

1940.

Sun. June 2<sup>nd</sup>. We are  
evacuated.

We sat down to breakfast this  
morning with the windows  
shaking from the reverberation  
of heavy gun fire out to sea.  
At half past seven we locked  
the front door & left our  
home, wondering if we should  
ever see it again. The word  
"refugee" now had a new and  
real meaning to us.  
We got into the car, well  
loaded, & drove to Esplanade  
School. It was a very hot  
morning with a heavy heat haze  
over the sea. I was surprised  
at the numbers of people round

Left home

about the school, gathered  
there to see the children leave,  
children so cheery & brave. Soon  
Mr. Stading, who was to drive  
the car, arrived. George said  
goodbye to me & entered his  
school, pausing at the doorway  
to watch me drive away. He  
picked up Mrs. Philbrick & our  
luggage, & so left Doverport,  
with the guns booming incessantly  
the enemy seemed to be doing  
their utmost to prevent the  
children from leaving. I cannot  
remember much of that hot &  
tiring journey right across  
England, except that we went  
through Oxford which seemed  
a most pleasant place. Mr. Stady  
pointed out a church with, I thought

odd sort of twisted pillars  
on either side of the doorway.  
He said it was St. Mary the  
Virgin, if so I believe he never  
preached there. He, later on, passed  
through a beautiful village near  
Strood. He had some difficulty  
in finding our way as all  
names of towns & villages were  
removed as well as signposts.  
He had a good laugh me, as  
three times, at a "Y" junction,  
Mr. Stading asked which was  
the road to Gloucester & now  
had apparently heard of the  
place. He thought them stupid  
or a bit "windy" but it turned  
out we were not pronouncing  
the name right. They called it  
something sounding like "hiscester".

One we were, stopped for sandwiches about 4:30 & Mr S. spoke to man by the wayside who said he was a Suffolk man. He was in Gloucestershire so it was a pleasant surprise.

We arrived at last at Thornbury station 20 mins. before the evacuation train drew in at 5:30. From it alighted a company of children & teachers all tired & grubby they had halted twice on the journey for when kind people gave them lemonade etc. there seemed to appear from nowhere in particular, plenty of H.M.I.s & officials of one kind or another & a lot of what seemed to be rather unnecessary formalities

not really helpful. After all, its not nice, from their point of view to have a crowd of unknown adults & children forced to live in their homes. Still it makes it hard to try & get anything resembling a school going with no help from them. So there is George dreadfully hard at work, while I havent a thing to do. Hence this diary. The ship I am has only been built a few years is quite modern, electric light, refrig. own pump to pump in & up the water. We are very comfy here. Kasee is Mrs. Mrs. Kato. Old man rather - they lived in Singapore some time. But its too expensive for us to stay here. Besides I want to get rooms where I shall have something to do & also the cooking

I shant feel so miserable with  
work to do & there seems nothing  
I can do to help George unfortunately.

Thurs. June 1 Miss Willoughby

the village schoolmistress has

offered us rooms with her & her

mother. We have viewed & accepted

them. Furnished, we provide "linen

covers & cutlery & heating & lighting

appliances & she charges 10/- a week.

She is going to clean out the rooms

& we move in on Saturday. It is

very very hot here. We had tea

with Capt. & Mrs. Whitehead today

& he said the temp. in the dining

room was 78° they are a unique

couple & good company. George

likes the Head of the village school

a Mr. Farry.

Sat. June 2. We moved into

Now the last had gone, & we

found, to our dismay, no

"billets" had been reserved for

the Head & his wife!! There was

much putting of heads together

& running about after which Geo.

was taken to the Ship Inn, where

after a tasty supper, we were

soon to bed. But not to sleep.

I suppose we were overtired &

it seemed so hot & airless after

our lovely sea air.

Wed. June 3. If only we could

go home. It is miserable here

Es. is terribly busy each day from

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. He looks absolutely

done up. There was a terrific amount

to do before we left D'urist, & now

organising all here as the locals

seem to resist our being here & are

Organization was poor, & it was past nine o'clock before the last lonely & unhappy child was taken away by its new foster parent. Mrs. Whittelsey & Mrs. Bennett & thirty boys had gone to a village called "Stone" & the rest of us found ourselves in Oldbury-on-Severn. For hours, we had been sitting in some dark & gloomy room (I acting as kind of clerk) getting those boys sorted out. They were so tired that the younger ones began crying & I found myself in the end a nurse, not a clerk. Poor little dears I hugged & kissed them into silence, one by one, & sent them away to their new homes feeling, I hoped, a little comforted

and I saw this afternoon a kind of farm house, square in shape, built of stone as are most of the houses - Cotswold stone of course with wall 2 feet thick, & is about 150 years old, large garden at the back & a couple of orchards. We have two large sunny rooms at the front, & share the use of the "kitchen", which was once the dairy, & is quite large. All the floors seem to be of stone, except our sitting room, & upstairs are wooden floors of course.

I had better now try to describe Oldbury. It is a small village of about 400 inhabitants scattered about at quite long distances from each other, in

fact, the village is several miles long & wide. It is situated on the banks of the R. Severn & about 3½ miles from Thornbury. There is no gas, electric or water laid on so each house has its own well. Sanitation, to put it mildly, is primitive. To get to our only lavatory, we go out through the yard, open a gate large enough to admit a horse & cart & into the first orchard, & what we find after we get there — Well, well, well! It's a better one than the Thompsons however, as their roof leaks. We have oil lamps, & cook by oil. I know nothing of oil cooking & expect I have a lot to learn. Still, I am very glad to get these rooms as

now I shall have things to do instead of letter writing & sitting about longing for home & thinking how far we are from Douglas. Our evacuation was a blow to him, knocked the bottom out of his world to suddenly find he had no home as it were. A Mrs. Lantis, nearby, has offered to sleep him when he comes on leave. They are very nice kind people & have two of our boys & are making them very comfortable. Mrs. Thackwell, the Rector's wife called on me Thursday. I said we did not hit it off very well. She struck me as a perfect example of a snob. The Rector was in the Army & we have been told, if he is annexed, stands for several

minutes using shocking strong language. He is rather amusing. He goes to get the milk each morning from some farm, riding a very old bike too small for him, & he is clad only in shirt & trousers with his somewhat thin & long white hair streaming in the breeze. The Church is locked up all the week & opens on Sun. for services - Holy Communion first Sun in the month at mid-day & third Sun. after Evensong. A great disappointment to us.

