standing around with their heads down. The radio was by the toilet, the prisoners were taking turns to make a visit to sneak a listen, and George always swore that he was on the toilet when he heard 'the war is finished'.

'Uncle George weighed just six stone on his release. The ex-prisoners were due to fly to New Zealand to be fattened up before repatriation to Britain, and even then his luck continued. He was queuing to board the plane to New Zealand, the man in front got on but George was stopped and told there was no more room. That plane was caught in a typhoon and crashed, killing everyone on board.

'He did make it to New Zealand, and returned to Britain in February 1946. He rarely talked about his experience at home but he wrote of it in notes that he made afterwards for the Far East Prisoners of War Association. He sometimes found himself crying for no reason, unable to speak, and had horrible nightmares about drowning and being beaten up. He found comfort in meeting up with old comrades and always led his local Remembrance Day parade.'

The Death Railway was the Siam-Burma Railway, 258 miles of track built between 1940 and 1943 connecting Ban Pong (Thailand) and Thanbyuzayat (Myanmar). It was the subject of the book and film *The Bridge on the River Kwai*. About 12,000 Allied Pows died during its construction, along with about 90,000 local civilians – one death for every 4½ yards of track. Around 70% of the British prisoners of Japan survived, but many of them never truly escaped from their ordeal.

Opposite: Alison Orchard's family treasures. Before his posting to Singapore George was stationed in Walsall, where he met his sweetheart Dorothy. All his letters from the camps, most of them on pre-printed cards, mention her, and she waited for him. At bottom left is his telegram home, sent upon safe arrival in New Zealand. At top right, back in England, George and Dorothy re-united. They married and had 50 years together. At top centre, George leading his local Remembrance Day parade. At bottom right, a souvenir note of Japanese Invasion Money, known as banana money.



Sumatra - Patricia Field

'I spent my early childhood in Sumatra, where my father, Ian Ritchie Matheson, was a tea planter in Simbolon. When the Japanese invaded Malaya in February of 1942 I was four years old. A lot of Japanese aeroplanes were flying over Sumatra every day and it was obvious to the adults that after Malaya fell, we were next. Most British families decided that it was time to get the women and children out.'

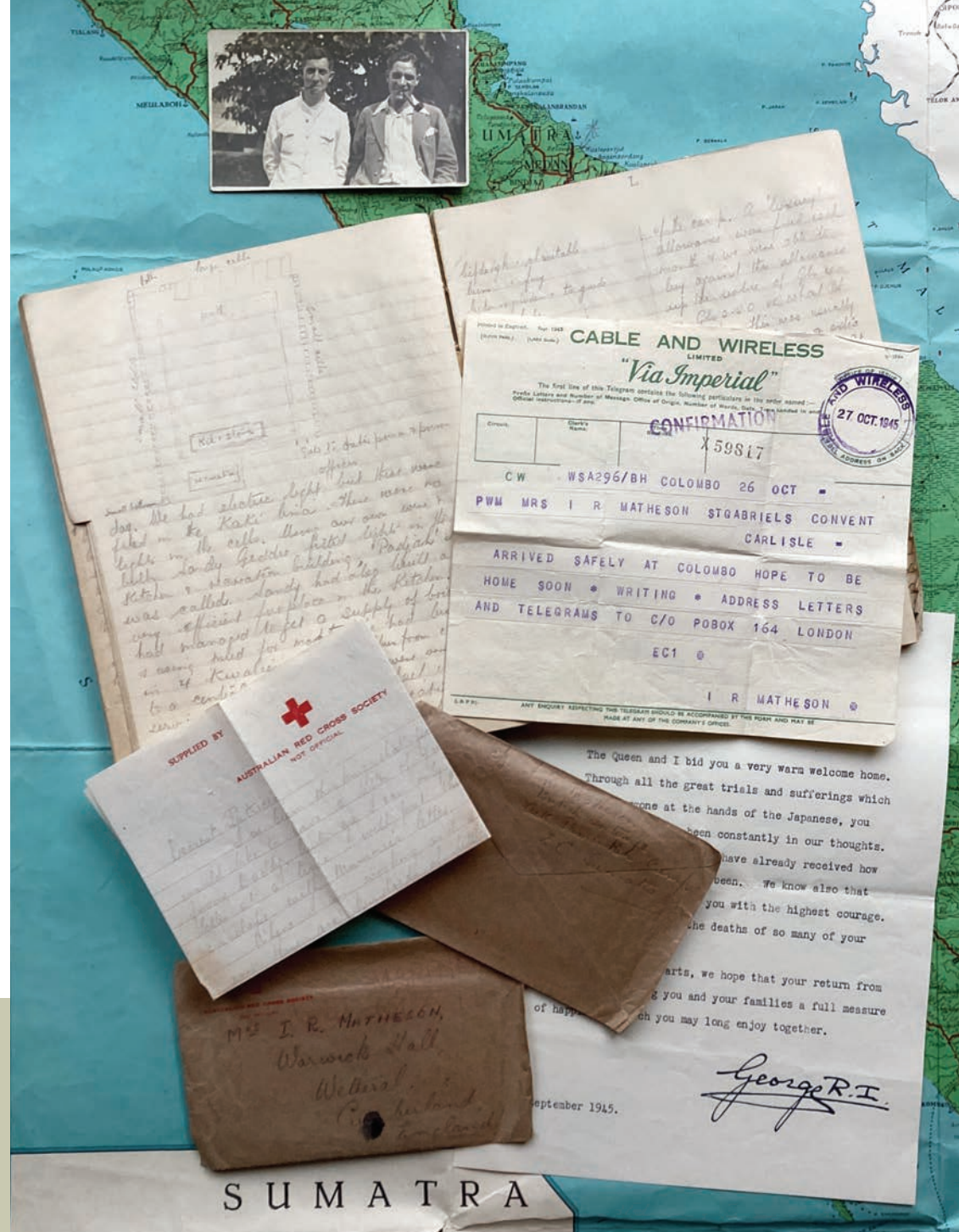
'I remember my mother and I being taken away in a car in the dead of night, a very long drive. When we arrived there was a huge black shadow overwhelming us, an aeroplane. I was screaming. Somebody came down the steps and took us on board, then we were away. We flew to Calcutta, then on to stay with my uncle in Darjeeling. At one time I nearly died of dysentery. Eventually we sailed in the P&O liner RMS Mooltan from Bombay to Glasgow, and we finally settled at a hotel in Warwick Bridge, Cumberland. I was later told by my mother that we were on the last American aeroplane out of Sumatra.'

