

THERE IS A WAR ON YOU KNOW

SCULCOATES
LANE

MELWOOD
GROVE

NICHOLSON
STREET

EXCHANGE ST.

TUNIS STREET

STEPNEY LANE

FOLKESTONE
STREET

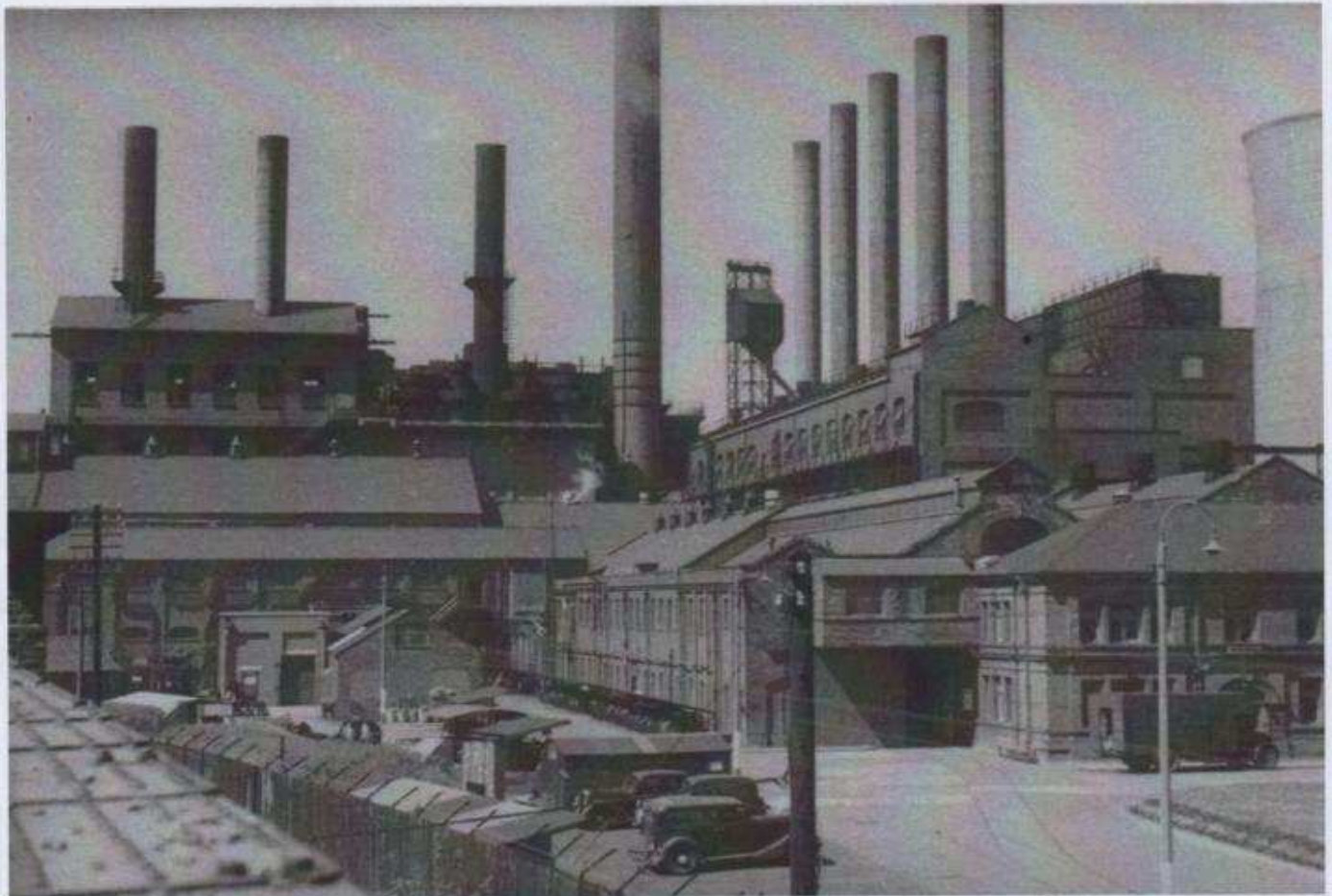
LOCKWOOD ST.

LIFE THROUGH THE EYES OF CHILDREN
LIVING IN THE SCULCOATES AREA OF HULL
DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

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Life through the eyes of children living in the Sculcoates area of Hull during the Second World War.

We all lived in an area bounded by two lanes, Stepney and Sculcoates, with probably around 5000 people living mainly in town houses -two up and two down with a scullery and a pantry and outside lavatory, coal house and shed in a small backyard.



*Sculcoates Power Station on Sculcoates Lane, a prime target for German bombers.
Ted Tuxworth Estate.*

It was a big industrialised area with the Hull and Barnsley railway line, the Sculcoates Power Station, the North Eastern Gas Board factory and gas holders, Needlers Sweet Manufacturers, Blundell, Spence and Co and Sissons paint and varnish works and just across the River Hull in Stoneferry there were huge silo mills. The whole area must have been marked down early by the Luftwaffe as a prime target for their bombers during the Second World War. It really was a 'grace of God' situation for all of us who lived through the devastation with over 300 houses in the area totally destroyed by enemy action and it was not until another twenty five years before re-building started in the area.

The two nights of May 7th and 8th in 1941 were sheer hell for the citizens of Hull with Heinkels, Dorniers and Junkers dropping over 300 high explosive bombs on the city as well as magnesium incendiaries, parachute land mines and oil bombs the size of dustbins during twelve hours of terror. The Riverside Quay was burnt from end to end, Rank's Flour Mill was severely damaged, Hammonds Store, the Cecil Cinema, the Alexandra Theatre and the main

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bus station were all destroyed as were shop and office premises in King Edward Street. The Hull Royal Infirmary and the Hull City Hall were hit and the Alexandra, King George and Victoria Docks in the east of the city were all heavily bombed. The Prudential Tower on the corner of Waterworks Street and King Edward Street was a landmark building and it received a direct hit and the building had to be demolished. Sixteen people sheltering in the basement of the building were killed during the raid and only ten bodies could later be identified. 420 people were killed and 325 injured over the two nights of heavy bombing.

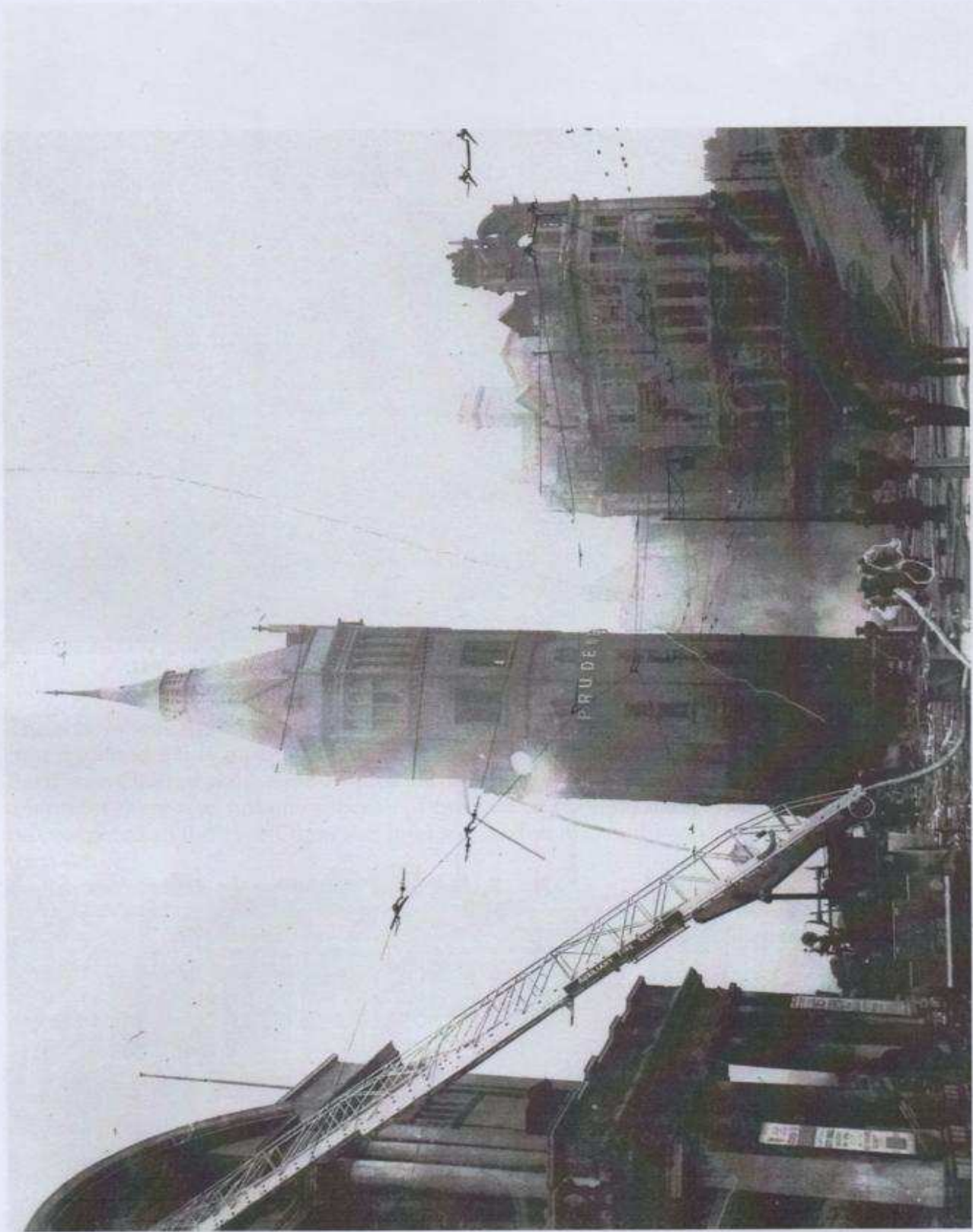


*Queen Victoria Square and King Edward Street, May 9th 1941, clear-up after two nights of heavy bombing.
Hull Daily Mail.*

Most of the children in the area attended Beverley Road Mixed School and it remained open during the war years but many pupils were evacuated to Alford or Bourne in Lincolnshire which meant a walk to the Corporation Pier with teacher Mrs Boulton, a trip across the River Humber to New Holland on a coal-fired 'Castle' paddle steamer and then a steam train to one or other of the villages. Once there, residents would then choose which children they wanted to take in.

