

Campsea Ashe and World War II



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Campsea Ashe and World War II

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*The Heritage Group is grateful to Campsea Ashe Parish Council for
sponsoring this booklet*

Introduction

A tribute to all the residents of Campsea Ashe and especially the 49 women and men who served their country during World War II

The outbreak of war in 1939 would have brought great uncertainty to the villagers of Campsea Ashe, as it did across the country. Some residents would have served in, or at least lived through, The Great War of 1914-18 and they would have some idea of what was to come. Younger people would be thinking of whether they should volunteer or wait for conscription to call them up for service. Children in the village may be excited or afraid of what was to come.

This booklet has been prepared by members of Campsea Ashe Heritage Group as our contribution to the VE Day 80 commemorations in May 2025. It aims to give a flavour of what life was like in the village at the time.

Some forty nine residents from the village served in the armed forces, the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service), in hospitals or other ways. Sadly, six people were killed when on active service abroad. One civilian resident in the village died when a bomb fell on her house.

Some eighty or so years on from the end of the war it is difficult to imagine what life was like and what thoughts were going through the minds of the people of our village. It is hoped this booklet gives some insight into this.

More information about the village and what the villagers endured during the war is available at www.campseaashechurch.org.uk/War_section.php



Background to the War

The causes of the Second World War were varied and complicated but – in its simplest terms – they can be traced back to severe political and economic instability which developed throughout the 1930s. Much of this arose from the consequences of the First World War because Europe had been exhausted by the conflict, and was having to grapple with recession, inflation and unemployment. Germany in particular was bitter in defeat, was seeking redress for the punitive terms of the Treaty of Versailles, and became a ready breeding ground for the emerging doctrine of Fascism. Against this background, the fanatical Adolf Hitler wheedled and bullied his way to power in 1933; shifts towards totalitarianism, militarism and expansion were also taking place in Japan, and later in Italy. Unchecked by their more moderate neighbours, these aggressive powers moved to dominate and subjugate vast swathes of Europe and the Far East.

All through the later 1930s, it seemed that war was becoming inevitable, yet in many respects Britain was unprepared. Very rapidly during the summer of 1939 it had to catch up with its own rearmament



and get on to a war footing. Reports in radio broadcasts and

Chamberlain announces Britain is at war with Germany on the 3rd September 1939

the press were soon dominated by news of the Government's programmes to alert the population and take the necessary steps, preparatory action that became all the more urgent once Germany had invaded and occupied the western fringes of Europe, France in particular. Matters came to a head in September 1939 when war was declared by Britain, after Germany had made a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union and had invaded Poland, whose borders had been guaranteed by Britain and France.

In the summer of 1940 Germany turned on Britain. It's U-Boats soon had Britain under siege (indeed, the Battle of the Atlantic against this menace

lasted throughout the war), and it clearly intended to neutralise the RAF as a prelude to invasion. In the event its Luftwaffe was unable to overcome the RAF during the Battle of Britain, but German bombers continued operations over British cities and air bases during the subsequent 'Blitz'.

Apprehension was turning to dread. Serious plans were already under way across the country: conscription was being organised, as was rationing. Gas masks and air-raid shelters were being distributed urgently, and arrangements were being made to evacuate towns and cities. Britain still had painful memories of the First World War in which every community in the country had lost men in the fighting. There were 18 names listed on Campsea Ashe's War memorial alone, and was this carnage to be repeated, even closer to home?

After the fall of France, Britain stood alone. Its East Coast was firmly on the front line and needed to be protected at all costs, and villages such as Campsea Ashe and its neighbours were clearly vulnerable. Defences were



Winston Churchill - Wartime British Prime Minister

quickly put in place to cover all coastal towns and nearby inland communities, so all ports, harbours, estuaries and beaches had gun emplacements, barbed wire, pillboxes and tank-traps installed with great urgency. Crucially, the railway with its stations and marshalling yards needed to be secure, not least because

agriculture and food production was so vital. There were also key military sites to be protected, many within just a few miles of our village such as Bawdsey and Orfordness. New airfields had been laid down across East Anglia, again with several very close to Campsea Ashe. Consequently, military personnel, air-raid wardens and Observers were on duty everywhere. Campsea Ashe found itself in the thick of it.

Those Who Served

Name	Service
Ablett, Mona	HQ Company Office, Catterick
Ablett, William G	248 Squadron, Battery Quartermaster Sergeant
Arnott, A	Army, Private, S.C.U.I. Suffolk Regiment
Bagg, Joyce	RAF. Lance Corporal, LACW, Bucks
Barnes, George	SS Ormonde
Bell, J W E	Army, ROAC, Lance Corporal Iceland C Force
Cairns, J R	RAF, LAC 1857 Squadron, Central Med Forces
Cattermole, W G	Suffolk Regiment, Royal Corps of Signals Private
Cook, Alec, N	RAF Service No 1232722
Copping, Eric G	RAF, Corporal, No 1306397
Ellis, M	Nothing known
Fairhead, Tom W	Royal Navy, HMS Lucifer
Graham, Lord Alastair	Royal Navy, Captain
Graham, Ian	Royal Navy, HMS Royal Arthur
Graham, Liliias	Relief work with the UN
Graham, Margaret	ATS Bawdsey and other places
Graham, Robin	Royal Navy
✠ Hammond, Arthur	Royal Army Service Corps, Driver
Hembling, John	Royal Navy, No JX 533362
Kemp, Charles	Army, Gunner
Latter, Edward L	Berrington Hall Hospital, Leominster, Sergeant
Latter, Violet M	ATS, Corporal, Regimental Police, Pontifract
Leech, Elsie	ATS, Army Catering Corps, Aldershot
✠ Lees, Russel T	Royal Artillery, Gunner

*For more detailed biographies about all those who served visit
www.campseaashechurch.org.uk/Those_who_served_WWII.php*

Name	Service
Lort-Philips, Raymond	Scots Guards, Captain. War Office
✝ Lowther, John A	Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve, Lieutenant
Manning F	Nothing known
Mowson, George	Army
Newman, Albert V	Royal Navy, HMS Paladin
Newman John	Army
✝ Newman, William A	Royal Engineers, Sergeant. Fought in WWI and II
Park, F M	Voluntary Aid Detachment, Nurse
Park, R D	SRN, 27th General Hospital
Parsons, C	Royal Army Medical Corps, Private
✝ Plant, Clifford R	Army, Corporal, Parachute Regiment
Reade, A E E	Special Operations Executive, Major
Reeves, J	RAF, Flight Sergeant
Sawyer, John Alfred	Air Raid Warden
Skeet, Clifford	Grenadier Guards
Skipper, Dennis W	Royal Norfolk Regiment, Private. SE Asia
Skipper, Raymond	Royal Navy, Able Seaman HMS Valiant
Smith, Muriel B	ATS, Lance Corporal, Aldershot
Smith, Raymond	RAF, service number 1238600
Smith, Stanley	Army, Private Cambridgeshire Regiment, Mayala
Tidey, R	SRN, St Luke's Hospital, India
Tildesley, V	Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF)
✝ Trumpeter, George	Army, 4th Battalion Suffolk Regiment. POW
Warne, George	Royal Army Medical Corps. POW
Wordley, Elizabeth	ATS, Private, Home Postal Centre, Nottingham

The Ultimate Sacrifice

It is estimated there were some 384,000 British military and 70,000 civilian deaths during WWII. Campsea Ashe played its part, with seven lives sacrificed. Their names are inscribed on tablets inside the church.

