

## **“Oh I aint half prad of my ol’ Mum”**

When I was young my Mum, Dorothy Miles often told me about The Blitz and the Doodlebugs. She was only a teenager then so I guess some of it was quite amusing to her. She told me of the sirens sounding before a raid, before the German bombers, and the gradual drone of the bombers as they came nearer. The droaning becoming louder and louder. German bombers I have been told, ‘crabbed’ as they flew, that is they all moved to one side. So occasionally the pilots corrected them back on course, causing a louder droan.

My Mum told me that after the siren sounded, most of the family fled to the Anderson shelter which was in the garden, but my gran opposed all this and hid under the kitchen table, leaving her rear protruding. My gran and the rest of the family, all lived in Rodney Place, Walthamstow until a few years after the war. My Mum told me of the raid where Millfield Avenue was bombed, the area of the bombing is now marked by newish council homes. The targets of the Luftwaffe were the engineering factories in the Billet Road (or so it is said) but bombed many homes and killed and wounded a lot of people. After the raid my Mum took a walk around the back garden and saw what she took to be the leg of a chair, but when she picked it up, horrified she found it was the rear leg of a dog! She hated firework night, because it reminded her of the war, as many of her generation did.

It seems that my Mum, Dolly missed being blown up by a Doodlebug, missed being bombed by the Luftwaffe, and was almost blown up by a V2. I heard that my Mum and Dad (my father being on leave at the time), were returning from the laundry in James Street with the laundry and as they walked along Blackhorse Road, and somewhere way behind them fell a V2 . Fortunately, they were not harmed but the bags of laundry they were carrying on their heads ended up being blown up the street. This they found laughable.

As a kid I used to play at the gun sight which was a barrage balloon depot and anti aircraft gun sight. I remember the deep concrete trenches the old pill boxes used frequently as toilets and lots of old barbed wire. The area of the gun sight has the strange name of ‘The Dolly Hole’. I don’t know exactly when but the gun sight was blown up some time in the early 60s, I still remembered hearing explosions in Fleeming Road. An old friend of mine told me of the time when he lived in Leyton, that an Anderson shelter received a direct hit , the family were inside and the shelter was blown over the roof of their house and landed in the street. The family of four were all found dead inside, how awful that war on civilians is common place these days. My parents had little time for Remberance Day, just contempt for it. I don’t blame them; I think they just tried to forget it that’s all.

An incident of a german bomber shot down by night, and crashed into one of the local reservoirs I think was sad, the ARP tried to rescue the crew but due to darkness the crew could not be found and they were all drowned. The crew were all buried in Chingford cemetery, how decent and respectful we are.

In closing a V2 rocket, fell at the end of Farnham Avenue near Forest Road and at the other end of it in Chingford Road a parachute mine fell which appears to have been very devastating.

Well I hope you found that interesting

Thanks all, Alan