Sun. June 9. We went to Thornbury Church at 8 this morning. A fine Church & a very nice & devotional service - vestments the Vicar looked nice. Then Oldbury Church

at 11. Quite a village effort. Girls & one man in the choir & about 18 people in the congregation. He & about 20 boys filled the back part of the church where we all sat together. It was very hot. I saw after Church that the girls in the choir had come in a couple of farm carts, & they took off their hats when they came out of Church, & put on old rain coats or something similar & then clambered up into these carts for the journey home. Now let me say a few words about Thornbury. Imagine the letter T. Oldbury is at the foot & Thornbury where the two strokes meet, with Bristol on the extreme right &

St. Blouester the left. Thornbury is a large village about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from us, a kind of market town for lots of villages round about. It has one wide High St. in it about one shop of each kind. But the variety of goods amazes me after the bare necessities of D'wont. It is because this is in the hunting district I expect, Berkeley is near. A bus runs between Thornbury & Oldbury on two days a week! We are truly isolated here. I have discovered that a butcher calls Tuesday at 12.30 Wed. evening & Friday evening. Baking in this hot weather is going to be difficult indeed the baker comes Tues. Thurs. & Sat. & fresh fish is brought from

Bristol Wed. evening. What an awful spot to be suddenly dumped down in. I returned Mrs. Pectol's visit Fri. so that is settled. I will draw a veil over my first attempts yesterday to cook by oil. It is still very hot, no doubt we miss the sea air. E. is still frightfully busy & looks quite ill. I hope he doesn't have a break down. He has got a Memorial Hall loaned to him & he opens school tomorrow. Then I hope he won't have quite so much to do running about after the children as they will be in school together. He gets on very well with Mr. Parry. I have met him & liked him too. Wed. June 13. What a game housekeeping is in the country!



I am learning to cook anew. Everything seems to take twice or three times as long to cook by oil as electricity. I can't buy any potatoes here. Everyone grows their own. I wandered up & down, armed with a basket & we had to have bread for dinner & no vegetables only a tin of peas. Nearest shop to sell them is in Thornbury, 3 1/2 miles away!

Sun. June 16. Thornbury Church at 8 & Oldbury at 11. There is a youngish man at Oldbury. I don't know if he is the churchwarden, but he looks a bit simple to me. He wears one of those collars one claps over with a damp cloth. It is never fastened to his back stud. He sits behind him & as his coat seems

a couple of sizes too small, it is not up at the neck behind, but low enough for us to have a nice clear view of his <sup>shirt</sup> collar - band & back stud, a strip of neck, then the collar. When this collar has worked up too near his ears, he seems to stick his neck in & out of the collar somehow until it drops down again. An extraordinary performance & one I find fascinating. It has not been so hot today. He had tea with Mrs. Parry & his sister who keeps house for him. I liked her exceedingly & we had a very pleasant time. They live in Thornbury & have these little bits of civilization - water laid on, a tap & electric light. Glorious.

I have been going around  
with L, the last few evenings.  
Yesterday we had our first trip  
out & went to Gloucester. The  
Cathedral is partly Norman &  
the proportions of the building  
were fine. It wasn't so beautiful  
Edward II. tomb was sandbagged  
from floor to ceiling. It was so  
fearfully hot we did not enjoy  
the visit as much as we had  
hoped. Gloucester seemed a very  
busy place. We saw some Ganges  
barges that made us feel homesick.  
We did quite a lot of shopping,  
had a poor tea left about 6 o'clock  
into a nasty thunder storm.  
Tues June 18 I get into such a muddle  
with my odds & ends, like an  
empty tin or jar. I must bin you.

see & I can't find anywhere to  
hide them. The H's have opened  
eyes & want to leave me alone. Perhaps  
they are wise! In the course of a day  
I walk miles from the sitting  
room to the kitchen & to the pump &  
to the washhouse & to the sink. And  
these stone floors do make my  
fat ache. The pump is for washing  
only & I mean to buy us two pails  
of drinking water a day. And  
believe me, that's not much as I  
wash up with it & do vegetables  
in it as I don't trust the other  
water at all. I am afraid of  
sewage. This is a spot. We  
have walked several times to &  
along the banks of the Severn which  
they tell us, is three miles wide  
here. It has about as much water

in it at low tide as the Orwell.  
The scene over the other side looks  
pretty, but oh for the sea at  
Doverport. How I wish we  
could go home. Miss Wilbury  
suggested she & I played hostess  
to all the local & evanuel teachers  
& their wives to tea. We did,  
I provided biscuits & cake & she  
the tea & made it all so her house.  
I let her do the honors. We all  
had quite a pleasant time. There  
were the Parrys & a good student  
& from Doverport, ourselves, the  
Thompsons & Bells. They are  
having lot of roads down home.  
Mollie sounds tired of them. No  
chance of Douglas getting any leave  
until this two months training is  
finished & that will be in a fortnight.

Wed. June 19 We have had the  
first air maid washing since we  
came here. He are only 16 miles  
from Bristol which was the objective.

In our sitting room is an  
awful picture of a bullock. It is  
a square creature, four straight  
legs & a triangular shaped  
head. Ruddy in hue except for  
a white nose & a black currant  
eye. It is being driven by a man  
in a tall hat, frock coat & white  
knee breeches. At first I thought  
it funny but by now its just  
plain awful.

