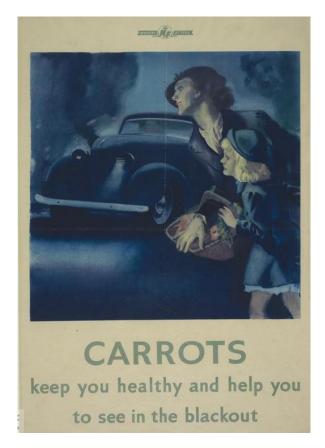
# Changes to Daily Life.

The Emergency Powers regulations applied from the dates below. As the war progressed further powers were taken, for instance the requisitioning of land for either military or agricultural purposes. Some information given in the Time Line has been repeated for readers' convenience to give an idea of the rapid pace of wartime legislation.

Any further information related to the village or inhabitants would be appreciated.

**1939. 1**<sup>st</sup> **September.** The 'black-out'. After black-out time no lights were to be shown. No opportunity was lost to encourage caution and healthy eating. It was believed that carrots aided night vision.



'Carrots Keep You Healthy'
© IWM Art. IWM PST 6015. Imperial War Museum.

Reported in the Bury Free Press and Post.

# BURY FREE PRESS & POST, SEPTEMBER 18th. 1943

Edith Morley, of Anchor Lane, Lakenheath, was fined 15/- for permitting a light to be displayed inside a roofed building during the hours of darkness on 20<sup>th</sup> August.

In 1943 15/- (shillings) was the equivalent of approx. £42 today.

**1939. 1**<sup>st</sup> **September.** The first phase of evacuation from towns and cities was begun. (OPERATION PIED PIPER). The first evacuees from London arrived in Undley on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept. *Please see the Timeline*.

**1939. 8**<sup>th</sup> **September**. In order to maintain essential supplies for military use and the war effort generally, petrol for private use was rationed on the 8th September 1939. In 1942 further restrictions made it available by special permit only, for instance, to doctors, War Ag. officials and others whose work was essential. The already small number of cars in and around the village would have been further reduced. The permit included agricultural vehicles which brought about a resurgence of horses on some farms. Petrol was coloured pink to combat illegal use. *Photographs of petrol coupons are shown on the Timeline at 8th September 1939.* 

1939. 30th September, 1st October. Compulsory National Identity Cards were issued. Please see the Timeline.

**1940.** 8<sup>th</sup> January. Food rationing commenced. It was changed regularly to reflect availability.

**1941. 1**<sup>st</sup> **January.** Rationing of clothes furniture and furnishings began.

**1941. 25**<sup>th</sup> **February.** Double Summer Time was introduced, effectively making agricultural work possible until 11.00pm.

Quite apart from all the new regulations, wartime movement of military personnel had a big effect on rail travel and bus services which were severely affected, particularly after enemy action. Food rationing brought considerable changes to everyday life.

# Food Rationing.

The War at Sea greatly affected the supply of food: our dependence on large amounts of imported food was a major problem. In 1939 \*'Great Britain was importing 70% of its cheese and sugar, 80% of its fruit and 70% of its cereals and fats'. The population was constantly urged to be economical with food by all available means. The Ministry of Food commissioned posters to get its message across.

\*Wikipedia



'Food is a Munition of War.....'

©IWM Art.IWM PST 20687



'A Clear Plate Means a Clear Conscience
- Don't Take More Than You Can Eat'

©IWM Art.IWM PST 2814

Imperial War Museum.

Food rationing began with bacon, butter, sugar, cooking fats and tea being rationed in July 1940. Fruit and vegetables were not rationed but were often in short supply and fruits like bananas and oranges became virtually unobtainable. In March 1940, meat was rationed, with cheese and preserves following in March and May 1941 and in 1942 tinned tomatoes, peas, and canned fruit followed. Other rationed foods were eggs, biscuits, fish, breakfast cereals, dried fruit, and rice. Tinned meats like Spam (luncheon meat) and corned beef appeared in 1941/2 and for some, horse meat filled the gap. Alcohol was never rationed.

Terry Charman. 22.03.18. museumcrush.org

# www.bbc.co.uk>history>ww2peopleswar>stories

Country folk generally fared better than people in towns and cities but the scarcity of basic ingredients affected everybody, especially when it came to the making of tasty traditional dishes.

