# *All About ....*

# THE SECOND WORLD WAR


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# General Information: Home Front

In Britain, preparations for war had begun long before the war broke out. By the end of September 1938, some 38 million gas masks had been given out, house to house. They were never to be needed. Yet these cumbersome items loomed large in every day life during the early stages of the war. “Remember, chin in—right in—first, before you start to pull the straps over your head,” ran the official instructions. The respirators looked alarming, and to calm the fears of small children the government issued some brightly coloured examples, known as Mickey Mouse masks.

In 1939 there were already 1.5 million people involved in civil defence, including ARP wardens, ambulance drivers, first aid helpers and fire fighters. More than two-thirds of them were volunteers, recruited in their local boroughs. Perhaps the most conspicuous of these volunteers were the ARP (Air Raid Precautions) Wardens, who were kitted out in tin helmets and blue overalls.

In the build up to the war and during its early months, the government made great efforts to ready the public for the effects of war. Information, some of it in leaflet form, was distributed to the population explaining what to do in case of air raids, gas bombs, fire bombs and other possible situations.

For months after the outbreak of war, the expected swarms of German bombers failed to appear over British cities. This edgy period, known as the Phoney War, lasted well into 1940, but the evacuation of the British Army from the Channel port of Dunkirk and the fall of France prompted fears of invasion.

In May 1940, War Minister Anthony Eden called for a new defence force to be set up. It was originally known as the LDV (Local Defence Volunteers): recruits were supposed to be between 17 and 65 years of age and the only fitness requirement was that they should be capable of free movement. The response was immense. A quarter of a million men joined within a week and the numbers had doubled by July when, at Churchill’s suggestion, the force was renamed the Home Guard.

The volunteers were not paid and, in the early days few were equipped with rifles. There was just one gun to serve 10 men on average. The Home Guard’s task was to keep watch on coasts, public buildings, roads, railways and other significant targets for signs of enemy invasions.

The war changed life on the home front immeasurably. Rationing, air raids and the evacuation of children from major cities all meant that war pervaded daily life.

**Gas Mask**
**(Not to be worn)**

During the First World War gas bombs were used on the troops causing severe respiratory problems, burns and even deaths. As a result, in the build up to WWII, the government became concerned that the Germans would use planes to drop gas bombs on Britain during WWII. In the summer of 1938, the government issued 40 million gas mask — one to every person in Britain.

There were several types of gas mask, including standard masks for adults, masks for children and those for babies.

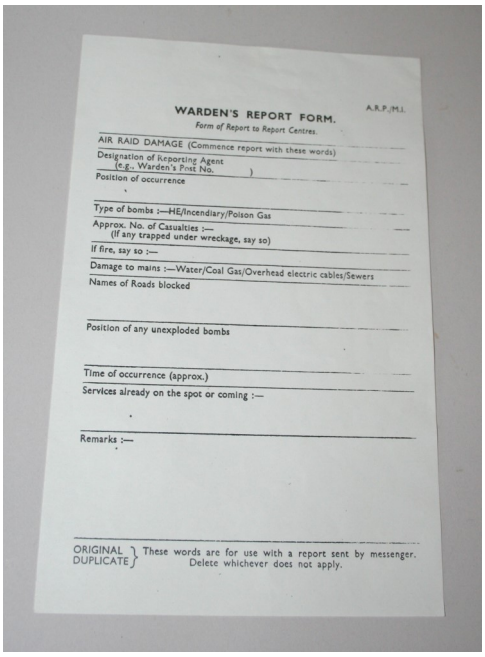
Every gas mask was issued a plain cardboard box. Many people made cloth bags or even fancy handbags to carry them in, as they had to be taken everywhere.

People complained that the masks were uncomfortable and smelt of new rubber, but they were considered essential.

The gas mask in this loan box is the style worn by ARP Wardens gas mask. The ARP gas mask was different to those issued to the general public. It had a separate, large filter, which offered greater protection from poison gas. This filter would have been kept in a box or bag and strapped to the warden's waist.

**ARP Arm Band**
**Head Air Raid Warden Plaque**
**Warden's Report Form**

As early as 1935 councils had to draw up plans for air raid precautions, and so employed Air Raid Precaution Wardens to issue and fit the gas masks. Full-time wardens earned £3 a week. At first people harboured some resentment towards the wardens as it seemed that they were being paid for doing nothing. However, when bombs started to fall, the importance of their job became apparent.



WARDEN'S REPORT FORM. A.R.P./M.I.
*Form of Report to Report Centres.*

AIR RAID DAMAGE (Commence report with these words)
Designation of Reporting Agent (e.g., Warden's Post No. )
Position of occurrence
Type of bombs :—HE/Incendiary/Poison Gas
Approx. No. of Casualties :— (If any trapped under wreckage, say so)
If fire, say so :—
Damage to mains :—Water/Coal Gas/Overhead electric cables/Sewers
Names of Roads blocked
Position of any unexploded bombs
Time of occurrence (approx.)
Services already on the spot or coming :—
Remarks :—

ORIGINAL / DUPLICATE } These words are for use with a report sent by messenger. Delete whichever does not apply.

Wardens were issued with a dress uniform but often turned to basic boiler suit when working. An arm band and a badge were something that could easily be moved when clothes were changed, allowing people to identify the wardens wherever they went.

The wardens often put plaques saying "ARP Warden" outside their houses. People then knew where to find the wardens to ask for advice.


ARP Wardens had a number of responsibilities. They ensured that the people in their area followed the blackout protocol and organised getting people into shelters during raids. They also attended incidents and assisted with the job of rescuing people from bomb-wrecked buildings. After an air raid, the ARP Wardens would submit a report outlining the number of bombs that had fallen and damaged caused.

## Mustard Glove and Cardigan

During the WWII, the number of factories making clothes for civilians decreased, in because factories were being re-purposed to help with the war effort. This was compounded by the fact that many employees left to join the forces. The result was a reduction in the amount of clothing available, a problem the government tried to ameliorate by introducing clothing rationing in June 1941.

To help people with the shortages and rationing, the government launched a campaign called “Make Do & Mend,” which encouraged people to repair objects, including clothes, instead of buying new. One way of ‘making do’ was to unravel old jumpers and use the wool to knit new ones.

People were also encouraged to knit much needed items, such as balaclavas and gloves, for the soldiers on the front. There were even patterns available to help those participating in the “Knit for Victory” effort.

## Air Raid Precaution Cards

These cards are part of a series of 50 that were produced as a public awareness campaign by the cigarette company W.D. & H.O. Wills, a branch of the imperial Tobacco Company. The cards came with packets cigarettes made by that company.

The aim was help people to understand some of the things they could do to prepare for air raids and to protect themselves during air raids. The cards explain basic things, such as how to use a gas mask (called a Civilian Respirator), how to equip your refuge room, details on garden dug outs and how to extinguish incendiary bombs.