‡ **Iris Driver, Campsea Ashe, 21st November 1940**

A bomb fell on Railway Terrace Cottages killing a young civilian, Mrs Iris Driver, aged just 25 years, together with her unborn baby.

‡ **Arthur Hammond, Greece, 28th March 1941**

During the spring of 1941, Arthur Hammond was serving in Crete. He was one of the casualties defending the island prior to the full invasion by the Germans later that year. He was 29 years old.

‡ **John Lowther, Dunbeath, Scotland 25th August 1942**

John Lowther, grandson of village resident Viscount Ullswater, was killed when the plane he was travelling in crashed into the remote Eagle's Rock on the northeast coast of Scotland. He was 32 years old.

‡ **George Trumpeter, Thanbyuzayat, Burma 16th October 1943**

George Trumpeter was one of thousands of British and Commonwealth prisoners of war who were forced to work as slave labour on the notorious Burma Railway. About 12,000 allied servicemen died of exhaustion, disease and maltreatment, sadly including George, aged 25 years.

‡ **Russell Lees, Chittagong, India 29th December 1943**

Russell Lees served with the Royal Artillery and was killed as the Japanese prepared to invade. He was aged 25 years.

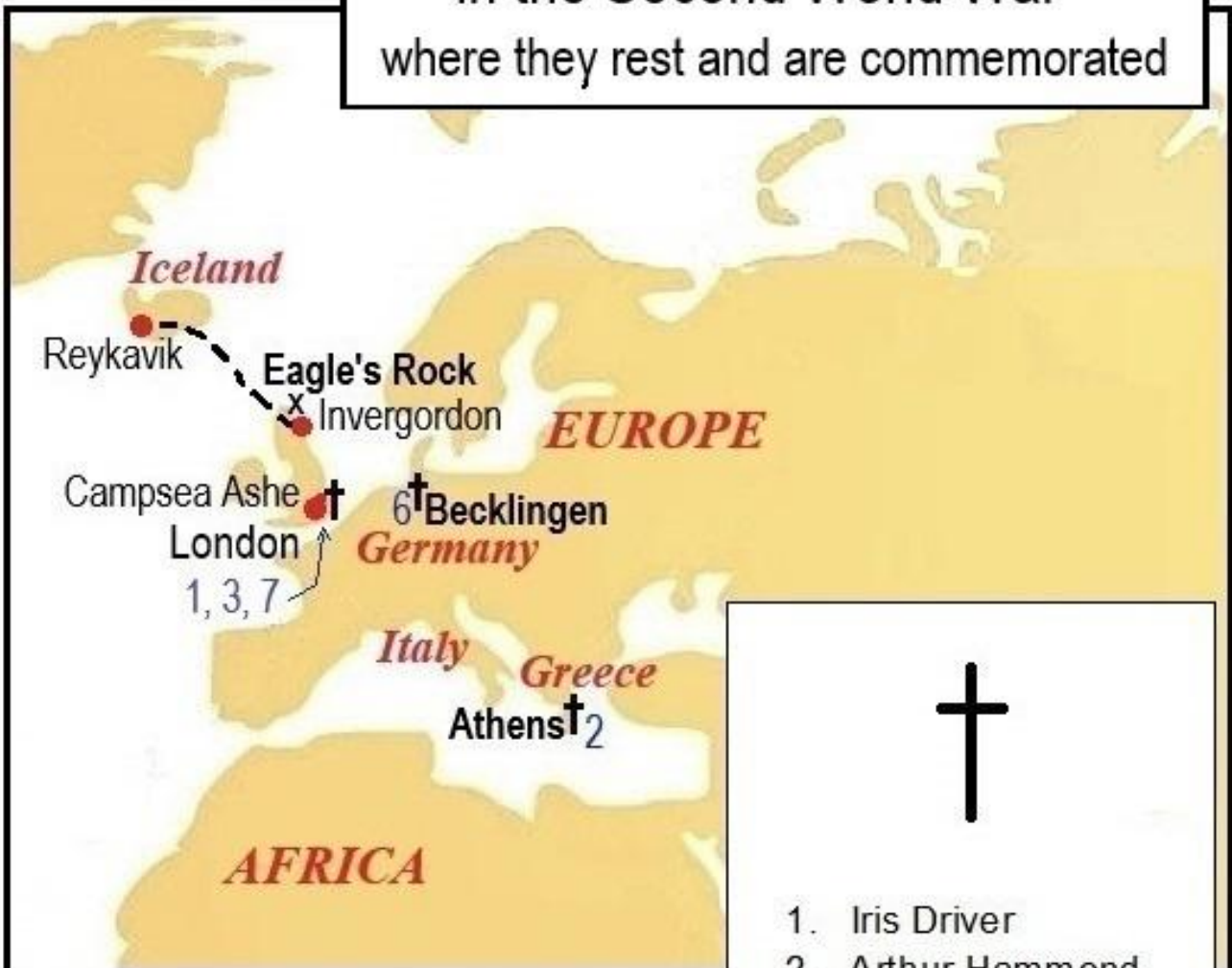
‡ **Clifford Plant, Neustadt Bridge, 7th April 1945**

Paratrooper Clifford Plant lost his life, aged 20 years, in one of the many small-scale but vital battles to secure strategic positions in Normandy following D-Day.

‡ **William Newman, Campsea Ashe 21st July 1951**

William Newman died six years after the war as a result of war wounds, aged 56 years. He had served in the Royal Engineers in both World Wars.

The Ultimate Sacrifice
in the Second World War
where they rest and are commemorated



-
1. Iris Driver
 2. Arthur Hammond
 3. John Lowther
 4. George Trumpeter
 5. Russel Lees
 6. Clifford Plant
 7. William Newman



The Village During the War

Since the end of World War I Campsea Ashe had remained a farming village. Its population as recorded in the 1939 National Register was 528, an increase of 135 since the census of 1921. Fewer workers were employed on the land due to mechanisation. The village had two main landowners, James Lowther and the Rendlesham Trustees. The farms, Ash Green Farm, Shrubbery Farm, Chantry Farm, Church Farm, Ashmoor Hall, Low Farm, Jolly Farm and Quill Farm, were managed by tenant farmers.

Eight Council houses were built in Mill Lane during the 1930s. There were two public houses, The Talbot (now The Duck), and The Buck's Head (*right*). The Iron Room, next to what is now The Old Rectory, was the only public meeting place in the village. The post office and grocers shop were very important to the villagers.



