



1. Evacuation



2. Gas Masks & ID Cards



3. Rationing & Memories



4. Questions & Answers

The following is Part 2 of a transcript produced from a tape recording made in 1983, when Margery Kelsey (née Chambers) spoke to a class of children at Pyrford Junior School in Surrey, about her experiences during the Second World War.

Part 2 (of 4) - Gas Masks and Identity Cards

Margery Kelsey: "I have brought some things. This in fact...I noticed you all had a gas mask. This was the case of a gas mask but we had to.....after the war we had to give them all back. I believe last year you had one from somewhere?"

Teacher: "Actually we've got quite a few this year. We've got about three gas masks."

Margery Kelsey: "With the gas mask in front?"

Teacher: "We've got one bag with a disintegrated gas mask inside.....and we've got one box, but unfortunately the box isn't complete it's sort of fallen to bits."

Margery Kelsey: ".....but you see, our gas masks fitted in there and we had all the instructions on the lid. We didn't have to use them which was a good thing but we never went anywhere without them, even when I left school in 1942 and I came home and went to work, I still..... we all carried them every day and in fact all the shops used to sell the most fantastic type of covers there were cloth ones and even the 'well-to-do' people had leather cases and with lovely shoulder straps so you had it on your shoulder. But we as children all just took this wherever and we never ever went without it."

"You also had, I noticed someone had an identity card."

Teacher: "They've all got one..... we did copy them yes..... so they could have one each."

Margery Kelsey: "The identity cards, I was thinking last evening, they weren't issued until after the war started. We were all given a number and it was the number of people in the household. So I was 5 because the lady (the mother) and the father and the two children were 1, 2, 3, 4, so I was 5, because I was the evacuee. But that's what you always carried wherever you went. I've forgotten what it said, name and address, number, is that right?"

Teacher: "What happened when you were asked for them?"

Margery Kelsey: "Oh you just showed them. That was all you had to make sure..... seldom were you asked; probably adults were, but not so much children. They were two different colours as well."

Teacher: “Yes - I have to admit that I photocopied the adult one. I didn’t photocopy the children’s one.”

Margery Kelsey: “Yes - I think they were a beige colour.”

Teacher: “Mrs Cossee’s in fact got her own that she had as a child.”

Margery Kelsey: “Is it beige then?”

Teacher: “I think it is.”

Child: “A creamy beige.”

Margery Kelsey: “A creamy beige colour yes.”

Child: (inaudible): (has an identity card)

Margery Kelsey: “You’ve got an original one have you? How interesting and that was your mummy’s was it? Your grandma’s - yes it would be wouldn’t it. Yes, yes it would be. Oh that’s it – that’s a child one, a creamy beige colour – that’s right.”

“That’s it, number and your address and of course if you changed your addresses then a sticker was put over. I had two or three different stickers because, of course being a child I moved around. And then later in the war that’s right it was changed for an adult one. I suppose you were 18 to be an adult I can’t remember – maybe not in those days because you left school at 14 in those days.”