'My father didn't make it out. He was captured by the Japanese and spent the rest of the war in internment camps in Sumatra. At first the Japanese didn't know what to do with the European planters, so they sent them back to their estates to keep working, although their houses had been looted and the local workers had deserted. By good forethought my father had buried supplies of rice and tinned food among the tea bushes, so he was able to survive. Three of my father's friends were shot in cold blood by the Japanese and their bodies left in a ravine.'

'Eventually the European civilians were rounded up and imprisoned. To begin with my father and 30-40 other British plus 150 Dutch were at Siantar prison camp. In 1943 he was moved to an all-British camp at Bindjai. He had the good luck to be with his brother Eric, a rubber planter, and they helped each other to endure.'

'It's well known now that the camps were horrific, with terrible conditions of malnutrition, disease and forced labour. The British got themselves organised by creating a semblance

Opposite: Some of Patricia's family treasures. Her father, Ian Matheson, on the right with big pipe, and his brother Eric. Ian's exercise book survived through his internment and contains poems, recipes, language lessons and his plans for the future, plus his account of prison life written on the voyage home. Here he's sketched the plan of Bindjai prison. Letters to Patricia and her mother, through the Australian Red Cross. This one begins "Dearest Patricia, I've been thinking that perhaps you would like to have a letter of your very own from Daddy..." The telegram sent from Colombo, homeward-bound, and a letter of welcome from King George and Queen Mary.



of normality, with talks, lessons, duty rotas and a communal money kitty. In October 1944 he was moved again, to a rubber estate at Panigoeran. Amidst the forced labour on the plantations, my father and Eric made themselves a little garden plot and grew peanuts, beans and spinach. It wasn't until November of 1944 that my father received a letter through the Red Cross telling him that mother and I were safe.

'When the war ended there were no Allied troops near Sumatra so the former internees had to see to their own immediate welfare. My father and some of his fittest friends bought chickens and vegetables from the locals to take to the women's camp, 16 km away. There, they found that the conditions were even more atrocious than at their own. With children to look after, the women had been less able to fend for themselves than the men. This is what he wrote:

'I shall never forget the smell and squalor of the women's camps. The pale, undersized children, many of them naked, the grey-faced, haggard women, clad in patched rags, many in pants and brassiere only, and all bare-foot. The outstanding impression was of smell, filth, noise and overwrought children. I recalled my prayer of thanks to God for his great mercy that my two were not there.'

'He and about fifty others from the men's camp spent the next few weeks at the women's camp, taking over the kitchens and generally helping to make life easier for them until the Allied armies arrived. Some officers had been dropped by parachute, and lists of survivors collected and radioed home, but he had no knowledge of whether or not we knew that he was alive.

'The 5,000 women and children were evacuated first, before the men. My father's journey home started in a truck, driven by a Japanese soldier and escorted by a Dutch parachutist. Then by Dakota to Singapore, where he had a bread and egg sandwich, neither of which he'd tasted for three years. During the long voyage back to Britain by ship he wrote an account of his 3½ years as a prisoner. He wrote it in my mother's kitchen book, which he'd grabbed before being taken to the camp. I still have it.

'Then he came by train and taxi to Warwick Bridge, where, expecting him, the whole hotel was awake with excitement at 2am. When he arrived mother was still on the station platform waiting for the wrong train! The same taxi that delivered him went back for my mother, and very soon we were all re-united.'

