

NUTLEY AT WAR 1939-1945 Written by Mollie Smith

INTRODUCTION

War was declared at 11a.m. on Sunday 3rd. September 1939.

It was not a total surprise. By 1936 the Government had accepted that war was inevitable and as early as 1935 East Sussex Council had set up an Air Raid Committee.

In 1936 Lt. Col. O.J.F. Fooks (retired) of Swithe Wood, Horsted Keynes was appointed the County Air Raid Precaution Officer.

He was recalled to the army in 1940.

The Home Office recognised the need for more fire protection and under the ARP Act of January 1938 a body of volunteers was trained to become the Auxiliary Fire Service.

Gas masks were issued, details on how to black out houses and motor vehicles had been supplied, and exercises to test the arrangements followed.

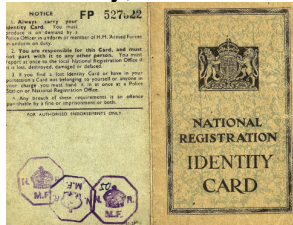
The Women's Voluntary Service and Church workers were responsible for the housing of evacuees from London.

In Nutley, Mrs. Nichols of Garde was responsible for the placing of evacuees.

In June 1939 a first police reserve was formed, mainly of retired officers. Special Constables were then introduced.

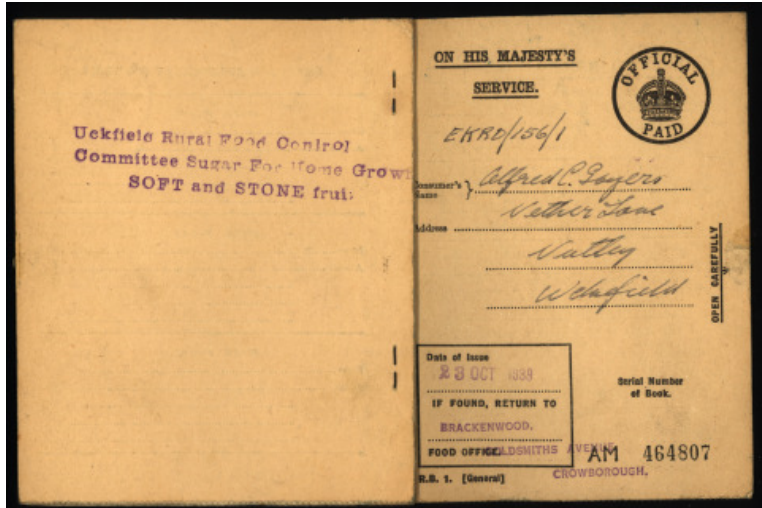
National Registration Day took place on 29th. September 1939 when householders were asked questions similar to those used for census details. Buff coloured National Identity Cards were issued for each individual.

In 1943 a blue security printed card was issued in an attempt to counteract forgery and ration book fraud. On the 14th. May 1940, one week after the attack on France, Mr. Anthony Eden broadcast an appeal at 9p.m. asking for able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 65, not already engaged on National Service to enrol in the Local Defence Volunteers (LDF). On the 23rd. July 1940 the name was changed to The Home Guard.



National Service required the registration of all men and women of certain age groups. Initially the Military Service Act had enabled men of 20 years to be called up. By December 1941 men aged 18 and a half to 51 were liable for service. Unmarried women from 20 to 30 years could be called up for military or civil defence service.

Where the Home Guard was under strength men between the ages of 18 and 55 could be directed to do up to 48 hours duty and training per month



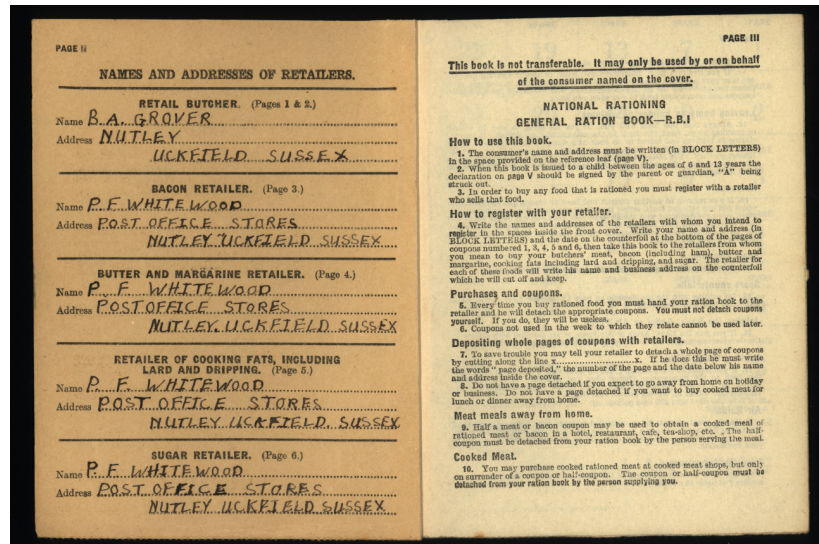
Throughout the war food prices were subsidised by the government.

Rationing of meat started in March 1940, followed by sugar, butter, margarine, lard, eggs and tea in July 1940.

In June 1941 clothes rationing began. By November 1941 tinned goods, cereals, dried fruit and biscuits were included.

February 1942 was the rationing of all forms of soap. July 1942 sweets became rationed at two ounces per person a week.

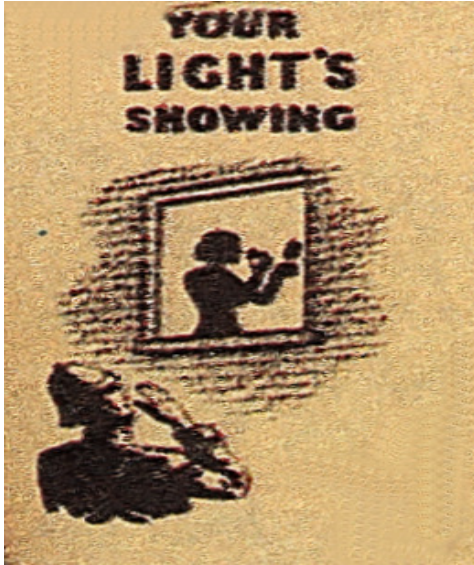
Coal and petrol were rationed at the start of the war and by July 1942 the petrol ration for private motoring was abolished for the rest of the war.



LAW AND ORDER

Nutley's policeman, P.C. Skinner had special constables to help him keep Nutley safe. The A.R.P. also had duties to report certain incidents to the police.

At the beginning of the war keeping the blackout was very important. Both the police and the A.R.P. Wardens would patrol the area looking for breaches of the law



Special Constables Dobbie and Freer on several occasions reported house owners who were taken to court at Uckfield. Typical fines were £2, for a first offence, £3 to £5 for the second offence and up to 7s. 6p. Costs. The larger houses in the village appear to have offended the most.

After the retreat from Dunkirk a fifteen mile deep zone from the coast was a restricted area. For visitors to come into the area a permit was required. Nutley was within that zone.

On August 2nd. 1940 Frederick J. Nettlefold was summoned at Uckfield Sessions with aiding and abetting an alien enter a restricted area. His friend, Vladimir Metzel, a Czech of Regents Park, London had been a frequent visitor to Nutley, and did not realise that he needed a permit. The magistrate ordered that Mr. Nettlefold be fined £5 and costs, and Metzel was let off with a caution. With headlights on cars blacked out more accidents occurred.

Petrol was still available for private motorists until July 1942, but with the army all round, many army vehicles were on the roads. Nutley garage petrol pumps were taken over by the army.

In April 1941 a maid employed at the Vachery was killed down Millbrook Hill. She was returning home from a dance in Nutley Memorial Hall, and ran into three soldiers. The soldiers were walking in the middle of the road and did not hear her coming. She hit her head on the road and died immediately.

In September 1941 two soldiers were killed when their Bren Gun Carrier overturned on Millbrook Hill. It threw its track and the remaining three soldiers were badly injured

On October 1st. 1943 pedestrian, William Ernest Goodson of Chelwood Gate was killed in Nutley High Street. Two Polish airmen drove the car involved. A well -known local man, Mr Alfred Browning was killed by an army vehicle in

March 1944. Mr Browning was a boot and shoe repairer in the village. The accident occurred whilst he was riding his bicycle home. There were several accidents involving motorcycles.

The courts dealt with motoring offences. These included lights not completely blacked out, cars left not immobilised and cars speeding.

In March 1940 Countess May Eleanor Castle Stewart was summoned at Mark Cross for failing to conform to the indication of Halt Major Road Ahead sign. She did not appear in person and was fined 10 shillings. One resident reported his shotgun stolen. A soldier at Maresfield camp had taken it.

Some fights did occur between locals and soldiers.

Poaching also occurred and culprits were taken to court.

Pippingford Park was a favourite haunt and there were several prosecutions of local residents.



NUTLEY AT WORK AND PLAY

Nutley residents were not surprised when war was declared.

Already arrangements were in place to receive the evacuees from London, gas masks had been issued and other air raid precautions were in the process of implementation.

The first evacuees arrived and were placed with families.

Some of Nutley's men were called up to fight as soon as war was declared. Some were given reserved occupations, especially agricultural workers and those in the building trade.

Locally, Maresfield Camp needed extending to accommodate more troops, a flax factory was required to process the flax which the government had directed the farmers to grow, and a firing range was constructed at Old Lodge. The country had entered what was later known as the "phoney war".

Village life continued, adapting to change as the war progressed.