Sun June 22 Awful mishap on  
Friday. Broke my dentures. No  
dentist nearer than Bristol. Took  
Miss Wilbury with us Sat. morning  
& she introduced me to her dentist.

He did the job & let me have them at 1.15. Meanwhile I spent a miserable morning crawling to her. George To add to our "joyful" excursion, it just poured with rain all the time.

We had another walk by the Severn Fri. evening, but too thickly populated with cullivobs for me.

Mollie seems to be very done up with all the raids. We have talked it well over & I have written asking her to come here & I will see after her.

Douglas says all leave cancelled.

I do want to see him.

Wed. June 25 Mollie has written saying the military may enforce total evacuation & advising those who can make arrangements to go now. I have got rooms for Mollie

& her mother as well with.

Mrs. Connacher expect them tomorrow.

Mo. seems very run down. I have written to my woman in D'court for more things to be sent me.

We go to Stone each week to see the other boys. The two with the young doctor & his wife will have to be removed. George has obtained

extra petrol for evacuation. Of course he has to pay for it. He tells me he has done 200 on evacuation business since we have been here.

He is working a little better now.

We go into Shrotonburg each Sat. as all the teachers (D'court) around about are going to do the same & to sheer delight to get together & talk of D'court as well as to laugh at our present difficulties. I have

begin to make myself a  
nightsdress, all by hand of course  
as I do get terribly depressed at  
times. Not like me. I must let it  
know. When I went to  
wash up the yesterday morning  
old Mrs. W. said to me "This  
is the 18<sup>th</sup>". I said "Yes that's right".  
She eyed me & repeated her remark.  
I looked blank, & said "Oh! yes".  
She said "Very important day". I  
still looked blank. Then she said  
"It's Waterloo Day". I nearly let  
out a yell of laughter. These people  
still live at about the date of  
that historic battle. No wonder  
No need for it they say. The popular  
papers seem to be John Bull.  
Sun. June 30 Mollie & her mother  
came. Mollie looks like a little white

ghost I think they will be happy  
with Mrs. W. But, my goodness  
Mrs. Hunt is going to get some  
shocks when she sees the methods  
of gardening here. As Mollie  
her mother did not arrive in  
Bristol until tea time, we had an  
early dinner & spent the afternoon  
in the City, sightseeing. Some very  
fine shops & while it is really  
lovely in design I thought. Saw  
the college & St. Mary's Church.  
bought some delicious cakes & so  
to Temple Mead Station. I forgot  
which day, but we came into  
Bristol once before & bought a wireless  
set. Battery of wires, as no electrician  
have the business of an <sup>or</sup> ~~circumlocution~~  
running down just when we  
want particularly to hear something.

Wed. July 3 We have taken  
Mollie round about a bit, but  
she isn't much struck with the  
place. Who would be! But she  
hates thistles. on the quiet & fear  
of it. Like ourselves, she is amazed  
that the only really picturesque  
walk is by the River, yet when  
ever we go, we are the only ones  
in sight. The natives never seem  
to go. Lots of birds about I have  
never seen before, except for  
magpies, I recognize them, lots  
of lots of them too. I wish  
Douglas could get some leave.

Sun. July 7 Mollie liked Thornbury  
Church. It is lovely & the flowers  
on the Altar superb. I wonder  
who arranges them! Whoever it is  
is an artist. I have never seen

any thing like it. I can't take  
my eyes off them. Each Sunday  
a different & seemingly more lovely  
arrangement. Yesterday  
I went to the only hairdresser  
in Chelbury having been told she  
was quite good. She trimmed  
my hair, & shampooed it & set  
it. She died was done in her  
house in a small room cluttered  
up with Victorian odds & ends.  
She talked a lot of nonsense about  
my "natural waves". No glass  
to see myself, but I was becoming  
the worst. I got out & when  
George got back from some  
meeting he had got to with the  
Evacuation Officials, he gave me  
look at me, screwed up his  
face, then exploded in laughter.

Impossible to describe what  
I look like I saw Mrs. Gali  
after church this morning & said  
I had been & she hadn't heard  
there was a local hairdresser  
I told her to try it, changed or no  
but I couldn't resist it. It will  
be a good laugh I know <sup>when</sup> ~~after~~  
she meets me afterwards.

Wed. July 10 Dad is coming  
on Saturday. How lovely to see  
him again. It has poured all day  
to day & I had Douglas's washing  
to do. I was as wet as the clothes  
doing washing in these conditions  
No sink in the wash house & no tap  
or hot water. I carry it from the  
kitchen in the house & across the  
yard!!!! Terrible & bad in  
pelting rain. To get to our

lavatory in this weather, we  
or rather I have to change my  
slippers, put on a mac & take  
an umbrella. George is sending  
for his water boots!

Sun. July 14 Dad came yesterday  
we met him at Bristol. It has  
been wet since Wed. morning. The  
rain seems to just pour down all  
the time, much heavier than our  
way. He didn't stop in Bristol,  
too wet & it's a bit popular with  
the Germans just now. The rain  
did ease off this morning, but a  
very damp & dismal day.

Wed. July 17 This cold wet weather  
continues. Dad is very comfy at  
the Ship. He was, as we were greatly  
surprised at finding such a modern  
inn. Douglas says no leave yet. My

disappointing. We are having  
three or four air raid warnings a  
day now. The boys are all organized  
of course. Worst thing too, as the other  
day when out for a walk by the  
sever, a Heinkel came over so low  
they had to fling themselves flat to  
escape it. It had been shot down  
& landed & sunk in the water.

July 21 Sunday. We had eight  
warnings on Thurs. I think Dad  
is enjoying himself. It's nice to have  
us all around & Mollie too. We went  
to Gloucester yesterday, & have also  
been to Stone & Thornbury. We have  
had the Thompsons round to tea &  
the Whittles. Getting quite  
familiar.