AFTERSHOCKS

The six years of WW2 saw a new world order emerge. Britain was still – just – at the top table of superpowers but events such as the fall of Singapore had shaken faith in the protective abilities of distant imperial rulers. There were immediate and irresistible demands for self-government, uncountable numbers of displaced people, ruined factories and fields and the growing footprint of communism. For millions of people around the world there were no street parties and bunting, just more violence, dislocation and death.

Palestine - Holly Russell

After WW1 Britain and France had been left holding the baby in the Middle East. The region's long-standing overlord, the Ottoman Empire, was gone for good and there was the obvious risk of the region tumbling into chaos. The League of Nations placed Palestine under British administration with a view to the eventual formation of independent nation states. This was the so-called British Mandate. It included the establishment of a Jewish national homeland, which encouraged large scale Jewish immigration, mostly by ship.

In 1939, with appalling timing, the British unwisely introduced immigration caps and intercepted, even fired upon, several ships. Anti-British feelings surged, as did sectarian violence. Immediately after WW2, catalysed by post-Holocaust immigration, there was a violent insurgency against the British Mandate. British troops, whilst attempting to act as peacekeepers between Jewish and Arab groups, were seen as an enemy by both.

Holly Russell again:

'With no Burmese oilfields to manage, my father was seconded to the army and sent to Palestine. This was 1946. His job was to send back the little boats coming in from Europe full of Jews. He had to send them on to Cyprus, knowing that they wouldn't make it, they were such rust buckets. They were so thrilled to have made it to Israel, but sent away. It gave him a nervous breakdown and he came home.'

Sumatra - Patricia Field

Prior to the war Sumatra was part of the Dutch East Indies. An independence movement had begun in 1908, and during the wartime occupation Japan encouraged nationalist sentiment. The Dutch had been unpopular and many Sumatrans were tolerant towards the Japanese, seeing them as just another colonial overlord. Japan

unconditionally surrendered on August 15th 1945 and Sumatra declared itself part of the new Republic of Indonesia on the 17th. This went down badly with the Dutch and there followed several years of armed conflict known as the Indonesian War of Independence.

Patricia Field takes up her family's story.

'My father went back to Sumatra in September of 1947. He was the first British planter to return and his job was to restore the tea plantations, which had been destroyed by the Japanese and local factions. On arriving at his old estate, the first person to greet him was his old cook, Wakidju. Of the 15,000 acres of beautiful tea gardens, which they were so proud of, only 6,000 remained and those were in a dreadful, overgrown condition. All but one factory had been burned or gutted, and even that had subsided at an angle. All the bungalows and warehouses had also been burned.

'By much hard work my father and his assistants got one factory running in time to manufacture the first leaf plucked. Conditions were dangerous – Dutch troops were still fighting the Sumatran nationalists and there was shooting every day. He was issued with a revolver, a rifle and eventually a Sten gun, and Indonesian armed guards were posted



Mardjandi tea factory, the only one that Patricia's father found intact upon his return.

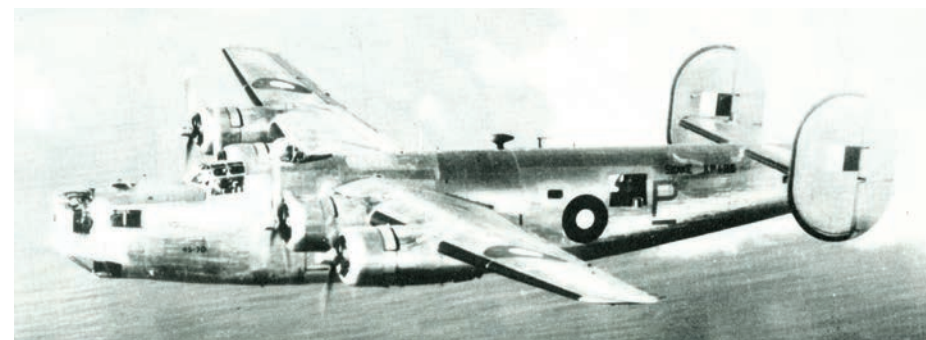
at each European house. Even so, his engineer and one of his assistants were murdered and another attacked; my father was himself fired at whilst driving his Jeep. But he stuck with it and by 1952 his estate was producing two million pounds of tea per annum. Unfortunately the high cost of working under such difficulties caused his company to call it a day and they handed over their estates to the Indonesian government.

'In 1959 my father was awarded the OBE by Queen Elizabeth for his services towards rebuilding the tea industry.'

Burma – Flt Lt Bill Field, RAF

Patricia's husband Leonard William Charles Field – Bill for short and Dusty by nickname – enlisted in the RAF in 1941. Having volunteered as aircrew he was sent to Canada for training, where he gained his wings as a pilot of multi-engined aircraft. After a spell as an instructor he became the pilot of a B-24 Liberator heavy bomber and was posted to 355 Squadron at Salbani in West Bengal, India.

By then the war was over, but the action was not. The Japanese occupation of Burma had disrupted rice cultivation and created a severe food shortage. Civilians were starving, especially in the hill districts, and the only way to alleviate the famine was to air-drop supplies. In late 1945 and the first months of 1946, 355 Squadron contributed to the airlift, known as Operation Hunger. Bill, his crew and their comrades flew up to three missions each day, dropping thousands of pounds of rice on each flight.