Mrs. R.I. Hudson of The Stores, Nutley was the agent for the Sussex Express newspaper. Most weeks she reported on church activities, whist drives, fund raising and dances, which frequently took place twice a week on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

The newspaper reported on the home front. Restrictions did not allow for locations of bomb damage to be identified, troop movements and any information, which an enemy may use.

I have taken extracts from newspaper reports over the war period, to try to give a glimpse into the residents of Nutley, and how they responded to the changed way of life.

October 1939

The village Cricket Club held its October 1939 Committee meeting recording a deficit of £12. Chairman, Frank Mitchell thanked his secretary, Mr. A. Hart and treasurer Mr. W.A. Sparkes, and members Mr. C. Sparkes and Mr. W. Gillham for using their cars to convey players to matches.

On October 27th. 1939 Nutley Amateur Boxing Club held a dance in the Memorial Hall. It was restricted to 200 people and could only take place from seven to ten o'clock because of wartime regulations.

November 1939

A whist drive took place on November 24th. 1939 in the Memorial Hall. Proceeds towards the War effort.

December 1939

On December 8th. A committee formed from the Boxing Club to organise parcels, to send to troops.

A Carol Service took place in the church on December 22nd. 1939.

Some of the evacuees had returned home before Christmas but for those remaining, and for Nutley school children, a party was organised by Lady Castle Stewart in the Memorial Hall.

A Boxing Club Dance in aid of the Parcel Gift Fund was organised by its Chairman, Mr. A. Montgomery. The Sussex Swingers Dance Band provided music.

January 1940

On January 5th. The British Legion's Women's Section entertained all of the school children.

The Boxing Club held a Carnival Dance on January 26th.

Maresfield Parish Council held a meeting on the 26th. and its committee included Mr. W.A. Sparkes (Chairman), Mrs. Nield, Mr. W.H. Cottingham, Mr. R. Kenward and, Mr. F.T. Ridley. The Clerk was Mr. C. Rintaul. A precept of £17 was drawn on Uckfield Rural District Council.

March 1940

Maresfield Parish Council was requested to place extra 100 evacuees in the parish.

Nutley Bowls Club held a committee meeting. The President was Mr. T. Shoebridge, the Saturday Captain, Mr. H. Carr and the Wednesday Captain was Mr. W. Wheatley.

The Ashdown Lodge R.A.O.B. organised a dance in the Memorial Hall on Wednesday for the local nursing association. The MC. was Brother Frank Penfold and it raised £4 4s.

On the next Saturday the scouts ran a dance in the Memorial Hall.

April 1940

The Nutley Refugee Committee met. A report followed on the progress of an Austrian boy who had arrived in June 1939 and had been adopted by the committee.

August 1940

A stool ball tournament took place on the green to raise money for the Red Cross.

February 1941

A newspaper report stated that little Betty Kemp had collected £3 11s on behalf of Mrs. Barber for the local Fighter Fund.

February 28th. It was reported that water chlorination was required for Nutley and Fairwarp at a cost not exceeding £100.

March 1941

The Sussex Express reported on March 31st. 1941 that Nutley's feather weight boxing champion, Harold "Chick" Bodsworth, aged 19 had joined the R.A.F. Nineteen members of the club are now in service, including his eldest brother Cyril, a Petty Officer in the Fleet Air Arm and brother Leslie, the boxing lightweight champion in 1940.

Their father Mr. F.P. Bodsworth of Lewes Park Cottage, Wych Cross is the club's Hon. Sec.

April 1941

A committee meeting of The Women Legionares took place. The Chairman, Mrs. Henriques urged for a keener spirit of service. It's Secretary, Miss East supported the speech.

War Weapons Week, reported on 19th. April that the committee consisted of Colonel G.R. Miller (President), Hon. Mrs. Bingham, Mr. G. Sayers, Mr. P. Freeland and Mrs. Kirby.

May 1941

The Annual Meeting of the Refugee Committee took place.

On May 23rd. a dance took place to aid the British Legion funds. Mr. G. Sayers was the MC. and the music was supplied by a military band.

August 1941

August 1st, since the school's District sports had been abandoned, headmaster, Mr. C.J. Ryall organised school sports on the green. It was a very popular event.

Nutley and Fairwarp are told by Uckfield R.D.C. that they must save water.

September 1941

For the National Day of Prayer a full parade took place of the Home Guard, A.R.P. A.F.S., First Aid Point, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and Brownies in Nutley. Colonel G.R. Miller, followed by Major Henriques, led the parade. The church was full and Cdr. Marsh read the lesson.

November 1941

Nutley Women Legionares were saddened by the news of the death of Lady Edward Spencer Churchill and Mrs. Bannister, a former committee member.

A parade of Home Guard and Civil Defence took place to commemorate Remembrance Day.

December 1941

The Nutley children and evacuees performed the pantomime "Cinderella" on December 19th. The evacuee headmaster, Mr. Philips was the co producer.



The cast included, P.M. Parker as Cinderella, J.E. Remnant as the prince and A.W. Morriss and J.S. Allen as Tallular and Delphinium respectively. R.D. Laing gave a clever portrayal of Baron de Broke, while others with leading parts were Dandini, J.M. Remnant, Buttons, C.M. Ryall, page B.W. Woodroof and an A.R.P. warden, K. Laing.

Others in the cast were, Evacuees, S. Horley, B. Hogg, A.N. Jackson, G.K. Ryall, K.I. Whickham, A. Pye, N. Dryden, D.J. Ridley, M. Skinner and I. Turner.

Courtiers were, M.H. Clements, M. Curd, G.K. Hargreaves, E.M. Tarbet, E.J. Nicholson, I.W. Dobbie, C. Attenborough and R.S. Wickham.

April 1942

The Trinity Holiday Home Extension was opened. The home had been built in 1935, for tired mothers and fathers of the Poplar District of the East End of London to have a rest.

August 1942

Free films fortnightly in the Memorial Hall were advertised in the newspaper.

Will Wheatley retired after 41 years a postman for Nutley. His son, Gordon is reported missing after the evacuation of Greece. Two sons are in the Home Guard.

Home Guard Whist Drive organised by Lt. E.J. Addicott.

September 1942

Advice on dealing with fire bombs talk in the Memorial Hall.

November 1942

A Civil Defence Parade was held in Nutley, led by Mr. E.J. Gillham the head warden

Church bells are rung for the first time since the start of the war, to celebrate the victory of the 8th. Army in Egypt.

July 1943

Mrs. S. Ridley was notified that her husband, Gunner Spencer Ridley was missing. Her last letter from him was in December 1941 when he arrived in Singapore.

January 1944

The village children were entertained by the Women's Section of the British Legion.

A dance took place in the Memorial Hall in aid of the Prisoners of War, the Red Cross and the St. John's Ambulance Brigade.

September 1944

The Sussex Express newspaper headline was "Where the Doodle Bugs came down". A large map of East Sussex and Kent indicated the position where the V1 flying bombs had fallen. At least ten incidents occurred close to Nutley.

March 1945

The newspaper headlines were "Kills in locomotives".

It was reported that Flying Officer Geoffrey Nichols of Nutley had been credited with his 40th. kill. His squadron, which had destroyed more German aircraft than any other, were currently engaged flying along the railway lines from Athens to Vienna, bombing locomotives. They had started the war with Spitfires, but were now flying Mustangs. They were based in the Balkans and two Australians commanded his squadron.

May 1945

A parade took place on Fords Green to celebrate the end of the war in Europe. The Home Guard, the Civil Defence, the Voluntary Aid Detachment, the Auxiliary Fire Service, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides paraded to the church for the thanksgiving service.

The May Bank Holiday was the scene of victory sports on Fords Green, followed by tea in the Memorial Hall. Countess Szechenyl who was now going to leave the village to return to her home provided the tea.

June 1945

The Refugee Committee met to receive its annual report.

Mr. Ryall reported that the Jewish boy, Herbert Strumpel, who had been adopted by the village of Nutley was about to look for a job. He had done well at school in Nutley and had progressed to Wandsworth Technical College. The village had contributed £50 a year for his keep. The total money spent to date was £380 with £140 1s. 6p. left.

CIVIL DEFENCE

After the A.R.P. Act of January 1938 volunteers came forward for service. In December 1938 the County records show that for Maresfield Parish there were, 15 Air Raid Wardens, 24 Auxiliary Fire Service, 23 in Communications, 11 Ambulance Attendants and 6 Cleansing Station Attendants.

A first Aid Post for the parish was set up in Uckfield County Council Clinic at a cost of £1950.

A mobile Unit was stationed in Crowborough at a cost of £3,000. The Medical Officer for the Uckfield Clinic was Dr. W.D. Bell of the Meads, Grange Road, Uckfield.

One doctor was to be attached to each post on a rota.

Facilities for gas decontamination had to be provided, because the use of Mustard gas was expected.

THE A.R.P. WARDENS

In Nutley Mr. E.J. Gillham was the head warden. He and his fellow wardens took turns to patrol the village.

Duties for men were, air raid duties, demolition works, rescue services, first aid duties, gas decontamination services, ambulance duties, messengers and the auxiliary fire service.

For women the duties were, first aid duties, gas decontamination duties and ambulance duties.

Training courses were organised by Uckfield R.D.C. and certificates were issued.



Training exercises took place in Nutley.

On one occasion the Memorial Hall, acting as a bombed target was used to practice rescue procedures.

Initially the wardens wore civilian clothes with an armband.

Later blue dungarees were issued. By early 1941 navy blue battledress, boots and anklets were issued for men who were on duty more than 48 hours each month. Those on outdoor duty were provided with an overcoat, steel helmet and some had a service type of gas mask.

They worked with the police on enforcement of regulations. Falling bombs were to be observed and reported.