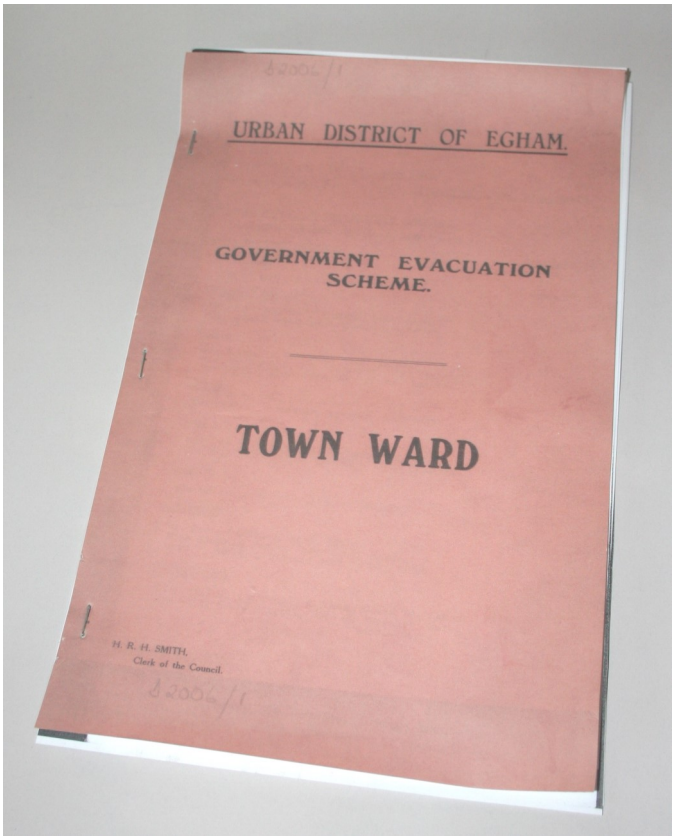
## Bus Tickets

The government used a wide range of tactics to get information to the public. In this case they have used the backs of bus tickets to display key messages from their propaganda campaigns. Many people took the bus so the hope was that the government campaigns would reach large audiences in this way.


"Guard Your Conversation" and "Careless War Talk Costs Lives" both relate to the government's campaign created to reinforced the idea that people should not talk about sensitive war information in places where the conversation could be overheard by spies. Putting the slogans on the back of bus tickets made good sense because public transportation was one place the government feared people might talk carelessly. In fact, there was also a series of posters that stressed this message.

The third bus ticket displays the slogan "Lend to Defend." This was part of a different government campaign aiming to encourage people to buy war bonds (National Savings Certificates) to help the government finance the war.

# Egham Evacuation Scheme




This document outlines how the government intended to run its evacuation scheme in the Urban District of Egham. Evacuees were sent to the Egham area early in the war. This document lays out the plans for when children, teachers and helpers would arrive and where they would be billeted. According to the plan, over 1,400 people were to be evacuated to the area.

Evacuation to Runnymede began on 2 September 1939 and lasted for three days. On each day, three trainloads of evacuees arrived — at 10:00, 12:10 and 16:10. It is estimated that Chertsey Urban District area received 2,846 evacuees and Egham Urban District received 1,800. Across the country, some 827,000 school children were evacuated. Also evacuated were: 524,000 mothers and young children, 13,000 pregnant women, 7,000 disabled people, and 103,000 teachers and helpers.

The government had drawn up evacuation plans back in the spring of 1939. Called Operations “Pied Piper,” these plans called for children from Britain’s cities and ports to be evacuated to the countryside. The evacuation plans were put into effect in September of that year. Children under five were evacuated with their mothers, while older children travelled with teachers and were then boarded with foster parents. Pregnant women and some disabled people were also evacuated. Around one and a half million women and children were evacuated in the first few days.

The whole country was divided up into areas: evacuation areas (places where children were sent away from), neutral areas (where children would stay put) and reception areas (where children were evacuated to). The plan was to reduce the number of people at risk from big cities, so that there would be fewer to feed, and fewer injured or dead in air raids.

Some children were evacuated overseas to the USA, Canada or Australia, but this stopped in September, 1940, when a German U-Boat sank a ship and 73 evacuees drowned.

## Egham Evacuation Scheme: Continued

Parents were given a list of clothing to take as well as other things, although some poorer families did not have all the things on the list. The list included the following: (from Item 9: leaflet titled War Emergency: Information and Instructions) gas mask, a change of under-clothing, night clothes, house shoes or plimsolls, spare stockings or socks, a toothbrush, a comb, towel, soap and facecloth, handkerchiefs and if possible, a warm coat or mackintosh. It also stipulates that they should have a packet of food for the day.

Teachers organised the move and so travelled with their pupils to make sure they all arrived safely at their destination. Children that travelled on the trains did not know where they were going to, and may not have been able to get to the toilet on the train as there were no corridors. Children often arrived dirty, hungry and exhausted, having travelled all day on trains; so they were often fed before going to their foster parents.

When they arrived at their final destination the children had to go through the picking process. They would be lined up while prospective foster parents inspected them, choosing which children to take. Brothers and sisters were usually kept together. Children who were grubby or had glasses or spots were often left until last. The left over children were then driven around town while the evacuation organiser knocked on doors looking for places for them to stay, even if it was only for the night.

Many evacuees came from the poorest parts of Britain’s towns and cities and so were dirty and often had infections such as scabies and lice. Some were not used to baths, proper beds or sitting at a table, which often shocked their foster parents. These children helped open the eyes of Britain to the poverty that some families lived in. Other children left their homes with piped running water and electric lighting to find themselves in farm cottages without either. For many children it was the first time they had seen the countryside and so they learned many things about farms and animals.

Mothers could go with their children if they were under five, but often found it difficult to fit in with the local people, as there were differences between town and country life. They also found it difficult to share a kitchen with their host family.

A householder who took in evacuees was given 8 shillings and 6 pence a week per child — about 42 pence today.

The local schools struggled to cope with the extra number of children and demand for resources. Pencils and books were scarce. Some younger teachers had joined the forces, so older teachers came out of retirement. Schools often

## Egham Evacuation Scheme: Continued

split the day into two, taking the local children for half the day and the evacuees for the other half. Sometimes fights broke out between the two groups of children as they came from such different backgrounds.

Many children tried to escape back to their homes as they were unhappy in their foster homes. Some children were poorly treated by their foster parents by being starved, locked up or worked hard. By Christmas, 1939, most children had returned back to their homes as no bombs had fallen. However, in June 1940, when France fell to the Germans, evacuation began again. Children were moved away from coastal towns because of the threat of invasion.

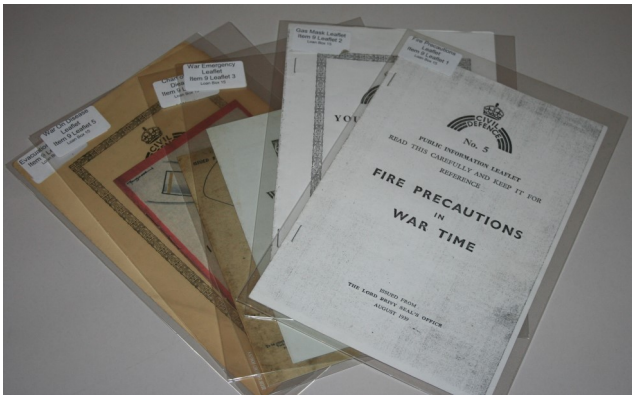
**Selection of Leaflets:**
**"Fire Precautions in War Time," "Your Gas Mask," "War Emergency: Information and Instructions," "Chart of War Gases," "War on Disease," "Evacuation: Why and How?" and "Air Raid Precautions Warning Leaflet."**

These public information leaflets explain the precautions necessary to help people stay safe and healthy in war time. The government needed to disseminate important information to the public to prepare the country for war. Leaflets such as these played an significant role in that process and people were asked to keep them safe for future reference.

The government also alerted people in some of these leaflets to the fact that instructions would, at times, also be broadcast. People were asked to be ready to note down any instructions given by broadcast.

