



Burcombe Home Guard : 1942- 1945

May 2015 Interview with Fred Kellow born in Burcombe in 1924 and a member of Burcombe Home Guard.

I was a corporal. Well I went in it in 1940. I was a runner for the first bit, taking messages. The huts where the Home Guard spent their nights was up on the Downs. We used to spend a night a week up there. No telephones. So I had to run down to the village, I was the kid for running down there. I could run down there quicker than you could get to a telephone, well they didn't have one but I could have got there quicker than you could have got through on a phone.

I was a good shot in the finish. I had a 12 bore to start with. The first gun I had from the army was a Thomson submachine gun! Round barrel. They took all those guns away and then I had a rifle.

We used to go on duty on Sunday mornings and one night a week and you didn't miss! They'd want to know where you were, you'd have to explain yourself. We were probably trained to the same standard as the reservists are now. We used to go one night a week looking for parachutists.

At the start we went with two regular army and two home guard. After a while they stopped the regular soldiers because they caused so much trouble. They said it was because of Dunkirk, but I don't know. They shot at Eric Ruffle and Wallis. They were on duty with two soldiers. Wallis was a farmer and Eric Ruffle was a school teacher and of course they didn't want to sleep in the hut so they went for a walk on the downs. The two soldiers stayed in the hut and when they saw they two coming back they shot at them. There was a barn not far from there so they ran in the barn and waited. They soldiers called up headquarters and we were all called out. They said "We know where they Germans are, they're in the barn." We started about half a mile from the barn and crept up on them from all directions. The RSM shouted "Come out or we'll put a grenade in!".

"Don't do that, its only us!" they shouted (Wallis & Ruffle)

Bloody soldiers shot at our own men. They said that at Barford they shot at some sheep but nothing was ever proved.

The other thing we did was go looking for a prisoner (German airman). He jumped out of a plane. They knew the plane he came from because it crashed and there was one (airman) missing. So we went

looking for him. We didn't find him but he gave himself up to an air warden at Chilmark Dump. The warden was going along on his bike and he (German airman) saw him and gave himself up.

Chilmark Dump was a bomb dump. They made a concrete road from the dump right into Grovely Wood to put the bombs up there. They built a road two miles long just to take bombs up there to put on a stand!



Burcombe Home Guard

Front Row: Pte. Dick Osmond, Pte. Fred Cannings, Capt. Ray, Pte Dyre, ?????, Pte. Ed Dimmer, Pte. Reg Dimmer, Pte. Dash?

Middle Row: Cpl. David Kellow, Pte. Alfie Fay, Pte. Adlam, Pte. Eric Ruffle, Cpl. Fred Hide, Pte. Ted Cannings, Cpl. Fred Kellow, Pte. Jimmy Kellow

Back Row:- RSM Chalk, Cpl. Wallis, Maj. Wooley, Lt. Sidney Pond, Capt. Bob Coombes, Cpl. Crouch, Sgt. Evens (2 un-named)