The Lowther family were living in the High House and from 1942 the Rectory was used as a hostel for the Women's Land Army. Rendlesham Hall was requisitioned for use by the army.

Mains water and electricity still had not reached the village so the residents had to rely on oil lamps and candles for lighting, and they had to fetch water from the wells located around the village.

The Women's Institute continued to meet throughout the war. It was an active group organising events and fund raising activities for the war effort. They met in the Iron Room and their president was a well known local villager, Mrs Ruby Brumwell.



Members of the village Youth Club were involved in collecting items for the Armed Forces and helping in whatever way they could. It is believed there was also a Scout Troop in the village who would play their part in keeping the village safe. The residents of the village would have been subject to all the restrictions that were imposed on the community by the government.

Rationing, carrying gas masks, building air raid shelters in the garden and many other impositions would have affected the lives of the people of the village. Early in the war the village received up to 100 children who were evacuated from London. According to a newspaper article the children were called 'our young holiday makers' and were well received by the village.



Evacuees arriving at Church Farm in Campsea Ashe 1939

The Church in Wartime



The Church in the 1940s

St John the Baptist Church would have been very important to the people of Campsea Ashe during wartime, as was the Church throughout the country. Although we do not have any documentary evidence of what happened at the Church, many villagers, especially those with loved ones serving overseas, would no doubt have wanted to sit and pray for their safety.

Throughout the war the Rev. William Robert Park was Rector of the Parish (*right, with his family*). His responsibility was for the one Parish, not a wider Benefice as is the case today. He had been appointed in 1937 and served here until 1949. He was born on 12 January 1880 in London, the son of Henry George and Elizabeth Park. He was educated at Christ's Hospital, London and then at Exeter College, Oxford. In 1910 he married



Rosamund Woodruff (1891 – 1932). In 1919 he was awarded an OBE. He died on Christmas Day 1961. Prior to his appointment in the village he served as Archdeacon of Rangoon.

Rev. Park listed the names of all those from the village who served in the war and his list was discovered in Suffolk Records Office. Across the nation the clergy would have held prayers for those serving the country as well as for the nation in general. Rev. Park would also have regularly held prayers for all who served abroad and at home, for our government and those who had died were injured or made homeless.

Throughout the war the four Church bells would have been silent other than if there had been an invasion when they would have been rung. In all probability they would have been rung to celebrate the ending of the war.

As far as possible normal Church activities would have continued. Services would have been held, probably weekly although the timings of services would have changed as no lights would have been permitted after dark. Baptisms, marriages and funerals would have been arranged as usual.



Extract from 1942 Parish Magazine

A E Spear & Sons Cattle Market

During the war, all agricultural produce, whether crops or meat, was controlled by the Regional War Agricultural Committees (The War Ag.). The Committees were formed immediately on the outbreak of war on 3 September 1939. Their members had been selected before the war and were appointed directly by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries. It is not known who served on the local group, but they would have been leading farmers, with a good knowledge of local conditions, who had volunteered, unpaid, to help in the campaign to get full production from the land in Suffolk.

The Cattle Market at Campsea Ashe became a Certification Centre. At the time Michael Spear was working at the centre. He was a young man in the firm working with his father Donald and uncle Claude (sons of A E Spear). The cattle were brought to the market and 'certified' by the War Ag. official and sent on to a designated abattoir. The farmer was probably paid a price by the War Ag. - thus there was no auction as such, as the beef supply had to be controlled by the War Ag.



Cattle Market c1938

The Cattle Market today is a thriving Auction Centre managed by Clarke & Simpson. Since the 1990s livestock sales have not taken place. We are grateful to colleagues from Clarke & Simpson for their contributions to this history of the Centre.

Station and Railway

At the time of the war the railway at Campsea Ashe was much busier and extensive than it is today. Two lines, one leading towards Ipswich and the other towards Lowestoft, with a branch line to Framlingham, were in place. Sidings were available for rolling stock to be left ready for use whenever needed. Steam trains would have been seen regularly transporting both people and goods to and from their destinations.

A W.H.Smith bookshop was available on the platform, a goods shed was used for maintaining rolling stock and there was even a creamery on site so that milk and other dairy goods could be easily transported. Cattle and other livestock were often transported by rail and cattle pens were available ready to store cattle before moving them to the cattle market a few yards away.



The railway in the 1950s, much as it would have been in wartime

The railway would have been a likely target for the Germans and in 1940 one plane did attack and hit Railway Terrace with fatal consequences for Iris Driver.