This photograph of Mr. E.J. Gillham was taken in the late sixties.

THE AUXILIARY FIRE SERVICE



In Nutley the Auxiliary Fire Service was based in Frank Ridley's garage. By September 1939 Nutley had a trained band of men. They included Bill Bannister (Acting Leading Fireman), Frank Ridley (Garage owner), Joe Ridley (Frank's son), brothers, Albert and Charlie Wickham, Don Cambell, Charlie Walter,

Bill Weller and Frank Hill.

Early in 1940 the garage was taken over by the army for supplying their vehicles with petrol.

By November 1940 the residents of Nutley had raised the funds for the purchase of a fire tender. This was a Fordson V8 Pickup truck with a Coventry Climax Pump. It was kept in the covered vehicle storage part of the garage.

The Sussex Express newspaper showed a photograph of the tender and its crew, including their mascot, Frank's dog, Toby.

As with other sections of the civil defence a duty rota was organised, and the garage was manned at night.

Training was updated, and exercises took place.

The men played an important role in wartime Nutley.

THE WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICE

In the spring of 1938 the Home Secretary invited Lady Reading of Swanborough Manor, Kingston to undertake the creation of a voluntary service of women, to undertake welfare duties as part of the Civil Defence programme.

Between March and May 1939 all the local authorities were written to by the regional organiser, Lady Rachel Edgerton of Uckfield asking them if they would support the organisation. All of the councils wished to help and limited funds from Central Government were provided to help with accommodation, stationery, armbands and badges.

The W.V.S. was not allowed to raise funds and continued to receive Government funding until 1994 when it became a registered charity.

In 1945 the W.V.S. was asked to help at reception camps for returning prisoners.

Their "Stand Down" came at the end of the "Cold War".

In Nutley, the arrangements for the evacuation of children from London were in place by the summer of 1939.

The Women's Voluntary Service was to take charge of the billeting of the children with local families.

Mrs. Nichols of Garde was responsible for the collection and taking the children to their host families. The collection point was a large barn on her property.

Many of the children were very dirty and covered in lice. Some host families were not too happy with the situation.

The billeting allowance was between 8s.6p. And 10s.6p. per week, per child. This only covered the cost of food, and not clothes and bedding.

At the beginning of the new term, September 1939, in Nutley village school the numbers had increased from 97 to 125, due to the evacuees. The headmaster requested another teacher who was appointed on November 7th 1939.

It was decided that to blackout the school was not essential. Instead 25-watt light bulbs were fitted, with darkened shades. Basic fire fighting equipment was installed.

By January 1940 Forest Dene (Royal Oak) was in use for extra classrooms and a canteen. It was requisitioned for the duration for £65 per annum in June 1940. By now the total number of evacuees were 140.

The schools were St. Mary's C.E. (Junior) from Lewisham and The Joseph Lancaster Council (Senior), run by the L.C.C. Both schools brought their teachers with them.

Teacher shortages during the war years occurred and several temporary solutions had to be found. This included local residents offering to teach certain classes.



The canteen was used in the school holidays for supplementary feeding, and looking after children whose parents, and foster parents were engaged on war work.

Across East Sussex there were depots of clothing, should residents be bombed out, and lose all of their belongings. The County Council had been reimbursed by Central Government for the supplies. The W.V.S. was to distribute the clothing where it was required.

Members also helped to run school canteens, clinics and kept a watchful eye for changes of numbers in households.

Headmaster Mr. C.J. Ryall and Mrs. Ryall

THE RED CROSS.

Members of nursing associations would go to the scene of an incident and render first aid. They would also help to load ambulances and escort casualties.

In Nutley the Red Cross Commandant was Mrs. Robinson of Forest Edge.

THE HOME GUARD

The Local Defence Volunteers was formed on 4th. May 1940. On July 23rd. 1940 the name was changed to the Home Guard.

On May 15th. Sir Auckland Geddes was appointed the Regional Commissioner for the South East with Sir Cecil Romer as Area Organiser for Sussex, Kent and parts of Surrey. Captain C.H. Madden was given command of East Sussex.

In September 1941 Colonel Pike was given command of the whole of Sussex, Madden becoming Admin. Staff Officer.

Colonel A.A. Sharland D.S.O. was the Group Commander of the 2nd. 3rd, 7th, 13th and 17th. Battalions.

Nutley was part of the East Grinstead zone and became part of the 17th. Battalion.

No records remain of the 17th. Battalion at the Lewes Records Office and I have failed to discover the platoon number.

Colonel G.R. Miller was in charge with Major J.Q. Henriques as the platoon commander. Other officers included Lt. Levy and Lt. Addicott. Lord Castle Stewart was in charge at Old Lodge.

The main duties included reporting any incidents of enemy attack or infiltration, observation of any enemy presence until the arrival of the military, harassing the enemy and acting as guides to the regular forces in their area.

A further duty was the guarding of telephone exchanges, post offices, railway property and various utility works.

In Nutley a hut was erected by the side of the old telephone exchange. Later another hut was erected where Tyes now stands. Rotas were established and patrols were made checking on hedgerows, outhouses and isolated properties.

The hours a volunteer could expect to stay on duty varied from group to group. Hours of duty ran from about 9p.m. until 5a.m. split into two shifts.

Members of Nutley's platoon included Sgt. George Hargreaves, Sgt. Tom Ralph, Sgt. Ernie Kirby, Cpl. Jack Wickham, L/Cpl. Cecil Turner, Claud Sparks, Vic Wickham, Ted Druce, George Vinton, Jack Andrews, Algie Osborne, Doug Kemp, Darkie Sandles and Jim (Nessie) Walter.

Before their call up, Charles Sayers, two sons of Will Wheatley and Spencer Ridley of Courtlands Bungalow who died as a result of an accident on August 28th.1942. His coffin was accompanied by his Home Guard comrades to Nutley Church.

In April 1941 Nutley Post Office was broken into by two youths. This occurred in the middle of the night and it was spotted by two Home Guard members. They caught the lads climbing out of the window in possession of cash, and handed them over to P.C. Skinner. The youths were prosecuted and the magistrate commended the Home Guard members.

Field exercises took place on the Ashdown Forest between visiting platoons, and shooting competitions were organised.

Members of the regular army gave some training and instruction. Training manuals were issued by the War Department, and individual booklets on most aspects of Home Guard work. In some areas training films were shown.

In December 1944 the Home Guard were stood down.

WOMEN AT WAR

THE LAND ARMY

The Women's Land Army (WLA) was founded in September 1939 with Lady Denman of Balcombe Place, Sussex as the Honorary Director, a post that she held in the Great War. Acceptance by farmers to use girls was slow.

In the spring of 1941 a recruiting campaign was launched from the Women's Land Army headquarters at Balcombe for girls aged 18 to 40.



In the autumn of 1941 call up papers were sent out to girls to join up. The WLA members were numbered like service personnel but received wages as decided by the National Wages Council.

They received four weeks training with board and ten shillings pay as an introduction to farm life.

Later Plumpton College ran training courses for over 4,500 during the war.

In October 1945 a parade was held in Lewes of 1,000 Land Girls from East Sussex.

The need for the Women's Land Army continued after the war.

Doris Penfold can remember exactly when war was declared. It was her mother's birthday and she was at home that Sunday morning. Very quickly followed an air raid warning and her father put on his auxiliary fireman's uniform and rushed to Frank Ridley's garage, which was the headquarters for the fire service. Fortunately it was a practice.

Prior to the outbreak of war, Doris had looked after the children of Lord and Lady Castle Stewart at Old Lodge. When the youngest was sent to boarding school Doris was no longer needed but had secured a position with Lord and Lady Kindersley at Plaw Hatch. She took up the position soon after war was declared

Evacuees were placed with Nutley families within days and two boys were placed with Doris's family. Next door were given three girls, all of the children from one family. The children were very dirty and since the weather was warm



the tin bath was placed in the garden and Doris bathed all the children.

They only stayed about a month because all was quiet, and no more evacuees were sent to them.

Doris took up her position at Plaw Hatch in the autumn of 1939. She had the responsibility of some of the grandchildren of Lord and Lady Kindersley. All of the family lived in the big house and it was an extremely happy place. Lord Kindersley was Chairman

of the Bank of England and was a great benefactor locally. During the war years whilst Doris was in residence her employers visited the Queen Victoria Hospital in East Grinstead each Christmas Day, and served the Christmas dinner. A ward still carries the name, Kindersley.

Canadian soldiers were billeted in the grounds of Plaw Hatch with their officers in part of the house.

The nine-hole golf course was dug up for vegetables and Lady Kindersley did much to help with fundraising and comforts for the troops.

Doris has really happy memories of her time there and was sorry when she received her call up papers in late 1941.

She elected to join the Land Army and first had her medical in the village. Dr. Gainsborough who lived in Fletching had one day's surgery in the village in Bay Tree Cottage, each week. In February 1942 she reported to Glynde Place for her one months training.

She was billeted with another girl in a small cottage opposite the big house. The weather was extremely cold and Doris found the training hard. One of her first jobs was to dig a trench in the freezing cold ground. Quite a shock after living in such luxury at Plaw Hatch. She requested horticulture rather than agriculture after her training and was sent to a Colonel Gwynne at Folkington Manor in Polegate. He already had three men working there so Doris found life not too hard. Whatever happened to the fruit and vegetables grown there, she never knew.

After some months a request by Commander Marsh of Ardens, for her was granted. She returned to live at home and worked the field where Hillmead now stands, growing vegetables. Nutley village school had a canteen in the house, now Royal Oak, and the vegetables grown were to feed the children.