Liberator serial number KP136. On 29th January, 1946, Bill and his crew flew this exact aircraft to drop rice to the villagers of Kyowang.

The rice was packed in sacks, each weighing about 80lbs, which were suspended by rope slings in the bomb bay. To make the most of the Lib's 8,000lb payload capacity extra bags were stowed in the fuselage, and had to be man-handled by the despatcher along a

catwalk over the bomb-bay then jettisoned. In his log book Bill recorded his typical load as 7,040lbs of rice.

		16 JEFFCOAT	DIGRI - PEGU BURMA
SUMMARY FOR	OPERATION "HUNGER"	PHASE 1.	
TOTAL RICE	DROPPED ON	KYDWAING, PATADO,	
		AND METHEROOT	1041 TONS.
RICE DROPPED	BY F/LT FIELD AND CREW ON	46 SORTIES	
			65 TONS.

Photo BF3 Log From Bill's log book. By the end of Op Hunger Phase 1 Bill and his crew had dropped 65 tons of life-saving rice to Burmese villages.

On one occasion Bill had to crash-land onto a beach. He was rescued by the Royal Indian Navy, and whilst recovering would complain that 'I can't get the blasted dust from out of my eyes'. Hence he became Dusty Field. By de-mob Bill had nearly 1,000 hours on the clock as first pilot. He went on to join BOAC and BA, with whom he spent 29 years as a navigator, pilot and test-pilot of airliners, and a Senior Flying Instructor.

Burma Again – Holly Russell

Burma had been under British colonial rule since 1824 and was largely managed as an extension of India. As with Sumatra, a nationalist movement became established in the early 1900s. Britain's failure to protect Burma during the war, combined with neighbouring India's move towards independence inevitably led to Burmese independence. Civil war broke out soon after. This is when Holly and per parents returned....

'In 1946, after my father's time in Palestine, we went back to Digboi in Assam, to the oilfield there. We were there for two years then we went to Rangoon for six months. The Burmese were not happy about anything, ever, at that time, very warlike. We had a house on a corner. At night there were riots going down the street, gunfire and whatever. My mother would crawl along the balcony to make sure that I was safe under the bed. There were bullet holes all along the wall!

'If I went to the market with my mother the shopkeepers would listen out and if there was a riot coming round the corner the shopkeepers would grab both of us and stick us

under their table and pull the cloth down in front of us. Our neighbours had a wedding, with the reception in garden. The bridegroom smiled and got up to make a speech and bang! was shot dead. Mother came along and I was whisked inside.'

China – Betty Drake

Betty and Ken Drake came to live in Grayshott in 1976. Here's Betty's story of her early childhood.

'My parents were missionaries. My mother, Winifred Cummings, went to China in 1928 when she was twenty-one, all on her own, up to the border near Tibet. She married my father, William Raymond Colley, also a missionary, in 1935 in Yunnanju. My sister Dorothy was born in 1936, my brother David the year after and myself in 1939 in Lijiang, Yunnan province. With the constant fighting between warlords, Nationalists, Communists and the Japanese, China was a dangerous place. My parents lost their house three times to bandits. I have a bullet fired by the Reds, as my mother called them, and which landed in David's cot.'

China at that time was riven by conflict. By the time of Winifred's arrival Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese Nationalist Party had more or less suppressed rebellious warlords, but bounced straight into a civil war with Mao Zedong's Chinese Communist Party. Then in 1931 Japan invaded the Chinese region of Manchuria, marking the start of WW2 in Asia. This forced the Nationalists and Communists into a fragile alliance against Japan. Even before the Japanese arrived China was a place of violence, treachery and atrocities, and it got worse afterwards.

In 1937 Japan launched a full-scale invasion. Millions of civilians were killed. The US imposed economic sanctions upon Japan, depriving them of the oil and raw materials they needed for their war with China, which in turn led to the Japanese to war against America and Britain. Following the defeat of Japan in 1945 the Chinese Nationalists and Communists were free to go at each other again. This time the communist People's Liberation Army got the upper hand and in 1949 the People's Republic of China was formed. The Communist takeover was brutal. In Lijiang the markets emptied and shops closed; there were indoctrination lectures, lootings, night-time arrests and secret executions; temples were desecrated and books destroyed. Children were forcibly conscripted into the 'army'.

Betty continues:

'At the outbreak of war in Europe, 1939, we came to Britain and settled in Manchester.

I was just a babe in arms. We returned to China in September of 1946, first to Kunming and then back up to Lijiang. Our views looked up to the mountains and as children we were free to do as we wanted. We weren't aware of war or politics, although I remember looking out of our window and seeing soldiers in their blue uniforms – just boys and girls – marching along the street.

'We were too little to realise there were problems, but the atmosphere must have been very tense and the missionary societies were alert to the situation. As the Communists approached my parents were warned that we might have to leave very quickly. We had to keep a bag packed and ready, with a change of clothes and one toy each for us children.