Above Railway Terrace, bombed 21st November 1940

**Transcript of Letter to EADT from local resident, Russell Whipps.
22nd December 2015**

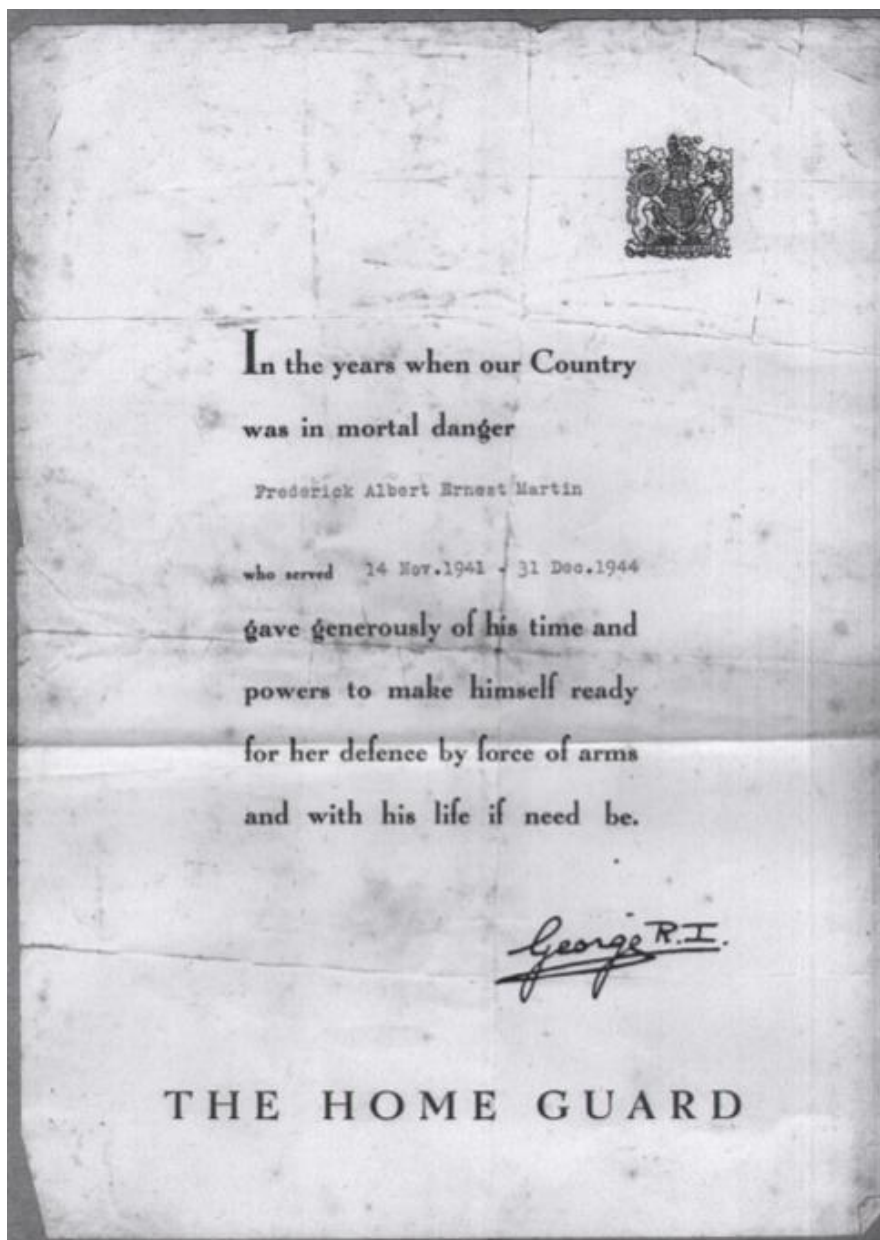
Our family were living in the Railway Cottages, Campsea Ashe, when, on November 21, 1940, a German bomber dropped 11 bombs on the area. One landed in the road, opposite the pub, another on our house. My older brother Derek and me were at school, which is about three quarters of a mile and we did not hear anything of the raid. When it was time to go home in the afternoon we were told to wait for father to collect us. When we got back to the village it was a scene of devastation. There was a big crater outside the pub, we were allowed to collect our belongings, but not to stay. So my father put us on the train and we went to my grandmother's at Wissestt, near Halesworth. My younger brother Gerald, who was born at Campsea Ashe at the Railway Cottages, was one year old when the bombs were dropped. My mother had put Gerald in the pram out in the back garden, one of the neighbours said to my mother, "You should get your baby indoors, there is a German plane circling" (there had been no air raid warning). It seems he was trying to bomb the station. My mother moved brother Gerald to the front garden. Within seconds a bomb landed in the back garden. My brother was protected from the blast by the house. The neighbour, who told mother to move Gerald was killed at her back door. The other bombs that were dropped that day were two at Blackstock Woods, on the Framlingham branch railway line and about six in Mill Lane, Campsea Ashe and one in Loudham Lane (unexploded).

Home Guard

The Home Guard, originally called the Local Defence Volunteers (LDV), was established by the Secretary of State for War, Anthony Eden, in 1940. A unit was formed for the Campsea Ashe and surrounding area and it was linked to the 5th Suffolk Battalion. It is likely that the volunteers wore the Suffolk Regiment badge with pride on their Home Guard uniform.

Records have not been discovered to identify who from the village was involved in the unit. However, it is likely that they used the Iron Room as a base and that they kept watch for invaders and fires from the top of the Church tower.

One person we know of who did volunteer was local resident Frederick Martin who received this certificate (*below*) from the King after the war.



The Village School

School Roll

The first entry on 3rd September 1939 tells us that there were 48 children on roll. The school reopened after the summer holidays with 2 sessions. Campsea Ashe scholars attended the morning session, 9 till noon. The afternoon session was between 1- 4pm for Dagenham & Elmhurst and Forest Gate evacuee children. In October the late classes in the afternoon for Campsea Ashe children were held in the Iron Room. It appears that teachers came with the evacuated children. They helped out with local children if needed. (13th October: *‘Teachers absent so Campsea Ashe children taught in the morning by the evacuated teachers.’*)

On January 2nd 1940, New Year parties were held for school children, including the evacuees. There were 70 children on the books including 32 evacuees, 34 Campsea Ashe children and 4 visitors. In April that year there were 60 children on roll as 6 children who were 11 had moved to The Wickham Market Area School. They were all provided with cycles to get there. One of the evacuated teachers returned to Forest Gate later that month. The evacuees left the village on June 1st 1940. There were now 32 children on roll, including 3 evacuee children who didn't go with the rest.



Believed to be class of 1945

The number on roll remained fairly stable until July 1944 when 18 evacuees were admitted and they were aged 4-14 yrs. There is no mention of where these evacuated children came from although it is likely that they came from London. In September the log book tells us that there were 25 children from Suffolk and 16 evacuees. Two days later, 2 of the evacuees were excluded with scabies. A further entry for that day states that 2 drums of disinfectant were delivered!

School Closed

There were a few reasons for the school to close to pupils. Here are some log book entries.

No Coal

31 January 1940 No coal at school. All children taught at Iron Room.
5 February 1940 Still no coal - juniors and seniors taught at Iron Room, infants in a room in the Rectory.
8 February 1940 Received coal.
1 April 1940 School reassembles after Easter holidays, not able to continue as no coal. The Headmistress had previously supplied the school for 10 days before the holidays. There are further entries referring to school being closed due to no coal.

Acorn and Blackberry Gathering.

23 September 1940 School closed for gathering blackberries and acorns. In October 1942, there was a holiday in the afternoon for gathering acorns. In September 1943, the children were taken for a short walk and gathered 7lbs of blackberries for the troops and then on the 17th the school was closed and 18lbs were gathered.

Teachers ill

School was closed on occasions when both teachers were ill.

VE Day

VE Day and VE Day +1 were holidays.

School 'visitors'

Over the war period hair inspections, dentist visits and diphtheria injections continued. Reference is also made to dentists inspecting and treating children. His Majesty's Inspectors visited. Gas masks were tested, needlework inspected and local managers called in. The school was used

for the anti-tank corp during the night of 5th December 1941. A series of cookery demonstrations were given by Miss Taggart in January to March of 1942. The Horticultural Instructor visits regularly to support the growing of food in the school garden.

School Dinners.

School meals were brought from Wickham Market. In February 1944, an entry reports that 'Mrs Watson is unable to continue fetching dinners because her horse is lame'! A year later the log book states that there are arrangements to move the canteen into the school building rather than a hut. The canteen fed 27 children. Mrs Rose was washer up and Mrs Watson transports the meals from Wickham Market for £1 per week.

Attendance

There are references to low attendance due to heavy snow, remarkably so in 1945 when entries dated April 30th and May 1st refer to only 11 children attended due to heavy fall of snow.

Staff absences are due to illness, training for Home Nursing Examination, husband home on leave, husband in hospital sick with pneumonia.

This is just a snapshot of some information included in the Log Books. They record only day to day school matters and do not refer to the war directly. Obviously there were factors that had an impact on the school, such as shortage of coal, the arrival of evacuees, gas mask inspections, fundraising for the Troops (10/5d given for the Overseas Tobacco fund for the forces, gathering blackberries for the troops).