The school was also used as an emergency centre after air raids with the WVS looking after the homeless and using the school kitchens to feed everyone. Shelters were built in the school playground and could be used by pupils during daytime air raids and by local residents during the night raids. Mr M.C. Longden was the Headmaster during this period and he organised teachers to go round the houses in the immediate area to implore parents to evacuate their children away from the regular devastation which the bombing brought. Infection was rife in the school in June 1943 while gifts and sweets donated by the USA were distributed to the children at Christmas 1944 and a Victory Tea Party was held at the school on July 25 1945.

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*The Prudential Tower in Hull City Centre about to be demolished on May 9th 1941 after suffering a direct hit in the previous night's bombing.
Hull Daily Mail.*



*Part of King Edward Street, shops completely destroyed by enemy bombing in May 1941.
Hull Daily Mail.*



*Hammonds Store on the left in Jameson Street, c1930. Destroyed by enemy action in May 1941 & rebuilt in 1950.
Mike Ulyatt Collection.*

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*The Cecil Cinema on the corner of Ferensway and Anlaby Road, c1926. The cinema had a lift from the foyer to the balcony and the seating capacity was 1500. Destroyed by enemy action in May 1941, site later cleared to become a temporary car park and an office block now stands there.
Hull Daily Mail.*

The school was right next door to the Beverley Road Swimming Baths so it was not surprising that it gained a fine reputation in school swimming galas. Many pupils also swam in the nearby Barmston Drain during the summer months although when you look at the drain nowadays it's a wonder there was not an outbreak of typhoid or cholera!. Jack Hale was a fine swimmer and he competed in the 1948 Olympics held in London and he lived down nearby Nicholson Street for a while.

Pearson Park was just across the road from the school and it was an oasis of green in an industrial area and it became a children's playground during and after school time and especially during the summer holidays while for those more interested in organised games of football, rugby or cricket, it meant a walk or a bike ride to Beresford Avenue a mile or so further down Beverley Road.

Blundell, Spence and Co were paint and varnish manufacturers at the Bankside end of Sculcoates and they supplied paint to the Admiralty, the War Office and various Government departments. Their premises received many direct hits in 1941 with the company's offices and the triple-roller building being completely destroyed in one raid and one of the varnish stores was badly damaged.

An Air Raid Precautions Committee had been set up in Hull in 1938 in anticipation of an unsettled world and it proved to be a big life saver in the next six years. The Hull Corporation spent £1.5m building 40,000 various types of shelters throughout the city. Anderson Shelters were made of corrugated curved steel sheets, six foot high, six foot long and four foot six inches wide and they had to be sunk two feet into the ground. They were used mainly in the back

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gardens of houses and could hold four people, six at a squash and they were later extended to take eight or ten people. The shelters were not bomb proof and soon filled with water and they were damp and cold. Anyone earning £250 a year or less received the shelter free of charge.

Square shelters with walls of brick and concrete roofs were built in some back gardens and larger communal shelters were built in heavily-populated areas and they could hold up to 100 people. Timber sandbagged shelters were also used in certain areas. Morrison Shelters were meant for indoor use and were suitable for flats or houses with no gardens. They were rectangular with a mesh steelcage, 6ft 6in long x 4ft wide x 2ft 9in high and they were bolted together with steel. The shelters were named after the then Home Secretary and Minister for Home Security, Herbert Morrison. During the war, 250 domestic shelters and 120 communal ones were destroyed by bombing and 800 people were rescued alive from them.

Air Raid Wardens were recruited for a six day working week and they were permanently on call for air raids. Men received £3/5/ and women £2 a week in wages.

The Civil Defence, Wardens, Fire Service, Police, Doctors, Nurses, Home Guard, Salvation Army, voluntary services and men and women from the Armed Forces, the Ambulance Service and the Utility Services -they all did a wonderful job in helping the citizens of Hull in their hours of need.

The very first daylight air raid in the country took place on the outskirts of the city at Saltend on July 1st 1940 and one of the last air raids of the war by a piloted German aircraft was on Hull on March 18th 1945. No ship out of the city's docks ever missed a tide during the war, a proud record.

Hull had 815 alerts, 82 air raids, 86,715 houses damaged, 152,000 people temporarily homeless and provided for, 1200 people killed and 3000 injured during the war years.

We have always felt it an injustice that Hull was always mentioned in media and radio reports of the time as "heavy bombing took place on a north-eastern coast town", an example of the Ministry of Defence edict on censorship to avoid giving information to the Germans.

These are our stories and memories of a stolen childhood.

Michael Edward Ulyatt born 18 November 1939, lived at 23 Nicholson Street and at 67 Exchange Street in Hull.

" I was actually born in a Nursing Home at 68 Cottingham Road, near to the Newland Orphan Homes and it was later destroyed by enemy action. My mother Mary and dad Les had met at the Hull Brewery Company in Silvester Street in Hull where they both worked as did my Grandad Fred. My dad was a Lance Sergeant in the 1st East Riding Yeomanry and when he was called up he was captured by the Germans in Belgium in September 1939 and he was held as a Prisoner of War in Germany for the duration of the war. My mother received a telegram from the War Office informing her that " he was missing, presumed lost in action" and it was not until early in 1940 that she found out that he was still alive. By that time she had claimed on dad's life insurance policy and when he returned home after the war had ended the insurance company refused to re-insure him as according to their records he was dead.

My earliest recollection of the war is of drinking fizzy lemonade on the top bunk of the

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My dad Les Ulyatt (front left) with Dick Rial. George Solley, 'Nellie' Wallace and Len Myers (back), Roland Hill, Ken Cousins and Reg Brown (centre) with the East Riding Yeomanry above Sutton Bank prior to mobilisation in 1939.

Dick Rial.

communal air raid shelter which had been built by Hull Corporation on the south side of Exchange Street, one of three such buildings. Later I remember the air raid warning siren going off, almost every night it seemed, and being carried from a warm bed into the damp shelter and the smell of burning candles still reminds me of those days. Most women would knit during the raids while the few men around would play cards or just snooze but the screams would come when bombs dropped nearby and the shelter would shudder with the blasts.

I had thirty one relatives living in the immediate area, all of them on my dad's side and my mam's family lived on the Bilton Grange Corporation Estate, having moved there from Courtney Street on Holderness Road. My Granny Trix had married Alf Scarborough and he drove trams and buses in East Hull. Grandad was in the Home Guard and he was asleep in bed one night when he was woken up by stones being thrown at the bedroom window and when he got up and opened the window, one of his pals shouted to him, "Come on Alf, we are off on manoeuvres." My Grandad shouted back down to him, "Clear off, I'm on my holidays" and he promptly shut the window and went back to bed. My memories of their house in Hornby Grove are of wonderful Irish Stew and bread and dripping and of being scared stiff listening to Valentine Dyall as the Man in Black on the radio late at night with all the lights in the house turned off. There was a square, brick-built air raid shelter in the garden and we often stayed over as Holderness Road, Hedon Road and the nearby docks received a terrible battering from enemy action. My mother took me to my Aunt Peggy's in Huddersfield for a short time. We went by train and I have photographs of me in a pram in Sparrow Park but my mother was

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keen to get back home and I was later to start school at Hopewell Road and then St Mary's Roman Catholic School in Wilton Street while we lived on Bilton Grange and then I went to St Vincents RC School in Queens Road when we eventually went home.

My dad's parents lived almost opposite us down Exchange Street at number 76. Grandad Fred was a part-time fire warden and with ten grandchildren at the time, he and my Granny Fairy were certainly kept busy. I remember the porridge and Dandelion and Burdock drink we had there on a regular basis in the kitchen and my grandparents bought me the Beano and Dandy comics which were published alternate weeks during the war and that taught me to read --Desperate Dan and his cow pies, Korky the Cat, Keyhole Kate, Hungry Horace and Lord Snooty are still characters I fondly remember reading in their front room which had mirrors on all three walls and they gave a view of the whole street. Later on I moved onto more "grown-up" reading and the Rover, Adventure, Hotspur and Wizard comics became my favourites with splendid story lines such as Alf Tupper Wilson, the Wonder Athlete who broke all world records, running barefoot and wearing a black one piece outfit; Limp Along Leslie and his footballing glories; Joe Palooka and Sexton Blake. The comics also gave me an introduction to football clubs in Scotland with such marvellous names as Hamilton Academicals, Forfar Athletic, Queen of the South, St Johnstone, Stirling Albion, Partick Thistle and East Fife.