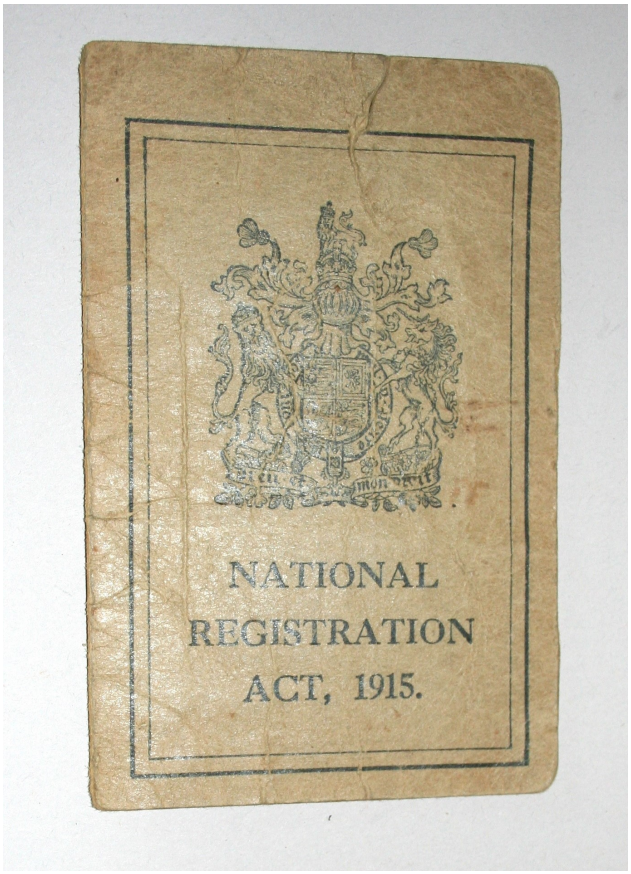
The War Emergency: Information and Instructions leaflet outlines procedures put in place to help civilians stay safe during the war. Among other things, it gives detailed instructions for air raid warnings, blackouts, dealing with incendiary bombs and plans for evacuation.

The Air Raid Precautions Warning Leaflet provided the public with information on the various actions that people should take in case of an air raid.  It explains the different alarms that will be used to warn of impending air raids or gas attacks and to announce "all clear."



## National Registration Identity Card

National Registration Identity Cards were issued in 1940 and everyone was required to carry one throughout the war. Those under 16 had their cards kept by their parents. Failure to produce an identity card was an offence that could lead to prosecution. Many problems were associated with the cards. For example, hundreds were lost when houses were bombed. What's more, as the cards did not carry photographs, they could be stolen or copied or acquired by enemy agents. Identity cards were unpopular with the public in general, and people called for their abolition at the end of the war. Nonetheless, they were not done away with until 1952.




## Five Wartime Newspapers

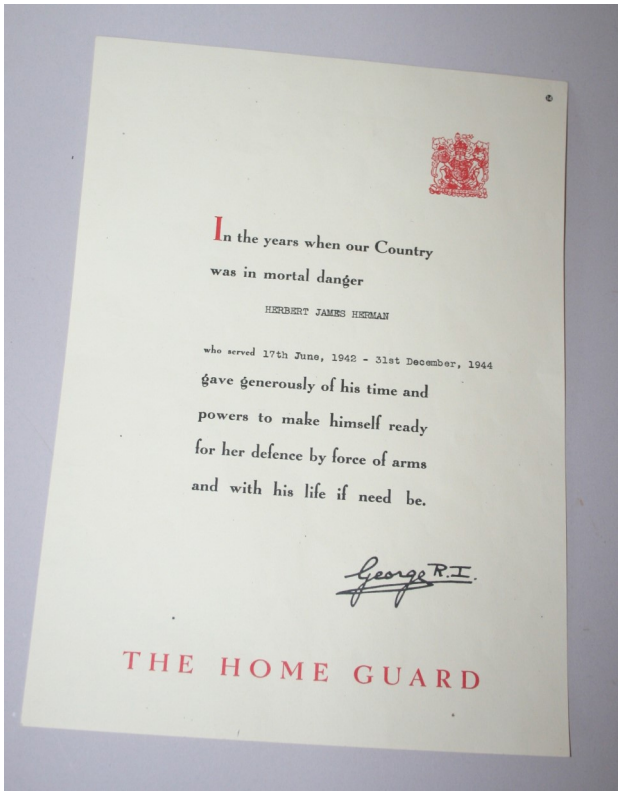
These newspapers show the way the news of the war was reported at the time. There is one newspaper from August 20, 1943, and four from the early May 1945. They cover early reports on the death of Hitler and VE-Day celebrations.

Despite that fact that there were plenty of newsworthy stories to print during the war, newspapers were generally short at that time. This is because newsprint was in short supply. As such there were times when the papers could only be a few pages a day.

## Home Guard Certificate

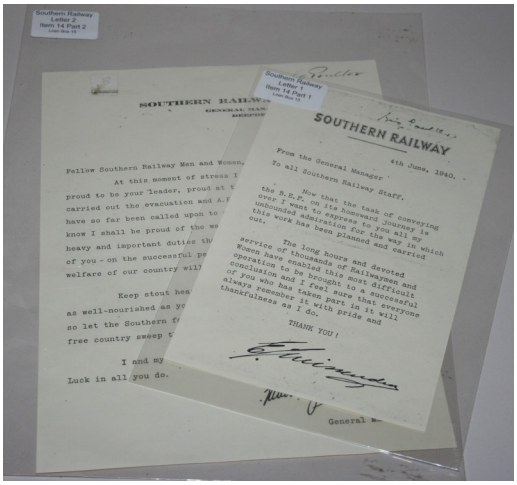
This certificate was given to a member of the Home Guard as thanks for his service.

The Home Guard, originally called the Local Defence Volunteers, was set up in May 1940 to protect Britain at home in case of enemy invasion. At that time there was a great fear that Germany would invade Britain. These men were charged with watching over the country's coast, factories, airfields, and other targets. At one time the Home Guard had nearly 2 million men serving in it. The majority were part-time volunteers who were not eligible to serve in the military, often due to their age or the fact their full-time job was deemed essential on the home front.



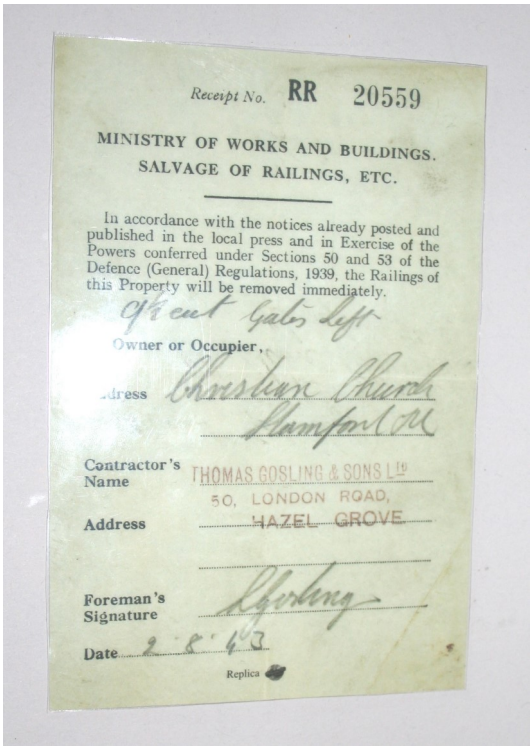

## Two Southern Railway letters

These emotive letters were from the General Manager of Southern Railway to the company's staff, thanking them for their help with war-related activities.



## Salvage Letter

This notice would have been given to the owner of a property with iron railings. The Ministry of Works was responsible for a nation-wide campaign to salvage iron railings. The plan was to put this metal to the war effort. This was just part of the campaign to collect metal. People were also urged to donate any aluminium pots they might have; the aluminium in these was then used to make airplane parts.



Receipt No. RR 20559

MINISTRY OF WORKS AND BUILDINGS.
SALVAGE OF RAILINGS, ETC.

In accordance with the notices already posted and published in the local press and in Exercise of the Powers conferred under Sections 50 and 53 of the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, the Railings of this Property will be removed immediately.

