

Tessa Heard's Wartime Reminiscences.

I was born in 1938. My name was Tessa Mary Heard. I was brought up in the small market town of Warminster on Salisbury Plain. It was then, and still is a military town. We lived on Imber Road about half a mile from the barracks. Army life was all around us. I remember it vividly. My father having been invalided from the army worked at a local garage and was a member of the Home Guard. My mother who was a Cumbrian insisted on returning "home" to Blackford each Summer.

A few days after school broke up in July, my father would put my mother, my brother Bruce and I on the 8.12 am train to Bristol at Warminster station. Mum always posted our wellingtons and sturdy shoes ahead of our journey. She always wore her grey costume and a hat for travelling. I remember carrying my doll and my brother always took a *Beano* comic to read.

There was no buffet or restaurant car in war time. We carried egg sandwiches in a brown carrier bag and a bottle of lemonade made from powder. This always got warm during the journey and the egg sandwiches never smelled very appetising. We often could not get a seat and had to sit on the big suitcase in the corridor of the train. We had to change trains at Bristol Temple Meads. We looked at the barrage of balloons flying above the station. The train had to have two steam engines to pull it over Shap Fell. My brother Bruce used to run up the platform to watch them coupling on the second engine.

It took a long time to reach Carlisle, sometimes after four o'clock. We then got a bus to Blackford and then walked to the little farm at Newtown where Grandma lived. My uncle Billy went to work each day at the aerodrome at Kingstown. He had a car - a Ford 8. My other uncle, Bob Eaglesham was the farmer. He used a horse called Diamond for the field work. We loved helping him. One year he

had a German POW called Kurt who came each day in an army truck. I had never seen a German and stared at him for hours.

Mum had to register for rations, and Holywell, the grocer delivered the groceries from Carlisle. They had a shop in Lowther Street. They were lovely holidays.

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