The BBC Radio Light Programme was my big favourite and was the main source of entertainment during the war and immediately afterwards with Uncle Mac on Children's Hour, Sandy MacPherson on the BBC Theatre Organ, Tommy Handley on ITMA (It's That Man Again) with characters such as Colonel Chinstrap, the Funf and the catch-phrases "Can I do you now Sir?" and "TTFN" (TaTa for now), the Billy Cotton Bandshow, Henry Hall's Guest Night, the Jimmy (Snuzzle) Durante Show and much later Dick Barton Special Agent with his sidekicks Jock and Snowy and that great signature tune "The Devil's Gallop" and the crime thriller "Paul Temple" by Francis Durbridge with the "Coronation Scot" music starting off the programme. Radio at that time certainly helped stretch my imagination on a regular basis during the 1940's.

Early Saturday afternoon kid's matinee at the Mayfair Cinema on Beverley Road was a weekly treat for me and how we all looked forward to the escapism. Along with two or three hundred other kids, I would queue up at the side entrance of the cinema down Ryde Street (stalls only --the plush balcony seats were strictly out of bounds for us urchins) for two hours of American black and white short films. The afternoon show would start off with the cinema manager Mr Coverdale rising majestically from the basement playing the illuminated electronic organ. He would be dressed in a chocolate and brown page-boy style suit and usually he would be greeted with orange peel being thrown at him as the usherettes vainly tried to keep order. Often the film projector would temporarily break down and a chorus of boos and stamping of feet on the wooden floor would begin and end with a cheer when it started up again. What a collective groan from the boys when a romantic scene was shown but eventually the high spirits stopped and we enjoyed the films --the ever-popular comedy duo Laurel and Hardy, the slapstick antics of the Three Stooges (Moe, Larry and Shemp), the Marx Brothers (Groucho, Harpo, Chico and Zeppo), a Jewish-American vaudeville act who were not really my cup of tea, Our Gang -The Little Rascals with Alfalfa, Butch, Spanky, Buckwheat, Froggy and Mickey. Buck Jones and Flash Gordon were also popular but for me the Western film was the highlight where the goodies wore a white cowboy hat and the baddies were always dressed in black --Roy Rogers and his horse Trigger, William S. Hart as Hopalong Cassidy with his horse Topper, Tom Mix, Lash LaRue, Gabby Hayes, Tex Ritter and his horse White Flash and Gene Autrey, one of the first 'singing cowboys' whose recording of the song 'Old Faithful' about his beloved horse

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Champion had been adopted by Hull FC as their battle cry in the 1930's. I am certain that the impression these characters had on me over a period of time made me a life-long fan of the Western movies. When we left the cinema we would all pretend to gallop home on a horse with a fish and chip tea waiting for us. It seemed to be a staple diet for most families then.

Christmas time was always something special. Coloured paper chains glued together to string across the rooms, Chinese lanterns to be made and holly and mistletoe to be hung up. Not many Christmas trees, real or fake, in our streets then. Maybe a mince pie and a glass of sherry to be left for Father Christmas and a carrot for Rudolph the reindeer to be left out before bedtime on Christmas Eve and the joy to be had next morning with a pillowcase at the bottom of the bed with an orange, apple, nuts, sweets and maybe a jigsaw or a game to be discovered. Not many turkeys or chickens then for Christmas lunch, probably a rabbit and perhaps a pudding with thick custard and then relatives to welcome or for us to visit.

Family names in the area which I can still recall are Grantham, Peak, Marsden, Harrison, Twiddle, Hargreaves, Stocks, Chapman, Shimells, Bailey, Ward, Collinson, Nicholson, Barlby, Dean, Gloster and Pearson in Exchange Street; Smith, Nutbrown, Banks, Giddings, Drant, Musgrave, Allen, Chadwick, Taylor and Overment down Nicholson Street; Kember, Beck, Frankish and Buck in Tunis Street. Sexton, Bursell, Marritt and Edwards in Stepney Lane; Scaife, Peddie and Dunn in Fleet Street.

In later years my mam told me that she often sang popular songs of the time to me such as 'You are My Sunshine, My Only Sunshine' and 'Don't Fence Me In' but evidently I was less than impressed with her vocal renditions, usually imploring her not to sing to me.

We had a big party in the alley at the back of our houses to celebrate VE Day with food and drink conjured up from somewhere by everyone. Tables and chairs were brought out and then we had games and races to end the day off.

Our parents and grandparents deserve great credit for looking after us during what were terrible times for them but for us youngsters it must have seemed like a big adventure every day. Quite how we were fed and kept reasonably healthy for the five or six years is hard to understand now.

My dad came home in the early summer of 1945 after his release from the German prisoner of war camp. I found it very hard to accept what had happened as for the whole of my young life I had been the centre of attraction with my mam and now I had to share her attention with my dad who was a stranger to me. Selfish I know but it had a big effect on my relationship with him over the years through no fault of either of us really. My brother John was born in February 1946 and we were both to pass our scholarships to Marist College which I know made our parents very proud.

Barbara Belcher (nee Kemp), born 9th July 1931, lived at 3 Pemberton Gardens, Folkestone Street, Hull.

" My father, Mr Stanley Vincent Kemp, was an Air Raid Precaution Warden during the war as he was a builder which was a reserved occupation. Together with my younger brother Ron, we were evacuated to Bourne in Lincolnshire in 1941. I was ten years old and Ron was nearly six. I cried that much that my mother Florence had to come and fetch us both home after just four days there. All I could think of was that if my mother and father were bombed then I wanted to

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be with them. My mother did a very heavy job at Holmes Tannery at the bottom end of Stepney Lane and she left work and caught a train at Paragon Station and it took her nine hours to get to Bourne. It was the happiest moment of my life when I heard my mother's voice downstairs when she arrived and I will never forget that moment as long as I live."

Comedian Norman Collier was born on Christmas Day, 1925 and weighed in at 15lbs 4 oz. "My dear mother Mary never walked in a straight line ever again and my dad Thomas Henry reckoned that at that weight I should have been launched. " He lived at 22 Lockwood Terrace, Lockwood Street, Hull during the early part of the war.

" We lived in the middle of an industrial area which was a regular target for German bombers. It was a big adventure for me, picking up shrapnel the morning after a raid. A brick air raid shelter with a concrete roof was built by Hull Corporation in the middle of our terrace and it had a wooden door entrance and the inside walls were whitewashed and bunk beds up to the ceiling. I can still recall the eerie sound of the wailing air raid siren warning us of another bombing raid and that seemed to happen most nights ..The parachute mines were the worst as you could hear them flapping as they dropped. I was out with my brother Maurice once and we heard the dreaded flapping above us so I pushed him to the ground and lay on top of him to protect him against any explosion but luckily for the both of us it exploded some distance away. One night as we were all filing into the air raid shelter, Mam dashed back into the house. "Where are you going , Mary" said Dad. "Back for my false teeth" she replied. "Come back here, the Germans are dropping bombs not meat pies" shouted Dad. Someone always started to sing during an air raid and everybody would join in but all I wanted to do was to go to sleep despite the shelter shuddering when bombs were dropped nearby. A lot of our neighbour's children were evacuated to the outlying countryside , supposedly for their own safety but I think my parent's philosophy was that the whole family would all go through things together, whatever happened.

I enlisted in the Royal Navy in June 1943 and served as a gunner in Malta, Newfoundland, the Far East and later in the North Atlantic. I was demobbed in 1945 and when I got off the train at Hull Paragon Station, I just could not believe my eyes at all the bomb damage in the city centre and as I walked the short distance home so many buildings and landmarks I remembered were no longer there and the city had a sombre air about it but all ex-servicemen and women received a tremendous welcome home with street parties and pub nights held all over the city.

After taking a couple of weeks off to settle down and get used to life in civvy street, I got a job as a bricklayer's mate with Hull Corporation. There was a tremendous amount of work to do in rebuilding Hull after so much bombing damage and I was working down Hawthorn Avenue helping bricklayer Alf Copping to point up chimney stacks on Corporation houses. Alf said he was going down to buy some Wills Woodbine cigarettes so I took his trowel and continued the work when I accidentally dropped a brick down the chimney. Well, what a commotion developed. The lady of the house came out of her back door, looking up and shaking her fist at me. "Come down here, you ginger haired little b*****, " she yelled" I'll murder you." I clambered down the ladder and followed her into her back kitchen. What a sight there was. The poor lady had been baking for her family and on a big square table there were apple pies, jam tarts and lemon curds, all covered in thick black soot which the brick must have brought down from the chimney. What could I do but apologise profusely to the lady but the damage had been done although I did resist the temptation to lighten up the moment by telling her that her baking looked a bit burnt! "

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Brian Cooke. Born 16 April 1935, lived at 16 Carlton Avenue, Nicholson Street, Hull.

