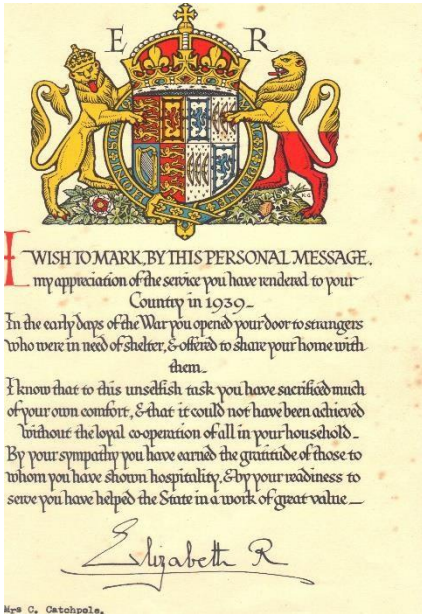


The search for visitors to Stowupland in 1939 was prompted by this certificate that was donated to our Village Archive by the Catchpole family in 2018.



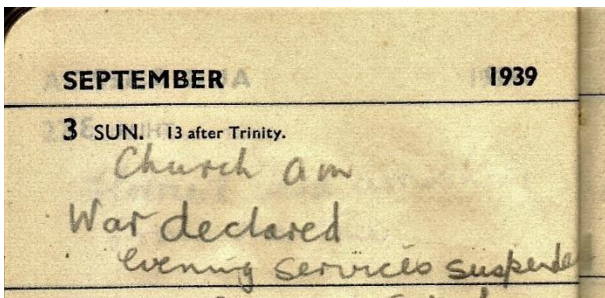
Members of the LHG committee were unsure who the 'strangers' in 'need of shelter' were or why it had been sent to Emma Catchpole. Were they American servicemen, land girls, evacuees or even someone else?

The certificate had been kept with its envelope which was stamped with the Buckingham Place seal but also franked with Buckingham Place stamp mark, showing with GR.



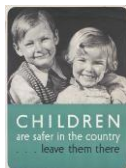
Internet searching suggested that these certificates were sent out in 1945 to families who had taken in evacuees, and the Elizabeth R was the Queen Mother not our Queen Elizabeth

I looked at the 1939 war survey to see if that could shed any light as to who these strangers might have been. Of course, this survey was taken on September 29th 1939, so later than the outbreak of WW2 which does affect our story, but there are several families who had visitors staying with a different surname, many visitors were young children.



lockdown 2020 gave me time to read through the collection of diaries that Emma's daughter Margaret had kept. At the time of WW2 Margaret was a 39-year-old teacher. She was a very sporadic recorder, often focusing on domestic details but on Sunday 3rd September, she noted 'church a.m.' 'war declared' and the 'evening services suspended.

rior to the wee end



What was unexpected was that 3 days earlier on Friday September 1st, she had noted 'Ilford Evacuees arrive' and Robert Colman, age 6^{1/2} was to go to Belvedere. However, he did not stay long as 9 days later his mother came to collect him.

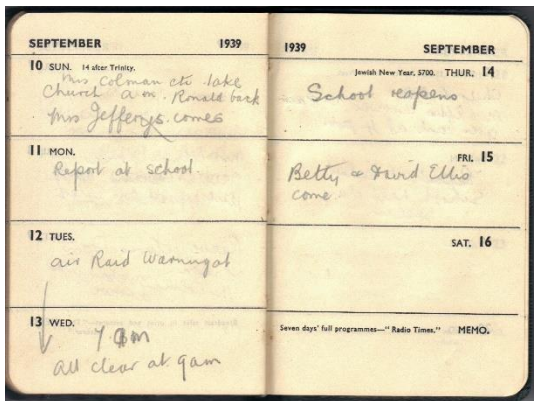
So, whilst we still couldn't be certain that the strangers referred to in the certificate were children, we do know that in 1939 some evacuees had travelled from Ilford to Stowupland to stay with local families.

Thanks to Jerry (our new LHG Secretary) we then realised that at least one person in the village still kept in touch with a couple of ladies who he had been friends with when they were young evacuees and living here. Jerry spoke with John Hill whose Auntie May had taken in Wanda Lee and his mother had taken in Freida and Doreen Quitch. Through him we were able to find out some personal memories and get copies of photos of their time in Stowupland.



They arrived by train with a few possessions in ruck sacks and with their gas masks. They were first taken to Stowupland school where families selected who they would take.

Wanda remembered walking from the school down the road past Barn Cottages, along Rendall Lane and to her new home with the Wilden family. We can only imagine the contrast between the countryside views, sounds and smells compared with the bombed-out areas they had left behind but that is a story for another day.



Stowupland might have been considered a relatively safe destination for evacuees but it did have its own wartime experiences, Margaret recorded a couple of air raids in September. In our archives is a report in 1940 of incendiary bombs landing in fields along Saxham street and Jack Carter told of search lights being sequestered in fields between Gipping Farm and Saxham Street which meant he could not graze his cattle.