'In the autumn of 1949 the day came when we had to go, as Communist forces had taken control and the missionary societies realised that it was impossible to continue their work. We were told to leave – the Communists thought of missionaries as 'imperialist spies' and the army was tracking them down. We fled in the early hours, a three-hour ride on horseback to the airfield, which was just a dried-up lake bed. The aeroplane didn't arrive that day so we had to stay there overnight, sleeping on the ground and surrounded by soldiers. When the local people realised we were fleeing they searched us and our bags. I think they were after medicines and money.

'We were flown out on an American aeroplane by pilots from the Flying Tigers, and taken to Kunming. Some Chinese officials had asked to put their gold money on the aeroplane, but the pilots refused – it was too heavy. Chinese coins were huge. At home my parents had to count their money at night, when they couldn't be seen by prying eyes, and bury it under paving slabs.

'From Kunming we went to Hong Kong, then by cargo boat to Calcutta (now Kolkata). I remember the trains in Calcutta were buried beneath the mass of passengers hanging on to them. This was not long after the Partition of India and millions of people were still on the move. My parents wanted to stay close to Tibet, so we went up to Kalimpong near Darjeeling in the Himalayan foothills, where my father continued his mission work. Whilst there we meet more exiles from China - White Russians, Catholics and Europeans who'd come out overland through Tibet. For a few months I went to school at the well-known Dr Graham's Home for children.

'I came back to Britain in 1950, to school in Wales. My mother knew of Gladys Aylward, whose life inspired the film *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness*. They were in China at the same time and on one occasion she came to speak at my school.

'Fifty-six years after leaving Lijiang as evacuees, Dorothy and I returned as visitors. Lijiang is now preserved as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. My father's church is still there, and the house where I was born. My happiest memory is of a local man who came up to our guide and said he remembered playing with us when we were children! He said 'There were three of you, where's your brother?'

'After many more travels my parents retired, at first to Headley Down and then, for the last ten years of their lives, to Grayshott.'



From Betty's family album, the C-47 Dakota of Civil Air Transport at Lijiang, 1949. Founded in 1946 by General Claire Chennault, the former C/O of the Flying Tigers, CAT supported the Nationalist forces and airlifted thousands of refugees to safety.



India – Dick Lovell

Independence for India had been on the cards for decades prior to WW2. The British Viceroy's terrible blunder of declaring war on behalf of India without consulting Indian leaders, the Allies' use of India as a base for operations in Burma and China, India's contribution of 2.5 million soldiers and Britain's general state of exhaustion accelerated the inevitable. The sectarian violence as up to 20 million people attempted to relocate themselves – two million of whom disappeared, presumed dead – is well recorded.

Less commonly told is the story of the Anglo-Indian community, people of mixed Indian and British heritage. With independence their traditional roles in industry and administration evaporated. Faced with an identity crisis – feeling British but with generations of Indian connections – many of them chose to emigrate. Dick Lovell, whose daughter Annie Childs has lived in Grayshott for over 27 years, relates his family's journey.

'I was born in Calcutta in 1934. My father's family were British; he was a purser in the Merchant Navy and my grandfather was the engineer in charge of the Hooghly River. My mother, Meeta, was of Goan Indian descent. She was a nurse and during the war worked in a British Army hospital.



Dick with his parents Meeta and Ernest, Calcutta.

'From the age of three I was sent away to boarding schools up-country, as were my brother and sister. It was normal and our education was first class. As the civil disturbances grew, mother brought us back to Calcutta, to schools closer to home. I remember the riots, murder and mayhem – it started in August of 1946. Bad memories, dead people left on the pavements. My school, Calcutta Boys' School, escaped the riots because the headmaster was a communist and so they left us alone. Through her work mother qualified for 'repatriation' to Britain, and day-by-day she waited to receive a movement order from the army.

'That day came in the autumn of 1946. The exodus had been going on for a while but fortunately, I now realise, we were ahead of the horrific mass slaughters that came later. We made our way by train to Bombay, mother and three children. Father was off at sea. The journey took two or three days, just wooden benches to sit on, no upholstery, no toilets. When the train stopped you had to jump off and perform necessities at the trackside. We only had what we could carry on our backs and in one suitcase, everything else was left behind.

'At Bombay we were put aboard a troopship. We shared a cabin with another family. Everyone was seasick except me. People recovered in the calm of the Suez Canal, and at Port Said mother bought some Turkish Delight. We all tucked in, and when the ship got to the Med it all came up again, but not mine. I was given the remnants and I've loved Turkish Delight ever since!

'I guess the voyage was three or four weeks. The ship moored offshore from Tilbury docks and a government boarding party came on to check that we weren't spies or whatever. Mother's sister Edie had reached England before us, and she had a plan. She told us to refuse the Army's accommodation in barracks because a distant cousin would put us up. Well, we went by train to Fenchurch Street where the plan fell apart. The cousin had changed her mind, and having refused the Army's one-time offer we were homeless. Mother and three young children with nowhere to go in dark, wet London on the edge of the coldest winter on record.