"I went to Beverley Road school where you were a hero if you brought shrapnel or parachute silk from one of the many bombs which fell in the area. Around seven or eight townhouses down our avenue were destroyed by high explosive bombs in an air raid and firemen filled a reservoir with water where they had stood and this was used as a source of water for the fire hoses in later air raids. I was evacuated to Alford in Lincolnshire but have no memories at all as to how I got there, who I stayed with or how long I was away from home. When I did come back to Hull it was to live with my mother Maude as my dad Charlie had been moved to Croydon as part of his Civil Defence duties. He is pictured second from the right on a photograph on page 81 of the reprint of the book *A NORTH EAST COAST TOWN with Civil Defence workers having a cup of tea at a mobile canteen run by the WVS (Women's Voluntary Service)*).

Our air raid shelter was a communal one in the Hull Corporation yard in Stepney Lane which was about 100 yards away from our house and it was a constant run in all weathers to get there quickly when the air raid warning siren went off. I have often wondered where the siren was situated and who set it off .

I do remember the street party to celebrate VE Day (Victory in Europe) in the summer of 1945. Mums, those dads who were home and grandparents all joined together to bring out tables and chairs into the middle of Nicholson Street and what a spread of spam , jam, cheese and thinly cut ham sandwiches, cakes, pies, trifles, jelly to eat and lemonade, dandelion and burdock and sarsaparilla to wash it all down. There was red, white and blue all over the place with bunting hung between the houses across the street and we all had flags to wave and to finish off a great day we had organised races down the street.

Bonfire Night on November 5th was another memory I have. There was certainly plenty of wood and stuff to burn but our street bonfire was a bit tame from the one in Bournemouth Street just round the corner in Sculcoates Lane which was massive and actually burnt through the road tar. Parents must have been sick of the sight and smell of burning wood but I don't suppose we thought of that as kids.

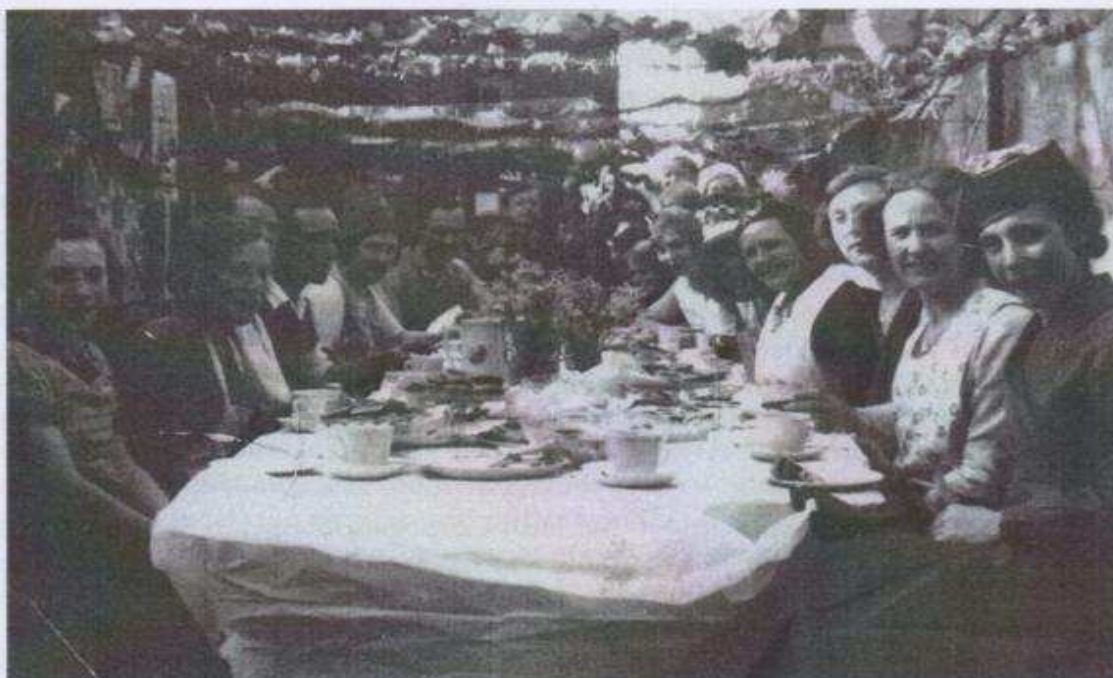
Shops I remember are Nutbrown's Fresh Fish shop, Cross's Greengrocers further up Nicky, a stocky man in a brown overall called Crouch who pushed a barrow round loaded with fruit and veg to sell, Nipper Lowe's Fruit and Veg Shop and he had a barrow with " our reputation is high but our prices are low" painted on the sides and on Beverley Road I can recall the Rose Cottage Post Office, Miller's the barber's shop and Laurie Evers furniture shop.

After the war I joined the scouts at St Mary's Parish Hall down Folkestone Street which was run by Alan Taylor and he was known as Skip and we had a scout's jamboree trip by boat from Hull to Holland and eight years after the war had ended I was called up for National Service and I joined the Army for three years, serving in Cyprus where I saw a bit of action."

Margaret Desforges (nee Walsh), born 18 August 1936, lived at 11 Exchange Street, Hull.

"I had two aunties who lived at 21 Exchange Street, Elsie and Hilda Harrison. I do remember the atmosphere of the war with bomb damage just twenty yards away from our house. We were evacuated to Withernsea where I started school and can remember the imprint of the coconut

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*Could this be a VE Day Party in the Sculcoates area in 1945? Sisters Elsie (on the left) and Hilda (on the right) Harrison lived at 21 Exchange Street.
Margaret Desforges.*

mats we had to kneel on in class and seeing soldiers putting barbed wire all along the beach and we were told it was to stop the Germans coming ashore. This photograph of a party might have been to celebrate VE Day but I am not sure and I don't know where it was taken. My Auntie Elsie is first on the left and my Auntie Hilda is first on the right."

Michael L. Eldon, born in March 1938 and lived at 54 Nicholson Street on the corner of Exchange Street, Hull.

"Next door to us was a Mrs Pitts and on the opposite corner lived the Jordan family who had an only son, Michael, who was a few years younger than me and went to the Hull Grammar School. In our family I was a late arrival, having two older sisters, Mary and Joan, who both served in the ATS. Our elder brother, Cyril, was twenty two years older than me and he served in the Western Desert and then in Italy where he lost a leg during the fighting at Casino.

One of my earliest recollections was as a three year old during the heavy bombing in 1941. I remember the air raid sirens going and being bundled out of bed in the middle of the night and taken to the dugout shelters at Holmes' Tanyard at the bottom of Stepney Lane. Later on brick and concrete shelters were built in Exchange Street and these were more convenient and provided a playground for us kids after the war until they were knocked down. After one air raid we all returned to the house to find that many of our windows had been broken and in the back bedroom the whole window frame had been blown out but the glass remained intact. Such are the strange effects of blast damage.

I suppose to us children the war experience was an on-going adventure and I don't remember any of us being particularly frightened. One of our favourite pastimes was looking for shrapnel after an air raid. If you found the nose cone of a shell or a bomb it was a great prize and good for any number of 'swaps'. Bombed buildings were also an attractive playground for us later on and looking back, I am surprised we all survived considering the hazards involved. It must

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have been a very worrying time for our parents.

A lot of the shopping was done down Nicholson Street where there were ten or eleven shops but I'm blown if I can remember most of their names. George Lammiman the butcher stands out in particular. He used to swear a lot at his wife who always stood at the till to take the money while he did the serving. She used to take all his abuse and never batted an eyelid. Fentimans was the off licence at the corner with Sculcoates Lane and he was probably the original 'open all hours' character as he was a grumpy old so and-so and didn't seem to like children in his shop. He had a beer pump on one counter and customers would bring their jugs to fill up with beer or Guinness to take away. There was a trapdoor behind the counter which gave access to a cellar into which he would disappear now and again and this always fascinated me as I used to wonder what was going on down there. Just around the opposite corner of Sculcoates Lane was 'Slasher' Southall, the barber. He was an expert at the two minute pudding basin type of haircut. It was always a painful experience for me as it used to feel as if he was plucking my hair out rather than cutting it. I don't think he liked my mop of curly ginger hair! Milk was served at the door in one pint measures from a churn by a local dairyman who had a small dairy herd on Clough Road and he used a horse and cart for deliveries. One local character was Mick Crouch who had a large handcart loaded with fruit and vegetables. He would sit on a seat in our backyard next to the kitchen door to take a rest and my mother would argue with him about the quality or the price of his goods and end up feeding him with any leftover pudding from the midday meal. He called at our house for years so they both must have enjoyed the experience."

Brian Eley, born 24th February 1938, lived at 7 Baden Grove, Exchange Street, Hull.

"If we did not get into the communal shelter on Exchange Street when the air raid siren went, my dad, mam, me and my younger sister Maureen would get underneath the kitchen table during an air raid. When we did have time to get to the shelter, my dad would see the three of us safely inside and then he would go back to bed at home. On the days after a raid, me and my pals would go looking for shrapnel.

I can remember Florrie and Jack Rippingdale Emmett shop at the corner of west Exchange Street and Nicholson Street which sold sweets, sugar, bread etc from 9am to 5pm but you could always knock on the window after hours if you needed something urgently as they lived behind the shop.

My Uncle George was a POW in Germany and when he came home after the war a big sign WELCOME HOME GEORGE was painted on the house wall in Fleet Street where he lived. My Uncle Charlie was killed in France."