Owner or Occupier, Great Gales Left

Address Christ Church Hampton Rd

Contractor's Name THOMAS GOSLING & SONS Ltd

Address 50, LONDON ROAD, HAZEL GROVE

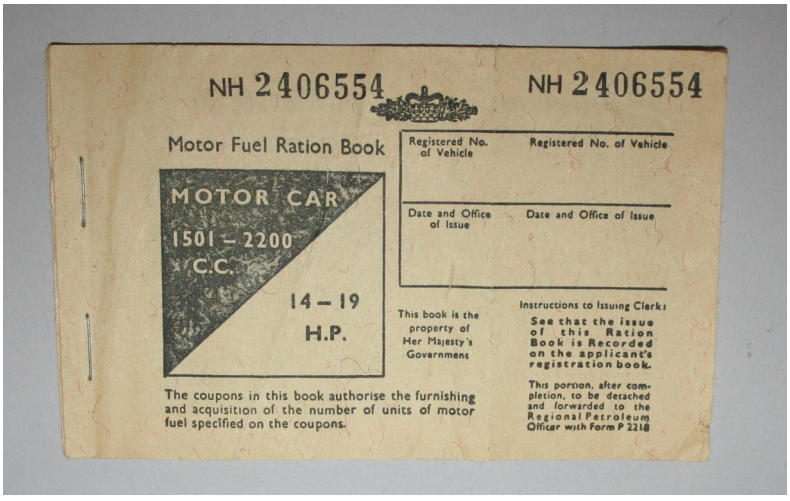
Foreman's Signature

Date 9.8.43

Replica

## Motor Fuel Ration.

There was a shortage of fuel during the war. What was available largely went to military vehicles and other vehicles being used in the war effort. However, because not many people had cars in the 1930s, motor fuel rationing did not have a huge effect on most people. People generally walked, cycled or used public transport.



NH 2406554 NH 2406554

Motor Fuel Ration Book

MOTOR CAR
1501 – 2200 C.C.
14 – 19 H.P.

Registered No. of Vehicle

Registered No. of Vehicle

Date and Office of Issue

Date and Office of Issue

This book is the property of Her Majesty's Government

Instructions to Issuing Clerk:
See that the issue of this Ration Book is Recorded on the applicant's registration book.

The coupons in this book authorise the furnishing and acquisition of the number of units of motor fuel specified on the coupons.

This portion, after completion, to be detached and forwarded to the Regional Petroleum Officer with Form P 2218

# Wartime Posters

During the war the government used war propaganda posters to communicate important messages to the British population. In fact the poster was a key medium by which the government could try to influence public opinion.  These seven posters show some of the messages that were conveyed through these campaigns.

## Blackout Curtain

This is an original blackout curtain from WWII.

Britain put blackout regulations came into effect on 1 Sept 1939 — just prior to the start of the war. The blackout required everyone to cover their windows and doors at night to prevent even a sliver of light escaping into the outside world. The blackout was conceived because of fears that visible light from houses and towns could aid Nazi night-time bombing attacks.

To comply with the regulations, people would cover their windows and doors with black fabric curtains, cardboard or paint before the sun went down.

Other sources of light were also covered up or turned off. This included street lights. Initially the blackout led to a large number of accidents on the streets. The regulations were then loosened slightly. Street lights were adjusted to put out minimal light. Many other sources of outside light, including car head lamps and torches, had devices attached to them to angle the light towards the ground.

Part of an ARP Warden’s job would be to patrol the streets each night, ensuring that the blackout was being carried out successfully.

# General Information: Rationing

Before the Second World War, a significant percentage of the food consumed in Britain was imported from overseas. Much of this food came to this country by ship. Once hostilities broke out, Germany targeted these ships, hoping to put pressure on Britain by squeezing the country's food supply.

Only months after the war started, with the threat of shortages looming, the Ministry of Food imposed rationing on certain key types of food. The aim was to ensure fair distribution and discourage hoarding.

Rationing began on the 8th of January 1940, with butter and ham/bacon (4 oz /113g per person per week) and sugar (12 oz/340 g). Each person was issued with a ration book and was required to register with their local shops. When they bought rationed items, the shopkeeper either crossed off or cut out the relevant coupon in their ration book.

Meat rationing followed in March and was by price rather than weight. The cheaper the cut, the more available. From July, tea, cooking fats, jam and cheese were rationed.

For eggs and milk the government used a different rationing system. Supplies were allocated to shops in proportion to the number of customers registered there. People were permitted one egg per fortnight, though supplies were not guaranteed as they were with other rationed goods.

Additionally a points system gave shoppers a choice of foods such as breakfast cereals, biscuits, canned fruit and fish. These were all valued at a certain number of points, and customers could buy what they wanted up to a specified number of points.

All in all, it was a complicated system involving a lot of paperwork. But despite official misgivings, rationing proved popular with most people because of its fairness. The rich were hit as a much as the poor. Even in the better off households, a weekend guest might arrive with his own little parcel of butter.

The government also started many additional initiatives to ensure that everyone was adequately nourished. For instance, eateries called 'British Restaurants' were set up, where workers could get a meal at a modest cost — minced beef with carrots and parsnips was a typical dish. To boost the vitamin intake, the Ministry of Health made sure that every child received daily milk, cod liver oil and orange juice. The ministry also filled newspapers with food facts designed to keep the nation healthy and to make the best of unrestricted foods such as vegetables.

‘

Dig for Victory' was one of the great wartime slogans, first launched in a broadcast of October, 1939, when the Agricultural Minister, Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith, called for every able-bodied man and woman to dig an allotment in their spare time. Lawns and flower beds were turned into vegetable gardens and office workers cultivated plots in town parks. The aim was to make Britain as self sufficient in food as possible. Chickens, rabbits and even pigs were reared in town gardens.

In many countries, including Britain, where food rationing was introduced, the health of the civilian population improved. In Britain, the poor fared better because of government encouragement to eat healthy, vitamin-rich foods. Pregnant women were supplied with milk and orange juice so that fewer mothers died in child birth.

Rationing, however, extended beyond food. Other items, including petrol, soap and clothing, were also rationed. Clothing, for instance, was rationed from June 1941 on a points system. In principle it allowed everyone to buy one complete new outfit a year. Meanwhile, new 'utility' clothing was introduced. To save fabric, men's trousers were made without turnips, while women's skirts were short and straight with no trimmings. 'Make Do and Mend' was above all the order of the day.

Ultimately, rationing continued even after the war had ended. Soap and clothing were taken off rations in 1949 and 1950, respectively. Food rationing persisted the longest, with the final item being de-rationed on the 4th of July 1954.

**Weekly Rations and Ration books:**

Rationing in the Second World War began in Britain in January 1940. To help organise rationing the government held National Registration Day in September 1939. A list was made of all the people living in each dwelling. Using this information, the government issued National Identity Cards to each person. People then showed these cards to collect ration books. Everybody was issued with a ration book — even the Royal Family.


There were three types of ration books: one for adults, one for school-aged children, and one for children under five and pregnant women.

To use their ration book, people had to register with their local shops. They would then present the book, which contained coupons, to the shopkeeper when buying the rationed items. The shopkeeper would cut out or cross off the appropriate coupons. People had to pay for the items as well as, although prices for these items were fixed by the government. When a person had used all their coupons for one item for that week, they had to wait until the next week to buy more.

The first foods to be rationed were bacon, ham, butter and sugar. Meat soon followed. Ultimately many key foods were rationed, including margarine, milk, cheese, tea, jam and eggs. Even sweets and chocolate were rationed.

A points system was also introduced in late 1941 for some un-rationed foods. Under this system, certain types of food were given a points value. Each person was allocated a number of points each month that they could use as they pleased. The items of food in this category included various types of tinned and dried food.