'There was no accommodation available for families. Hotels had signs up 'No Irish No Dogs No Children'. We tramped the streets for a week. Mother was offered hostel accommodation but was told that, after being fumigated, the children would be separated. She refused, and eventually found a hotel near Euston to take us in, but her money was nearly gone by then. We were saved by a letter she'd been given in Calcutta giving the name of a good man who would help if we were in trouble. I shall remember



Calcutta, August 1946, after the riots: vultures feed on bodies in the streets.

his name until my dying day, Mr Sonnoborn in Liverpool. Well, she found the scrap of paper with the address and there was just enough money left for the train fare. Mr Sonnoborn, a little, dumpy man, was very kind to us. He found us a tiny flat with only cold water and no electricity – we had to make do with the streetlights shining through the window. But we survived.

'Mother found work as a textile machinist and in 1948 father left the Merchant Navy and joined us. As a Navy purser he could have expected to find a professional job, in an accountant's office or suchlike. There was nothing doing. He had to go to London to find work, as a night-cleaner in the Bank of England. In due course the family joined him in London. I finished my education and carried on the family tradition by becoming an Engineering Officer in the Merchant Navy.'

SOUVENIRS, KEEPSAKES AND RELICS

'The boys would go out collecting bomb parts then putting them back together so it looked real. We thought they were all terribly brave!'

Jean Bishop

Souvenir hunting was ubiquitous. Almost everyone kept hold of something, if not a battlefield trophy then a memento of their own or family member's service. Many of them have become treasured family heirlooms. Today, relics are still being dug up, making new connections with history. Here are some of Grayshott's gems.



These spanners and the engine rev counter from an M4A2 Sherman tank were bartered by the author's grandfather, Sid Willis, from Canadians of The Elgin Regiment. The spanners still come in very handy. Without the matching tank, the rev counter has so far been less useful. A keen mechanical and electrical tinkerer, Sid was possibly hoping to obtain a Sherman one bit at a time. Also shown is a button from his National Fire Service uniform and the Union Flag flown by the family on VE and VJ Days.



Badges were popular keepsakes – durable and highly personal. These are Bill Field's RAF and subsequent BOAC wings.



Richard Peskett has the WW1 medals of his grandfather, Private Thomas Ryder of the Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment, a favourite unit for our local lads. This set, comprising the 1914-15 Star, The British War Medal and the Victory Medal was a standard combination, nicknamed Pip, Squeak and Wilfred after cartoon characters of the time. The Star was prized because it showed its wearer to be a regular or volunteer, who served before conscription was instituted. Thomas never got to wear them – he was killed on March 28th, 1918, during the German Spring Offensive, leaving his widow Elizabeth and two young children. His medals were claimed by Elizabeth, and still live in the tube in which they were delivered.



This .50 calibre bullet case and a cap badge of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical engineers were recently dug up in Whitmore. The REME had a training depot in Bordon and would have been all over our area helping the Canadians keep their tanks running. The bullet, dated 1942, was probably fired from an American-made aircraft. A Spitfire or Hurricane equipped with eight .303 machine guns pumped out 160 bullets per second. In the air battles overhead, thousands of these little gifts fell in a glittering, tinkling rain onto Grayshott's roofs, roads, gardens and woods. They were hoovered up by schoolkids but there must be thousands still left to find.



On 18th July 1919, street parties known as Peace Teas were held to celebrate the signing of the Treaty of Versailles and the official end of WW1. Cheryl Jackson's great-aunt Lily had this napkin signed by companions at her Peace Tea in London. At her WW2 VE Day street party she had it signed again, and waved the Union Flag on both occasions.



This dog tag is another Whitmore find. It's of WW1 vintage and marked to Battalion Quartermaster-Sergeant EM Royce of the 87th (Grenadier Guards) Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. A civil engineer by training, Edwin Royce enlisted in 1915 and on 27th May 1916 he arrived at Bramshott Camp. The 87th departed for France on 10th August, and it must have been during the intervening ten weeks that Edwin's dog tag came adrift. He saw action at Ypres, the Somme and at Vimy Ridge during the Battle of Arras. Near Vimy, on the night of 10/11th May 1917, during a German counter-attack, Edwin was hit by a shell explosion. He was buried and unconscious for half an hour, suffered multiple contusions and deafness, and was diagnosed with shell-shock. After several months recuperating he returned to duty, survived the war and ended his army career as a major. Found and researched by Martin Sims.



Some brass on a bigger scale. Stanley Beard picked up these German shell cases at Vimy in 1917. They now serve as a dinner gong and their four notes can play 'Come to the Cookhouse Door'.





In 1934 Nurse Margaret Cuff took up her appointment as Grayshott's District Nurse and Midwife. Her transport was this trusty BSA bicycle, no doubt purchased from Fred Harris's shop on Crossways. Fed up with slogging it up the hill out of Whitmore, she upgraded to a motorised Norman autocycle and sold the bike to Evelyn Beard of Grayshott Hall, where it served through the wartime years of petrol rationing. Evelyn passed it to her daughter Patsy, and it's now in daily use with Evelyn's granddaughter, Allie.