Doris married in 1944 but since her husband was working in aircraft production in Southampton she continued in the Land Army until the end of the war.

Eileen Hawker was not in Nutley when war was declared. She was attending the chapel service in Hove with her aunt. She and her aunt, who was her guardian, had returned to their employer's home in Hove at the end of August 1939 to make ready the house for evacuees. Four girls arrived, two sisters and two others. Within a few weeks the girls returned to their homes and in January 1940 Eileen and her aunt returned to the cottage in Tylers Lane where they lived for the rest of the war.

Eileen registered in Uckfield and was given the reserved occupation of agricultural worker. In the autumn of 1941 she was called up and attached to the Land Army to work at the flax factory in Five Ash Down.

The government had directed the farmers of Sussex to grow many acres of flax. Imported flax was not getting to England with the convoys under attack. Fields of blue surrounded Uckfield and many local girls were used in the process.

At first she cycled, but when more girls in the area were directed there a van was organised to collect them and return them to their homes.

Her duties included collecting the sheaves of flax from the fields and taking them to the factory, where they were put into stacks. When the sheaves were ready for processing she helped to load the large elevators taking the flax into the mill.

From memory her pay was just over two pounds a week.

Eileen continued to work there until the end of the war.

May Wickham nee Beany. (The late wife of George Wickham remembered by him).

May and her sister Violet were directed by the Land Army from their home in Hastings to the flax factory at Five Ash Down.

May boarded at Ringmer and her sister at Uckfield.

May was a tractor driver and her duties included collecting the sheaves of flax from the fields, and taking the processed flax to the railway station in Uckfield. She met her husband to be in Uckfield after the war but continued in the Land Army until her marriage in 1947.

Her sister, Violet married a fellow flax worker. His family, mother, Belgium and father, Scottish, had fled the Germans from Belgium, and because they had worked in the Belgium flax industry they were directed to Five Ash Down.

Connie Sayers nee Funnell. (The late mother of Vivien Woods remembered by her).

Connie was married in 1939 and she and Alfred lived at Southmead, Nether Lane. At the outbreak of the war two evacuees from London were given to them. Alfred was directed to work in Croydon, where he lodged and the evacuees remained with Connie until she was called up. She elected to go into the Land Army and was detailed to work on Funnell's Farm, Nether Lane, owned by Mervyn Hart.

Two other girls had been drafted into Nutley to work there, and prisoners of war from the camp by Chapelwood Manor were sent out each day to the farm.

Connie stayed working there with the Land Army until February 1948, and enjoyed the experience and comradeship.



Connie, Vi and Nina with the German Prisoners of war.



Nina driving the tractor at Funnell's farm



Connie with the cows.

FACTORY WORK

Betty Constable was in Nutley when war was declared. She left Nutley village school in 1939 and went to work at Chelwood Vachery. Her two elder brothers volunteered for armed service at the beginning of the war, her third brother was too young. A younger sister was also at home but the family managed to fit in an evacuee, who remained there for many years.



In 1943 when Betty was old enough to volunteer she wanted to join the Women's Air Force but her father would not give his consent. His three sons were now fighting and he did not want to risk her life.

Instead Betty went down to Wiltshire to stay with her aunt and went into a factory, necessary for the war.

It was an underground complex packing essential emergency survival supplies for Royal Airforce aircrew.

Her duties were in the office dealing with requisitions and despatch forms. She still remembers the 89 steps down into the underground bunker, the electricity failing from time to time, and coming back out into daylight. About every three months she would apply for leave and travel back to Nutley by train, crossing London. She remembers the trains and underground often bulging with service personnel. Sometimes she was carried along with the crowds.

Everyone was helpful and friendly and she never felt threatened. Betty stayed at the factory until the end of the war.

THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE



Lady Castle Stewart founded Nutley's Women's Institute in March 1924.

It was a popular club in the village, and by the beginning of the war had a large membership.

Throughout the war years Lady Castle Stewart was the President, Miss Fountain and Miss Riley the Vice Presidents in 1939, Mrs. Robinson and Mrs. Ryall in 1940, and the Honourable Mrs. Bingham and Miss Riley for the years 1941 until 1945.

They met monthly in the Memorial Hall.



Miss M. T. Riley

In **September 1939** Lady Castle Stewart asked members if they should continue the meetings and it was agreed unanimously to do so. Letters had been sent to individual Institutes with lists of activities, which they could undertake.

Already in Nutley a Welfare Committee had been set up and the W.I. offered to take over

the management of the making and mending party for making clothes for the necessitous evacuated school children. A sub committee was formed under the chairmanship of Mrs. Hudson.

It was decided to ask the two teachers from the schools to determine the children with the most need.

Members were asked to help at the school canteen from 11.30a.m. until 1.30p.m. to relieve the teachers in minding the children who were not having a meal.

At the **November 1939** meeting it was decided to invite Mr. Owen, as deputy head of The Joseph Lancaster School, and Miss Wansburgh, as deputy head of St. Mary's School, and their staff to the Nutley Christmas party.

A collection was made for sending cigarettes to soldiers, a dance was organised which raised £3 for the purchase of wool for soldier comforts and Mrs. Hudson was appointed the National Savings Association representative.

The Waste Paper Salvage Scheme was brought to members notice. It was decided to ask the two teachers from the schools to determine the children with the most need.

In **December 1939** Lady Castle Stewart and the W.I. in the Memorial Hall entertained the Nutley school children and evacuees.

At the **March 1940** meeting a request for extra sugar for preserving was forwarded to the authorities and members were urged to grow as much fruit as possible. A depot was to be set up and in the short-term surplus fruit was to be sent to the W.I. Jam Centre in Forest Row. A cookery school had also been set up in Forest Row and some members wished to go. Lectures on several wartime topics were also taking place in Uckfield.

Members for the Blind took on Flag Day collections. They also undertook the distribution of seeds sent from America, to boost local grown produce.

The **July 1940** meeting reported that half a ton of newspaper had been collected in the village and sold for £1 13s 18p.

It was decided to cultivate the 3/4 of an acre at Warrens Acre by allotments. By **September 1940** salvage collected had been sold for £5 5s, the money to go to the wool fund. 112 garments had been made to date. These included khaki gloves, pullovers and mittens. The surplus fruit and vegetables had

been sent to Forest Row for bottling, canning and preserving.
Collections of books were made by Mrs. Grover for the Red Cross.
Dressmaking classes were taking place in the village.
Christmas parcels for Nutley men were being organised and Mrs. Robinson was the W.I. representative.

February 1941 saw a request for the W.I. to grow more onions and tomatoes, and to knit garments for the homeless of London. 2000 tomato plants would be available in May at a cost of 5s. a dozen.

During the summer months herbs were collected including foxgloves and nettles and these were dried in Mrs. Bingham's barn.

By **September 1941** knitting wool was rationed so knitting for the troops had to be scaled down. Vouchers could obtain some wool and Mrs. Raynor was the knitting representative.

Monthly meetings included talks by members from other voluntary organisations and practical tips were shared by the membership. These included recipes for eggless cakes.

In **December 1941** the school requested helpers to distribute milk from 10.15 - 11.15a.m.

Red Cross practices were taking place at the First Aid Point in the village. Nurse Midgely was giving lectures on gas decontamination and burns from incendiary devices.

During **1942** money raising events took place and donations sent to many good causes. Vegetables were sent to sailors and the weekly W.I. Market in Uckfield. Petrol rationing created problems in collecting and transporting salvage. Wheelbarrows were used in some situations.

Members were asked if they could give hospitality to American members of the forces.

In **October 1942** quantities of hips were collected.

During **1943** it was decided to grow onions for the Red Cross. Dances, whist drives and jumble sales were organised and £30 each was donated to the Cancer Campaign and St. Dunstons.

An infant welfare Clinic was started in the village.

An appeal was made for more Land Girls and Mrs. Grover was to be the registrar. Canadian seeds were distributed.

In **June 1943** new ration books were to be introduced and Nutley residents had been told that they must journey to Crowborough to collect them. The W.I. sent a letter of complaint to the authorities and as a result the ration books came to Nutley. The onions grown for the Red Cross were collected and stored in Mrs. Bingham's barn. The total weight was 88lbs. and these were sold to the N.A.F.F.I, the proceeds to go to the Red Cross.

The W.I. had been asked through the W.R.V.S. if they could show hospitality to the Canadians at Pippingford Park.

During **1944** knitting garments for refugees in Europe was an urgent request. Knitting wool was provided.

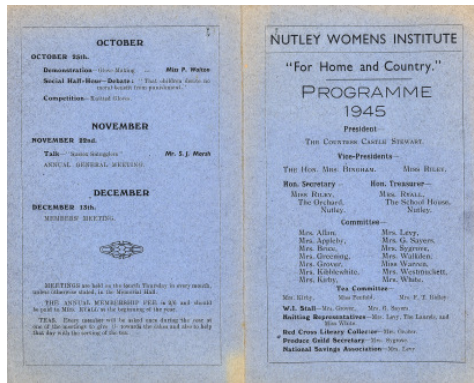
Fund raising events continued, alongside the vegetable and fruit growing.

Books for the Red Cross library, National Savings, herb collecting, salvage collecting and supervisory help in the school and canteen.

Nutley W.I. celebrated its 21st. birthday in **March 1945** and in **May 1945** the choir competed in the Lewes Festival.

Victory in Europe celebrations took place on the May Bank holiday, with sports on Fords Green and a tea provided by the W.I. in the Memorial Hall.