The Ministry of Food and The Ministry of Agriculture, were set up to control every aspect of food supply. This was done by the setting up of Food Control Committees made up of retailers and consumers for each food area (Divisions) who were appointed by the local authority and who were responsible to a Divisional Food Officer.

In 1943 the ration for each adult was:

1 packet dried egg per month. 12oz sweets per month. Jam or similar preserve 1lb every 2 months.

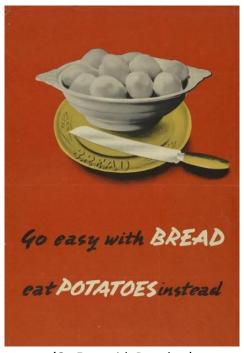
Imperial weights and pre-decimalisation money.

Weight: oz- ounces. 16oz per 1 lb. 1oz = 28gms. lb- pound. Equivalent to ½ Kg Money: £- pound= 20 shillings or 240 pence. ½ d (half-pennies) and 1/4d (farthings).

The sugar ration affected jam, marmalade, syrup, and treacle. The obvious happened when many people gave up sugar in their tea, making the sugar saved available for puddings and jam. In 1941 dried milk became available when liquid milk was rationed and canned food such as condensed milk and fruit and vegetables became available on a 'points' system. Pregnant women, children and some workers were treated a little more generously as were those whose work was particularly strenuous and amounts for everyone were regularly adjusted.

Rationing in World War Two: historic-uk.com

Additionally, a number of 'staples' were in short supply, eggs in particular. Although bread was not rationed, white flour became increasingly in demand and the population was urged to eat less white bread; so much so that in 1942 the National Loaf was introduced which was made using wholemeal flour with vitamins added, (the forerunner of 'Hovis'). For a population used only to white bread the national loaf was not well received and was described as mushy in taste and unattractive in colour. Oats, a cereal traditionally associated with horse feed became an important ingredient in cooking.



'Go Easy with Bread....'
©IWM Art.IWM PST 20675. Imperial War Museum

Lakenheath had the advantage of locally available wild fowl, eels and wild rabbits, not to mention vegetables grown in gardens and allotments and hens and a pig often improved things. The pickling of surplus vegetables grown on garden or allotment was a common feature of a housewife's year and almost all food was prepared and cooked in the home. But like everywhere else, many normally available food-stuffs were either in short supply or virtually unobtainable.

The national campaign, 'Digging for Victory', was definitely not a new experience for Lakenheath village but having to change or reduce everyday cooking ingredients was probably difficult for many people.

<sup>\*</sup>Per week:

<sup>\*4</sup>oz. Bacon and ham. \*Other meat 1 shilling 2 pence (=2 small chops). \*8oz. Sugar. \*2oz. Tea. \*2 oz Cheese. \*2oz. Butter. \*4oz. Cooking fat. \*3 Pints milk. \*4oz. Margarine. \*1 Fresh Egg.



'DIG FOR VICTORY NOW.'
©IWM Art.IWM PST 17009. Imperial War Museum.

"In Lakenheath most people were related to each other in one way or another, the old people were somebody's gran, grandad, uncle or aunt who saw after them, or a good neighbour would....."

"There were several allotments around the village (small pieces of land) that could be rented to grow vegetables, also a pen to keep a few hens for eggs or to fatten a few cockerels for the pot. If gardens were large enough, fowl could be kept there too, a wooden rabbit hutch did not take up much space, therefore many people kept domestic rabbits which were very good, and even the skins could be sold. Rabbit skins were used to line clothes and winter boots."......"If meat was scarce good vegetables and even wartime bread made a decent meal".

Also: "In Undley most tenants had a house cow for milk, some had 3 or 4 and sold milk to the Milk Marketing Board. ................. Later on in the war when some people were allowed to slaughter a pig for their own consumption (with the necessary licence) they had to forfeit their meat coupons. It was illegal to sell any of this meat. ................. One of our neighbours had access to a cellar, most had to keep any fresh meat in a safe (not a money safe), they were nothing more than a wooden box with metal mesh.

When we had a pig killed three or four neighbours would receive a joint of pork or a plate of lovely offal (some liver, heart, kidney and lacy fat) these favours were returned when they slaughtered their own pigs".

# Butchering the pigs:

"Fred Smith was a very versatile man, blacksmith, slaughterer, butcher, ham and bacon curer, and a special constable as well. ........... Mr Smith would kill the pig with a humane killer and drain its blood and prepare the carcase for butchering".

