

The Walk

The **Tea Rooms** was a busy place. Not only did it bake bread and cakes but the café was a great boon to the troops.

Just along the road **Norman House** was then the Police Station. It housed Police Sergeant Braddock and his wife. They survived their time in Appledore but moved away and were both killed by a flying bomb in 1944.

The large house called the **Forstall** was requisitioned by the army and was full of troops. They made sure the **Swan** opposite was always very busy.

There was a garage next door to the **Swan** (now demolished) but unfortunately no petrol! Pictured the scene when a doodle bug came straight for the village. Safely shot down by a fighter plane but the house behind the pub ended up with cannon shells through the front door.

The garage next to the **Old Junk Shop** was a butchers shop. Even in these times of hardship there was always had some sort of meat for sale - perhaps the owner knew the local farmers. The road in front echoed to the sounds of recruits drilling.

Tudor Rose Cottage was used by officers from many regiments while the house next door was home to evacuees who reluctantly returned to London when the war was over.

Look down the public footpath by **Saxon House** and feel the blast of the doodle bug which plunged screaming into the ditch at the bottom. Many windows out and plaster down during that night.

Averys, the black and white house, was a general store manned by polite elderly gentlemen and young girls. It sold everything you ever needed, haberdashery, shoes, linen, crockery, bloomers, etc.

As you walk along pause a while to listen to marching feet, planes overhead, a throbbing sound of enemy planes, rapid gun fire as a doodle bug approaches with

fighter planes following - Hark! has the engine stopped?

At **Coltrups** picture a policeman, not young, coming out with his cycle. No Panda cars then, just a steady pedal to do his rounds.

Over the road **Orchard House** and its neighbour. Both used by the "survey" regiment for a year or more with very hush-hush instruments being taken in and out through the back at night.

Stop a minute and feel the tanks as they lumber through to Lydd - Listen! was that the Tenterden siren going?

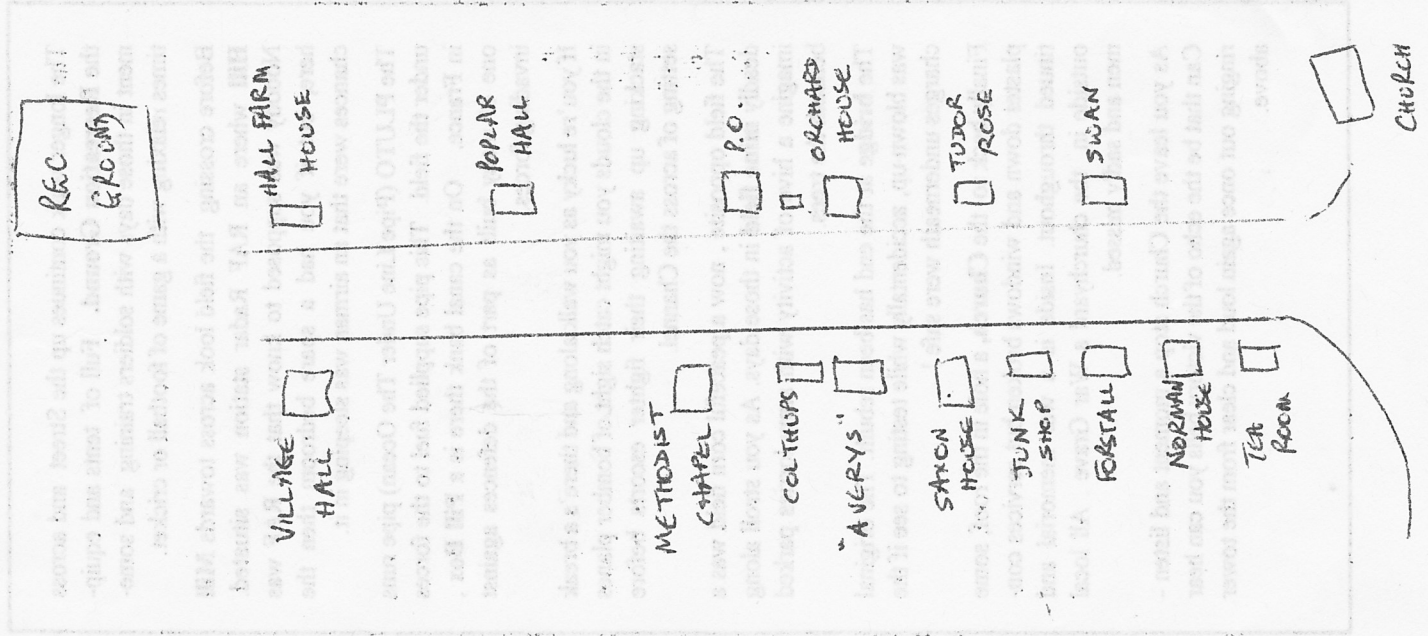
The **Post Office** was run by Mr Mac, an ex-quarter master. The windows were blown out by the blast of a doodle bug coming down the drive opposite. A great to-do one day when a tank transporter stopped outside to unload a tank. The tank was crooked and might fall off. After a lot of argument about how to unload it, a lady sergeant came and drove it away with no fuss.

The **Methodist Chapel** housed the canteen run by village ladies in the later years of the war. Although soldiers slept in houses in the village, they ate in the canteen.