*All information used here is taken from the school log books, which can be accessed on the Heritage section of the Church and Heritage website:
www.campseaashechurch.org.uk/Village_school.php*

Women's Land Army

In the summer of 1942 the Rectory in Campsea Ashe (now the Old Rectory) opened as a hostel for about 40 Women's Land Army (WLA) girls. Most of the girls were aged between 17 and 30 years, were single and came from across the country. They were given a uniform and worked 5 1/2 days a week from 6.30 am to 6.00 pm. It was hard work and they were often wet and very cold in bad weather.



Some of the Land Army girls at Campsea Ashe

The work included ploughing, clearing ditches and new land for cultivation, pulling carrots, picking fruit and harvesting sugar beet. They earned £1 7s 6d per week. The Land Girls worked in gangs under a

forewoman and would be taken to farms in the area for work. If it was some distance away they would travel by lorry. At the Rectory the girls shared a room, seven to a room. There was a resident cook who provided an evening meal within the constraints of rationing. The girls would make their own packed lunches.

Concert and film shows were an occasional treat at the hostel. The girls would sometimes go by train to Woodbridge on a Saturday afternoon but they had to be back by 10.00 pm. The Land Girls were gradually accepted by the village and were invited to W I meetings and individual houses.

The hostel closed in 1947 and the Land Army was disbanded in 1950. The girls received a certificate from the Queen Mother for their service.

(With thanks to Ada Newman, who was one of the girls at The Rectory, for her memories.)

Land Army Reunion



June Barber of Kesgrave was a Land Army girl and in the late 1990s she undertook to try and contact some of her wartime colleagues who were based at the Rectory Hostel in the village. She organised a reunion (*above*) and they met in April 2001, firstly at The Talbot pub (their old watering hole!) for lunch and then went to the Old Rectory, their old hostel, for a cream tea. Memories and tales were shared and all agreed that despite the hard work they were some of the happiest days of their lives.

Campsea Ashe Invasion Committee

The village established an Invasion Committee at an early stage of the war. Clearly invasion by the German's was a real concern both here and across the country. The village was known as a *non-Independent Hold Up Village, coming under the command of the Wickham Market Garrison Commander.*

Extracts of some of the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee have survived:

Minutes: 20 Aug 1941:- *Local food organizer has four cases of most meats and two sacks of sugar at Talbot Hotel. Each member of committee would be ready to distribute food if village became cut off.*

Organization made for receiving and treating casualties (First Aid Post – Iron Room) and for receiving refugees. Population of village approx 400 people.

Viscount Ullswater asked if he would place one of his cars at committee's disposal to act as ambulance in time of isolation.

Extra fire watches during harvest time.

Minutes: 19 Oct 1941:- *ARP wardens on duty 11 pm to 4am (two on duty, no's reduced after harvest)*

Minutes: 18 Dec 1941:- *Stretcher bearers of ARP had received no first aid training. Classes to be arranged.*

Minutes: 15 July 1942:- *Discussion of evacuation of Sudbourne and Iken area (as a result of establishing the Orford Battle Training Area) discussed and possible effect on this parish.*

Minutes: 7 July 1943:- *Stores at Wickham Market can supply their outside customers during invasion so long as roads and paths are open. Liaison officer between Invasion Committee and military was Home Guard representative (Sir C Bunbury).*

(Taken from Campsea Ash Invasion Committee Minutes, original available at Suffolk Records Office)

Bombs dropped at Campsea Ashe

On Thursday 21st November 1940 at 11.00 am bombs were dropped at Campsea Ashe by a German Dornier 215 (*right*). At the time a train was leaving the station heading north and it is probable the bombs were dropped in an attempt to damage the railway.



Location	Number of bombs	Casualties	Damage caused
Blackstock wood	2	None	Near to railway
37 feet east of Talbot Hotel	1	None	Damage to pub hotel and store
3 yards from rear door of No 3 Railway Terrace	1	1 person killed, 5 injured	No 3 & 4 Railway Terrace partly demolished, damage to other houses in Mill Road
Garden No 4 Mill Road	1	None	Damage to house in Mill Road
Field 280 yards south of railway station	1	None	Damage to houses in Mill Road
Field 300 yards from railway station	1	None	Damage to houses in Mill Road
3/4 mile west of railway station	1	None	Unexploded bomb in Loudham Road

Plane crashes in Campsea Ashe

There were at least two plane crashes in Campsea Ashe during 1945, both involving USAAF Mustang planes. The first was on 9th June 1945 and happened at the end of a training flight when the aircraft, piloted by Flight Officer Wright, crashed at Hell Corner. According to the Aviation Archaeologists Association:

"A/C involved in mock combat with USAAF P-51 Mustangs over sea. Pilot dived towards base (believed to be at Bentwaters). At 300 - 350 ft rear fuselage fractured, tail unit started to break off Pilot thrown clear into small trees and bushes - slightly injured. A/C crashed at "Hell Corner" completely wrecked. Debris in trees. Spiral dive. Adjacent to LNER station."

It appears the pilot survived the accident. The pilot of the second crash, on 20th July 1945, was less fortunate and he was killed. The crash occurred in the Blackstock area and the pilot was 1st Lt Richard J Stone (*below*) who had been involved in an earlier accident when landing at Martlesham on 6th February 1945. The fatal accident is again described by the Aviation Archaeologists Association:

"A/C crashed in flames into a 12 acre barley field on edge of Blackstock Woods, 100 yards from Signal Box on LNER line level crossing. A/C exploded on impact. Almost no trace of pilot found. Pieces of wreckage in trees"



Richard Stone, 1929 - 1945, came from Connecticut, USA, and he is buried in the American Cemetery in Cambridge (Plot F-3-23) (*left*). His name is also recorded on the War Memorial at Martlesham Heath.



Defending the locality

Eighty years on from the Second World War there is little left of the defences that were in place to keep our locality safe from invasion. England's south-eastern coastline became vulnerable, especially from Aldeburgh to Felixstowe, and also the inland airfields, vital military installations, main roads and railway. After Dunkirk, defensive 'Stop Lines' were formed, consisting of some natural features (rivers, marshlands etc.) and also constructions of barbed-wire, ditches, concrete anti-tank blocks and metal 'dragon's teeth' spikes. Even the bridges across the river were mined ready for demolition. Further inland were observation posts, gun-batteries, command centres and barracks. Historical sites came into their own too, after centuries of dormancy, like Landguard Fort, Orford Castle and the Martello Towers.