Though Wanda did not recall ever having to take shelter in the school ditch, or the air raid shelter on Dents corner.

Though she did remember American soldiers camping on The Green and hearing that the council had told everyone to be nice to them – apparently the lady next door to Auntie May was very kind to them!

On a sadder note, she recalled walking down to Stowmarket with Auntie May one day, when some of the men had been riding a jeep along Preston Hill and the jeep had overturned. She remembered clothing draped over wire at the side of the road and believed some of the men to be injured or even killed, but Auntie May would not let her stop and stare.



These are just 2 of the ladies who took in the youngsters from Ilford, although this photo shows the twin sisters May Wilden and Daisy Hill in 1958.

The evacuees attended school alongside local children., Wanda remembered, the head mistress Miss Ada Kinch as strict but nice.



Other teachers Wanda named were Miss Abbott who took the middle class and Miss Burch the kindergarten and country dancing. Wanda recalled one day in winter when it had snowed hard instead of lessons the children were allowed to treat the school yard as a skating rink!

In the warmer weather the children would climb over the tin around the ponds on The Green to go swimming.

On Sundays they went to the Chapel, walking along a cinder track across Allard's fields and being scared of the cows. She remembered milk being delivered to the door in a large churn, and Mr Allard opening the unlocked back door to ladle milk into a jug that had been left out. His daughters were probably not yet old enough to do the deliveries themselves. I understand the wheeled milk churn can still be seen at the Museum of East Anglia Life, Stowmarket.

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We are not sure how many children came to Stowupland, but there were at least 12 staying in the village with others in surrounding areas.

We know of a Christine Jiggins who went to Cubbitts Farm, and elsewhere a Paul Mills, Geoffrey Howe and Brian Hart. I understand Brian Hart wrote of his experiences in 2002 in Telstar. He had been unhappy in his first placement but subsequently moved into Otter's Cottage nr Columbyne Hall with the family who had taken in Geoffrey Howe. Columbyne Hall was apparently in a bad state and the Council had taken over the Farm, putting in a tenant and with Land girls.



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Wanda stayed with the Wilden family, Auntie May, whilst John's mother Daisy, took in Wanda's cousins Freda and Doreen Quitch.

According to Wanda the evacuees were accepted by the village. From Margaret's 1939 diary we know that on Dec 27th 1939 the evacuees put on an entertainment and on the 29th 'the ladies of the reception committee' held a party for the children.

Some children only stayed a short time but others for the duration of the war and even staying to complete their secondary school education in Stowmarket. Wanda really enjoyed Stowupland and did not want to leave.

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This is Wanda with her best friend, a local girl Monica Williams.
Monica lived down Saxham Street. Monica's father was a games keeper.

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family and friends

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Whilst some children returned home soon after being evacuated to Stowupland eg R. Colman, others stayed for the duration whilst others completed their senior schooling in Stowmarket

Freida returned home in 1943 for a year but when rocket attacks started up she returned to Stowupland.

Freida and Doreen completed their schooling at Stowupland and stayed on to go to Stowmarket grammar school. Freida went onto marry and lived in America.

Wanda wanted to stay but her father insisted she return to Ilford. She was not very happy. She had bad memories from the bombing. She had been staying with her Nan in Forest Gate when their house was hit. Her granny was killed but Wanda and her mother were rescued, though Wanda's

mother was blinded and had lost her legs. Wanda remembered being taken by bus to Whitechapel \Hospital seeing the red flames of burning buildings. She remembered holding her mother's hand as she died on what was her 6th birthday. Wanda was transferred to another hospital and her father then brought her to Stowupland. Whilst Wanda was living in Stowupland her father had remarried and Wanda on her return home did not get along with her step mum.

On returning to school, she recalled how her schoolmates sounded strange as they had picked up dialects from being staying with families in so many different locations.



Internet Stock photo of young children wearing gas masks

The 1939 war survey was taken on September 29th but does give us so names of young visitors who were staying in Stowupland families. The problem is knowing whether these are family members or friends of the family or official evacuees. There are also teachers staying with some families.

