

Today on this Friday morning of the 2005-10-21, Peter Bird came to see me and to collect one of his books on farming that he had lent to me.

He was to tell me about, one of his experiences of a time during the 1940s when living up on the farm up Scurf, known as Birds Hill Farm, he said that they were awakened early on morning between half two to three in the morning, by the clattering of tanks, along with the noises of their engines, when the first morning light came, and they could see what was going on, the fields surrounding their farm were full of Tanks and soldiers, Peter told me that when his father Hector, went out to fetch the cows in for milking, they were already in the cowshed being milked by the army, an officer was to approach Mr Bird, and was to tell him that for the time being the Army was taking over the farm, along with any thing that they may require from off it, with no questions asked, the officer said that anything that he requisitioned would be wrote down on a Army Form, and Mr Bird could put in a claim for whatever, and that he would be paid for everything that was taken.

Peter said all the milk along with the eggs, anything that could be eaten or used they took, Mr Bird was to get really concerned when the Army opened up the Potato Clamp, and started to eat them, The officer was to keep telling Mr Bird all will be reimbursed, (if the Germans were to have come it would have been a different scenario).

Peter said that when one of the officers was to see the fitches of bacon hanging on the kitchen wall, his eyes were to light up, Peter said that during the period the army stayed the officers were to sit down at their table eating fried eggs and bacon every morning, Hector Peters father, had to write down about the bacon as well as the Milk, Potatoes, etc that was taken and eaten.

Peter said they had just turned off the road and through the hedges to get onto the fields, where they had tried to get through a gateway they had knocked down one of the gateposts, they were to stay for about for about two weeks, they had tanks on the top of both of the hills on the Downs, and along the ridge to Little Lift Farm, of Mr Gilkes.

Peter said that his father told him years later, that the Army at the time were on manoeuvres, stretching from South Oxfordshire, into Buckinghamshire, through Northamptonshire, and on into the County of Rutland,

Along with these tanks were hundreds of infantry soldiers, they all had to live off the land, as they were told to do so, I suppose they were getting ready for the Normandy Landing, or such likes, as most things were kept secret in those days and not talked about.

Even being a few years younger than peter, I personally remember many tanks travelling through Bugbrooke, or being in the field at the back of the school (The Close), along with the soldiers sleeping in the school.

S.J.Clark.

2.

Friday 05-02-20010.

I was talking to Peter Bird today over the telephone, and during the conversation the Eastcote Prisoner of war camp came up; Peter said about a time during the First World War when his grandfather farmed the farm where he was born.

One of the doctors who kept an eye health wise on the German prisoners came to see grandfather Bird, to see if he had any green stuff spare to feed the prisoners with, as due to the shortage of food at the time that indirectly the war was creating all sorts of problems that arose indirectly food wise.

The only green stuff spare were the outer leaves of Cattle Cabbage, and the large green leaves that the cattle would not eat from off the Kale Storks.

The Doctor said that they would be just the job to sort the problem out, from what Peter said all the German in Eastcote Camp were suffering from Constipation due to the meagre diet they were on.

Peter said his grandfather filled up his horse and trap with these leaves, and took several loads to the camp.

These outer cabbage and Kale leaves were to do the job, but just before the war ended many of these German Prisoners were to lose their lives with a the Flu Epidemic that swept through Europe and the World at the time, they were to buried in Pattishall cemetery, whereby many years later a wealthy person paid to have them dug up and repatriated back to Germany to make room for local folk to be buried.

Stanley Joseph Clark.

86.

3.

Thursday 12th January 2012.

Peter Bird from the West End of Bugbrooke came to pick up a picture of a print from an oil painting, called the millers field that once belonged to his father that I had renovated for him.

He spoke of a time his father decided to send some Rams to Northampton market to one of the Ram fairs that were held annually during the second week in September. Peter said, that when asking his father how they were going to get them there, he said you can walk them for us, for his father could not afford Tarry's the local Haulage Contractor from Bugbrooke take them.

He said that Fred Perkin from up Wards Lodge offered to help Peter take these Rams to Northampton Market; peter said that Fred walked out in front shutting gates or standing open side roads etc, he said they took the road from the farm towards Dalscote to pick up the Banbury Lane and onwards towards Northampton.

He said on reaching Banbury Road Railway level Crossing, the gates were shut for passing trains, so after a period of waiting they eventually opened, and they started to cross over, when one of the rams slipped and fell over breaking one of its legs when one of them got trapped between the railway lines and the wooden sleepers that were lain up to the rails and in between, for wheels of vehicles to pass over on, or for the such as driving cattle over.

Peter said he was in quite a quandary as what to do, whether to go all the way back to the farm or carry on, the level crossing keeper at the time helped them put the injured ram into one of the fields of Anker farm, that was next to the Level crossing, he said you carry on and take the rams to market, and that he would sort things out over the injured ram, the crossing keeper was to telephone up one of the local vets, who when seeing the ram said that it had to be put down, but by having to do so they would not lose out on the market value of the ram, Peter said after filling out several forms as to what happened his father was compensated as to the value of it at market prices.

Stanley Joseph Clark.