Wed July 24 Mollie's father  
is here now for a fortnight. Douglas

holds out no hope of leave as yet.  
& suggests we go down to see him.  
Quite a good idea & we are thinking  
it over. Seem to have an awful  
lot of enemy balloons over. I don't  
much like it.

Sun. July 28. Had a bomb drop  
Friday evening opposite side of  
the Severn they said, but it was  
this side. A nasty old crack. Dad  
went back yesterday. Rather  
had a bit of an adventure going  
to Thornbury Church at 8 this  
morning. We were stopped by  
the Home Guard & had to produce  
our identity cards & tell them  
where we were going & why. I suppose  
they had an exercise on, but they  
looked pretty fierce & held their  
rifles in an alarming manner.



Wed. July 31. Our sitting  
room, bedroom windows and  
absolutely covered with flies  
the noise they make is surprising  
Never seen so many in my life  
Disgusting things. I have hung  
up fly paper, but you want to  
paper the walls with them to  
said I have seen thousands out-  
side covering completely a large  
door so something similar I  
suppose they thrive on the primitive  
way of life here. Dorey hopes  
to come on Aug. 9. I do hope he  
does, but I feel afraid to think  
about it. He had a little  
bit of fun last night. About 11.15  
Miss Willup & ourselves were  
standing outside the front  
watching a plane caught in the

searchlights. Not a gun was  
fired. How are they any?  
However, back to the tale.  
Suddenly, quite quietly, the front  
door shut behind us. We were  
locked out. No use calling to  
Miss Willup, too deaf & she was  
in bed. The back gate was barred.  
George tried to force a window  
but quite unsuccessfully. Then  
Miss Willup remembered a ladder  
in the wash house. George climbed  
as quietly as he could over the  
back gate, unlocked it, admitted  
Miss Willup & they fumbled  
their way in the black darkness  
found the ladder & George  
climbed in, our bedroom window  
which was wide open. Landing  
so, he got beautifully mixed

up with the blind (which is  
very temperamental when it  
comes to pulling it up) a pair  
of curtains - our aerial. He  
was laughing. I had my  
handie in my mouth to hide  
my own giggles. Miss Hilleop  
has no sense of humour.

Sun Aug 4 I had a sort of  
gastro trouble Thurs & Friday.  
Friday night 5 bombs went off  
over side of the Severn, nasty cracks  
it then came a whistling bomb.  
George said "duck" so we ducked  
under the bed clothes. It was a  
crash too, but no damage done I  
hear. Can't buy any more  
about here, haven't seen one since  
I came. Douglas says he may  
be here on Aug 9 - five more ships

We went to Gloucester yesterday  
& did some shopping & had tea  
which I enjoyed as I hadn't had  
much to eat for a couple of days.

Had an outstanding service at  
Oldbury this morning. During  
the Te Deum, the Rector's dog  
came happily in, sniffed around  
the nave & scurried towards  
the choir & finally saw his  
master & greeted him with  
much tail wagging. The Rector  
shooed it out, & said loudly  
"Go home," several times. Then  
the dog stood on its hind legs  
& pawed the Rector who gave  
it a resounding whack on the  
head with his prayer book &  
off it went. The Rector went to  
the lecture & told us he was going

to read special lessons which  
he had found on leaflet he  
had found in the stable when  
looking for old iron. I didn't  
know what to do for laughing.  
I did not look at anyone.

Wed. Aug 7 Expecting Douglas  
any day now. Schools shut  
this week. The Belles Thompsons  
are going away, but George won't  
leave his boys. I go round with  
him always now to visit any  
who are sick, or in trouble.

Several parents are coming to stay  
or see their boys during the holiday.  
George is organizing games &  
nature study walks for any of  
the boys who like to come during  
the holiday, but I think they will  
work on the farms, seeing after

the animals or doing a bit of  
gardening. I bought a dress in  
Shornbury yesterday. Among the  
straws these little shops have. This  
afternoon we went for a drive with  
Mrs. Stading & Nora Twike & had  
an enjoyable time. They are going  
to make a match of it. I can see.  
We went to Titchington & saw  
Miss Johnson, on to Wootton under  
Edge & visited Ruth & Geoffrey  
Stading. Met Ellis & Mary some  
where. Then on to Dursley & saw  
Mr. McEwen & various High  
School children we knew. I had  
tea there & then back home. Very  
pretty country about Dursley &  
Wootton. We had plenty of good  
laughs together & thoroughly  
enjoyed the afternoon.

Sun. Aug 11. Douglas came Friday. He met him in Bristol of course. The balloons were up when we left Thornbury, but we were not stopped. We had an hour to wait & then came straight out & back. Douglas looks well, the same old Douglas. It's marvellous to have him here & with us again. We all went to Thornbury Church at 8 AM. Douglas is in an almost constant state of amusement at our primitive life here & we are laughing our heads off most of the time.

Wed. Aug 14. What a lovely week we are having together. Have not too much behind, but have taken Douglas round about & to Gloucester one day. He seems

to be thoroughly enjoying himself. He & Mollie are together all day.

Sun. Aug 18. Well, he has gone again, left by the 2.55 on Friday. Ais road on when we drove to Bristol. It seems very tame & miserable again. The seven went Fri evening at 10.30 & the all clear Sat. 5.15 AM. Bombs were dropping just after we saw Mollie home & she had a bad night. I pity she is not in the same house as ourselves.

Road on when we went to Thornbury Church this morning & the Vicar turned & told the congregation to move away from the great windows, into the nave by the pillars. As soon as the all clear went, he paused in the service.

• offered up a beautiful little  
prayer of thanks for our safety.  
I have discovered it is the wish  
the Rev. Maileod, who arranges  
the altar flowers each week. He  
must have very artistic ideas.  
The flowers were in a magnificent  
arrangement this week again.