Not all food was rationed or part of the points system. For instance, fish was not. However, just because a food was not rationed, did not mean it was always readily available. Often people had to stand in long queues to get scarcer items. Imported foods, like bananas, were uncommon during the war.

People became adept at making healthy food out of what little was available. Recipes from the time show the creative ways they did so.

Although food was not abundant during the war years, many people were better fed than before the war. In part this was because they ate more vegetables, which the government encouraged everyone to grow with the “Dig for Victory” Campaign. People dug vegetable patches in back gardens, allotments and even parks in order to help feed the nation.

Everyone worked hard to minimize waste, and any food scraps people did have were saved. These were collected and used to feed pigs.

Rationing continued even after the war was over. In fact, bread was only first rationed in 1946 — after the war ended. The last item to be de-rationed was meat, which became freely available in July, 1954.

Food rations varied throughout the war according to supply. These tables show the basic weekly food ration for one person in 1942.

**Weekly Food Ration 1942**

| | |
|---|---|
| Bacon or ham | 4 oz (113.4 grams) |
| Sugar | 8 oz (226.8 grams) |
| Tea | 2 oz (56.7 grams) |
| Meat | 1s/2d worth (approximately 1 lb) (454 grams) |
| Cheese | 3 oz ( 85 grams) |
| Butter | 2 oz (56.7 grams) |
| Margarine | 4 oz (113.4 grams) |
| Cooking Fat | 2 oz (56.7 grams) |
| Egg | 1 |
| Milk | 2 pints (1.1 litres) |
| Jam (a month) | 1 lb (454 grams) |

**Soap was also rationed**

| | |
|---|---|
| Hard soap | 4 oz |
| Toilet soap or flakes | 3 oz |
| Soap powder | 6 oz |
| Soft soap | 6 oz |

Some un-rationed foods were given points values. Each person had a set number points they could use each month.

**Points Value**

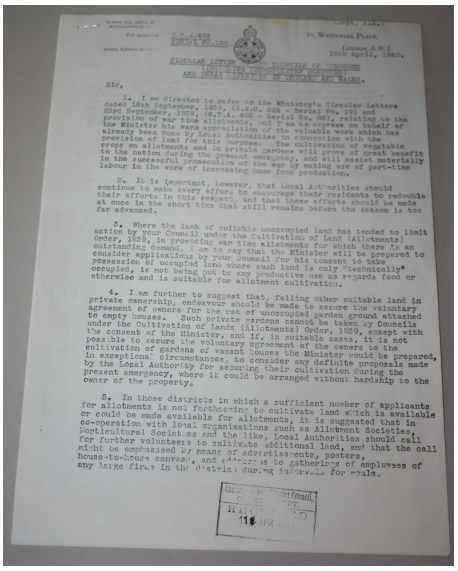
| | |
|---|---|
| Luncheon meat | 16 |
| Sardines | 16 |
| Canned fruit | 8 |
| Baked beans | 4 |
| Condensed milk | 8 |
| Cereals | 4 |
| Rice, Sago, Tapioca | 2 |
| Dried peas, lentils | 2 |
| Dried fruits | 8 |
| Biscuits | 4 |
| Dried eggs | 1 packet per week. |
| Oranges | Limited to expectant mothers |
| Onions | 1 lb per person<br>(People who grew their own were requested not to buy Onions.) |

## The Years of Rationing

| Item | First Rationed | De-Rationed |
|---|---|---|
| Tea | 1940 | 1952 |
| Sugar | 1940 | 1953 |
| Cream | 1940 | 1953 |
| Butter | 1940 | 1954 |
| Meat | 1940 | 1954 |
| Petrol | 1940 | 1950 |
| Shell Eggs | 1941 | 1953 |
| Cheese | 1941 | 1954 |
| Clothes | 1941 | 1949 |
| Jam | 1941 | 1948 |
| Sweets | 1942 | 1953 |
| Bread | 1946 | 1948 |

# Government Advice Leaflets

To help with food shortages, the government encouraged people to do their bit for the war effort by turning their gardens into Victory Gardens. The hope was that that these Victory Gardens would take some pressure off the food supply. There was also a major push to grow food in allotments, in parks and on other unused pieces of land. The government wrote this letter to local councils asking the local authorities to continue to encourage their residents to cultivate vegetables.



Sir,

1. I am directed to refer to the Ministry's Circular Letters dated 18th September, 1939, (S.R.O. 824 - Serial No. 19) and 23rd September, 1939, (S.R.O. 828 - Serial No. 20), relating to the provision of war time allotments, and I am to express on behalf of the Minister his warm appreciation of the valuable work which has already been done by Local Authorities in connection with the provision of land for this purpose. The cultivation of vegetable crops on allotments and in private gardens will prove of great benefit to the nation during the present emergency, and will assist materially in the successful prosecution of the war by making use of part-time labour in the work of increasing home food production.

2. It is important, however, that Local Authorities should continue to make every effort to encourage their residents to redouble their efforts in this respect, and that these efforts should be made at once in the short time that still remains before the season is too far advanced.

3. Where the lack of suitable unoccupied land has tended to limit action by your Council under the Cultivation of Land (Allotments) Order, 1939, in providing war time allotments for which there is an outstanding demand, I am to say that the Minister will be prepared to consider applications by your Council for his consent to take possession of occupied land where such land is only "technically" occupied, is not being put to any productive use as regards food or otherwise and is suitable for allotment cultivation.

4. I am further to suggest that, failing other suitable land in private ownership, endeavour should be made to secure the voluntary agreement of owners for the use of unoccupied garden ground attached to empty houses. Such private gardens cannot be taken by Councils under the Cultivation of Lands (Allotments) Order, 1939, except with the consent of the Minister, and if, in suitable cases, it is not possible to secure the voluntary agreement of the owners to the cultivation of gardens of vacant houses the Minister would be prepared, in exceptional circumstances, to consider any definite proposals made by the Local Authority for securing their cultivation during the present emergency, where it could be arranged without hardship to the owner of the property.

5. In those districts in which a sufficient number of applicants for allotments is not forthcoming to cultivate land which is available or could be made available for allotments, it is suggested that in co-operation with local organisations such as Allotment Societies, Horticultural Societies and the like, Local Authorities should call for further volunteers to cultivate additional land, and that the call might be emphasised by means of advertisements, posters, house-to-house canvass, and addresses to gatherings of employees of any large firms in the districts during luncheon intervals.

To help with food shortages, the government encouraged people to keep chickens or other poultry in their gardens and provided advice on how to do so. Rations of feed were also available. People saved any spare food they might have to help feed the chickens..

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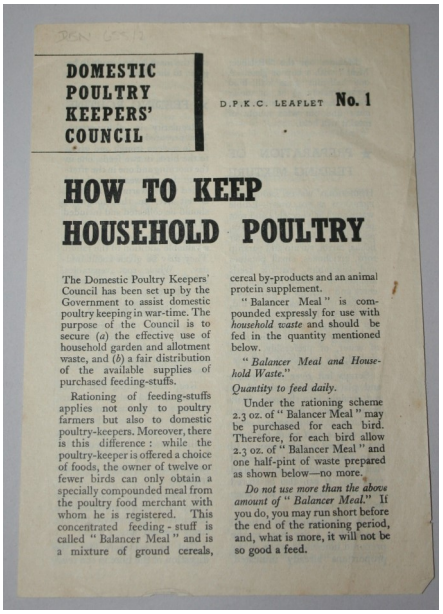


DOMESTIC POULTRY KEEPERS' COUNCIL

D.P.K.C. LEAFLET No. 1

## HOW TO KEEP HOUSEHOLD POULTRY

The Domestic Poultry Keepers' Council has been set up by the Government to assist domestic poultry keeping in war-time. The purpose of the Council is to secure (*a*) the effective use of household garden and allotment waste, and (*b*) a fair distribution of the available supplies of purchased feeding-stuffs.