Esther Muriel Foster (nee Eley) born 28 February 1931 at 16 Fleet Street and lived at 115 Stepney Lane and 27 Nicholson Street, Hull.

"My father, Charles William Eley, was a Corporal in the 4th Battalion East Yorkshire Regiment and he was killed in action near to Ypres on 28th May 1940, aged 33, and he is buried in Ypres Town Cemetery and my daughter Lynn and her husband took me to see his grave in 1998. My Mum Enid was a fire watcher at Stepney Lane Junior School and she also worked as a Clippie (Conductress) for the East Yorkshire Motor Services bus company. She later married George Woodbridge who had lost his wife, two sons, mother and father, an aunt and uncle and a cousin when their air raid shelter in St Paul Street received a direct hit.

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*Esther aged 14 with her mother Enid in her East Yorkshire Motor Services Clippie (Conductress) uniform.
Esther Foster.*

Our two houses were fortunately not damaged in air raids apart from broken windows but the house opposite us in Nicholson Street was bombed and my two younger brothers, Guy and Raymond, were told not to go near but boys being boys they did and while playing inside the building, Guy broke his arm and Raymond dislocated his shoulder.

Shops I remember are Brusby General Store at the corner of Fleet Street, Greenwoods Greengrocer at the corner of Stepney Lane and Nicholson Street and Swift's Bakers opposite our house in Nicholson Street.

In the Spring of 1940 my elder brother Harry and I, along with our cousins Margaret and Kathleen Eley, were evacuated to Bourne in Lincolnshire along with many other children. We did not see our Mum again until she came a year later to take us to Moorends near Doncaster for six months, then to Beverley for a year and then home again when I was 12 years old.

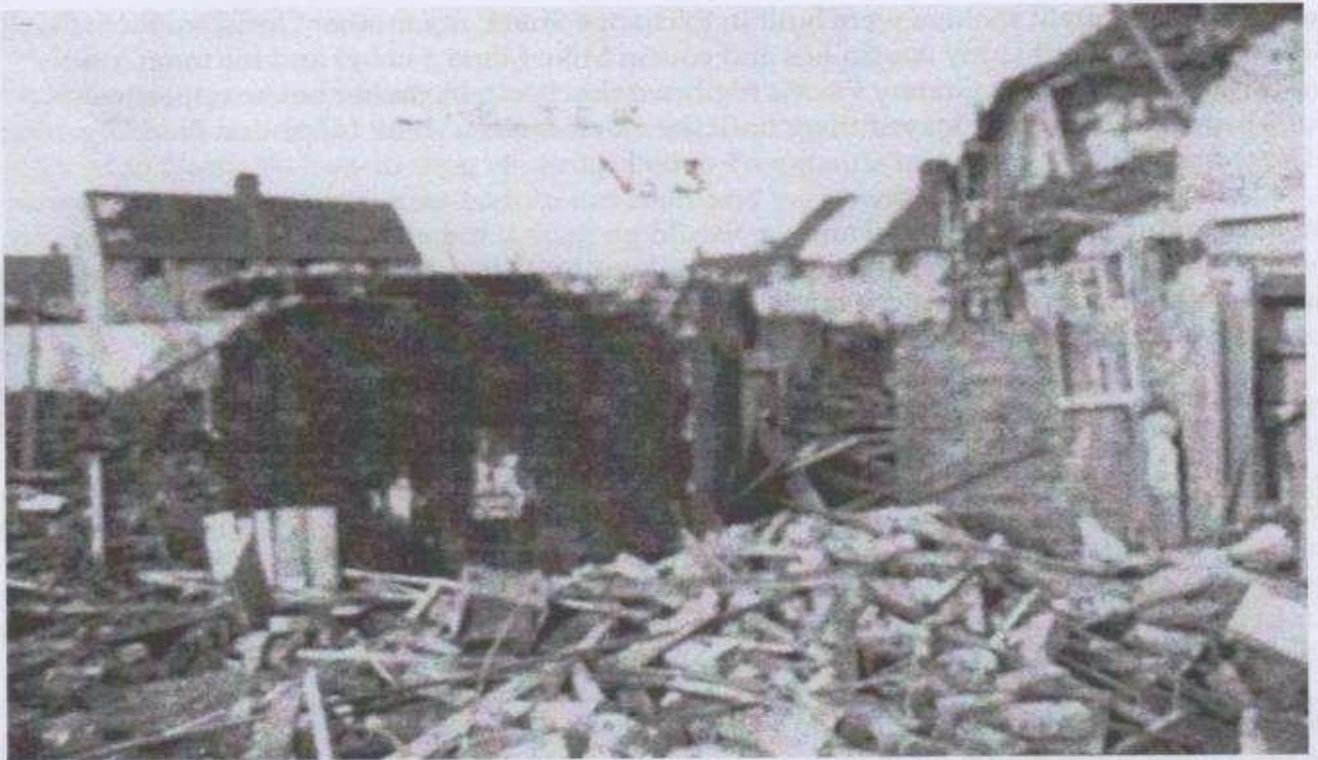
My brother Harry lived in Germany and he died there on 22 October 2010, aged 81.

Doreen Jennings (nee McCune), born 3 May 1930, lived in Fleet Street, Fifth Avenue and 59 Exchange Street, all in Hull.

" My dad George and my Uncles took it in turns to firewatch at their places of work. My Uncle Walter McCune was killed in an air raid on Rank's Flour Mill . My dad's cousin, George Reed, was a gunner in the RAF and he died in his first mission over Dusseldorf when he was just 18. He was my Aunt Alice's only child. Two girls from my class at Beverley Road School were killed in an air raid. I cannot remember their names but think they lived in Air Street and Tunis Street or Fleet Street. One girl was ten years old and the other eleven and we all were sent home from school when it was announced.

I remember Knobs Fish and Chip Shop, Bridges newsagents and a beer-off which also sold groceries (on rations of course).

THERE IS A WAR ON YOU KNOW



*Two views of Tunis Street, numbers 8 and 10 destroyed by enemy action, May 1941.
Hull Daily Mail.*



THERE IS A WAR ON YOU KNOW

Before the communal shelters were built in Exchange Street, my mother Doris, brothers Percy, Gordon and Ron and I, my cousin Les and cousin Mike (then a baby) and his mam Mary would shelter under my Granny Fairy's big heavy kitchen table in her house opposite ours during an air raid and we stayed there until the all-clear siren went. Grandad Fred Ulyatt was a fire warden I think.

We had air raid shelters at school and we would go there if there was an air raid during the daytime. We would have sing songs and did our knitting for the Forces. I knitted three balaclavas and four scarves and it made me feel really important. If the all-clear siren didn't sound until after midnight then we were excused school for that day. Goody good !!

One night we were all in the communal shelter in Exchange Street and when the all-clear siren went, Mam took us back to the house and tucked us up in bed only for the air raid warden to knock frantically on our front door half an hour later. "Get the kids out Doris" he shouted "you've got a bomb down your chimney." An incendiary bomb had dropped straight down our chimney, causing it to crack but luckily for us the bomb hadn't exploded and we were whisked away somewhere until the firemen came and got it out and took the device away. What a mess our living room was in, soot everywhere and my poor canary had changed colour from bright yellow to jet black.

I also remember a land mine dropping in Fleet Street and lots of houses in the surrounding streets having slates blown off their roofs and windows broken with the blasts. A Mr Crowther in Tunis Street had just got his vegetable garden all dug out and he had planted carrots, lettuces, tomatoes and onions and it was all blown away. My Mam said he never swore as a rule but he called Hitler a few choice names for a while after.

My husband Alan and I emigrated to Australia in the 1950's and I now live in Melbourne."

Michael Frederick Johnson, born 26 September 1939, lived at 53 Exchange Street, Hull.

"My dad would do a few nights as an air raid warden when he was home from Merchant Navy duties.

I went to St John's School in Clough Road just up Beverley Road together with my brother Peter.

I can well remember the sound of the sirens going off followed by my mother coming upstairs and getting me and my brother Peter out of bed by candlelight. I can still remember the candleholder, it was a brown tin with a loop handle. We slept in our clothes and only had to put our shoes on downstairs and cross the street to go in the communal air raid shelter. Mam used to sit us on a table to put our shoes on and as I was usually half asleep from being woken up at different times of the night and early morning, I was always frightened that I would fall off the table. It always seemed really cold (no central heating then) and the air raid warden would often knock on our front door calling "Come on Mary, hurry up and get in the shelter." Me and my brother would always fight to get the best position on the top bunk in the shelter. The bunks were wooden with criss-cross straps to the front and side. It was really damp and cold in the concrete shelters. We couldn't sleep very well as the many bombs which fell near to us made a dull thud as they hit the ground and the noise of explosions caused people in the shelter to scream and cry and then absolute silence until the all-clear siren went off and Mam would take us back to our beds which were usually cold after spending four or five hours in the shelter and we had overcoats on top of the bedclothes to try to keep us warm. Memories of those times stay

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with you forever !

After the war I joined the Merchant Navy and later I set up my own business with my wife Pat, making cushions and I sold them at markets throughout Yorkshire for quite a few years before we moved to North Wales and then we emigrated to Freemantle in Australia where we stayed for seven years and then we came back to our roots and we now live in Hornsea."