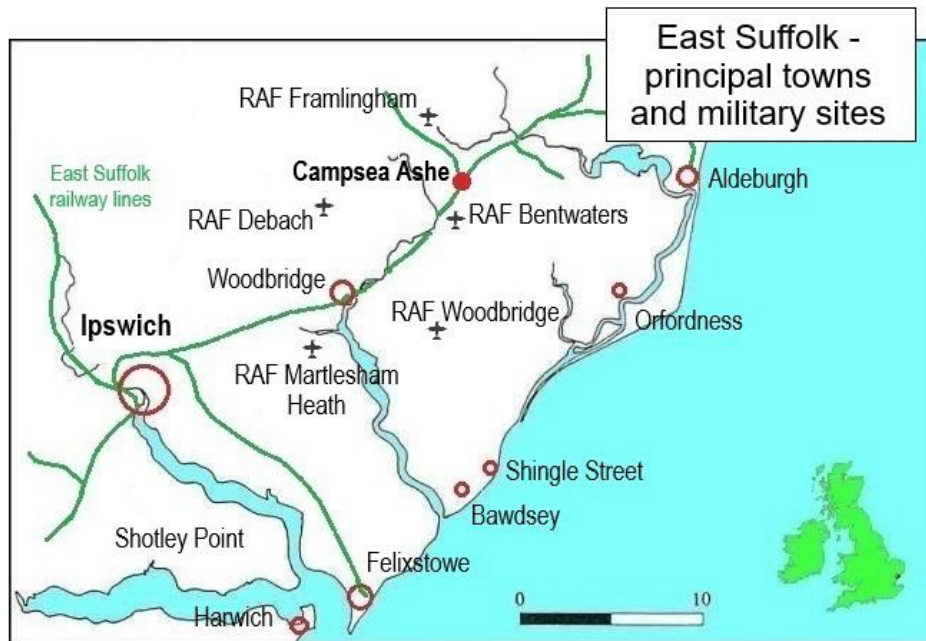


Remains of defensive pillboxes in Marlesford (left) and Wickham Market

Though not in the front-line itself, there were military installations very close to Campsea Ashe: several pillboxes were in place along the rivers Deben and Ore, for example one near the ford in Marlesford and another just beyond Wickham Market, and the slabs of concrete hard-standing along 'Tank Road' towards Glevering (*right*) were laid as parking bays for armoured vehicles waiting to support the D-Day landings. Parts of Pettistree were believed to have had steel and concrete obstructions installed as well.



Military Sites surrounding Campsea Ashe



From the Stour Estuary northwards were numerous ports and anchorages, as well as crucial scientific Research & Development sites for radar at Bawdsey and gunnery at Orfordness. HMS *Beehive* was an anti-submarine gun boat base in Felixstowe. Most conspicuous were the airfields, the two nearest to Campsea Ashe being Bentwaters and Framlingham (Parham.)



RAF Framlingham Control Tower

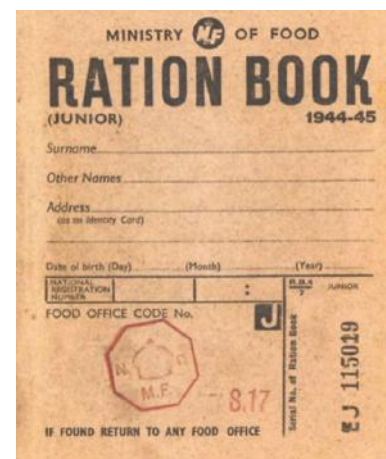
RAF Bentwaters (3 miles distant) was the last to be activated, the first aircraft – mainly American Mustang IIIs and later Spitfires - arriving in November 1944. Missions and bomber escort flights began the next month. **RAF Framlingham** (in Parham, 4 miles distant) was built in 1942 for B-17 Flying Fortress aircraft of the USAAF's 8th Bomber Group. Bombers flew in support of the D-Day landings, and against enemy airfields in the final push against Germany during the spring of 1945.

The National Scene

At the outbreak of war on 3rd September 1939, Neville Chamberlain was Prime Minister. He reconstructed his existing government into a War Ministry Government which consisted mainly of Conservatives with support from some National Labour and National Liberal MPs. There were no representatives from the Labour or Liberal Parties. At 11.15 am on the 3rd Chamberlain addressed the nation over the radio and said “This country is at war with Germany”. This would have sparked fear and worry amongst most of the nation who were listening. The Government lasted until May 1940 when Chamberlain resigned and Churchill formed the War Ministry Coalition with a War Cabinet of five members. The outbreak of war led to many changes for the country.

Rationing

Food rationing was introduced in January 1940 and it was overseen by the Ministry of Food. The scheme was designed to ensure that at a time of national shortage food could be distributed fairly. Everyone, including children, were given a ration book (*right*) with coupons. Rationed items could not be bought without the relevant coupon. Many items remained rationed until the 1950s. Fish and chips were not rationed.



September 1939 Petrol was the first item to be rationed.

8 January 1940 Bacon, butter, and sugar were rationed.

At different times the following items were rationed:

Meat, tea, jam, biscuits, sweets, breakfast cereals, cheese, eggs, lard, milk, canned and dried fruit. Alcohol was not rationed, but was scarce. Beer, however, was considered a vital foodstuff so was widely available, albeit shortages of sugar made the beer brewed weaker.

By August 1942 almost all foods apart from vegetables and bread were rationed. Although not rationed there were still severe shortages of these items.

Game meat - rabbit and pigeon for example - were not rationed and no doubt in a country area like Campsea Ashe they were reasonably plentiful. Bread was never rationed, but the National Loaf was introduced in 1942. It was made from wholemeal flour and replaced the popular white loaf. This was not well received but was not abolished until 1956. This was a typical weekly food ration for an adult during WWII:

Bacon & Ham 4 oz	Milk 3 pints
Other meat value of 1 shilling and 2 pence (equivalent to 2 chops)	Sugar 8 oz
Butter 2 oz	Preserves 1lb every 2 months
Cheese 2 oz	Tea 2 oz
Margarine 4 oz	Eggs 1 fresh egg (plus allowance of dried egg)
Cooking fat 4 oz	Sweets 12 oz every 4 weeks

Everyone was encouraged to grow their own food and the '*Dig for Victory*' scheme was introduced.

Conscription

The British government recognised that the international situation was deteriorating and considered the necessity to conscript men into the military service as early in 1939. The introduction of conscription was as follows:

May 1939 Military Training Act

Men aged 20 - 22 years were required to undertake six months' military training. 240,000 men were registered.

September 1939 National Service (Armed Forces) Act

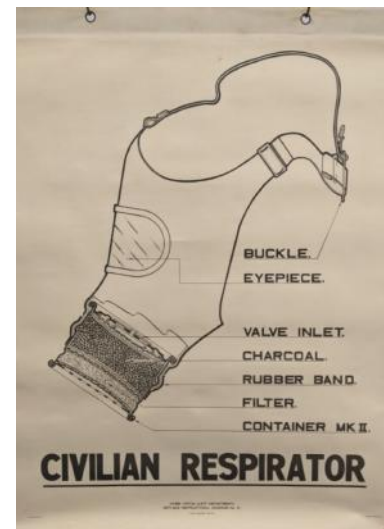
Conscription imposed and all men aged 18 to 41 years were required to register. Medically unfit people were exempted. Those in key industries were also exempted and these included baking, farming, medicine and engineering. Conscientious objectors had to appear before a tribunal to argue their case. By the end of 1939 more than 1.5 million men had been conscripted to join the armed forces. Just over 1.1 million joined the army and the rest the Royal Navy and RAF.