Wed Aug 21 - Susan went. Sun  
just as we were half way to  
Mrs. McCormick with Mollie. Alphet  
Mollie I would see, especially now  
her mother is gone back home.  
We have arranged for her to go to  
sleep at Mrs. Curtis, next to us  
as it were they are nice people.  
Going into the house today, there  
was a swarm of flying ants on the  
front door steps. I went through  
with some pencils & told Mrs. Phillips

She did not seem to understand  
what I meant, & so came with  
me to have a look. "Flying ants," I  
said. "Oh!" said she, so there  
are "Flying ants." "Yes" said I.  
"Ants." "No" says she "Flying  
ants, Flying ants." I pictured  
all our aunts flying about  
& collapsed into laughter.

Yesterday we went to see  
Mr. Stading & Sarah again to  
tea at the Berkeley Arms Hotel.  
She wanted me to be hostess to  
their wedding <sup>reception</sup> to which I agreed.  
And this was it. They asked me  
before of course the Whitlachs  
were there, Miss Chapman & Best,  
& Mrs. Nelson. We were a jolly  
party & today they leave for the  
wedding at D'Arrest. - Douglas

11  
had a bad journey back last  
Friday owing to roads everywhere.  
He was an hour & a half getting  
from Watford to Busbinton as the  
line had been bombed. When he  
finally reached camp, he found it  
had had a bomb or two on it but  
no casualties thank God. He  
had a quiet night last night.

Sun. Aug 26 He had a nice  
day out on Thurs. He went to  
Cheltenham & then on to  
Glowkebury, a very interesting  
old town. Saw the abbey, (Norman)  
& lovely. A place mentioned in  
"John Galsworthy, Gentleman", the old  
mill, the Bell Inn, Hop Pole Inn  
& Bear Inn. Then on we went to  
Malvern. Lovely lovely scenery.  
The Malvern Hills we could see

long before we got to them, all  
a mystical blue in the heat  
haze. Malvern was a very  
charming place & we were sorry  
to leave. Back via Colchester, as  
we left as late as we dared stay  
it was all so beautiful. The  
most enjoyable day we have had.  
Had roads all night from  
10pm to 4.45 a.m. Nothing here,  
but the drone of countless planes  
overhead is not pleasant.

Our rations are now, per week -  
1/2 butter, 1/2 sugar, 1/2 lard & margarine.

Wed. Aug 28 He had another  
day out Monday. Left after an  
early dinner & went by a short  
cut to Fulfield, a very pretty area.  
Passed a little water cross bed.  
On to Wootton & up a steep hill

into the heart of the Cotswolds  
Marvellous views, warm gentle  
Down to Dursley Saw Mr Headbelle  
who gave us Miss Cuttredge's  
address, & then back here by  
another road. Tuesday we  
went to Wotton direct & had a  
look round & into St. James Church  
then on to see Mr & Mrs Bullbridge at  
Uley-cum-Owlpen. What a  
lovely name for a really lovely  
village. It was a hot sunny  
day the church of St. Giles stood  
high up on the side of the hill  
up which the main road straggled.  
I wanted to see it. George was  
not feeling too good, so stayed  
in the car while Mollie & I went  
to visit the church. It was a very  
brilliant day & the interior of the

small church rather dark, with  
outside doors a very small  
porch & inside swing doors.  
Unfortunately for me, there was  
a step up into the church  
between these two pairs of doors.  
Not seeing clearly with the change  
of light from sunlight to gloom  
I tripped heavily over this step  
up, shot through the swing  
door like a bullet from a gun  
& fetched up hanging over the  
back pew with a mighty  
whack across my tummy &  
a tremendous shatter. Breathless  
I looked up & discovered I had  
by my spectacular entrance  
interrupted Mass Intercessions  
or something. I gathered myself  
together & got out nearly as

quickly as I had entered.  
Found Mollie with tears  
streaming down her face  
doubled up with laughter.  
After I had recovered, we made  
our way to Miss Gutteridge's &  
had tea with her & her sister.  
Back home via Dunsley, a very  
lovely road. School starts  
tomorrow.

Sun. Sept 8. Had a visit last  
week from the Vicar of Thornbury.  
He had noticed us there & inquired  
who we might be. He told us  
the Altar frontal to be used today  
was made for an altar in  
Westminster Abbey for the  
Coronation. Heavy air  
attacks in London commenced  
last Friday, day & night. I fear

the casualties are heavy & lot of  
damage done. Dined here. The plates  
are bad. No Telegraphs yesterday.  
A letter posted in Ipswich on Mon.  
1:45 reached me Thursday.  
A point of meat turned up for me  
at 8:15 Friday evening. It was  
dark, & I paid a bill for lamb  
& got indoors & found it was beef.

Went into Bristol yesterday  
but didn't stay long. Had my  
hair cut yesterday evening  
by Mrs. M. Webb Wilcox who  
is staying here. She is handmaiden  
to the Duchess of Kent.

Sun. Sept 15. I have got a  
drawing licence & had my first  
lesson last Friday. Quite enjoyed  
it, but there seems a lot to master  
so far. I am thoroughly incompetent.



The air battle for London continues. It is terrible. Saw a crowd of about 60 German planes over Bristol way - broken up by 15 of ours. Tremendous thrill to watch a battle like this. But surely our boys were killed, but not many they are wonderful.

We have been blackberrying.

Very pleasant. Got some apples too, & some walnuts.

Sun Sept 22 Lessons in driving continue. I drove from the Pond to the barriers outside Thornbury on Wed. Mollie & I are gathering quite a lot of blackberries & we can get apples from the orchard. The locals make cider, gallons of it. A lot of boys were ill one day with pains in their tummies

& so on it. Turned out their foster parents had given them quite a lot of this cider, & not being used to it, they were fairly upset. Funny really. We have had some cider & thought it horrible. We have also had some real Severn salmon.