Ronald V. Kemp, born 27 August 1935. Lived at 3 Pemberton Gardens off Folkestone Street, Sculcoates Lane, Hull.

" My father Stanley was an Air Raid Warden during the war and he was exempt from military service as he was employed in the building trade which was recognised as a reserved occupation. My Uncle Tom Stones served in the RAF and my Uncle Cliff served on the HMS Hood which was sunk by the German ship Bismarck but luckily for him he had been moved to the battleship HMS Rodney shortly before.

I went to Beverley Road School which also served as a community centre for families in the area who were bombed out of their homes. My dad Stan frightened everybody one night when he brought a full shell case into the air raid shelter and everyone there thought it was a live bomb. Shrapnel from the bombs was much valued among us lads, especially if it had the name of the maker of the bomb on it -----KRUPPS -----and you could swap that for ten marbles.

At the start of the war we had no air raid shelters down our street and when the first bombs were dropped, my mother Florence dragged me, my elder sister Barbara and my stone-deaf Uncle George under our solid wood table in the lounge. I was four years old at the time. When the land mine dropped between Sculcoates Lane and Tunis Street, it destroyed many houses and left an enormous crater some 20 feet deep and 50 feet across and a little friend of mine was killed. It was to be another thirty years or so before the whole area was re-developed.



*Bomb damage in Sculcoates Lane, May 1941.
Hull Daily Mail.*

THERE IS A WAR ON YOU KNOW

Eventually we had a shelter built at the top of our terrace and every front window in the houses were often shattered during air raids but we were luckier than some folk. Three shops on the bend of Sculcoates Lane, opposite Park View, were destroyed during one air raid ---a large Co-Operative store, a butchers and a pawn shop and there were pawn tickets blowing all over the Lane when we went to school next morning. We had a UXB (unexploded bomb) at the top of Folkestone Street, near to Surridges Garage and we were all moved to Princes Avenue some half a mile away while the bomb was de-fused. There were a lot of barrage balloons in the area which forced the German planes to fly higher and the balloons would sometimes break loose from their cable moorings, causing havoc as they bounced along the roof tops, knocking off chimney pots. It was funny to us kids but looking back certainly not to the householders who had enough to put up with. One barrage balloon site was in Pearson Park where years later me and my pals would play football on the very site.

A troublesome time for parents were the air raid warnings, and there were loads of them in our area. Many turned out to be false alarms but once the siren went parents would get out of bed, get dressed and go to the air raid shelter, just settle down and then the all-clear would go, a continuous siren. Back to bed, half an hour later another warning siren would go off. Should we go back to the shelter or not? A parent's dilemma but finally most families would end up back in the shelter, cursing Hitler under their breath although some did sleep through it all. Early on in the war we did use the first World War shelters which had been built into the Hull and Barnsley railway line embankment near to the Wokes Nut Factory. One night as the all-clear siren went, we all came out of the shelters to see some of the barrage balloons on fire and evidently they had been struck by lightning in a severe thunderstorm.

Sculcoates Lane is a reasonably quiet area nowadays but then it teemed with people especially in the mornings and evenings when work started and finished in the many factories in the area and lads and lasses from Needlers, Blundells, Holmes' Tanyard, Sissons, Gas Board and Scully Power Station would fill the road on their bikes for fifteen minutes or so. Not many cars in those days. Sid Dixon had a cycle repair shop under the railway bridge directly opposite St Mary's Church and he did a wonderful job mending punctures etc for the many cyclists in the area. His wife took over the business when Sid was called up and one of his other services was charging-up the radio batteries called accumulators.

There were some real characters in the shops then. The Atkinson family made ice cream at a place at the back of Granville Terrace; Mr Potter the cobbler was nicknamed Pansy and lived on the premises. "Shoes will be soled and heeled by Wednesday" he would say but when you went for them, even before he saw who it was he would call out, "they'll be ready tomorrow" as soon as you opened the shop door. Fentimans was a grocer and beer-off shop at the corner of Nicholson Street, Mrs Oxley sold sweets and confectionery and Mr Newmarch at the corner of Folkestone Street sold cigs and tobacco and hardware. A shop at the corner of Queens Terrace sold groceries, beer and fruit and veg and fish and chips was a regular diet from the fish shop. Mr Southall the barber had his men's hairdressing business in the front room of his house. He was a bit rough with the short back and sides and you were lucky to come out of his shop with any ears.

A lot of women took on men's jobs in the area with so many husbands, brothers and friends being called up and some of the jobs involved heavy work.

Quite a few of children from Beverley Road School were evacuated to Bourne in Lincolnshire and that meant walking to Corporation Pier with your suitcase to catch the Humber Ferry

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paddle steamer across the River Humber to New Holland and then a train. My sister Barbara and I were split up and I stayed with a couple who owned a leather factory but we were so homesick that after just four days my mother Florence had to come and take us both back home which is where we wanted to be, despite the enormous risks.

Well after the war, I think around 1980, I went to work as a bricklayer in the south of Germany. Not many Germans on site spoke English but I did get chatting to one guy who asked me where I was from. "Hull, in Yorkshire" I replied, not thinking he would know where that was but I was wrong. "Ah, Hull on the River Humber" he said, "I used to bomb Hull in the war. We used the River Humber as a direction. I had some happy times in Yorkshire after I crash landed near Sheffield and I was taken a prisoner of war and I stayed on in the area after the war" he continued. We shook hands and finished our cup of tea together. What a small world, I thought."

Olive Lancaster (nee Jackson), born 23rd February 1929, lived at 25 Exchange Street, Grosvenor Terrace in Grosvenor Street and then in 8th Avenue on the North Hull Estate.

" My father Harold was in the Home Guard and my brother Fred served in the Royal Navy and he was killed in France on D Day. My Uncle Ernie lived in Tunis Street and his backway backed onto the tenfoot shared with houses down Exchange Street. He lived next door to the Howell family with the Sugden and Beck families in the next two houses to them. I think Uncle Ernie



*Houses in Cave Street off Beverley Road, completely destroyed.
Hull Daily Mail.*

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served in the Black Watch as I remember him in a kilt when he came home on leave.

My husband's sister and brother-in-law, Lilian and George Martin, were killed in an air raid on Holderness Road and there is a plaque outside of Boyes Store about lives lost on that dreadful night.

One shop I do remember is Maggie Dibbs' sweet shop in Melwood Grove which was a child's delight. She lived behind the shop with a relative and Maggie would greet everyone with a cheery "Now then luvvie, what can I get you?" as she peered at you over the top of her steel framed glasses. She had a terrible end when she was brutally murdered sometime in the 1970's in an attempted robbery at her shop.

I went to Beverley Road School and my brother Fred and I always liked to go to the cinema together -Mayfair, Strand or National, all on Beverley Road. We were in the Strand one night when a sign came up on the screen that there was an air raid expected and we left to run home but we were halfway there when we had to shelter in the shop doorway of Jubbs when a German plane machine gunned Beverley Road. I think that they were after the railway line at Stepney Station. My brother then went off to the fish shop leaving me to walk home to Exchange Street by myself and I bumped into my father in the blackout. He had come out to look for us both as it was a bit late and he gave our Fred a right rollicking later on for leaving me on my own.

Another time, dad and I were downstairs in the National cinema near to Fountain Road watching Charlie Chaplin in the film The Great Dictator along with about 150 other people. We heard the air raid siren ("Moaning Minnie" as we called it) going off outside so we got up and left and then next morning we heard that the cinema had been bombed. Most people had left the cinema itself to take shelter in the foyer and evidently a bomb had exploded in the auditorium. It was a miracle no one was hurt. I think that was in March 1941 and the frontage of the cinema is still there today and it is a Grade 2 Listed Building I understand.

We had an Anderson Shelter built in our back garden in Exchange Street and what a blast we got one night when some of Exchange Street, Tunis Street and Sculcoates Lane received direct hits on yet another bombing raid on our area. After that, I was evacuated to a great-aunt and uncle's house in Kilham near to Driffield and when I came back to Hull some weeks later it was to live in a Corporation house off Greenwood Avenue on the North Hull Estate. In 1943 I started work at Reckitts in Dansom Lane, East Hull when I was 14 years old. "

Dennis Lowther, born 5th December 1931, lived at 47 Nicholson Street and later at 55 Exchange Street, Hull.

" My father Albert and brother John served in the Royal Navy during the war and my other brother Ernie was in the Army. I went to Beverley Road school as did my younger sister Mary. When I went to work at Blundell's Paint Works in Sculcoates Lane after the war, I saw at first hand the aftermath of the terrible bombing the area received during the war.

Shops I can recall in the area were Lammiman Butcher, Greenwoods Grocery, Nutbrowns Fish Merchants, Holmes Beer Off, Wise Bakers and Emmetts Grocers and they all seemed to live behind their shops.

After the war, I played football for Sculcoates Amateurs on a Saturday in the East Riding County League and the club was run from the Sculcoates working man's club in Folkestone Street."

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Colin McCune, born 8 July 1937, lived at 5 Cecil Grove, Exchange Street, Hull.