William Lander from The Avenue kept his Home Guard certificate of service. In civilian life he was a driver with the Aldershot & District Traction Company. In 1943, with his colleagues, he helped drive a convoy of troops to Salisbury Plain. They stayed with the troops during manoeuvres and slept in the buses.



We finish with what must be the most bizarre souvenir of all. In 1946 Field Marshall Montgomery visited Switzerland on official business. As a token of their gratitude for his wartime achievements, the Swiss government presented him with a doll's house. True. For some reason Monty didn't want it and he gave it to his old friends at Amesbury school to auction. It was bought by Stanley Beard for Patsy. In due course Patsy passed it on to her daughter, Allie, who still has it. And here it is, still existing and having been lovingly played with – the doll's house of Field Marshall Bernard Law Montgomery, 1st Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, KG, GCB, DSO, PC, DL.



PHOTO GALLERY



The WW2 'army' end of the village, clustered around Waggoner's Bend. In the lower left quarter is the Canadian's Superior Camp. The parade ground is now covered in scrub, but the main concrete track is still in use. George and Violet Cornish, the village grocers, set up a small outstation of their shop down Waggoners Wells Lane to make it easier for the Canucks to spend their money with them. In the triangular area at centre, The Dower House, built in 1939 by Stanley Beard for his

in-laws, Aubrey and Olive Drayton, was requisitioned by the Canadians. So too were the houses on Headley Road west of St Joseph's Church. Their gardens were bulldozed to make a landing strip for Lysander light aircraft. Stoney Ridge House, at centre right, was the Canadian officers' mess: it still has a concrete storage bunker in its garden. The British Army had a searchlight battery in the field opposite, marked by the pale circles at centre top. Elsewhere in the village, Hill Road was lined with parked tanks and the Social Club was a favourite soldiers' drinking hole, despite beer shortages and its committee's attempts to limit 'unofficial guests' and the hawking of government property.



The Canadian camp on Bramshott Chase in WW1, known unaffectionately as Tin Town. This photo was taken just west of where the Bramshott Chase interchange now is, looking towards the South Downs in the distance. The dirt track was the London-Portsmouth road, now the A3 dual-carriageway!

MORE EGGS!

(Just ONE, or—even MORE.)

Past and present patients of **Grayshott Military Hospital** express their grateful thanks to the generous donors to the **Egg Fund** during the past year.

"On behalf of the patients of the Grayshott Military Hospital I have great pleasure in thanking the generous contributors for the EGGS they have so kindly contributed in the past year, which have been greatly appreciated by them, and I am sure Matron is very pleased to receive them."

On behalf of my comrades,

(Signed) Sergt. R. VERDIN.

LOTS more will be required this year so please fill in form below at once, so that you may not forget, and send it to Mrs. R. C. Harrison, Headley Road, Gravshott, to whom all eggs and money should be sent.

I shall be pleased to send for our heroes in Grayshott Military Hospital _____ every week for 3 months, or a donation of 2 6 for this period.

Signed

Address

Particulars of Charges, etc., for Advertisements in the Grayshott Magazine can be obtained from Miss Webb, Aumara, Grayshott.

A COMPLETE LIST OF THE
NAMES OF MEN OF THE
PARISH OF GRAYSHOTT
(RECORDED IN THE GREAT CHURCH 1914-1919)