Each pig yielded two large hams, two upper legs and two cheeks which usually were cured and smoked for bacon and ham. The lower belly and lower legs would be preserved by salting in large earthenware pots and the head, bones, and odd joints were turned into pork brawn. The smoking was done in Mr Smith's smoke hut. Bacon was cured in a brine made with vinegar, salt, brown sugar, and black treacle or molasses and then dried and then taken to Mr Smith's to be smoked.

Ken Turner

Eels could be caught by 'babbing'.

"This is best done after dark when the eels are most actively looking for food. To catch the eels first you dig for a tin full of lobworms which is best done when dark with a torch as they come to the surface. Then, using a length of worsted wool thread, threaded through a needle, thread each worm, head to tail until you have about a foot of wool with worms. Remove the needle and wrap the worms into a ball tied together.

The eel's teeth stick as they get caught in the wool. Then securely attach the other end of the wool to a short cane. You will need a metal container, or, better still, a \*tin bath. Using the cane, lower the worms to touch the bottom of the river and wait for tugs on the wool by the worms. Lift the cane over the bath or container without touching anything on the way or you will lose the eels. On touching the side of the container the eel will drop off. The eels can by cooked, either by boiling or cut into fillets and fried".

Philip Jackson.

# The Ministry of Food Demonstrations.

The authorities recognised that the shortage, or even complete disappearance, of commonly used ingredients could undermine national morale. Accordingly, a programme of cookery demonstrations which introduced substitute ingredients in everyday dishes was organised to show how imported ingredients could be reduced or replaced. Backed by the Ministry of Food, dishes were devised which considerably reduced the usual ingredients, or which introduced alternatives to those which had been traditionally used, and some completely new dishes were developed.

Cooking hints featured regularly in newspapers and magazines and The Ministry of Food produced recipe leaflets. Expert cooks such as Marguerite Patten advised, and Domestic Science teachers gave cookery demonstrations using the revised recipes, often in church and village halls and similar places.

### A Demonstration from November 1941.

The damaged condition of the demonstrator's original notes has made transcription necessary. They show examples of recipes created to cope with the shortage of ingredients by, in this case, using oatmeal. The need to accept changed circumstances is emphasised whilst suggesting nutritious recipes.

The pre-war dependence on imported food (shipping) and the need to save fuel, led to the increased use of potatoes and oats, and the reduced use of tinned foods. Re-using 'scraps' and using vegetable leaves and carrot tops are emphasised as well as saving flour and milk. There's also the suggestion that there will be less fruit for Christmas! (Unless less is used now?)

## The notes:

## Order of work

- 1. Oatmeal sausage.
- 2. Illegible text.
- 3. Hunters Nuts.
- 4. Oatmeal scones.
- 5. Oatmeal potato cakes.
- 6. Coat and fry sausage. (Presumably at the end to save time?)

#### Emphasise.

1. Reasons for using oatmeal. - Food values.

- Homegrown.

- Economical - cheap to buy, -needs less fat.

2. Keeping Qualities. -contains fat -doesn't keep as long as flour.
3. Suggestions. -use old porridge.

-Eat scones instead of bread.

-Oatmeal for thickening soups.

## Summing up.

\*J B Priestley's wireless talk, "Put aside old conventions. Support the Ministry of Food".

Try out new ideas and share them - Advertise your demo's.

### Points to remember.

Oatmeal and potatoes instead of flour - saves shipping.

Economy in every meal. - Use up scraps,

-Use veg. tops and leaves'

-Use less fruit, - more for Xmas. (I assume she means dried fruit).

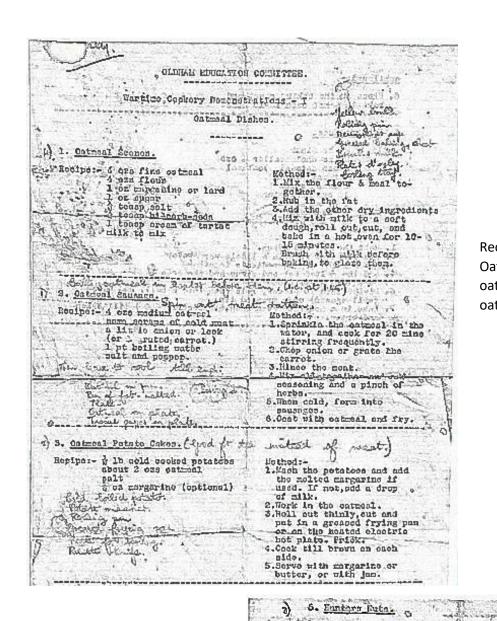
-Save on tinned food,

-Economise on milk,

-Save fuel

J B Priestley. Well known author and broadcaster of the time.