"The communal air raid shelter was at the end of our terrace and I remember my mother Mona taking me there once with only my pyjama top on which really embarrassed me. After one bombing raid our Christmas tree was blown out of the window by the blast and ended up in our front garden. My dad Stan was in the outside lavatory one night during an air raid and the ceiling fell in on him. He would never go into the air raid shelter for some reason. There was a horse's stable down Tunis Street, I think it belonged to the Co-op and it was bombed one night and my dad helped bring the horses out safely but they were terrified. German bombers often dropped what I think were called butterfly bombs. If you saw them you would think that they were a toy and it would then explode. I don't and won't ever forgive the Germans for that.

There was a lot of bomb damage down Melwood Grove and on the corner of Sculcoates Lane near to Beverley Road and I did look into a deep crater at the bottom of Exchange Street one morning after a big raid and houses were destroyed on Nicholson Street just in front of the tin works factory. We took our ration books to a shop near to Beverley Road and our one pound of sugar was supposed to be for three people but my dad took the lot as he had a very sweet tooth but he did not know that I pinched a spoonful to make a bread sugar sandwich otherwise I had to have saccharin sweeteners. When I was a bit older I had to go to Thirsk's on Beverley Road for a pound of sausages and pay for them and then run round to the back of the queue outside of the shop to try to get another half pound or pound. I used to go to Newmarch's shop on the corner of Folkestone Street for my dad's tobacco. He smoked a toxic brand of 'Old Punch' or as I called it, 'coffin nails'. Other shops I remember are the fish and chip shop, Potters Cobblers and Oxtobys Cakes and Pies along that stretch of shops, Fentimans at the top of Nicholson Street and a barber's shop a bit further along, a bike repair shop under the railway bridge and Mayfield Paints on Sculcoates Lane. Down Fleet Street there was a family of ten or twelve called the Daltons and the mother would sell some of their ration coupons, especially for sweets, for a shilling as they were hard up but then we were all in the same boat. At the corner of Exchange Street and Nicholson Street there was Florence Rippingale's shop and she sold a bit of everything. I can remember sweets, drummer dyes from Reckitts (Hull) and firewood bundles as everyone had a coal fire to start up each morning.

In the centre of Hull, all along the side of City Hall was bombed in early May 1941 and the only building left standing was Louisville Pet Shop near to where the 69 and 70 trolley buses left for Anlaby Road and Hessle Road and the 61,62 and 63 service ran from just around the corner in King Edward Street."

Mike Molloy, born 7th December 1936, lived at 3 Fleet Grove, Fleet Street, Stepney Lane, Hull.

"My father, Edward Albert Molloy, was nicknamed 'Lizzy' and he served as a fireman during the war years. I went to Beverley Road School during the blitz and can well remember Stepney Lane being littered with the fire brigade hosepipes when properties down Fenchurch Street were bombed and I would skip over them on the way to and from school. My sister Jean and I were evacuated to Woods Farm in Keyingham.

Most of the houses in our street were two up and two down, typical of the area, and most suffered damage from enemy bombing action -shattered windows, broken slates, chimney pots etc but most damage seemed to be in Exchange Street and Tunis Street with a great number of properties bombed and many casualties. The whole area was a prime target from German

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bombers, their main target was " Lecky " Power Station in Sculcoates Lane but only slight damage was caused to the building.

Shops I remember in the area are Adams General Store (later Hoptons) on the corner of Stepney Lane and Nicholson Street and down Nicholson Street were Nipper Lowe's Fruit and Veg Shop, Bob Lammiman Butchers and Holmes Off-Licence on the corner with Sculcoates Lane. These shops never seemed to close. There was a sweet shop down Stepney Lane, opposite Chatty Blacks Rag and Bone Merchant premises and a fish and chip shop on Beverley Road, right next to the Bull Inn and it's still there. At the bottom of our street was a clothes shop and I later found out that blackmarket stuff was sold at the back of the shop.

Joan Patman (nee Eldon), born in June 1924, lived at 54 Nicholson Street on the corner of Exchange Street, Hull.

" I was sixteen when the Blitz of Hull started and my memories are of nights spent in the dug-out which was in the grounds of Holmes' Tannery at the bottom of Stepney Lane, about 500 yards from our house. If there wasn't enough time to get there before the bombs were dropping we had to go into the street shelters which had been hastily built by the Corporation for the local inhabitants. They weren't luxurious, just a bench-like seat on each side but somehow we felt reasonably safe.

One night in particular we just made it to the shelter when a land mine dropped in the next street. We didn't think we would have a house to come back to but we were lucky: when we returned home after the all-clear siren, we found that all our windows had been blown out and there was glass everywhere and no gas or electricity but we had our lives. For the next few weeks we were supplied with hot food from the soup kitchen and very acceptable it was. Because we had no windows, the Corporation sent workmen round to fix blackout material to each frame. By this time some electricity had been restored but it was quite some time before the gas was back on.

We experienced some difficulty getting to work because of unexploded bombs in various streets. This made time-keeping almost impossible but because most people were in the same boat, the fact that we arrived late was considered inevitable.

Fast forward two and a half years and at eighteen I was called up into the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) and ultimately, having passed a few exams, became 'Storewoman 1st Class' and I was posted to various locations preparing Armoured Fighting Vehicles in readiness for D-Day.

While all this was going on, my older brother Cyril, a sergeant in the Black Watch Regiment, was fighting in the Battle of Casino in Italy. He was badly injured and lost a leg. It was a happy day for the family when he eventually returned home. My sister Mary was also conscripted into the ATS. She was posted to the London area and detailed to help man the Ack-Ack gun sites to deal with the doodle-bug bombs. They were bombs made to cause the maximum amount of destruction by scattering metal in all directions.

The thought that passed through my mind is that even with all the heartache and destruction the British people suffered, never once did I hear anyone say that we would not win the war: of course we won, we are British ! "

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Mary Elizabeth Skipper (nee Lowther) , born 14 April 1935 and lived at 47 Nicholson Street and 55 Exchange Street, Hull.

"We were bombed out of 47 Nicholson Street and moved to Exchange Street, next to Jack Nicholson and his mother at number 57 and the Johnson family at number 53. Backway the Beck family lived opposite us across the tenfoot. My father Albert served in the Royal Navy during the war as did my brother John and one of my other brothers Ernie was in the Army. My Aunt Jessie's husband was lost at sea when the minesweeper he was on was sunk by enemy action. A lot of Hull fishing trawlers were converted to minesweepers during the war and many were lost in action.

Mrs Rippingdale's general grocery shop was very handy at the corner of Exchange Street and Nicholson Street. "

Barbara Smith (nee Timewell) born 22 April 1932, lived at 67 Folkestone Street and 5 Pemberton Gardens in Folkestone Street, Hull.

" I went to Beverley Road School and at the beginning of the war I lived at 67 Folkestone Street with my Mam and Dad. At the back of our house there was an embankment with a goods train line and at the other side was the Electricity Power Station. Early one morning after an air raid the previous night, an unexploded bomb was found somewhere in the area and everyone in Folkestone Street was evacuated. I gather buses came and took residents to a church hall on Princes Avenue. Dad was a postman and had left early for duty and Mam and I must have slept through all the commotion. When we did get up, I looked out of the window and there was not a soul about . Mam made the fire then put the kettle on but there was no gas supply! Dad came home later and the whole street was cordoned off but he saw smoke coming out of our chimney from the coal fire and of course he realised we were still at home. The three of us then had to walk the mile or so to Princes Avenue only to be told there that the bomb had been made safe and we could go back home! Most houses in the area had ceilings damaged and windows



*Sissons Paint and Varnish Works on Bankside, badly bombed in May 1941.
Hull Daily Mail.*

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smashed with glass and debris everywhere after an air raid. Terraced houses on Sculcoates Lane were heavily bombed.

I remember gathering shrapnel in the mornings after air raids the previous nights and it was exciting to see how much we could collect. I was evacuated to Kippax near Leeds but it was a very unhappy time for me. Some children loved their time away but I was very homesick and cried every night. I can even get upset thinking of it now.

Fentimans Off Licence in Sculcoates Lane seemed to me to be open early morning until late at night while the Fried Fish Shop opposite opened lunchtimes until late evenings six days a week and fish and chips served in newspapers was nearly a staple diet in the war years and beyond. I remember Newmarch sweets and tobacco, Miss Oxley Confectioners, East Butchers, Potter the Cobbler and Gwen Atkinson Haidresser."

Terence Patrick Walsh was born 10 December 1934 and lived at 11 Exchange Street, Hull.

" My family (mam,dad, three brothers and a sister) were very lucky as our end of Exchange Street, a lot of Tunis Street and Scully Lane were very heavily bombed, probably bad bomb-aiming by the German planes as Sculcoates Power Station was very near. We were away from home for a lot of the time, either at Stainforth near Doncaster or at Withernsea with in-laws.

I do remember a shop at the corner of Queen's Terrace which sold most things and I think the shopkeeper was a Mr Hunt and his shop window had lots of newspaper cuttings of the concentration camps in Germany."

... .. and finally the memories of Gladys Warriner who was twenty two years old when the war broke out ; ---

Mrs Gladys Warriner, born 29 June 1917, lived at 3 Elm Grove in Sculcoates Lane and at 45 Tunis Street, both in Hull.

" My husband William (Bill) was in the Royal Engineers during the war and my brother, Harold Hodgson, served in the RASC. I was bombed out of my house in Elm Grove and my neighbour Richard Walker was killed in that air raid.