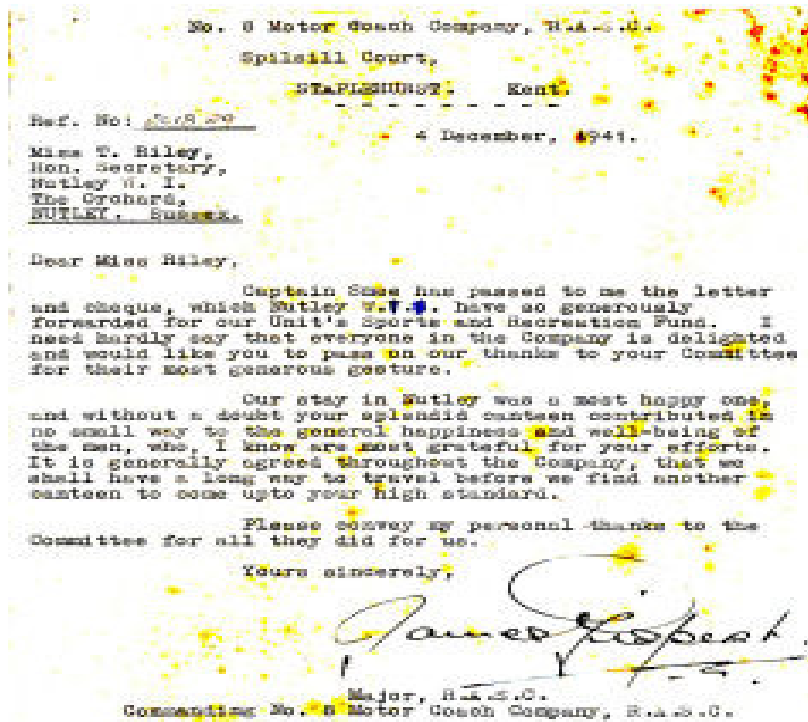
The newspaper reported that Countess Szechenyl, who was leaving the village to return home, had paid for the tea.



In **June 1945** the Nutley War Memorial Committee was set up with Lord Castle Stewart as its Chairman. The W.I. was asked for a representative to sit on the committee. Miss Riley was elected by the membership. A questionnaire was sent to the W.I. for discussion. From the discussions it was decided that a new, licensed club was preferable. A youth club and a room for child welfare were considered very important. However top priority should be given to have houses for the elderly.

By **February 1946** the school canteen had been closed.

The W.I. continued to give great support to the village immediately after the war, and the membership was, and still is, needed in Nutley.



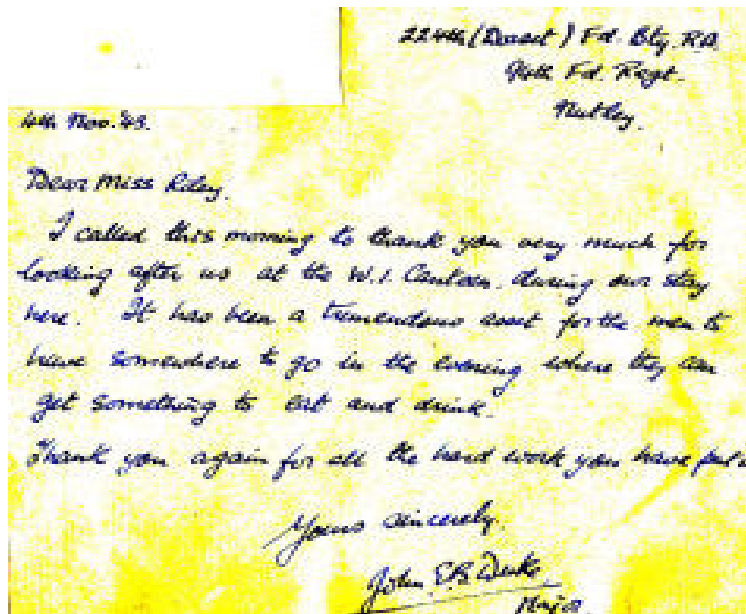
THE MILITARY

"The German Invasion of England" was planned for mid September 1940. The German 9th. Army planned to land two Infantry Divisions and a Mountain Division between Hastings and Brighton, and a second wave of two Panzer and two Motorised Divisions were to follow. The Ashdown Forest was a designated drop area for their paratroopers.

Kent, Sussex and Surrey were the most at risk. For their defence there were three divisions, the 1st. and 45th. British and a New Zealand Division, plus a Motor Machine Gun Brigade and one other Infantry Brigade.

From October 1940 five brigades of the 1st. and 2nd. Canadian Divisions strengthened the coastal defences from Newhaven to Worthing.

In January 1943, Uckfield House became the headquarters of the 1st. Canadian Infantry.



Pippingford Military Camp, an area of 500 acres, became the home to 3,000 troops. The majority were Canadian but there were also some from New Zealand.

Tanks were based there, as they were in Crowborough.

The troops were housed in nissen huts, with an

officer's mess, cookhouse, cinema and hospital.

They had a rifle range for target practice. A level area was used as a parade ground. Troops who trained there went on the Dieppe raid, where the losses were great. A road, The Canada Road remains today as a memorial to those lost.



Maresfield Camp had been a first world war Army Camp and continued to be the home of certain regiments. The Royal Signals Regiment was formed there in 1920. The camp was enlarged at the start of the second war to accommodate the extra troops.

Troops, both British and Canadian were billeted at various locations around Nutley. The Isle of Thorns and Woodgate, in Danehill parish were used from 1939. Plaw Hatch, also from 1939. British troops were in Sheffield Park in 1942.

As D Day approached more troops were brought into the area. A total of 4,500 troops passed through Newhaven and Shoreham on the first day to land on Gold and Juno beaches.

At Kingstanding in the Ashdown Forest a site was designated for the expansion of Operation Aspidistra, the black propaganda-broadcasting project.

The Bedfordshire based centre needed a more southerly location and a Canadian Army road-building unit, to accommodate an American 500 kilowatt

Harold won the war of the airwaves

A RADIO engineer who helped set up a crucial station during the second world war has died aged 87.

Harold Robin set up the most powerful radio transmitter of its time at King Standing on the Ashdown Forest which broadcast misleading information to Germany during British bombing raids.

Mr. Robin, who died on November 29 aged 87, was born in May 1911 in Streatham, the second of three sons, and was educated at Oundle, a public school renowned for its engineering facilities.

From there he went to the City and Guilds Institute to study electronics and electrical engineering.

He worked for American company Philco where he was asked to set up a broadcasting station in Liechtenstein to rival the popular Radio Luxembourg.

When the second world war broke out British sales manager for the company Richard Gambler-Parry was put in charge of MI6's radio communications as the political warfare executive and immediately recruited Mr Robin to find sites for 29 short-wave transmitters in the South of England.

These would broadcast to the German forces to undermine their morale, and proved incredibly successful.

In May 1941 Mr Robin was given a blank cheque to find the most power-

ful transmitter, and bring it back to England. He found it in New Jersey, USA, and increased the 500kW machine to 600kW.

It was set up at King Standing, on the Ashdown Forest and was used in secret project Aspidistra, which used to broadcast confusing information to the German people every time there was a bombing.

In 1946 Mr Robin was made chief engineer of the Diplomatic Wireless Service under control of the Foreign Office. This was used by the government to broadcast to trouble spots in the Commonwealth.

Telescope

Mr Robin retired in 1971, but remained active, building a fully automatic 18in telescope at his Tunbridge Wells home.

It was donated to the University of Sussex in 1996 on condition it was available for public viewing as much as possible, particularly for people with disabilities.

The telescope at the Harold Robin Community Study Centre for Astronomy, at the Isle of Thorns, is computerised so the image can be shown on a television screen so wheelchair users can see the pictures.

Close friend Duncan Goulding said: "He was one of the most charming and enthusiastic people that I have ever met."

"He was very generous, with information and help, and he took such an interest in the transfer of the telescope from his home."

He leaves a stepson.

transmitter, excavated a massive hole. This was the largest in the world. A bombproof roof 4ft. thick was part of the construction undertaken by a 600 strong civilian labour force working 24hrs. a day until it was completed. Floodlights were only turned off when an air raid threatened. The site took three weeks to dig out, and the transmitter complex took nine months to complete. The interception of German domestic radio signals violated the Geneva Convention, but was highly successful.

The site was marked on maps as a weather station.

This article was reported in 1998 in the local newspaper.

After D Day the camps were deserted.
Pippingford was used to house refugees after the army left.

Chapelwood Manor housed prisoners of war, mainly Italians. They would go out to work on farms or other occupation locations. Some prisoners had difficulty returning home due to boundary changes in Europe.

AIRCRAFT DOWN

1940

From July 1940 air battles were a regular event.

July 17th, a Lysander crashed near Forest Row, killing both airmen.

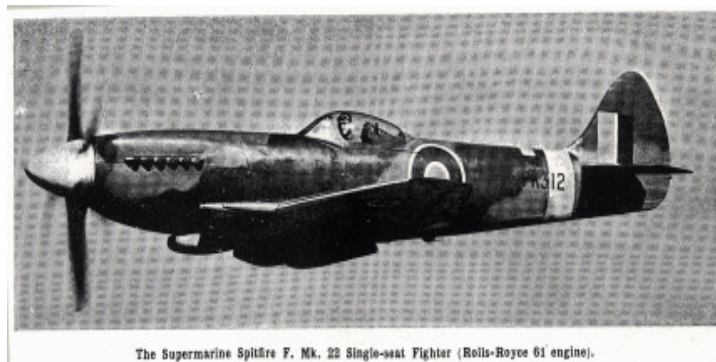
August 23rd, a Hurricane crashed at Hunts Farm, Withyham.

September 4th, a Spitfire crashed at Culvers Farm, Hartfield.

