

Written memoir to aide interview of Mr Ceredig Evans, Royal Navy Veteran

This interview took place at Gerald's home in West Wales on 1st August 2023. The interviewer was Mr Neil Davies of Age Cymru Dyfed Veterans. The film and audio were recorded by Mr Steven Munro, Age Cymru Dyfed Veterans project volunteer

This is the second interview of two recorded on the day and recalls Ceredig's childhood experience of London during the war.

The text has been altered and paraphrased to aide understanding but retains the facts and feelings attached to Ceredig's story.

I was born East Dulwich London (in 1927). At age 5 years old we moved to West London, where my father had his Milk business at Waverley Walk. Most of the Milk trade in London was done by Welsh people. My parents had moved to London from Wales in the 1930's.

When the war began, I was evacuated down to Wales. I was about eleven and went to live with my Aunt on a farm in Llanafan, Ceredigion.

But by 1942 my father's staff had been drougthed into the military. So at age fifteen I was back to Paddington, to help father with his dairy business.

My main job was to help with milk round. Milk was delivered by barrow or bicycle if further away. The round began at 5:30 - 06:00.

The milk was delivered in churns and bottled at the premises. Bottles were left on customers doorstep. Our delivery was mostly in poorer parts of Paddington. They would leave money in (an empty) bottle, a plus a note of what they were paying. People trusted each other then.

Ceredig later went around collecting customer's money.

Father also had deliveries in East Dulwich a posher part of London. But father experienced more trouble collecting payment from East Dulwich, than he did from then poorer parts of West London.

One customer was bed ridden, so milk was taken upstairs to her.

When on delivery you often heard the air raid siren, followed by the “Doodle Bugs” (Flying Bombs). You would head for the nearest air raid shelter. If you thought the raid was a big one (volume of German planes overhead) you would head to a big shelter. When sheltering you had to wait for the all clear (siren) to sound.

With the “Doodle Bugs”, you never actually heard them coming (after the engines stopped).

One time I went to a big air raid shelter under a furniture warehouse. It actually got hit with incendiary bombs and “set alight “. There was one solitary fireman, up on an extending ladder, who fought the blaze. He was awarded a medal for his service. (Fortunately) the fire did not affect the shelter underneath, due to the thick concrete (walls and roof).

I often had to leave the milk cart in the street, if a raid happened.

After the Milk round was done, I would finish work and in the afternoon help the ARP (Air Raid Precautions).

One time a bomb hit the corner of our street The blast blew out all the windows in the house. My elder brother slept through it all!

I helped the ARP clear the rubble (at bast sites) by hand. The heavy stuff was done by machines. I got two people out alive but never saw any deceased bodies.

My father did fire watching for the ARP. If he saw a fire, he had to report where it was.

(The German) Incendiary bombs did a lot of damage. In Paddington trains ran through out the air raids. At the bottom of my street was Paddington goods (by rail) depot. The Germans tried many times to hit it but failed. Although the houses nearby were often hit. I don't think they ever hit the (railway) lines.



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I often looked up in sky to see German bombers. I remember I went to my Grandmother's house in Ealing. I looked up and saw half a dozen German bombers up in the sky. I saw some comedown with the RAF Spitfires going for it (attacking them Germans). The (German) air crew para-chuted down as their planes crashed. Ealing was quite a country area back then, but it is built up now. The Home guard went out and captured them (the aircrew). They were escorted to the POW camps. I never saw an enemy pilot up close. But it was a good feeling when our Spitfire shot down the enemy. Being a young lad at the time, you did not think of the damage to them though. "Quite a time it was."

When the war ended, I was serving in the Royal Navy. I went on a few victory parades.

We did Hereford and Worcester, marching through town with fixed bayonets. There were many crowds cheering. The Army Navy and Air force were there but the Navy was the smartest.

I'm Ceredig Price Evans, I'm 96 years old. I live in a nice part of Wales. I've shared my experience of the War. I've told you all I can remember of that time which is a long time ago.

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- Our thanks to the National Library of Wales for assisting in the producing and retention of the film material.



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