Rationing of feeding-stuffs applies not only to poultry farmers but also to domestic poultry-keepers. Moreover, there is this difference: while the poultry-keeper is offered a choice of foods, the owner of twelve or fewer birds can only obtain a specially compounded meal from the poultry food merchant with whom he is registered. This concentrated feeding-stuff is called "Balancer Meal" and is a mixture of ground cereals, cereal by-products and an animal protein supplement.

"Balancer Meal" is compounded expressly for use with *household waste* and should be fed in the quantity mentioned below.

"*Balancer Meal and Household Waste.*"

*Quantity to feed daily.*

Under the rationing scheme 2.3 oz. of "Balancer Meal" may be purchased for each bird. Therefore, for each bird allow 2.3 oz. of "Balancer Meal" and one half-pint of waste prepared as shown below—no more.

*Do not use more than the above amount of "Balancer Meal."* If you do, you may run short before the end of the rationing period, and, what is more, it will not be so good a feed.

## Cooking Leaflets


These leaflets are four of the many written by the Ministry of Food, the government branch that set up rationing.

The Ministry of Food was charged with ensuring that people ate well, despite rationing. They distributed leaflets designed to teach people how to make the most of the available food and other resources.

People were not used to cooking with the type and quantity of food that was available during the war. The Ministry of Food created recipes to help. As well as distributing leaflets with ideas and recipes, the Ministry also had experts travel the country showing people how to make these recipes. There was even a Ministry of Food Advice Bureau in Harrods.

## Dig for Victory Leaflet

These leaflets were issued by the Ministry of Agriculture as part of the Dig for Victory campaign. The Dig for Victory campaign, which began in 1940, encouraged people to start vegetable gardens at home or in allotments to help take pressure off the public food supplies. Many spare bits of land and even public parks were also put to this purpose. Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park, for instance, both put in allotments.


Instructional leaflets, such as this one, were distributed to help people get the most out of their gardens. This leaflet focuses on ensuring year-round supply of vegetables.

# Make Do and Mend Leaflets

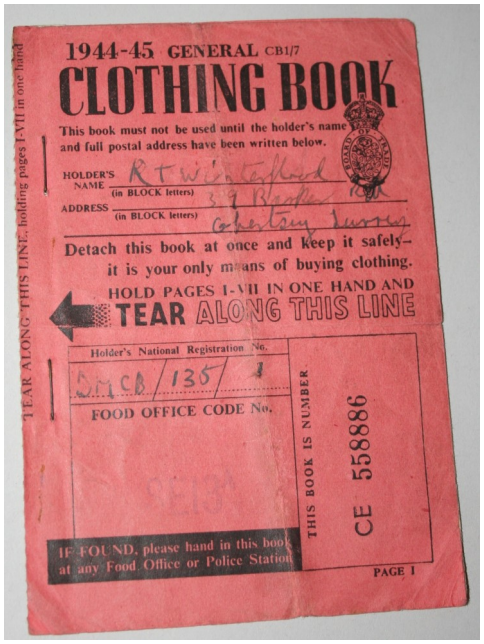
‘Make do and Mend’ was the slogan that accompanied another important government campaign. With shortages hitting supplies of clothing and other household items, the government extolled people to minimize waste by making do with what they had and learning to fix things.


As well as campaign posters, the government released a series of leaflets with tips and instructions on how to “Make do and Mend.”

With clothing rationed, people reused old clothing and learned how to mend holes, darn socks, make new outfits out of old clothing or old curtains and many other things.

Some leaflets also gave instructions on how to fix common problems with household furnishings and other objects. The leaflet in the loan box explains how to fix wobbly handles, re-web chair seats, clean wallpaper and fix leaky saucepans, among other things.

## Clothing Coupon Books




It was not just food that was rationed. Many clothing factories had been taken over by the war effort and were being used to make uniforms and parachutes. Plus many factory workers had left to join the forces.

So when material and clothing became scarce, the government rationed clothing. On 1st June, 1941, every man, woman and child over four was issued with a clothing coupon book containing 66 coupons. These coupons would be given to the shop when a person purchased new clothes. The 66 coupons were, in theory, just enough to purchase one new outfit a year. A girl's dress, for instance, required five coupons, while boy's trousers used six. The number of coupons provided each year was reduced later in the war.

To help with the shortage, the government created a marketing campaign, "Make Do and Mend," urging people to darn clothes, alter them or reuse them rather than simply throwing them away.

New "Utility" clothing was also introduced. To save fabric, men's trousers were made without turn-ups, while women's skirts were short and straight with no trimmings.

Parachutes, with their metres and metres of fabric, became a prized find. If a plane came down there was a good chance that a parachute would be lying nearby. These would be picked up and taken home. They would then be turned into items of clothing, such as bed covers, nightdresses, petticoats or knickers.

## Clothing Coupon Books
## continued

### Number of Coupons Required for Different items of Children's Clothing

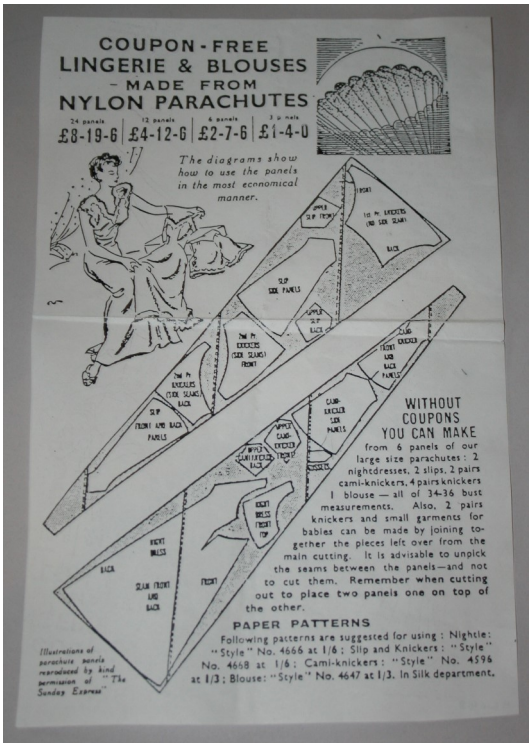
| Item | Coupons | Item | Coupons |
|---|---|---|---|
| Overcoat or raincoat | 7 | Girl's dress | 5 |
| Jacket or blazer | 6 | Pyjamas/nightie/ dressing gown (each) | 6 |
| Boy's trousers | 6 | Cardigan/ jumper/ sweater | 5 |
| Girl' gym tunic/skirt | 4 | Underpants/knickers/ vests (each) | 2 |
| Boy's shirt/girl's blouse | 4 | Gloves/cap/hat/scarf (each) | 2 |
| Child's shoes/boots/sandals | 2 | Socks, stockings, ties and hankies (each) | 1 |

## Parachute Postcard and Parachute Advert

During the war many of the factories that had once been used to make clothing switched to making parachutes and uniforms for soldiers. Other people were also called in to help. This postcard shows members of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force sewing parachutes.

Parachutes were of great interest on the home front for another reason. If found, they provided swathes of coupon-free fabric. If a plane came down there was a good chance a parachute would be lying nearby. These would be picked up, taken home and turned into an item of clothing such as bed covers, nightdresses, petticoats or even knickers.

This is an advertisement for parachute fabric. The company selling the fabric suggests ways to layout patterns on the fabric to use it most efficiently and suggests which patterns fit best on the parachute panels.