December 1941 National Service Act

This Act widened the scope of conscription to include all unmarried women and all childless widows between the ages of 20 and 30 years. Men were required to undertake some form of National Service up to the age of 60 and this included military service for those under 51 years.

Gas Masks

From 1938 onwards the Air Raid Precautions Department worked to supply every person in the UK with a gas mask. A total of over 38 million gas masks (or respirators as they were called) were produced and everyone, adults, children, babies were entitled to use one. There was a real fear of German raids using poison gas and casualties were expected to be extremely large. The Air Raid Protection (ARP) personnel and civil defence services were trained in dealing with the casualties of raids involving poison gas and chemicals.



Evacuation of Civilians

There were several evacuations of civilians organised by the government during the war. The evacuation scheme was developed in 1938 and implemented by the Ministry of Health. The country was divided into three areas and each area was classified as either 'evacuation', 'neutral' or 'reception'. Campsea Ashe received around 100 young evacuees and The *Daily Herald* of 1st September 1939 had the following headline and story:

'Holiday Home' For 100 Crisis Children

Thatched Lamp-lit Village Opens Its Arms

Six children, with six mothers, will stay at the huge-roomed rectory, standing beneath tall trees.

The same number will stay at the mansion of Viscount Ullswater, former Speaker of the House of Commons, surrounded by a dozen acres of parkland.

But most of them will stay with the villagers in the little thatched and mossy-tiled cottages.

Mr. T. J. Clarke, the senior air-raid warden, stood white-coated behind the counter of the village store and Post Office as he told me, "Of course, we are all doing our bit.

"They'll have a wonderful time."

The first phase of evacuation started on 1st September 1939 and in the first three days 1.5 million people were moved:

Children of school age	827,000
Mothers and young children under 5	524,000
Pregnant women	13,000
Disabled people	7,000
Teachers and others	103,000

Goods, as well as people, were also evacuated so, for example, the National Gallery collection was moved to the Manor Quarry near Ffestiniog in Wales. In 1939, the Camps Act was passed and this established a body to design and build residential camps for young people. Over thirty of these camps were established across the country. Some 24,000 children were approved for evacuation overseas to Canada, Australia and South Africa. The BBC worked with overseas radio stations to make a programme called *Children Calling Home*, which enabled evacuated children to talk to their parents live on air.

A second evacuation phase was organised from 13th to 18th June 1940 when over 200,000 children were evacuated or re-evacuated. Most came from coastal towns in southern England where there was fear of invasion. The evacuation process was halted for most areas from September 1944.

Air raid shelters

It was realised in the 1930s that in the event of another war, civilians would need protection from potential air raids. A variety of shelters were developed, some of which would be used in Campsea Ashe.

Morrison Shelter

Over half a million Morrison Shelters were made at the start of the war and in total over a million were distributed by 1945. They were designed as cage-like construction that could be used inside a house. They were provided as kits for householders to make up themselves. Many people slept in them as they believed they gave some protection from air raids.

Morrison Shelter. (With thanks to Imperial War Museum IWM (EPH 3209))



Anderson Shelter

These shelters were designed in 1938 and were named after Sir John Anderson, Home Secretary. They were designed for use in gardens and were covered with earth so giving some protection from shell and bomb fragments. They were provided free to low income families and sold to others. In total 3.6 million were produced.



A typical garden Anderson shelter

Street Communal Shelters

It was soon realised that there was a need to protect the public who were on streets or other public places in towns and cities. Hence a programme of street shelters was begun in 1940. They were designed for about 50 people, but were not popular as many felt they did not provide sufficient protection.

Underground Stations

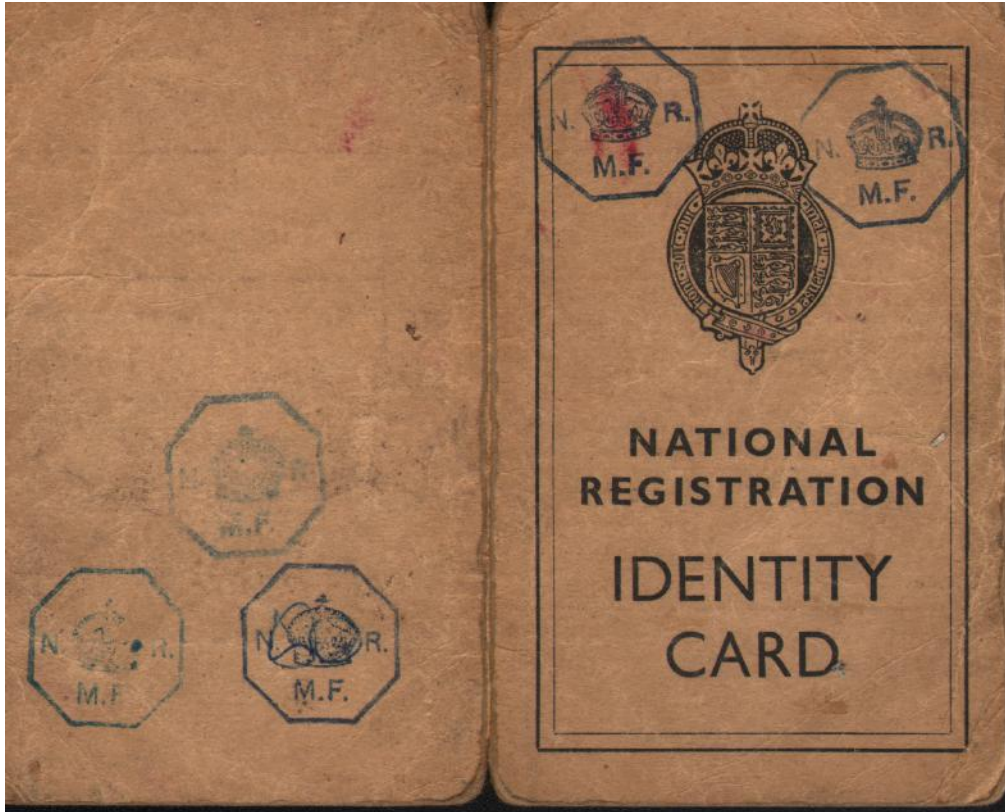
In London underground stations became popular places to shelter. They were fitted with bunks, had first aid facilities and chemical toilets. It was estimated that around 170,000 people sheltered in the tunnels and stations during the war.

Air Raid Precaution (ARP) Personnel

Air Raid Precautions Personnel were responsible for the issuing of gas masks, pre-fabricated air raid shelters and looking after public shelters. They were also responsible for maintaining the blackout. They assisted in fighting incendiaries during air raids and rescue work afterwards. There were around 1.4 million ARP wardens in Britain during the war, almost all unpaid part-time volunteers who also held day-time jobs.

National Identity Cards

The National Registration Act 1939 required all men, women and children to carry a valid Identity Card at all times. This requirement lasted until 1952.