<sup>\*</sup>Tin baths preceded modern baths and bathrooms.



Recipes for Oatmeal scones, oatmeal sausages and oatmeal potato cakes.

Recipes for Hunters nuts and Bakewell tart.

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And the calculation of the cold from the col
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Ingenuity was the order of the day and ideas were shared at church and village halls (WI's etc.) all over the country. See 1943 in the Timeline for a newspaper report of a WI meeting in Lakenheath.

Marie Laflin's mum made a syrup pudding which used sugar-beet to provide the essential sweetness.

"......when occasionally there would be some sugar beet which had dropped off the tractor and the trailer, Father would pick them up and bring them home and they would boil them. Because we didn't have electric coppers we had a copper in the shed where you lit the fire and I used to have to light the fire and stand back because when it started a mouse would run out and I didn't like that. He (Father) boiled up the sugar beet, boiled and boiled and in the end eventually they turned into syrup, which was lovely it tasted like maple syrup. So Mother used to use that for cooking, she made lovely sponge puddings, she used the syrup for sweetening, (sugar was rationed), and also(she) pour(ed) it over, we called them "sugar beet puddings" and they were lovely. That was one thing I really enjoyed.

Marie Laflin in Times Remembered.

You can listen to Marie's recollections in 'Times Remembered' on this website.

# Make Do and Mend, Utility Clothing and Furniture and household textiles.

Materials available for the making of clothing and furniture were reduced to allow factory space, labour and materials to be largely devoted to the production of essential war equipment. Any kind of waste came with a cost and so recycling became both a domestic and industrial activity which was essential to the war effort.



'Raw Material is War Material'
©IWM Art.IWM PST 14673. Imperial War Museum

## The Utility Scheme.

The term 'utility' described the essential simplicity of styling and economy of materials used in clothing, furniture, and such things as bed linen. The concern about the effects of food shortages on morale was also to some extent relevant to clothing and furniture and it was considered essential that new clothing should be available despite the needs of the war effort.

All clothing and furniture had to be marked to show that it conformed to the utility scheme set up by The Board of Trade.

'People should be able to 'maintain standards of dress'.

Some 'utility' designs are shown in the later photos. Such was their success that they influenced post-war furniture and fashion design. For instance, it's claimed that the requirement to carry a gas mask at all times led to the development of the shoulder bag which was unknown before the war.

'Make Do and Mend' particularly related to clothes and household items which were sometimes difficult to come by; a colander could have a handle repaired by 'cannibalising' an otherwise unusable piece of equipment, and broken or damaged furniture could be 'DIY'ed', and useful skills were developed out of necessity. I was told that small boys often learned to use a hammer by straightening bent nails so that they could be re-used. Ingenious solutions to everyday clothing problems were shared. It's said that it was not uncommon for men's trousers to be worn by ladies, particularly if the man was serving overseas for a lengthy period, and many a little girl's skirt was made from her father's cut off old trouser legs. It's highly likely that the later fashion for 'slacks' in the 1950's came about directly as a result of this wartime practicality.

A way of life came about which continued well after the war was over and for many people it remained a 'good habit'.



MAKE-DO AND MEND-EXHIBITION.
© IWM Art. IWM PST 14949. Imperial War Museum

## Clothes.

'Utility' standards were strictly applied and limited both the amount of fabric used and the range of garments available to buy; for example, only 15 different styles were allowed for girls' dresses.

Every textile was a wartime essential, used not just for uniforms and equipment, but for medical essentials like bandages and field dressings. They also supplied a wide range of vital industrial and scientific applications.

What had been thought of as desirable, like silk stockings, silk blouses, lining for jackets, and so on soon assumed the status of an almost impossible luxury. It's well known that the silk used in parachute canopies so relied on by the RAF and airborne troops provided a source of women's underwear and the blouses for social occasions. Sad to say that aircraft crashes were sometimes a source of silk for lingerie made from parachutes and parachute webbing and cords could be very useful for all sorts of things.