September 11th, a Hurricane crashed near Withyham Post Office.

September 11th, a Spitfire crashed at Parsonage Farm, Fletching.

September 27th, a Hurricane crashed at Holwych Farm, Hartfield.



September 27th, a German Messerschmitt ME 110 was shot down at Chelwood Gate. The time was 09.40hrs. and the pilot was F/W Adolf Bruns. 53585/158. The other body was not identified at the scene.

September 30th, a German Messerschmitt 109 fighter was shot down at 09.45hrs at Nettlefold Field, Bell Lane, Nutley. The pilot could not be identified at the scene.

It is believed that he was buried in the back corner of Nutley churchyard, and later returned to Germany



The Messerschmitt Me 109G-6 Single-seat Fighter with a wooden tail-unit.

October 3rd, a Blenheim crashed at 03.25hrs. at Broadstone Warren, Forest Row. The crew, F/O C.A. Hobson, Sgt. D.E. Hughes and L.A.C. C.F. Cooper were all killed.

November 8th, a Hurricane was shot down at Pound Farm, Withyham.

The Royal Airforce had ruled the skies and the invasion by Germany was put on hold.



The Vickers-Armstrongs Wellington X Heavy Bomber (two Bristol Hercules XVI engines).

1941

July 31st, a Wellington Bomber Mk. 2 QTH 5384 crashed at Slayesham on the Ashdown Forest at 0455hrs, cause unknown. It was completely wrecked and the crew of six were killed. At the scene only three of the crew were identified.

They were Flt.Sgts. H. Vidler, first pilot, L. Saunders, Air Gunner and Sgt. W. Brooks, observer Later, from the aircraft log, the other three crew members were Sgt. V. Sutton, second pilot, Flt. Sgt. E. Cave, and Sgt. S. Hathaway, both Wireless operator/Air gunner.

The squadron was based at Binbrook in Lincolnshire.

The night of the raid the target was Cologne. The weather was bad, with thunderstorms and icing occurred.



116 aircraft were despatched, 62 Wellingtons, 42 Hampdens, 7 Halifaxes and 5 Stirlings.

When the crews returned they could only report "Cologne believed hit". Cologne confirmed only 3 high explosive and 30 incendiary bombs, no casualties and 6 buildings destroyed.

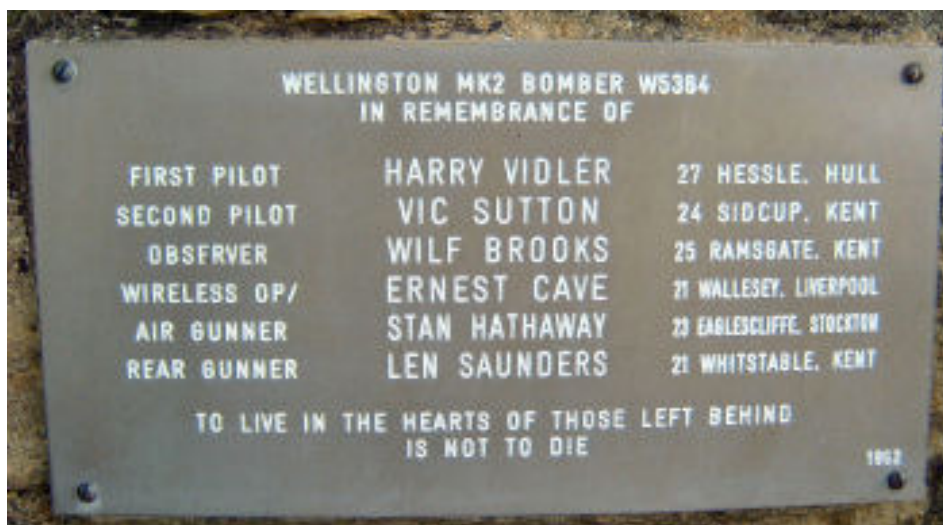
2 Hampdens and 1 Wellington lost. 6 more aircraft crashed in England.

Another raid that night using 12 Whitleys was aborted, due to the bad weather. They returned from Boulogne to their base.

The place where the Wellington crashed is now known as the Airman's Grave. A

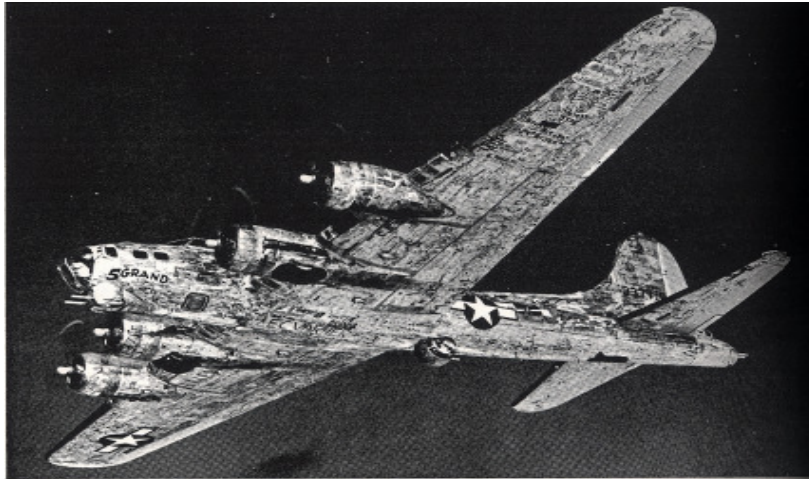
remembrance service is held there on Remembrance Sunday, which not only remembers those brave men, but also all who lost their lives in two world wars.

An aircraft flies over the memorial, weather permitting dropping poppies.



1943

September 6th, at 12.50hrs. An American Flying Fortress B17, low on fuel landed at the Isle of Thorns. It managed to take off again, once refuelled and lighter.



A Boeing B-17G, the 5,000th Fortress built by the Boeing Company, which went into service with the 8th Air Force covered with the signatures of employees of the company.

September 6th, at 12.55hrs. another straggling B17 Fortress crashed at the Convent of Notre Dame, Hartfield by the edge of the Ashdown Forest. It was almost completely wrecked. Seven of the crew were unhurt, but Lt. Peel, Lt. Jones and S.Sgt. Harrington all received facial injuries and were admitted to the Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead where they were detained. Following this incident the police were horrified to discover that troops guarding the wreckage had allowed local school children to take live ammunition. The dangerous souvenirs had to be tracked down by the police and taken from the children.

September 10th, at Pippingford Park a Proctor aircraft flown by Sgt. Richard Morriss crashed at 14.20hrs. It crashed into the stone tower and burst into flames.

1944

February 14th, a Typhoon of number 1 squadron, piloted by Sgt. R.W. Hornall had to make an emergency landing at Woodgate Farm, Danehill. The fighter ended up with its starboard wing smashed off and against the boundary wall of Woodgate Farm kitchen garden. Sgt. Hornall was unhurt and telephoned Biggin Hill from the nearby orderly room of the 5th. Canadian Division.



The Hawker Typhoon IB Rocket Fighter (Napier Sabre IIA engine).

April 7th, another Typhoon, piloted by Flying Officer D.J. Green of 83 Group Support Unit made a forced landing at Long Field, Moons Farm, Piltdown. Green was only slightly hurt.

May 6th, Flying Officer Green was back at Piltdown. He was forced to crash-land another Typhoon at Goldstrow Farm.

May 16th, a Spitfire EE625 from 303 squadron crashed at 11.45hrs.at Funnell's Farm, Nutley. The Polish pilot, F.O.Z. Marzalek was killed. The aircraft was from Horne, where three Squadrons, No.130, R.A.F, No.303, Polish and No.402, Canadian were based from 30th.April 1944 until 19th. June 1944.

July 12th, a B26 Marauder crashed at Forest Row.

1945

March 21st, a Photographic Reconisance Spitfire came down at Colemans Hatch. Fg. Officer F. Adlam piloted it and was the last recorded crash.

BOMBS DROPPED AT OR NEAR TO NUTLEY

15/08/40 19.00hrs. BoringWheel Farm. 8 H.E. 4 Cows Killed.

Chapelwood Manor. 2 H.E.

Picketts Farm. 4 H.E.

28/08/40 22.30hrs. Little Putlands. Incendiaries.

Highfield Cottage, Fairwarp. Incendiaries.

09/09/40 Pippingford Park. Incendiaries.

17/09/40 09.35hrs. Kingstanding. 1 H.E.

27/09/40 00.45hrs. Pippingford Park. 2H.E.

28/09/40 01.00hrs. Courtlands. 1 H.E. 3 Bungalows damaged. Broken glass.

Sewage Filter Beds. 1 U.X.B.

Nether Lane. Water main damaged.

20.30hrs. Pippingford Park. 1 H.E. Trees
uprooted.

29/09/40 02.00hrs. Pilbeams Nursery. 1 Incendiary.

01/10/40 02.00hrs. Duddleswell Manor. 1 Incendiary.

04/10/40 15.15hrs. Little Ashes. 1H.E.
Marlpits Cottage. 1 H.E.
Ashdown Forest. 7 Incendiaries?
15.40hrs. Gills Lap. 2H.E.
Hillside Farm. 2H.E.
Hillside Cottage. 1 H.E.
Ashdown Forest. 4 H.E.

16/10/40 19.30hrs. Old Lodge. 13 H.E.
Streatfield Farm. 1 H.E.
Woodstock. 1 H.E.
Courtlands. 1 H.E. Houses
damaged, water and electricity
mains damaged, G.P.O. wires
Down. Tricar blown to pieces.
(This car was being driven by
Norman Montgomery).