Most shops in the area, including fried and fresh fish shops, greengrocers,bakers,newsagents, drapers, butchers and beer-offs, all opened in a morning when the time of opening depended on when the all-clear siren sounded and they closed at tea-time before the bombers returned although the beer-offs (off-licences) were allowed to open until 10pm.

There was consternation down Tunis Street one night when a barrage balloon broke free from its mooring in the nearby Pearson Park on Beverley Road and it eventually came down deflated behind Turners Joinery premises and all we could hear were men shouting" we're being invaded! " Because of the blackout regulations they only had small torches to try to see what was going on and everyone thought it was a German parachuting into our street. "

THERE IS A WAR ON YOU KNOW

Gladys Warriner -My job as a platelayer with LNER 1941 -1945

In 1941 I worked at the British Oil & Cake Mills (BOCM), it was a very dusty job. We had drinks of barley water or tea every two hours (drunk whilst still working mind). We went home with dust covering our hair and clothes -we were a bit fed up with the job but it was an essential one to produce animal feed.

When my husband was called up he suggested I apply for a job on the railway where he had worked as a motor mechanic. My friend (whom I worked with) said she would apply as well as the shift work we did didn't really suit her as she had two small daughters and had to rely on her mother to look after them from 2 -10pm.

We went and got an application form from Paragon Station in Hull, filled it in and sent it to the head office in York. A week later we were both sent a rail pass to go to York for a medical -a great free day out.

A week after the medical we received instructions to report to the Engineer's Office at Paragon Street, Hull where my friend and I were given an overcoat and rule book. The Inspector, Mr Stamp, told us we were to be employed as 'Permanent Way Labourers/Platelayers which was outside work and rather heavy. We were given a rail pass for Southcoates Station and were to report there the next day. We reported to the station the following day and were directed to a lobby further down the line called Sweet Dews area. At 7.30 we knocked on the door and asked for ganger Coulson. He took one look at us and said "We don't want any bloody women here! Suppose you'd better come in" He was a miserable chap but gave us both a hoe and said "You'd better join us to do some 'skimming' (their name for weeding in between sleepers and the side of the track)" Bearing in mind that we had to cover two miles with about five tracks it was one of the most hated jobs. It was one of the easiest but also the most boring. This lasted about two weeks doing it between other jobs. The Inspector came after a day or two to see how we were getting on -we just said "Alright" -what else could we say really? Anyway, he had a word with the ganger and he asked us if we would like to work nearer home? Of course we agreed and so went to Wilmington Station which was just round the corner from where I lived.

We were introduced to a ganger called George Biggins. He was just the opposite of ganger Coulson and called us "lasses". He introduced us to the rest of the gang. Mark Winterbottom -he was under ganger Bill Brown and a Mr Longhurst (I can't remember his first name). The hut (or lobby as we called it) was divided into two areas. One area for eating with forms around three sides of a table and a stove in the centre heated with coal. The other half was for tools etc. The ganger pointed out the names of the tools and this is where we learned another interpretation of the English language. The ganger said that we could call him Pop (Biggins).

The following are descriptions given to me about the different tools of the trade:~

- Fish Plates weren't to eat off but to join two rails together.
- Chairs weren't to sit in but to fit rails into.
- Sleepers didn't have forty winks but to support chairs and rails.
- Keys didn't unlock anything but were wedges between rails and chairs.
- Points were nothing to do with ballet but diverted rails to another line.
- Dollies weren't to play with but to divert rails to another line manually.
- Bullock Horns weren't about rodeos but allowed a team to lift and move whole rails.
- Fish Spanners weren't to stun fish but to fasten fish plates -these were about 3ft long.

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- Claw Bars, Crow Bars, Sledge Hammers, Pickaxes and Shovels. Looking at this list of tools you can imagine that it was fairly heavy work most days.

Snowy weather we had to carry a bucket of salt up the track and clear all the points. We could only carry half-filled buckets as it was very heavy. On very snowy days we had to go back and forth collecting more salt.

Foggy weather meant carrying out jobs like putting detonators on the rails a certain distance from a station or goods yard so the train drivers knew where he was.

Rain -this was our lucky day because we stayed in the lobby with the men playing cards or dominoes whilst we knitted balaclavas and socks or read a book. If there was an emergency we did go out. Fortunately this never happened in the four years I spent there.

When we had to throw ballast along the track another four or five gangs helped. We covered twenty miles up to Withernsea and another fifteen miles to Hornsea. This took two days and we had to choose calm not windy ones. No goggles were supplied for this extremely dusty job. We also unloaded a coal wagon at all the stations and platelayers lobbies and then had to shovel it into a coal shed at each stop. This took a whole day.

I was twenty three and married when I started work on the LNER line in 1941 -the work didn't affect my home life as I lived with my mother after being bombed out of my house and my husband was away with the forces. The women in our neighbourhood who were eligible to work nearly all did men's jobs. It was an industrial area and we all used to ask each other what we did and compared all our different jobs. I left work after the war ended 15 December 1945. It was a very emotional time as we were a good team which worked well together. The Inspector came down to wish me well and I got a kiss from all the men in the gang. My friend Violet had left us in 1943 as she was expecting a baby. We never got anyone to replace her.

Yes I would have stayed on after the war had I been allowed. I really enjoyed the work. In 1951 I was a cleaner in a bank and stayed for the next thirty six years, a bit boring but fitted in with my home life.

Hull was heavily bombed one morning when we arrived at work and we discovered that an overhead railway bridge had been hit and had fallen on our part of the rail track. Three more gangs had been sent for making a total workforce of twenty four including eight women. We were told to repair it by 4pm as some armaments had to be taken to the docks for loading. There was to be no lunch break. So much track had to be taken from one line to another by swinging it round -this is where the Bullock Horns came into play. By 4pm we all stood back while the armament train trundled past. We all held our breaths as it travelled at walking speed over the patched-up track with creaks and groans. We finally breathed a sigh of relief over this ordeal and set to work making a proper job of the repair. We were all glad to get home, but we'd had a real sense of achievement that day.

Cleaning the track in Wilmington Goods Yard wasn't very pleasant as a lot of fish manure used to fall off the passing trucks. Maggots as thick as your thumb used to fall off your shovel when you threw a shovelful into the wagon -uughhh!

We had to cut all the grass each side of the track and up the banks. We did this with very big scythes. When I first used one I nearly cut ganger's leg so after this I was called 'The Deadly

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Reaper'. A week after my friend left they sent a man down one morning to take her place. By 2.30pm police detectives came and took him away. He had come from Ireland. No-one else ever came so we had only five in our gang.

Another time the full contents of margarine had been stolen out of a huge wagon in the goods yard. When I was making my way along the track for home two detectives stopped me and asked me to turn my bag out. Of course there was nothing in it but my gas mask and empty packing-up tin. Next day everyone had a good laugh -they would have had to search a lot of people for the amount of margarine that had been stolen.

There were a lot of Italian prisoners of war working every so often in the goods yard mainly loading and unloading. When our gang were having lunch sometimes they would all start singing and, to be honest, it was as good as any opera.

If we had to do some repairs higher up the line we loaded a bogey with everything that was needed. We had to notify the signal man who opened and closed the crossing gates where we were going. We used to follow the regular passenger train to Withernsea. You can just picture everyone waiting at the crossing, the train had gone by and they expected the gates to be opened. After a few minutes this bogey came by being pushed by the gang. The cat-calls and ringing of bicycle bells was quite embarrassing!

We were isolated most of the time in our own gang. I only met any other women when our gangs had to work together in emergencies.

The drawback of this job was that the only toilets available for me were the station ones which were usually a long distance apart. The men had toilets based at every bush along the railway ...

I enjoyed my time as a platelayer and would have stayed on had I been allowed.

The rule book stated that a load needed a man plus a red flag. This rule "had to be adhered to" -this was very rarely done.

My one regret was not being allowed to take any photographs as we were in the centre of an important industrial area and it was absolutely forbidden.

Gladys Warriner BEM -January 2005

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Hull Mail News and Media for the loan of wartime photographs of Hull. The Ministry of Information. Pathe News. Ron Fairfax, Steve Massam, David Sherwood and John Warriner for help with research -much appreciated.

My first job was not being allowed to take any photographs as we were in the middle of a war. Hull was heavily bombed one morning and the railway tracks had been hit and had fallen on our part of the rail track. There were gangs of men sent for making a road workforce of twenty four including eight women. We were told to repair it by spin work. The work was to be done by hand. The first job was to be to lay down the rails. The rails were to be laid on a patch of track that had to be taken from one line to another by swinging it round - this is what the Bullock Horns came into play. By 4pm we all went home while the armament team trundled past. We all held our breath as it travelled at walking speed over the patched-up track with cracks and grooves. We finally breathed a sigh of relief over this ordeal and set to work making a proper job of the repair. We were all glad to get home, but we'd had a real sense of achievement that day.

Cleaning the track in Wilmington Goods Yard wasn't very pleasant as a lot of tall magnets used to fall off the passing trucks. Magnets as thick as your thumb used to fall off your shovel when you threw a shovel full into the wagon stogie.

We had to cut all the grass on the side of the track and up the banks. We did this with very big scythes. When I first used one I nearly cut ganger's leg so after that I was called 'The Deadly