

At the end of 1945 the war had ended and my particular pilot returned from the Middle East so I left the land to get married. I was presented with a certificate and a thank you letter from Queen Elizabeth (now the Queen Mother).

Most of the time, bad weather apart, I really enjoyed the experience.

Peggy McAll

Ascott under Wychwood.

A HEAD HERDSWOMAN REMEMBERS

V.E. Day 1945 came when I was pursuing my chosen career to become a Head Herdswoman. I was living in a hamlet called Cudham in West Kent and my friend and I got up extra early to milk the cows and then set off to bike the necessary eight miles to Orpington Railway Station to go to London. There we mingled with the crowds and found it quite frightening at times to have to go where the crowds went, rather than where we wanted to go.

We joined the celebrations in Trafalgar Square and queued on the steps of St. Martin-in-the-Fields for one of the continuous services. It was here that I had a strange meeting, when amongst the people coming out from the previous service was a neighbour from my own street in my home town of Canterbury.

Much later my friend and I took a train back to Orpington and biked wearily back to milk some loudly complaining cows!

Olive Tucker

MEMORIES

SEPTEMBER 1939. We were 16 going on 17 - school boys. The summer holidays were well on. We paid more attention to the newspapers, but in truth the prospects for the next rugger season were more important to us than war in Europe or anywhere else for that matter. We listened to the Prime Minister's broadcast.

Home was in South East London - Blackheath to be exact. The air raid sirens sounded. We went down into the cellar. Nothing happened and after a bit the "all clear" sounded.

The "phoney war" had started. Later that month we went back to school - Windsor - 1st XV Rugby, the Officers Training Corps - uniform - I was a Sergeant. We thought more about the next match than the war. The British Expeditionary Force in France seemed a world away - and then it was May 1940..... The fighting escalated, the casualties mounted, evacuation from Dunkirk and the other channel ports began.

Somehow rowing on the Thames seemed less important.