21/10/40 10.00hrs. Little Annwood Wood.
Annwood Farm. 1 U.X.B.

19/03/41 04.20hrs. Wych Cross Place. 2 H.E. 4 U.X.B.
Stonehill, Nutley. 13 U.X.B.
300 yards from Little Gassons.
5 U.X.B.

20/01/43 12.45hrs. Nutley village. Machine Gun Attack
from aircraft. Hillend Farm. 3 cows
wounded. Cow shed damage.

25/03/44 Nutley village 4 H.E. 3 U.X.B.
Houses damaged.

V1 FLYING BOMBS



V1 Bomb and Ramp at Duxford, 1994.

- 3/07/44** 11.25hrs. Millbrook. Shot down. 6 houses damaged.
- 4/07/44** Park Wood, Batts Bridge. Shot down by a fighter. Soldiers hurt and 4 houses damaged.
- 5/07/44** 18.20hrs. Bivouac Camp, Crowborough. 8 killed And 17 injured.
- 8/07/44** 21.45hrs. Duddleswell.
- 8/07/44** 22.25hrs. Old Lodge. Engine cut out. Crater 2ft. deep and 18ft. diameter.
- 1/08/44** 09.50hrs. Nutley. One person injured, one house extensively damaged and eight slightly damaged.
- 29/08/44** 13.55hrs. Marsh Green, Military Camp, Hartfield. 3 killed and 45 injured. Considerable damage to the camp.



ROLL OF HONOUR

H.F. ALLITT
W.H. CLELOW
R. CONSTABLE
D.D.R. DALLAWAY
F.L.E. DOBBIE
C. GROVER
D.P. HUDSON
N.A. MONTGOMERY
R. MORRISS

H. PORTER
T.J. RALPH
S. RIDLEY
J.S.C. ROBINSON
D.E. SMITH
D.A.N. STUART
R.J.O. STUART
H. WALTERS
G.C. WHEATLEY

IN MEMORY OF EACH INDIVIDUAL AS LISTED ON THE MEMORIAL TABLET

ALLITT, HAROLD FREDERICK.
Sergeant 9th. Royal Sussex Regiment.
6404518.

Date of Death 22/12/1944 Age 28.
Commemoration Gauhati War Cemetery,
India.

Fred, as his family and friends knew him was born in 1916. He was the youngest son of Alfred and Louisa Allitt of Mill Farm, Cackle Street.

In his early years he was a choirboy at Fairwarp Church.

On leaving Fairwarp school he was employed as a gardener by Mrs. Key of Duddleswell. He had a keen interest in motorcycles.

At the outbreak of the war he joined the Royal Sussex Regiment. He was sent to India in 1943 and transferred to an Indian Unit as a sergeant instructor. His death occurred whilst on active service in India and he is buried there.

Gauhati is the capital city of the state of Assam in northeast India. The cemetery was started during the Second World War for burials from the several military hospitals posted in the area. Later the Army Graves Service brought in other graves from several cemeteries so that permanent maintenance could be assured. There are now 488 Commonwealth servicemen buried or commemorated there.

CLEWLOW, WILLIAM HENRY.
Corporal Royal Corps. Of Signals.
2310598.

Date of Death 01/08/1944 Age 41.
Commemoration Nutley (St. James the Less)
Churchyard, United Kingdom.

William was born on 11th. October 1902 in Clony, Staffordshire and was a

motor fitter before enlisting into the regular army. In February 1920 he enlisted into the Royal Engineers but in November 1920 the Royal Corps of Signals was formed at Maresfield Camp and he was transferred into it. He served in India from 1920 until 1929 when he returned to Maresfield Camp. Whilst there he met a local girl, Amy Amelia Carly, of 3 Summerhill Cottages, Cackle Street, Nutley. They married on 12th. October 1929 at Uckfield.

They had three daughters, Valerie and Betty were born in Gibraltar where he served for 6 years, and Jean was born in Cackle Street on their return to this country.

At the outbreak of the war he was sent to Egypt and after a year there he returned to Maresfield Camp. After his discharge in February 1943 he continued to work at the camp as a civilian. He died whilst working there of the effects of malaria fever contracted in India.

He was awarded four medals, The General Service Medal with Indian Clasp Waziristan, The 1939 - 1945 Africa Star, The Long Service and Good Conduct Medal and Defence War Medal.

These medals are on display in the Royal Signals Museum at Blandford Camp, Dorset. His daughter Mrs. Betty Foreman donated them.



CONSTABLE, REGINALD ALBERT.
Leading Stoker H.M.S. Dragonfly
Royal Navy P/SS 117724.
Date of Death 14/02/1942.
Commemoration Portsmouth Naval Memorial,
United Kingdom.

Reginald and his wife Rosetta lived at Dunromyn, now (Ridgefield), Nether Lane, Nutley. His grandparents, John and Barbara lived there until their deaths in 1935 and 1936. They are both buried in Nutley churchyard. It is believed that Reginald and his wife came to Nutley after their deaths. No more information has been discovered, and his widow left Nutley after his death.

DALLAWAY, DOUGLAS DEMUS RUSSELL.

**Sergeant 49 Sq. Royal Airforce Volunteer
Reserve. 1390391**

Date of Death 03/01/1944 Age 20.

**Commemoration Runnymede Memorial,
United Kingdom.**

Douglas, son of Douglas and Flora Dallaway of Brickyard Farm, School Lane, Nutley was born on 21st. March 1923.

He was educated at Nutley village school and was a keen cyclist. On leaving school he worked in Mrs. Sutton's bakery in the High Street, which later was run by Nurse Midgley and Miss Lockly. Later he worked as a gardener at one of the houses on the Birch Grove Estate.

Early in the war he volunteered for the Royal Airforce and served in the RAF. Regiment.

He was transferred to aircrew and trained as a rear gunner at Detling Airfield, Kent.

After training he was posted to Fiskerton in Lincolnshire to number 49 squadron of Lancaster bombers.

On the 3rd. of January 1944 383 aircraft, including 362 Lancasters, 12 Mosquitoes and 9 Halifaxes made their way to Berlin. 27 Lancasters were lost on that raid, the majority over Berlin, including Douglas's aircraft.

He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial.

DOBBIE, FERGUS LYLE EDWARD.

Able Seaman H.M.M.I. 232 Royal Navy.

Date of Death 24/04/1943.

**Commemoration Nutley (St James the Less) Churchyard,
United Kingdom.**



“Ferg” was born in 1922, the second child of Thomas and Minnie Dobbie of Forest Side, Clockhouse Lane, Nutley.

He had two brothers, Thomas and Sidney, and three sisters, Nancy, Ivy and Betty. He attended Nutley village school and was

an all round sportsman.

On leaving school he worked as a gardener at Chapelwood Manor. He then went into the building trade and during the Blitz travelled to London, clearing bomb damage. In 1941 he joined the Royal Navy and served in Scapa Flow and later in Pembrokeshire, where he drowned as a result of a tragic accident.



GROVER, CECIL.

Private The Queen’s Royal Regiment.

(West Surrey) 6407062.

Date of Death 21/06/1945 Age 27.

Commemoration Nutley (St. James the Less) Churchyard, United Kingdom.

Cecil was the son of Bernard and Emily Grover of the High Street, Nutley. He had two sisters, Enid and Renee and a brother Bernard.



He attended Nutley village school and was an outstanding football player.

He was offered a place by Sussex County but decided not to take it.

After leaving school he worked in the family butcher business. For some of his army life he was based in Chichester.

He contracted tuberculosis and was sent to Robertsbridge Sanatorium, where he died.



HUDSON, DUDLEY PARKER.
Gunner 118 Field Regiment Royal Artillery.
964418.
Date of Death 25/06/1943 Age 23.
Commemoration Chungkai War Cemetery,
Thailand.

Dudley was the son of Hamilton and Rachael Hudson of The Stores, High Street, Nutley.

The family moved into the village in the early thirties and it is believed that Dudley worked in the family shop.

He was captured by the Japanese and forced to work on the notorious Burma - Siam Railway.
His parents left Nutley after the war.

Chungkai was one of the base camps on the railway and contained a hospital and church built by the Allied prisoners of war. The war cemetery is the original burial ground started by the prisoners themselves, and are mostly of men who died in the hospital.

MONTGOMERY, NORMAN ALBERT.
Civilian War Dead.
Date of Death 16/10/1940 Age 19.
Commemoration Nutley, (St. James the Less)
Churchyard.



Norman was the son of Mr. A. Montgomery and Mrs. E. Montgomery of Chapelwood Cottage, Nutley.

He had decided to go to the cinema in Uckfield that fateful evening. Motoring along the A22 at the bend in the road at Horney Common, a German aircraft dropped its bombs. He was killed instantly.

MORRIS, RICHARD.
Sgt. Royal Airforce Volunteer Reserve.
1395754.

Date of Death 10/09/ 1943 Age 21.
Commemoration Nutley (St. James the Less) Churchyard,
United Kingdom.

Richard, born in 1922 was the son of Mr. Hayley Morriss and lived at Pippingford Park. He was educated at Stowe School and then at Chelsea College studying Aeronautical Engineering. With the country at war he volunteered to join the Royal Airforce.



He qualified as a sergeant pilot in the U.S.A.

On the 10th. October 1943 he was killed when his two seater Percival Proctor aircraft crashed into the stone tower of Pippingford Manor House.



PORTER, HENRY.
Rank, Date of Death and Commemoration,
Unknown.

Henry was the son of Sarah (Porter) Turk. Sarah was widowed and remarried Albert Turk in 1920.

Henry had a sister Caroline, and the family lived at South View Brickyard Cottage, Crowborough Road, Nutley.