Saw a whole one the other day. What a sight. There again, we all agree we like the salmon best out of a tin. The locals think we are beyond all hope, first we don't like their cider & now the salmon -

Sun Sept 29 Friday I drove into Thornbury & stopped at three different shops in the High St. I can do all except reverse. Not bad for me - in

a fortnight. He went  
to Gloucester Sat. Place was  
crowded, a fair on we heard.  
He didn't feel like a fair, so  
soon came back. I think we  
all feel depressed, the  
war situation is bad & this  
place begins to feel like a prison  
& home so far away & Douglas —  
Sun. Oct. 13. No petrol hardly  
this month. It's getting very  
uncomfortable here. They are fed  
up with us. George put his foot  
right through the floor when  
walking across the room on Mon.  
He said it would never have  
happened if we hadn't been here.  
No comment on that remark.  
Anyway, we have had it repaired  
& paid for it. George has put

an advert in the paper, but  
not much hope I am afraid.  
Sun. Oct. 20. Everything happens  
at once. Had a letter from Douglas  
saying he is going to have some  
stripes & has got the first one up.  
Then on Friday we got a letter  
from a house agent offering us  
a small furnished house in Thornaby  
at £2.2.0 a week. We thought it  
over, as rather expensive with  
paying rates & what not on 2 Beach  
Rd. as well. Sat. we went to see  
it & we liked it very much  
indeed, so much so we went  
& took it right away on a  
monthly lease. I feel so pleased  
I can hardly believe it. In fact we  
all do & we are all beautifully  
excited. Move in on Sat. Oct. 26.

Seems too good to be true, &  
Finished up the day with rain  
from 7:25pm to 6:15 AM & we  
didn't get much sleep as too noisy  
Oct 29. Sun. - Moved in to  
High St. Thornbury yesterday.  
Didn't realize we had so much  
of our stuff here. There was a ton  
of wool too, not to mention 48  
hatched eggs & a 10 weeks old  
kitten which we call Scamp. There  
are two cats kept here for  
mousing only & are not allowed  
in the house ever for things &  
seem half wild & terrified of old  
Mrs. Phillips who bangs them with  
her stick if they come near the  
door. This kitten was only 4 or 5 days  
old when its mother died. They don't  
destroy kittens around here, it is

unlucky they say so this poor little  
thing was left to die shortly. It  
cried most pitifully for a day  
& I couldn't stand it any longer  
& asked, if I got it to live, I would  
have it. The idea met with strong  
disapproval, but our combined  
efforts won in the end. I thought  
it was now 5 days old. I fed it  
with a fountain pen filler & made  
it up a warm bed in the coach  
house where it had been born. I was  
told I would have the kitten on condition  
I never brought it indoors. So I  
fed it on my lap sitting outside  
on a back wall & gave it a "bath"  
every morning by rubbing the little  
thing all over with a warm damp  
cloth. It soon dried in the sun.  
Anyhow, it lived. I am up & it

indoors in my coat pocket ???  
Sun. Nov 3 We are very comfy  
& snug in our new home. Too  
comfortable to last I feel. Douglas  
thinks he will get Christmas leave  
starting Dec 6. I must start  
trying to make some Christmas  
fare at once as things are very  
scarce. This house is really two  
old cottages knocked into one & all  
modernised. There is a nice large  
lounge, a large sitting room at the  
back & then up a step into a long  
narrow kitchen. Upstairs is a large  
front bedroom, a good size second  
& over the kitchen, the bathroom with  
a real wc. Beautiful. It works.  
The bath isn't fixed as yet. The  
walls are a couple of feet thick &  
there are 69 panes of glass in the

bathroom window, all very old  
with those greenish blots in some  
of them you can't see through.  
Sun. Nov 10 Douglas is coming  
on Nov. 26 now. All in a hurry  
to get ready for him. I am so  
looking forward to having  
him with us. I wonder what he  
will think of our new abode.  
We like it more each day. The  
furniture is new, tasteful &  
comfortable. There is some fine  
china, a complete Willow pattern  
dinner & tea set all set out in  
the dining room on a dark oak  
Welsh dresser. It looks most  
attractive. Beside that, there  
are three other complete dinner  
services, apart from a multitude  
of other stuff. The kitchen contains

heaps of cooking gadgets  
Sun. Nov. 17 - Douglas is coming  
on the 21<sup>st</sup> now. I have made  
a couple of puddings & a little  
meat so we shall be quite  
festive. It will be lovely to have  
him here with us & no one else  
in the house.

Wed. Nov. 20 - Read a letter from  
our landlord on Mon. to say we  
must vacate the house by  
Christmas. We have only been here  
three weeks. It seems a dirty  
trick to me. Absolutely fed up  
with this part of England.

Didn't get hardly any sleep  
last night with planes constantly  
droning overhead on their way  
north & later coming back. Most  
devastating attack on Coventry.

Sun. Nov. 24 - Another week of  
unpersuaded. Douglas arrived on  
Friday at 1.45 with a horrible  
cold & cough. He told us he &  
Mollie would like to get married  
at Christmas. They seem so young  
but they are very earnest & we  
both think they will be happy  
together. What can we say to  
them? It was a surprise to  
us both as we had no idea  
they contemplated marriage so  
soon. Anyway, ~~but~~ we have given  
our blessing & pray they will  
be happy & come through the trials  
of the war to a peaceful home  
& married life. Now to arrange  
things. Plenty to think about, &  
we must hunt for somewhere  
to live too. I went to a

Oldbury M. M. meeting just before we left there, at the Rectory the Secretary wanted me to give on three months probation before be allowed to join them. I refused such a condition. Absolute check I had never heard of such a thing. I have my M. M. card with me to prove I was a member. Can't get on with any of these people.