COUPON-FREE
LINGERIE & BLOUSES
– MADE FROM
NYLON PARACHUTES

24 panels £8-19-6 | 12 panels £4-12-6 | 6 panels £2-7-6 | 3 panels £1-4-0

*The diagrams show how to use the panels in the most economical manner.*

WITHOUT COUPONS YOU CAN MAKE

from 6 panels of our large size parachutes: 2 nightdresses, 2 slips, 2 pairs cami-knickers, 4 pairs knickers 1 blouse — all of 34-36 bust measurements. Also, 2 pairs knickers and small garments for babies can be made by joining together the pieces left over from the main cutting. It is advisable to unpick the seams between the panels—and not to cut them. Remember when cutting out to place two panels one on top of the other.

PAPER PATTERNS

Following patterns are suggested for using: Nightie: "Style" No. 4666 at 1/6; Slip and Knickers: "Style" No. 4668 at 1/6; Cami-knickers: "Style" No. 4596 at 1/3; Blouse: "Style" No. 4647 at 1/3. In Silk department.

*Illustrations of parachute panels reproduced by kind permission of "The Sunday Express"*

## Blackout Curtain

This is an original blackout curtain from World War II.

Britain put blackout regulations into effect on 1 Sept 1939 — just prior to the start of the war. The blackout required everyone to cover their windows and doors at night to prevent even a sliver of light escaping into the outside world. The black-out was put into effect because of fears that visible light from houses and towns could aid Nazi night-time bombing attacks.

To comply with the regulations, people would cover their windows and doors with black fabric curtains, cardboard or paint before the sun went down. Other sources of outside light were also covered up or turned off. This included street lights. Initially the blackout led to a large number of accidents on the streets. The regulations were then loosened slightly, allowing street lights to put out a minimal amount of light. Many other sources of outside light, including, car head lamps and torches, had devices attached to them to angle the light towards the ground.

Part of an ARP Warden’s job would be to patrol the streets each night, ensuring that the blackout was being carried out successfully.

# General Information: Childhood

In Britain, the war changed life on the home front immeasurably. While children continued to do such things as play with toys and go to school, they also had to contend with rationing, air raids, gas masks and, for some, evacuation. This box contains objects and information showing what life was like for children on the home front.

In the build up to the war and during its early months, the government made a great effort to ready the public for war. Information, some of it in leaflet form, was distributed to the population explaining what to do in case of air raids, gas bombs, fire bombs and other possible situations.

This information also included plans for evacuating two million children from big cities and coastal towns to the countryside where it was hoped they would be safer. As well as leaving their parents behind, some children were also split up from their siblings. The children did not know how long they would be away from their parents.

The government also began issuing gas masks — or 'respirators' —- before the war started. In fact, by the end of September 1938, some 38 million gas masks had been handed out. Although they were never actually needed, these cumbersome items loomed large in everyday life for both adults and children during the early stages of the war. Children were expected to carry the masks everywhere, and children would have been familiar with the instructions on how to use the masks, including such phrases as: "Remember, chin in—right in—first, before you start to pull the straps over your head." The respirators looked alarming, and to calm the fears of small children the government issued some brightly coloured examples, known as Mickey Mouse masks.

Rationing was another aspect of the war that had a big impact on everyday life for children. Before the Second World War, a significant percentage of the food consumed in Britain was imported from overseas. Much of this food came to this country by ship. Once hostilities broke out, Germany targeted these ships, hoping to put pressure on Britain by squeezing the country's food supply.

Only months after the war started, with the threat of shortages looming, the Ministry of Food imposed rationing on certain key types of food. The aim was to ensure fair distribution and discourage hoarding.

Rationing began on the 8th of January 1940, with butter, ham/bacon and sugar. Each person, including children, was issued with a ration book and was required to register with their local shops. When a person bought rationed items, the shopkeeper either crossed off or cut out the relevant coupon in the purchaser's ration book. To boost the vitamin intake, the Ministry of Health made sure that every child received daily milk, cod liver oil and orange juice.

**Childhood  General Information, continued:**

Despite the many hardships of war, children did still play with toys. However, many toy factories switched to making items for the war effort. As such many war -time toys would have been second hand or homemade. War themes also pervaded play, with many of the toys being military vehicles.

# General Information: Toys

Toys have been around from the earliest times. In fact, examples of toys from very ancient civilisations have been found. Many of these remind us of similar toys which are still played with today:

In Medieval times, toys such as kites, toy soldiers, hobby horses and push and pull-along animals were given to children to play with. The simplest toys were made from wood and bone, but the children from wealthy families were also given toys made from bronze, glass and even silver. During the 16th century, Germany led the way in the manufacture of toys. Woodcarving was a traditional countryside craft and, among the cities, Nuremberg became a centre for toy making. By the 18th century, German toys were being exported to America, England, Italy and Russia.

In the 19th century, Victorian children had far fewer toys than today's children. Toys such as rocking horses, dolls' houses and Noah's Arks were only for the wealthy, and many toys such as expensively dressed dolls were so expensive and precious that their young owners were never allowed to play with them.

In 1900 the average wage was £1 a week (the equivalent of £74.39 today) , and a four-roomed doll's house cost £1. 12s. 6d (the equivalent of £120.88 today), so most toys were far beyond the means of ordinary working people. Children from poor families were sent out to work at a very young age and so had very little time for playing, and even those from better-off homes were expected to keep busy helping at home. Playing was normally regarded as a waste of time.

At the beginning of the 19th century, even in the houses of the rich, most toys were judged for their educational value alone - dolls and dolls' houses were designed to teach girls the basic facts about household management and 'dissected puzzles' and card games were given to children to promote their factual learning.

Attitudes changed gradually as the century progressed and this, together with the spread of industrialisation, meant that an increasing number of families were able to afford the new toys coming on to the market. Mass produced, and therefore cheaper, tin toys flooded in from Germany and mechanical toys, clockwork railways and lead soldiers became increasingly popular. Machine-made paper, photography and new printing processes also brought new items into the toy shops. A whole new range of books and magazines were written just for children and brightly coloured scraps for sticking into special albums were manufactured. In the second half of the 19th century, toys were more commonly made from metal rather than wood and America increasingly became the centre for toy manufacture.

‘

## Early Plastic Doll

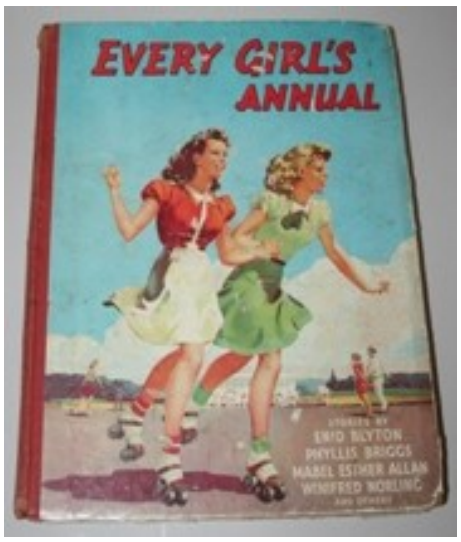
This doll is made of a plastic rubber material c1930s, with a knitted outfit. In the 1950s hard plastic dolls began to be produced on a large scale. Plastic had been in use for dolls since the 1920s, but during the war production stopped as factories took to war production.

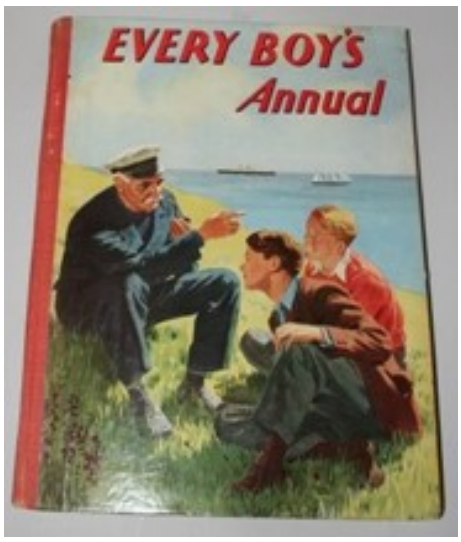
The clothes appear worn and tatty, so were probable made by a child.