NATIONAL REGISTRATION		
TRSQ	14	5-
Milton Juliet Anna		
<p>1. This Identity Card must be carefully preserved. You may need it under conditions of national emergency for important purposes. You must not lose it or allow it to be stolen. If, nevertheless, it is stolen or completely lost, you must report the fact in person at any local National Registration Office.</p> <p>2. You may have to show your Identity Card to persons who are authorised by law to ask you to produce it.</p> <p>3. You must not allow your Identity Card to pass into the hands of unauthorised persons or strangers. Every grown up person should be responsible for the keeping of his or her Identity Card. The Identity Card of a child should be kept by the parent or guardian or person in charge of the child for the time being.</p> <p>4. Anyone finding this Card must hand it in at a Police Station or National Registration Office.</p>		
<p>Registered Address of Above Person</p> <p>8. Ullameter Road, Lampeter Ash, Woolbridge</p> <p>OFFICIAL STAMP</p> <p>REGISTRATION TXD 24 MY 51</p> <p>51-4641 S.J.&CO.LTD. N.R.101</p>		
(Signed) <i>Juliet Anna Milton</i>		
Date 25 May 1940		

Home Guard

The Home Guard, originally called the Local Defence Volunteers (LDV), was established by the Secretary of State for War, Anthony Eden. In a BBC radio broadcast on 14th May 1940 he said:

“We want large numbers of.... British subjects between the ages of 17 and 65 to come forward and offer their services.... You will not be paid but will receive uniforms and will be armed. In order to volunteer, what you have to do is give your name at your local police station.”

Before the end of the broadcast, volunteers were turning up at police stations to volunteer. In total over 1.7 million volunteers were recruited. Their basic role was to try to protect the country in the event of a German invasion which, at the time, seemed likely.



Campsea Ashe Commemorates the War

VE Day 8th May 1945

Winston Churchill declared a two day national holiday to celebrate the end of the war in Europe, VE Day, and there were great celebrations across the country. Peace at last in Europe, albeit the war continued in the east. Many villages held a Thanksgiving Service at their local Church. Mr Churchill officially announced victory at 3.00 pm and H M King George VI broadcast to the nation at 9.00 pm.

It is not known what happened in the village this day, but, like the rest of the country, it is probable that there was much celebration. Street parties would have been hastily arranged, singing, dancing and probably the four Church bells rang out joyfully.

All this tinged with sadness for those who were still involved in fighting in the east, those who did not return and for the one civilian from the village who was killed.

Victory Hall

On the 15th May 1945 Lord Alastair Graham of Chantry Farm called a General Parish Meeting to consider a suitable memorial to commemorate the victory of WWII. It would be a tribute to all who served in the Armed Forces and other services of the King. Lord Graham proposed that the people of the parish would appreciate a good village hall. He also suggested the site should provide for a building and land for a children's playground, a bowling green and quoits court.

The initial Committee included Lord and Lady Graham, Mrs G Ling of Ashe Green, Capt. Arthur Lowther, Mrs Fairhead, Mrs W Smith, Mrs Warne, Mr Clark (sub-postmaster), Mrs Peek of Park Cottage, Mr Barnes of the Buck's Head and the Rev Park, incumbent of St John the Baptist Church.



A modern view of the Victory Hall

During a number of following meetings there was much discussion about what the new hall would consist of and where it should be sited. Enlarging the Iron Room was also considered as an alternative.

A survey was conducted for the views of the residents in the village and there was an overwhelming view that a brand new hall should be erected.

Viscount Ullswater, James Lowther, kindly agreed to allow an acre of his field at the rear of The Talbot Hotel to be used for the new building without cost. A voluntary conveyance was drawn up for this parcel of land and a committee of three was set up as a Trusteeship of the Village Hall Fund.

Mr Mullins of Woodbridge was engaged as architect, planning permission was granted and three tenders were received from local building firms. The lowest tender, from Regan of Felixstowe, at approximately £1500, was accepted.

A sub-committee and Entertainment Committee were set up to continue the work needed to complete the new hall - electrics, decoration, stage and toilets. These committees also worked on the furnishing and equipment required - 60 yards of curtain material bought from Footman's of Ipswich, crockery including items such as 10 dozen cups and saucers at 14/9 shillings per dozen (approximately 73 pence) were purchased. All committees and their supporters worked hard to raise funds for the new hall and on 18th December 1948, the new Campsea Ashe Victory Hall was officially opened. A new Management Committee was established which represented many of the organisations of the village - British Legion, Parish Council, Women's Institute, the PCC, Tennis Club. One person was also elected to represent the children of the village.

WWII Village Memorials

As happened at the end of the Great War, memorials were established to remember the seven villagers who were killed. Their names were recorded on memorials inside the Church (*below*), opposite those of WWI. Today the village continues to pay tribute to them, and those who died in WWI, at the annual Remembrance Day services in the Church and at the War Memorial in the churchyard.



Timeline 1939 - 1945

Year		Key Events
1939	August	Russia and Germany agree a non-aggression pact
	September	Hitler invades Poland
	September	Declaration of war by Britain and France
	September	Evacuation of children begins
1940	April/May	Hitler invades Denmark and Norway
	December	British rout Italians in North Africa
	May	End of 'phoney war'
	May	Dunkirk evacuation
	May	Chamberlain resigns
	May	Churchill becomes Prime Minister
1941	July	Start of Battle of Britain
	May	Bismarck sunk
	June	Hitler attacks Russia
	December	Pearl Harbor
1942	December	British and US declare war on Japan
	June	Battle of Midway
	August	Allies push into North Africa
1943	October	Battle of El Alamein
	July	Allies invade Sicily
1944	September	Italy surrenders
	June	Rome liberated
	June	D Day in Normandy
	August	Paris liberated
1945	December	Battle of Bulge begins
	March	Allies cross the Rhine Russians reach Berlin
	April	Hitler commits suicide, Germany surrenders
	May	VE day
	July	Russia declares war on Japan
1945	August	Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki
	August	Japanese surrender, VJ Day

Let Us Remember

Let us remember those who gave their lives at home and abroad, whose sacrifice enables us to all enjoy the peace we have today.

Let us remember those who came home, wounded, physically and mentally, and the friends and family who cared for them.

Let us remember those who returned to restore their relationships and rebuild their working and family lives after years of conflict and turmoil.

Let us remember the families that lost husbands, wives, sons, daughters and sweethearts.

Let us remember the servicemen and women of all nationalities and faiths who fought, suffered and died during six years of war.

Let us remember those in reserved occupations and the brave people who kept us safe on the home front - the doctors, nurses who cared for the wounded, the men and women who toiled in the fields, the fishermen who fished the seas, those who worked in the factories and the air-raid wardens, the police officers, firemen, ambulance drivers and the young people of the Scouts and Guides who played such a vital role in the war effort at home.

God Save The King



CAMPSEA
ASHE
Heritage Group