Sun Dec 1 Douglas gave again. He had a lovely week & don't feel so depressed at his departure with all the arrangements to be made for the wedding. He went to Gloucester yesterday shopping. Mollie knew just what she wanted for a wedding dress.

was able to get it. I must have a successful day. Tea is rationed to 2 pence a week each. Sun Dec 2 Douglas has been granted Christmas leave to get married & we are pressing forward with the arrangements & all is excitement. It is such a pleasure for me as I have no daughters & never expected to have this thrill. We are both of us very fond of Mollie. It is difficult to contact Douglas as he is in Scotland & the posts are slow, but no hitch so far. Bristol had a heavy raid on Nov 24 & a slashing on last Monday & again Friday. The fires raged all night & looked terrible. She

Post Office went so we don't know what letters are lost. He could not get any stamps yesterday. We have obtained rooms for when we leave here with Mrs. Sainsbury. Castle St. Mon. Dec. 9. Went to Bristol today to do some shopping but couldn't find any shops. I asked a man where was Wine St. He just pointed in front. All I could see was a waste heap of rubble, no signs of any roadway. It is as if something has died. The heart is bombed out of it. The people look grim but undefeated. Now I know what bombing can do. Unless one has seen what I have seen today, one does not know.

Wed. Dec. 11. It is Mollie's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. At 11:15 I got a letter for George which, under his instructions in such matters I opened. It was his recall to Harwich & has to report there at 11 A.M. on Mon. We are going home. Oh! what a relief. Mollie & I just don't know what to do & are dancing & running about for joy. Only got a couple of days to settle everything pack & away. Then on Saturday off we go, heading for Doverport & home. Yippee.

Dec. 12. We are home. We got up at 6.30 & had a hectic time doing the final packing of bed linen etc. It was dark of course, very windy & inclined to

rain. I know I dropped my  
nightie in the gutter full of muddy  
water. He started at 8:30 & must  
have looked like travelling gypsies  
Packages on top of the car, slung  
between the bumpers in front &  
behind, Mollie sitting on a pile  
of blankets & bumped her head on the  
roof every few minutes. I with  
a pail of pickled eggs between  
my feet & the kettle in a box on  
my lap. I shall never forget that  
journey. The car skidded going  
up the Coltswoods & we had to  
stop to readjust the weight  
of a couple of cases which had  
shifted to one side, and tearing  
wind too. Then on & arrived  
here, thanks to God, with no  
mishap on the way, at 11:30.

It snowed on the way & when  
we arrived it was raining & it  
took nearly an hour to unload  
the car because the ropes were  
soaked & had tightened of course.  
It was dark too, an air raid  
warning on, so we could not  
have any light. Found the garage  
was booked & leverage finally  
got the car in the bluff. The  
electric hadnt been turned on  
so we were once more trotting  
about by candle light until  
the electricity people arrived.  
There was a sharp nail hole in  
the roof & water coming in  
down through the dining room  
ceiling & wall. Still, we were  
happy. At 12 Mollie home  
then set to to clear up. The



got the dining room fire going  
& slept there on camp beds as  
the house was so cold & damp.

Dec 18. Wed. He slept  
downstairs first three nights  
& didn't let the fire up. But  
a fire going as well in kitchen  
& our bedroom so by now it is  
dry & warm. My woman can't  
come any more, so I shall have  
to do the work myself. Seems  
quiet here as no aid since the  
last three days. No body about  
& the strangest thing is to go  
out & not see a single body  
in a room & hardly a child  
either. Masses of army of course.  
George has tried hard & can't  
get a permit for his car. It will  
be very trying for him to walk

all that way. He will have  
to cycle, & that's not nice for him  
this time of the year. I feel a  
bit worried about it.

Our evacuation begins to  
seem like a bad dream. I am  
so happy to be home again.

Dec 22, Sun. Douglas  
coming home today. The house  
is nice & warm now & comfy.  
What a joy to have him with  
us again. Sargee is coming  
tomorrow. Weather not bad.  
All set for the wedding. Heard  
the bands this morning. Very  
odd service, sort of parade  
service I suppose. There were  
about 100 soldiers there & about  
20 wives. Most unimposing I  
thought. Early celebrations as before.

Dec. 24. Tuesday the wedding went off beautifully & very pretty one. Mollie looked so dainty yet dignified & radiantly happy in her lace gown. The Vicar (Rev. H. P. Statham) gave them a very nice address. He was assisted by the Rev. D. Rhymes our new curate, just ordained deacon. This was the first service he assisted at since his ordination. We are all going to morning service at 8.

Dec. 29. Sun. Douglas has gone again & it all seems like a dream. Now I suppose we'll settle down to living in an evacuation or invasion area, full of emptiness!!! George starts school on the 1<sup>st</sup> of Jan.

1941

Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup>. George has got 83 boys & no doubt the number will increase. But he thinks it wise to have them in school. We are getting a few raids but nothing like we know they have had in other places. Just two or three planes over & then away.

Jan. 15. We have had a bitter cold spell almost as bad as last Jan. George has had to cycle through the snow & frost dreadfully hard on him. He used a bus once or twice because of the snow, but the times are so uncertain. He walked too some days. The fortifications here are formidable. Butter ration reduced to 2 oz a week.

Jan 31 Had a few night raids. My goodness were heavy guns about. The noise they make - I'm near us makes me jump when it goes off. Bold getting up these nights, so we don't turn in until midnight to give things a chance. Local very short, I eat a week. Food is scarce too being evacuation area, but we never go hungry, fill up somehow.

Feb 26 Cold spell is broken. I am glad to say. Had a string of bombs dropped near the Police Station & did a lot of damage. George has 144 boys now. It's Ash Wed. so I went to Church at 8 a.m. It was a most beautiful & wonderful dawn.

March 31 Douglas came home on the 28 for 10 days leave. He had a happy time, but it slipped away all too quickly. He looked very well. These quiet nights whilst he was here, Our 'little pet' barked once. To anger came down one day. All young women are to be called up to do war work. Mollie has decided to join the W.R.N.S.

1/2 lb jam or syrup a month each!!

Apr 21 Raids getting heavy & sleep at night getting less. I think I should like to sleep downstairs now, so many people are & I can't seem to force myself into the shelter outside. What a muddle it will be to shift about the furniture as George says he's Oh!

will do it when I say the word  
Mollie started at Parkston on  
Apr. 17. & seems to like the work.  
He had a quiet Easter. Went  
up to Ipswich one day by the 8.50  
Not much damage, they have  
been wonderfully fortunate. Seems  
ages since we saw Douglas.