'GO THROUGH YOUR WARDROBE' ©IWM Art. PST 4773. Imperial War Museum

UTILITY DRESS SHOW AT AN AIRCRAFT REPAIR DEPOT.

©IWM CH 15996. Imperial War Museum.

Simple and practical styles made economic use of what was available. Elasticated belts disappeared entirely and buttons were everywhere to be seen. Knitting became a national activity and even though wool was rationed old woollen garments could be unravelled and reused.

School children were taught to knit and given free wool, and free patterns were available from wool producers.

Due to shortages, the lending and borrowing of clothes when something 'special' was needed became common. The simply styled 'bought' garments encouraged alterations to existing clothing and also made creative imitation possible. For those who could buy 'new' the choice was relatively simple, but for many women the altering and recycling of older clothes was a normal activity which was made easier by 'Bring and Buy Sales' and Clothes Exchanges. (As has already been said, there was a sewing machine in the Land Army Hostel)! These were often organised by the WVS, and were a source of recyclable fabric for adult clothing as well as clothing and shoes for children. It's easy to imagine a Clothes Exchange taking place in the Peace Memorial (Village) Hall. It's sure that the sewing machine in the Land Army Hostel was well used!



'MARKETING WITHOUT MONEY': CHILDREN'S CLOTHING EXCHANGE. NORWOOD. ENGLAND. UK. 1943

© IWM D 15092 Imperial War Museum.

Rules were very strict particularly for men's clothing. No double-breasted jackets were allowed and lapels had a maximum size and turn-ups were not allowed. Zip fasteners and elasticated waistbands were also not allowed.



Men trying on clothes from the utility scheme. ©IWM D 11587. Imperial War Museum.

Clothes were finally taken off ration in March 1949.

# Furniture and Furnishings.

Like all rationed commodities new furniture could only be purchased on the production of a Ration Book/Buying Permit. As a general principle, new furniture and furnishings could only be purchased by newlyweds or people who had been bombed out of their homes. The Board of Trade commissioned designers to produce basic 'Utility' furniture which used the minimum of solid wood (plywood was extensively used) and uncomplicated construction techniques. This led to innovative design and production ideas some of which had been developed in aircraft construction.



UTILITY FURNITURE AT THE BUILDING CENTRE, LONDON, 1942 ©IWM D 11051. Imperial War Museum.

The quantity of furniture allowed to be purchased was strictly limited and the required number of stamps had to be presented along with the purchase price before the sale could go ahead. A further form of security required the purchaser to include their Identity Card number or their armed forces service number. Naturally second-hand furniture and 'hand me downs' were eagerly sought after and was often hard to come by. At the end of the war returning servicemen were catered for to some extent as the certificate permitting the supply of bed sheets without the surrender of coupons shows. (See below). Utility furniture continued to be the main source of new furniture until 1952 and the leaflet UFD/6 'Utility Furniture\_and Household Furnishings' clearly shows the difficulties the country was facing.

These documents below relate to purchases made by Martin Taylor's father and mother in 1947/8.



Front of Buying Permit from 1947.

A page from the Buying Permit: Certificate to purchase bedsheets.



Utility Furniture stamps.

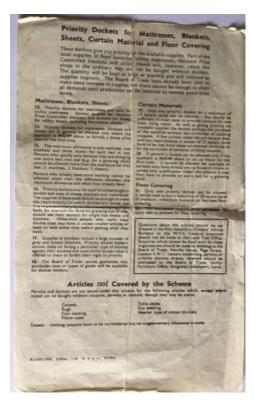


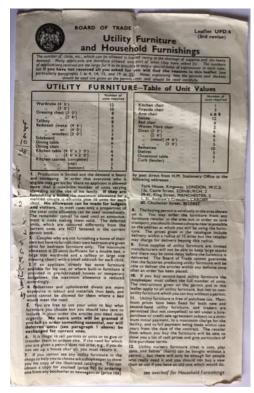


Invoice from Sheerness CO-OP. 1948.

Leaflet UFD/6. Utility Furniture and Household Furrnishings Leaflet.

This gives a table of unit values for each item of furniture.





Priority Dockets for Mattresses, Blankets etc

Documents donated by Martin Taylor.

After the war ended there was a period of austerity which ended in 1952 in which prices were tightly controlled and furniture remained more or less like the utility scheme which had been abolished in 1949.

The National Archives: Board of Trade Utility Furniture Scheme.