He attended Nutley village school, and it is believed that he was in the building trade.

Henry was in the army, but the War Graves Commission can find no details of his death.

RALPH, THOMAS JAMES.

Private 1st. Bn. Royal Sussex Regiment.

6403536.

Date of Death 22/11/1941 Age 24.

**Commemoration Halfaya Sollum War Cemetery,
Egypt.**

Thomas was the son of Thomas and Edith Ralph of Forest Bank, Clockhouse Lane, Nutley.

He attended Nutley village school and was popular in the village.

Called up at the start of the war he was posted to Egypt.

He was killed during the campaign in the Western Desert, which raged from 1940 until 1942.

Halfaya Sollum War Cemetery is approximately 12 kilometres from the Libyan border, adjacent to Halfaya Pass, the scene of heavy fighting in 1941 and 1942.

The cemetery contains 2,046 burials, of which 238 are unidentified.

RIDLEY, SPENCER.

Gunner 78 Bty. 35 Lt. A.A. Regiment.

Royal Artillery. 1777656.

Date of Death 20/01/1944 Age 40.

**Commemoration Labuan War Cemetery,
Malaysia.**



Born on the 6th. December 1905, Spencer was one of five children of Harry and Martha Ridley of Chestnut Cottages, Nutley. He was married to Sophie Hanscombe - Vinton and they had three children, Rosemary, William and Patrica. The family home was The Barracks, High Street, Nutley.

For a time he was employed as a footman at Old Lodge. He was called up when he was about 35 years of age.

A Sussex Express Newspaper report on July 23rd. 1943 stated that Gunner Spencer Ridley, husband of Mrs. S. Ridley received news that her husband

was a prisoner of war of the Japanese.

He had been posted missing in February 1943.

In November 1941 he had been posted overseas. Mrs. Ridley received a letter in December 1941 to say that he had safely arrived in Singapore. That was the only communication. It is believed that he saw action in Sumatra and Java before being captured by the Japanese.

It is understood that he worked on the Burma Railway.

He died of tuberculosis and is buried on Labuan Island, north west of Bourneo.

**ROBINSON, JACK SENIOR CLARKE.
Flight Lieutenant Royal Air Force (RAFO).**

70583.

Date of Death 26/09/1940 Age 44.

**Commemoration Nutley St. James The Less
Churchyard.**

Jack and his wife, Bertha came to Nutley just before the war. They lived at Forest Edge, Clockhouse Lane.



Jack was stationed at Northolt Airfield in August 1939, a frontline Fighter base with Hurricanes. It was at the heart of the Battle of Britain action.

He was killed during that time, and there is a plaque in the church from his fellow officers.

The couple were regular church members, and his wife took part in village activities.

She was the Red Cross Commandant and a committee member of the Women's Institute.

After the war she left the area.



SMITH, DUNCAN EDWARD.
Sub - Lieutenant (A) H.M.S. Condor Royal Naval
Volunteer Reserve.
Date of Death 02/10/1941 Age 21.
Commemoration Lee - On Solent Memorial,
United Kingdom.

Duncan was the son of William and Elizabeth Smith of The Gardens, Chelwood Vachery.
It would appear that the family only moved into the area just prior to the war.
I could discover no more details. His parents left the area after the war.

STUART, DAVID ANDREW NOEL Viscount.
Lieutenant 11th. Hussars Royal Armoured
Corps. 232729.
Date of Death 10/11/1942 Age 21.
Commemoration Alamein Memorial, Egypt.

David was born at Rowfant on 7th. October 1921. He was the eldest son of Arthur, Earl Castle Stewart and Eleanor the Countess Castle Stewart, of Old Lodge, Nutley.
He had brothers, Robert, Patrick and Simon. David and brother Robert played cricket for the Old Lodge side against the Nutley village side.
After boarding school he went to Eton and then to Cambridge University and at the end of his first year volunteered for armed service and joined the 11th. Hussars.
He served in North Africa with the 7th. Armoured Division and was killed in action just one month before his twenty first birthday

The campaign in the Western Desert was fought between the Commonwealth forces (with later additions of Free French, Polish and Greek troops), and the Axis forces (German and Italian) based in Libya. The battlefield was 1,000 kilometres of desert between Alexandria in Egypt and Benghazi in Libya.
The objective was the control of the Mediterranean, the link with the east through the Suez Canal, the Middle East oil supplies and the supply route to Russia through Persia.
The Alamein Memorial commemorates 8,500 soldiers who died in the campaigns in Egypt and Libya.

STUART, ROBERT JOHN OCHILTRIE Viscount.
Lieutenant "B" Sqn. 9th. Queen's Royal
Lancers. Royal Armoured Corps. 311623.
Date of Death 17/09/1944 Age 20.
Commemoration Ancona War Cemetery, Italy.

Robert the second son of Arthur, Earl Castle Stewart and Eleanor the Countess Castle Stewart of Old Lodge, Nutley was born on 12th. December 1923. Following his education at Eton he served for a time in the Nutley Home Guard. His father, a major in the Home Guard provided a hut in the grounds of Old Lodge for their use. Robert then joined the 9th. Lancers and served in Italy. He was severely wounded by a piece of shrapnel and died of his wounds at Loreto.

On 3rd. September 1943 the Allies invaded the Italian mainland, coinciding with the armistice made with the Italians who then entered the war on the Allied side. Following the fall of Rome to the Allies in June 1944, the German retreat became ordered, and successive stands were made on a series of defensive positions.

The cemetery at Ancona reflects the Allied progress up the Adriatic coast in August and September 1944.

Ancona Cemetery contains 1,019 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War.

WALTERS, HENRY.
Private 5th. Cinque Ports Bn. Royal Sussex
Regiment. 6398176.
Date of Death 16/06/1940 Age 29.
Commemoration Dunkirk Memorial, France.

Henry was the son of Edward and Alice Walters of Chestnut Cottage, Dodds Bottom, Nutley. He had a brother, Jim, and sisters, Lois, Violet, Harriett and Alice.

He attended Nutley village school and took part in village activities.

After leaving school he worked for the Council on road maintenance.

Dunkirk was the scene of the historic evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force in May 1940.

The Dunkirk Memorial commemorates more than 4,500 casualties of the British Expeditionary Force who died in the campaign of 1939 - 1940.

WHEATLEY, GORDON CYRIL.

Stoker 2nd. Class. H.M.S. Diamond. Royal Navy. P/KX 111656.

Date of Death 27/04/1941 Age 21.

Commemoration Portsmouth Naval Memorial, United Kingdom.

Gordon was the second son of four born to William and Kate Wheatley of 1 Glenside, Nursery Lane, Nutley. He was born on 14th. March 1920. Called up at the start of the war he served on H.M.S. Diamond, a destroyer. The ship was engaged in evacuating the troops from Crete and having taken one consignment to safety, they returned for another, and it was then that the ship was dive - bombed.

Gordon and the majority of the crew were killed in action.

His three brothers were called to serve their country and survived the war.



Portsmouth Naval Memorial commemorates 9,667 sailors of the First World War and 14,918 of the Second World War.

CONCLUSION

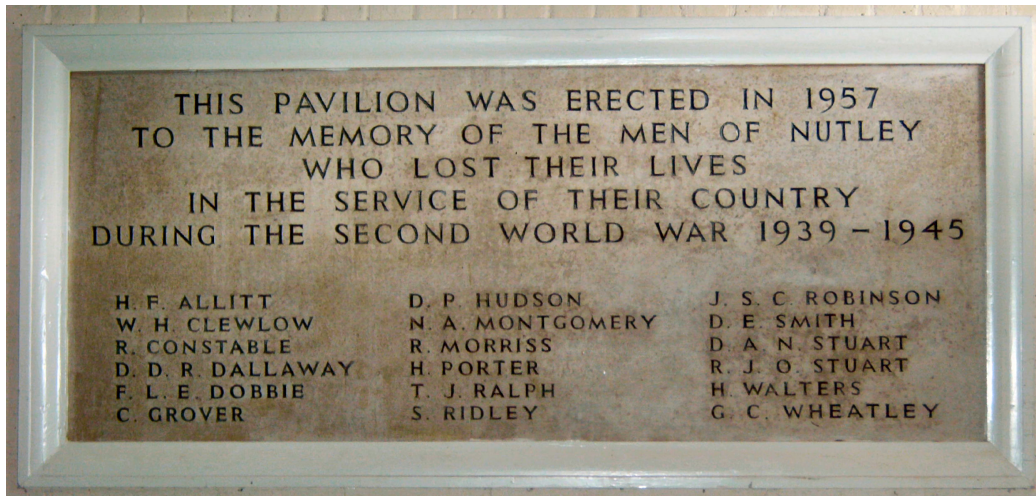
With the country bankrupt as a result of the war rationing continued, and life was still hard.

A Nutley War Memorial Committee was set up to discuss the best way to honour the dead.

It was eventually decided to erect a sports pavilion on Fords Green.

It was officially opened on Saturday, July 19th. 1958 by the Rev. David Sheppard.

The plaque bearing the names of those who died in the war was unveiled by Earl Castle Stewart.



Earl Castle Stewart. He and Lady Stewart lost two sons in the war, and he met a large proportion of the building cost.

The opening ceremony was attended by relatives of those who were named on the memorial tablet, and by standard bearers of the Nutley, Maresfield and Fairwarp branch of the British Legion.

The Rev. David Sheppard described the pavilion as a worthy memorial and something, which would have real use in the whole life of the village.

It was just the kind of thing he said, that those who gave their lives would have wished the village to have.

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Minutes of Nutley School Managers 1939 – 1946

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