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Teachers | | | |
| Gladys Peppin (4/11/10) | Margaret Carter | Stowupland Hall | |
| Doris Kate Hallorum (18/2/98) | With George (rent and Rate collector) and Harriet Meakings | Waveney along Church Road | Asst Teacher |
| Kate Emily Good (28/4/93) | George and Harriet Meakings | Waveney along Church Road | Headmistress Council School |
| Ada Kinch | | School House | teacher |
| Dorothy Sharland (28//10/90) | Mr & Mrs Hammond | Trevell | teacher |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|---|
| Grace Peacock (13/8/11) | | | Teacher |
| Henry Brett (12/12/84) | George & Elsie Carter | Green Farm | Elementary school master |
| Ronald Carter (27/4/16) | | | Senior master physical training and handicraft 9060's clubs visited him on day trip to Norfolk) |
| Gladys Knights | Alfred and Milly Robinson | Church Walk | District Nurse |

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-----|
| Harry Manning | Church Walk | | ARP |
| Cyril Garrod | Clarement | Along A1120 | ARP |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|
| Children | | | |
| May & Hector Wilden | 30 Bungalows (Columbine) | Derrick Wilden (27/3/32) | Hector worked at Chemical Fertiliser factory |
| | | Redacted – is probably Wanda Lee | |
| Charles & Emma Catchpole | Belvedere | Patricia Ellis (21/1/33) | Were her parents Betty and David ? patricia Possibly went on to live at 31 Woodthorpe Rd, Hadleigh IP7 SH1 |
| Fred & Lucy Cubbitt | 32 Bungalows (Columbine) – or Croft Farm | Pamela June Emmings (30/3/21 or 30/4/31) d 1996 in Brighton) | Mothers name Edith Beatrice Greenland living in Farnham, Surry Married Terry Watts in 1957 |
| Samuel and Alice Bowyer | | Leslie Walter Wright (13/12/27) | |
| | | Edna May Baker (7/3/29) | |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| Arthur & Christina Finbow | Pasture farm | Brian Howell (3/10/290 Mother ne Watkins | |
| Sidney & Eva Hammond | Gipping Cottage | Maurice Perry (22/11/31) | |
| William (27/3/1881) and Dora (18/7/1883) Rogers | Rainbow Cottage, Saxham Street | David (12/2/31) and Alan (24/3/32) Kramer | Both born in Hackney, there mother was Jane Greenblatt |
| | | David died in Scotland in 2010 | (Whitechapel 1904), her parents were from Russia. Father Edwin Issac Kramer |
| | | | |
| Thomas & Ruth Brame | Church Walk | Leslie Greenblatt (possibly just Green – or changed name?) (18/7/32) | Their eldest son Leslis brame became a congregational missionary |
| George & Elsie carter | Green farm | Jean Ewen (14/4/32) | |
| Reasons | The Green | Ann Phipps (20/3/34) and her mother (?) Grace (30/6/05) | Grace worked as a domestic |
| Mary manning | | Jean Aitison (21/10/32) | |
| Cosburns | | Oliver Dann (18/1/32) | Possibly from Plaistow parents John A E and Annie |
| Lockwood | | William Stewart (6/5/31) | |
| Not found in 1939 War survey | | | |
| | Cubbitt Farm (across 2 field opp school) | Christine Jiggins | |
| | Potters Cottage nr Columbine hall) | Brian Hart & Geoffrey Howe | |

Many farms were taken over and run by the local councils, including Columbyne Hall which had become run down. There was a hostel for Land Girls. Wanda remembered seeing the Land Girls

walking cattle down to the Green. She thought they were bulls but wondered if it just from a child's perspective that they looked enormous.

OW's were used as farm labourers. This is a report that the next farm along from Poplar farm in Saxham street, set back on a hill was on fire towards or after the war (1940's?) and OW's helped to carry out possessions. Was this called Nunn's Farm.

Deerbolt Hall In Earl Stonham was used to house POW's

At the school there were no male teachers, the first male master after the war was Les (Jammy) James who also was involved in the Boys Brigade

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The 1939 survey tells us that by the end of September 1939, two young boys were staying with the Rogers family in Saxham Street. The house still stands but is no longer called Rainbow Cottage,

The 2 boys were **David (12/2/31) and Alan Simeon (24/3/32) Kramer**. We know from Ancestry searches that Both were born in Hackney, their mother was Jane Greenblatt (b.1904 in Whitechapel), her parents were from Jessie Toback and Morris Greenblatt from Russia (In 1911 census he was a cabinet maker). They were Jewish, but in 1901 had arrived in London, Whitechapel. Jane's husband was Edwin Issac Kramer, he died in Hendon in 1975 at the age of 72. In 1939 (Edwin) Issac Kramer may have been working in Hendon as an accountant/Auditor) if so his family were from Romania.

Alan died in Harrow, Middlesex in 1998 aged 66, David died in Scotland in 2010

Intriguingly there was also a Leslie Greenblatt (18/7/32) staying on the green with Thomas and Ruth Brame. Their eldest son Leslie was a congregationalist missionary.

Pamela June Emmings (30/4/31) was the daughter of Edith Beatrice Greenland (her parents were Alfred Greenland and Mabel Burch) and Arthur Emmings (1898 – 1977 in Sutton, Greater London). Pamela died in Brighton in 1996 age 89, 2 years before her mother

In 1939 at the age of 32 Pamela's mother was living on Croft Farm (Gipping) .

S. A. Walker 2021

Sources

1939 War survey

Wanda Thomas (ne Lee)