



Dorothy Jarvis

We had to go straight off, up a huge, a very steep hill it's from the station to the village in Alton, well we had trail up there and I was beginning to feel tired by that stage and most of us were trailing, lagging behind and we trailed in a long crocodile through the village and I was sort of quite a bit excited about the style of the houses because they were made of great big stones. You know and I'd been used to red brick all my life. And we were taken to the school and again it was like going to somewhere like fairyland because it's a beautiful school in Alton, the primary school, it's a beautiful setting where the school is with the castle on the edge of the precipice, but we were rather tired but they gave us tea and biscuits and of course we went to the loo and that sort of thing. And then we had to turn round and go back to the village with this er, this Miss Sergeant, you know it was a good name for her, who had a long list and every so often we'd go down the High Street and children were disappearing into houses. They went in twos and, usually ones and twos but sometimes just one. I think they had put preferences down the host families, but they didn't always get what they wanted, but they tried very hard to. And then all the other children had gone and myself and my brother were the last ones and we went to this big house in Alton and *rat-tat-tat* at the door and we were [breaths in] you know, holding each other's hand then and the door opened and a lady came out and said "I can't take these children, I can't have them my house is full". So the billet lady said "You've got to take them because we know you've got a big house", she said "Well I've just got my sister here with her two children and they're staying with me", so she said "Well you've still got to take these children" and it was the first inkling I had that it was perhaps not going to be so good because she obviously did not want us. Anyway, they were very kind and we went in and first of all they wanted to see what we'd brought with us and we opened our suitcases and had to show them all our clothes and I found that rather disturbing you know I didn't want people looking at my underwear at that stage, you know you didn't show your knickers to anybody you see! Anyway they fed us well and I started to cry when I went to bed but Tony had fallen asleep straight away because he was so tired.