During wartime knitting was encouraged, knitting circles would be made up where women would get together and knit items such as socks for the troops to help with the war effort.

## Every Girl's Annual and Every Boy's Annual

Although these books date from the 1950s, this type of book had been in production since the Victorian period. The books have illustrated stories, games and puzzles. They both have underlying morals about men doing their duty at work and women doing their duty at home.



## Green Tin Car

This is a 1950s push-along tin plated car. Tin was mined in Britain providing a resource to make these toys. The tin would be pressed and shaped to make these light toys.

## Happy Families Game

Happy Families is a card game where the aim is to match up families of 4. Players take turns asking each other for the cards they need to complete families, such as ‘ Mrs Baker, the Baker’s Wife’. The winner is the person who has collected the most complete families.


The game, which is still made today, was first made in the Victorian period. At that time, children enjoyed coloured card games, and this one was a good, moral game for them to play.

During wartime, playing family card games became important, as children may have been evacuated away from their family, and their fathers and older brothers may have been abroad at war.

## Red Fire Truck

At the beginning of the war there was no National Fire Service — there was only the Auxiliary Fire Service.

In 1948 the National Fire Service was set up to ensure compatibility of equipment across the country and to provide a good emergency service for everyone.

This is another example of a die-cast toy.

## Green Removal Truck

This push-along, die-cast toy dates to the 1950s.


## Spinning Tops

Spinning tops are one of the earliest toys, dating back to the Ancient Egyptians, Romans and Greeks. They are a very simple toy that could be made at home, so these tops could easily be made during wartime for a child to play with.

The wooden one is probably made of a reused handle, and the metal one is just made of left over metal pieces. A whip could be used with a top to get it moving, but these tops wouldn't have worked very well with a whip.

## Wooden Boat Launcher

With wartime production at its highest and people being encouraged to 'make do and mend,' buying toys was not an option. This is a classic homemade, wartime toy. Created from leftover wood, this boat launcher would have been made for a boy to play imaginary war games with.


## Red Car

This is a c1930s die-cast car. Die-casting is a process that involves melting metal and then pouring it into a mould, creating a car with no 'inside.'

These types of cars were produced both in the U.S. and in Britain. However, production stopped during the war, when factories turned their metal works to producing munitions and military vehicles.

## Wooden Green Car

This is another example of a homemade toy made during wartime. It is probably meant to be a military truck, created so that a boy could play war.

Despite being homemade, it still has moveable wheels.

# Tin Figures

Miniature people and soldier toys have been around since the earliest civilisations, but were first made as ornaments rather than toys. However, since medieval times both children and adults have played with toys soldiers and assembled complex battle scenes.

For many years, lead toy soldiers and other figures were very popular. They were first made in moulds in Germany during the 18th Century. Lead was used as it was a cheap and widely available. Furthermore, people were not yet aware of its poisonous nature. Later tin was used, which is not as soft and breakable as lead. These toys are made of tin.

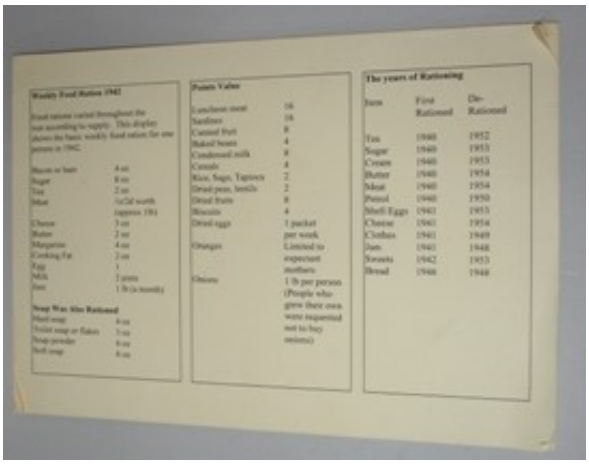
The first soldiers were less than a millimetre thick, but were cheaper than the solid metal figures. The flat figures would have had a base attached to them to enable them to stand up. The height of the figures was always 3cm for standing figures, and 4cm for those on horse back. This was probably to enable the toys to become compatible. Often the figures were sold unpainted at a lower cost, widening the market as well as adding another element of fun to the toys.

In 1893, British toy maker William Britain invented a new way of making toy soldiers. These were hollow, rounded figures. They were lighter and a worker could make 300 figures an hour from a hand-held mould.

Before the war you could buy forts and farms to use when playing with these figures, however most people would have made their own base. Soldiers were very popular, as well as sailors, farmers, animals and carts.

## Weekly Food Ration

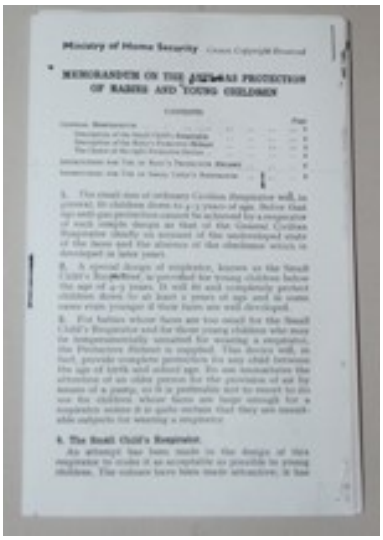
A number of factors led to the introduction of rationing. The factories began to produce war materials; it became difficult to get food into Britain because supply ships were attacked by German submarines; and as men were called up to serve in the war, fewer people were left to work the fields.



Many people did not find rationing a problem once they started growing their own food, keeping animals and using wartime recipes such as carrot cake, which used carrots instead of sugar.

## Child Respirator Instructions

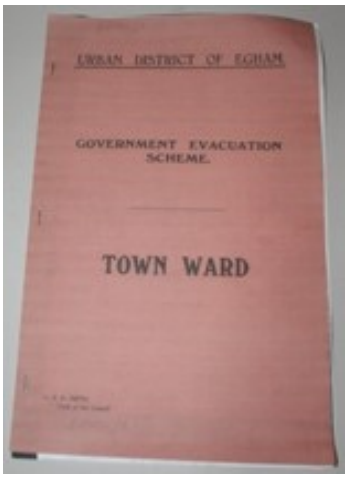
As gas was used on troops in the First World War, there was a fear that it would be use in the Second World War. The government issued every person in the country with a gas mask. Children and adults had gas masks that would fix to their face, but babies needed a different style. Babies had a respirator, which was a large case that the baby was placed inside. The mother would then have to pump the air into the container.



## Egham Evacuation Scheme Booklet

This is a booklet that was produced to aid with the evacuation of children and adults to the Egham area. Inside are the lists of the numbers of children and the roads they were assigned to. It includes timings, as well as the duties that had to be performed during the evacuation.

It is a good example of how much organisation was needed to move so many children around the country.




## Evacuation Why & How Leaflet

This leaflet was made available to all parents during the Second World War, so that they would understand the importance of evacuation as well as what it would involve. After the initial evacuation at the beginning of the war, many parents soon brought their children back from the countryside as there were initially no air raids. However, in 1941, when the raids began, parents re-evacuated their children.

# WW2 Sessions

These sessions concentrate on the home front, looking at ARP Wardens, evacuation, blackout, rationing and air raids.

**In School** - 1- 1½ hours session

- Object talk
- Object and map work


**In the Museum -** 1½ - 2 hours

- Object talk
- Object and map work
- WW2 Museum trail
- Optional gas mask making (additional 50p per child)

**All-day Activity Session at the Museum**

- Object talk
- Object, photographs and map work
- WW2 Museum trail
- Making gas masks
- Drama
- Air raid game