Poplar Hall is another large house requisitioned by the army for officer quarters. Like many of the houses in the village it had its windows all blown out when bombs fell nearby.

Further along is the **Village Hall**. Used extensively by the army as a cook house and lecture room.

The final house is **Hall Farm House**. Miss Dorothy Johnson lived here. She organised many civilian activities during the war including "mending" parties where village women darned soldiers socks and underclothes. During the war she took in evacuees (women and children only, she wouldn't have their husbands to stay), soldiers and waafs.



The longer walk continues up the Street and across the **Recreation Ground**. Full of tents and equipment in those days with soldiers training and sometimes relaxing with a game of football or cricket.

Before crossing the field look across towards **Mill Hill** where an RAF Radar station was situated. Nobody was supposed to know that the RAF was here, but if you had a spare bedroom then the chances were that an airman was sleeping in it.

The **PLUTO** (Pipe Line Under The Ocean) pipe runs under the field. This pipe supplied fuel to the forces in France. On the canal bank there is a **Pill Box**, one of many built as part of the defences against invading forces.

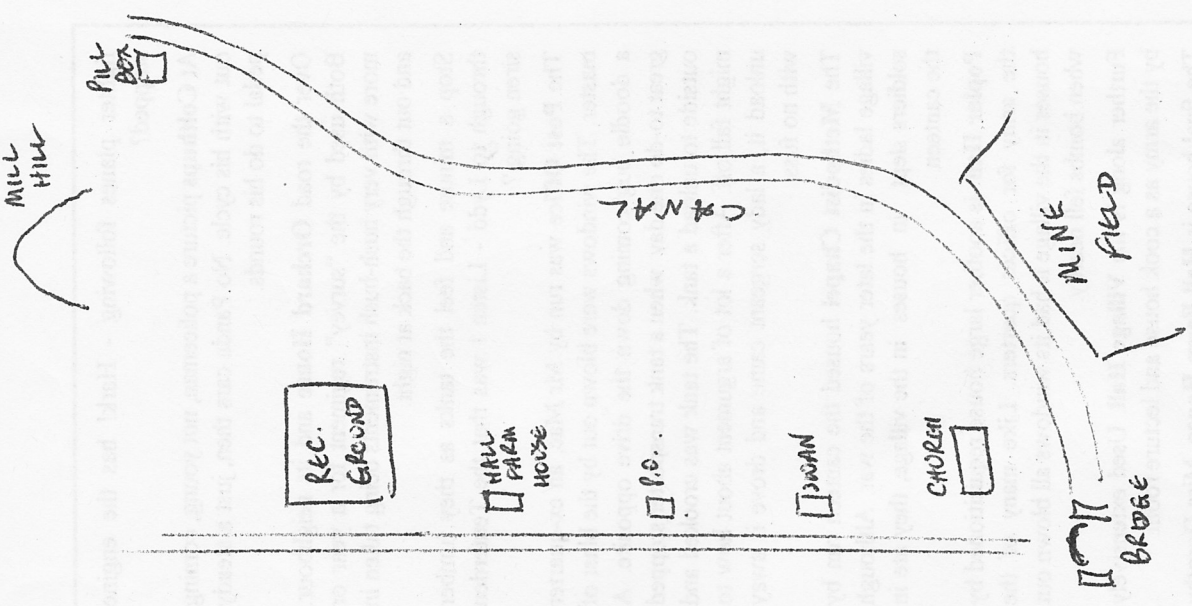
If you're lucky as you walk along and there's a break in the clouds you might catch sight of bomber planes stacking up awaiting their fighter escorts before setting off across the Channel.

The field opposite, now a peaceful corn field was a **deadly mine field** in those days. As you stroll along imagine a hive of activity with army lorries parked beneath the trees.

The **bridge** at the end has been rebuilt. The original was blown up, accidentally while testing to see if the charges underneath were safe!

Finally back to the **Church**, a hole in the roof, some plaster down and windows broken but services continued throughout. Inside is a war memorial and outside in the churchyard a War Grave. All local men and sadly missed.

As you leave the Church stop a moment and listen - Can that be the echo of the victory bells you can hear ringing out once again loud and clear from the tower above.



Produced by the Appledore Local History Society

The society wishes to thank the Appledore Tea Rooms for kindly sponsoring the production of this leaflet.

SIGHTS & SOUNDS OF WARTIME APPELDORE

A circular walk around Appledore taking about one and a half hours. For a shorter walk we suggest you use the leaflet to walk up the Street and then back down to the Church.

Appledore was a restricted area, full of troops, tanks and other army vehicles. No one, apart from close family was allowed to visit.

Our walk starts at the Tea Rooms. The scene outside is virtually unchanged but before starting pause, listen and let your mind go back through the years.

Can you see the Church Parades led by the Army, hear the Home Guard talking, while they keep "silent" watch on top of the Church Tower, see King George VI walking along the road to inspect the hastily assembled troops.

No church bells to listen to during those years, but many different accents: the Welsh Guards, Durham Light Infantry, Northumberland Fusiliers, the Leicester Regiment, the Liverpool Irish, the Somerset Light, to name just a few of the regiments who were stationed here during the War.

And up above and across from France the steady drone of aircraft, the noise of bombs exploding, anti aircraft and machine gun fire, and the dreaded doodle bugs.