Adams C.	Edwards	Knapp	Snelling W.
Adams C.	Edmond G.	Kingsmith T.	Smith H.E.
Adams W.	Edmond H.	Laker H.	Spearmann G.
Adams W.	Edmond V.	Langridge E.J.	Spearmann G.
Alcock J.A.	Edmond W.	Langridge F.F.	Spencer J.E. & A.
Allderton A.	Elliot H.	Lawrence J.	Spencer H.
Allderton C.	Emm H.T.	Levett G.L.	Spencer T.
Angell M.	Farley H.H.	Levett A.	Stacey F.
Angell M.	Farley C.	Levett W.	Stacey J.
Anker F.W.	Fairclough T.	Levett H.J.	Steenning W.
Asby A.	Flynn P.J.	Levett W.	Stephens C.G.
Baldwin W.H.	Ford A.	Levett P.J.	Stephens J.L.
Banger E.	French W.	Levett G.G.	Stevens J.
Barker S.	Fullich S.	Madgash E.	Stevens W.
Barnes C.	Fullich W.	Madgash J.	Stillwell H.J.
Barwell C.H.	Fullich A.	Madgash A.	Stillwell T.J.
Baxter C.A.	Gale A.	Madgash A.	Stokes W.
Beardon E.	Garnier G.E.	Meredith T.	Stokes V.
Bennett W.H.	Gillett A.G.	Niles A.	Stone J.
Bentley H.	Gould F.A.	Niles K.	Stone J.
Bentley E.	Gould F.	Norwood T.	Stout W.S.
Bishop A.	Hack G.	Mutall W.N.	Tappin A.
Bishop E.	Haggett S.	Moss M.M.	Taylor A.
Bishop J.	Hallam G.	Moss W.F.	Teater H.F.
Blaikwell W.	Hallam S.	Moss S.F.	Tennison A.B.
Blackwell W.R.	Hallstead C.	Money B.	Tigwell C.
Bradley G.	Hancock C.E.	Moss R.F.	Tiptonleigh S.W.
Brader E.J.	Hanley G.	Moss W.H.	Thornley F.
Bridges J.A.C.	Hartley J.	Moss R.A.	Thornley A.C.
Budd G.	Hartmann D.	Nebels C.	Viney G.C.
Budd J.	Hartmann F.	Neuman W.H.	Voller A.
Budd J.	Hartmann R.J.	Neuman L.	Voller J.
Burns W.	Hawking F.	Oliver W.A.	Walker T.P.
Burnage F.	Hawking F.	Oliver A.	Warr W.A.
Byatt E.	Hawking J.	Parker R.H.	White A.
Cave J.B.	Hawking J.	Parson J.	White A.B.
Chapman W.G.	Harris F.	Patnett J.	White E.B.
Chapman W.J.	Harris A.	Parman R.J.	White A.G.
Chandler V.	Harris E.	Pease T.	White H.
Chigney A.	Harris J.	Phillips A.	White J.
Chigney J.	Harris F.	Phillips A.	White P.J.
Clutton R.	Harris J.	Pitts A.	White P.J.
Clutton A.H.	Harris H.	Pock P.	White W.G.
Cole A.	Harris W.	Pratt P.F.	White W.G.
Cole T.J.	Harris C.G.	Puttick B.	White M.
Cotter G.H.	Harris R.	Rosley C.F.	Whitman S.
Cremody P.	Harris W.J.	Rogers G.	Wilde H.
Crombo A.	Harris W.	Roed B.A.	Wilde S.J.
Cromwell J.	Hartley H.	Robinson R.L.	Whitman J.A.
Cromwell G.	Hartmann A.C.	Robinson R.L.	Whitaker H.
Cotton H.	Herring G.A.	Robinson P.	Winchester F.
Cotton W.	Hickson F.	Sadgrove C.	Winchester W.
Craft W.	Hickson F.	Sadgrove J.	Winchester W.
Crawford J.	Hickson J.H.	Sadgrove M.	Winlake J.
Crawford F.	Hilder B.	Selle A.	Wood C.J.
Crawford A.	Hildman J.S.	Selle E.	Wood W.
Crawford A.J.	Hildman W.R.	Selle A.D.	Wood A.
Crawford W.	Hildman W.R.	Selle G.V.C.	Wood F.C.
Craw H.S.	Humphreys M.	Selle J.	Wood G.
Crook E.A.	Hunt J.	Selle J.	Wood P.
Crook L.	Jackson H.	Selle T.	Wood A.G.
Dean B.	Jackson H.	Sheldrake H.	Young S.
Dean W.	Johnson I.W.	Simpson W.	Young W.
Dean J.B.	Johnson T.	Slater F.	Smith J.H.
Dean R.	Jones W.	Smith C.	Loft L.
Darner T.	Kerr W.	Smith H.J.	

The citizens, shopkeepers and smallholders of Grayshott gave generously to support the welfare of wounded soldiers.

From the collection of the late June Peskett, this embroidery encapsulates so much of the Home Front spirit – gasmasks, stirrup pumps, munitions girls, ARP wardens, barrage balloons, secrecy and an RAF fighter overhead. Fantastic.



The WW1 Roll of Honour in St Luke's. It shows the village men who served in uniform but not the women, such as Isabella Harding and Rosie Cane, both of Stoney Bottom and who served in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, and Charlotte Lyndon, who served with the Voluntary Aid Detachment in Italy. A bit unfair.

Researched, written and produced by Grayshott Heritage.

Published on 15th August 2026, and dedicated to
the men and women of Grayshott's families who served.

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Some of the material in this book has been excavated from our archive bunker, but the majority is from personal interviews and private collections. We are indebted to those whose letters, photos, memories and artefacts have inspired us. It has been our great privilege to speak with some of our village's witnesses to events that shaped our world. Thank you for trusting us with your stories.

Graham Yarborough; Sarah Cusworth; Holly and Mike Russell; Alison, Rosemarie and Wilf Orchard; Patricia Field; Patsy Roynon; Robert and Carol Beard; Trevor Hill; Elizabeth Coleman; Keith Cox; Chris Vardy; Allie Pennant; Cheryl Jackson; Geoff Theobald; Jean Bishop; Tony Stockdale; Martin Sims; Richard Peskett; Betty Drake; Martin Wood; Ann, Harvey and Kim Myers; Dick Lovell; John Owen Smith; Janice Carter; Tony Minns; Jim Houlin.

Front Cover: Garnet Myers and Dorothy Blakeway at their wedding, a scene repeated tens of thousands of times as British women married Allied overseas servicemen.

Right: Bill Field (back row, second from left) and his Liberator crew at Kolar Refresher Flying Unit, India.