Apr. 27 Sunday George had a  
nasty experience the other day.  
Seven bombs dropped in the harbor  
in front of him as it were just as  
he left school. He hardly had  
time to jump off his bicycle &  
fling himself against a wall.

Cheese rationed now 1 egg a week.

May 9 Friday He had a right  
last night. About 2,000 incendiaries  
fell on Ipswich. Bernards burnt  
out & lots of other lesser damage.

Espionage boys were marvellous.  
Had raids each night the past  
week but not so much damage  
done. The two land mines were  
the worst. The cement pyramid  
barrier across Beach Rd. was  
lit up with red lights last Friday  
& next three nights a plane  
dived low down the road &  
dropped bombs. Thought we were  
for it. Inhabitants complained  
& the lights are out now.

Sat. May 3 Miss Osborne was  
bombed out of her house in Cliff  
Rd. & has come here to stay for a  
bit. She was unhurt but badly  
shaken of course. Fire blitz  
on London.

May 18 Sun Land mine dropped  
Friday on Ipswich killed 2 & injured  
30

200 homeless. School damaged but useable. The parish church windows gone. Should like a good night's sleep as we are all tired. Went to Ipswich yesterday.

Douglas working on railway repairs after bad Liverpool City May 29 Thursday. Had some quiet nights I am glad to say.

Berlinish week. Tues. Good work. I joined the W.V.S. eight weeks ago today. Have started a Savings Street Group, called the 'Victory' & already I am collecting £2 a week. Feel I am doing something. I have got the word on the three avenues - Lee Rd. They are talking of evacuation of all the old & children again. Surely the country won't be invaded! I can't

believe it, we must win or defeat this evil thing. June 1<sup>st</sup> Sun. We had a surprise this morning when informed in the news that clothes are to be rationed. We are to have 66 coupons a year each. For men a suit will take 26, raincoat 16, collar 1 & socks 3. Women dress 11, stockings 2, mac 14, & shoes 5. We shall all have proper fashion plates at the end of a year. I must get out my rag bag!!

June 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun. Russia invaded by Germany this morning. I hope they will fight & hold the Germans for a while. It will put away the thought of invasion of this island. Douglas coming home.

next week for seven days  
July 6 Sun. He had a lovely  
time when Douglas was with  
us. It went like a flash.  
We have not have any bad  
raids for three weeks now, but  
we are bombing heavily France &  
N.W. Germany. Lovely spell of  
summer weather the last fortnight  
very hot, temp. up to 90° one.  
Sun. Aug 17 Summer weather  
departed on S. E. winds day &  
its been wet & windy & cold since.  
Rusnic holding out well. He  
have one egg a week. Pretty  
feeble. Do we cook it for Sunday  
breakfast or bake it? Remmer's  
says milk<sup>to</sup> be rationed soon.  
Douglas left Chester July 31 & went  
to Ford on. Shrewsbury. Left there

Aug 6 for Scarborough. Talk  
about seeing the wentside!  
I was attacked to the Post  
Centre at Hill School about a  
fortnight ago - run by W. V.S. I  
bought some hipsters yesterday,  
first we have had for over a year.  
Delicious. Not going away.  
He miss the car a lot.  
Sun. Sept 7 Holiday over &  
not one fine hot day. Its been  
quite hot this week now the  
schools are open! He went up  
to Ips. several times during the  
holidays & to the pictures here each  
week I think. This wet August  
has spoilt the garden, But far  
worse is the corn situation. Its  
all cut & cant be harvested because  
of the wet. Very serious position.

Still no bad winds. Lot of  
attacks on convoys out here.

Sun. Sept. 14 Still lovely  
weather & the harvest is in.

Sun. Sept. 21 Douglas winning  
in seven days leave on Wed.  
Hope this lovely weather lasts.

Oct. 5 Sun. Douglas was  
home nine days & Nettie had  
hers at the same time. Lovely  
weather. Douglas has a nasty  
cough, but was better for the  
week's leave I am glad to say.

George came down from Friday  
to Tues. He didn't seem too well.

This is an eggless week. Use  
flour & milk for a pudding &  
try cake flour which includes  
(they say) sugar & egg substitutes.  
Some gains! George & I

went to Ipswich yesterday  
& heard Solomon in the Public  
Hall. Grand. What a wonderful  
player he is. Pure music, every  
note he plays. An unforgettable  
experience again to hear him.

Al pity Douglas would not be there.

Sun. Oct 12 The Nazis are  
pressing on & war is across the  
whole width of Russia & a fierce  
battle for Moscow is on. If only  
they can hold it. The winter is  
coming on & history often repeats  
itself.

Thurs. Oct 22 Had a cable  
from David saying he had  
arrived in the Middle East.

Nov. 14 Friday I missed fish, meat,  
& beans to be rationed now. Only  
the fresh air left for I think!!

We are going to Ipswich next  
Wed. to hear Poushroff.

Mon. Dec. 8 Japan invaded  
Far East Islands & declared  
war on America. What a mess!

One thing, all in it now & the  
long time we have stood alone  
is over. The final struggle is  
approaching.

Dec. 31. Dad. "The year is dying,  
let it die." And what of the  
future. It is a very dark one,  
but I am confident we shall  
win, We must, for the sake  
of the good in the world.

Douglas came home on Dec. 22  
for a few days as once again  
we were fortunate to be all  
together for Christmas. Dad  
came down of course.

1942 Sun. Jan. 11. There  
is nothing but talk of  
invasion here as soon as the  
early spring comes. So in  
case anything happens to  
this house, perhaps it would  
be as well not to write any  
more, although I do not  
think I have written anything  
that would be of help to the  
enemy, but I might. So  
this is THE END.