

## 1942-1943 Ministry Of Food Ration Book, Per Week.

Bacon & Ham -	4oz.
Meat.	Approx -1.lb
Butter.	4.oz.
Cheese.	2.oz - 8.oz.
Tea.	2.oz.
Sugar.	12.oz.
Margarine.	2.oz.
Milk.	2-3 Pints.
Eggs.	1 Small Egg Every 4 Weeks.
Dried Eggs.	1 Packet Every 4 weeks.
Sweets.	12. oz Every 4 Weeks.

Other rationing also on Clothes, Fuel for Household Coal Coke Etc, and Petrol and Oils Etc, for motor driven vehicles.

1.

Stanley Joseph Clark.  
11. Carr's Way.  
Harpole.  
Northampton.  
NN7 4BZ.  
2004-10-19.

After seeing an old war time ration quota for the period of 1942-43, I sat down and wrote of what I remember of my youth of growing up in these war years and the period after, and about the family that I was born into.

Mother and Father were to meet at Blisworth, when father was erecting the electricity poles in the village to supply electricity to all the houses there.

This was about the 1927 period, they were to get married in 1928 as (Sid) Walter Sydney Frank Clark, my eldest brother was born on the 19-09-28, up Stoke Bruerne Road, with uncle Bill and aunt Cloe French in Blisworth, they lived there for a short period before moving to Kiln Yard Bugbrooke, they only lived in this yard for a short time, before they moved to the cottage that stands opposite Bugbrooke village hall, next door to Mr and Mrs Hanley, and in later years Mr and Mrs Heygate the Millar and Farmer were to move in from the Mill House .

(Gwen) Gwendolyn Joan Clark was to be born in this cottage on the 13-06-1930; mother gave birth to Gwen half way up the stairs to the first floor.

Myra Ann Clark was born on the 18-05-1935; But Myra was to loose her life on the Isolation Ward in Staverton Hospital with Diphtheria on the 04-06-1940, also during this period Sid was in the Isolation Hospital at Hardingstone with Diphtheria, from what he survived from.

This disease was bought down from London with the evacuees at the start of the Second World War.

I was to born in this cottage on the 09-04-1939 Easter Sunday morning of that year, followed by Malcolm born on the 26-05 1941, then Audrey Jennifer Clark on the 23-02-1944, soon after this period we were to move home up to No 6 Camp Hill (now 41) where Stella Elizabeth Clark was born on the 27-02-1947, during this period in time we had been subjected to a terrible blizzard, and Bugbrooke was cut off for eight weeks, due to this heavy snow fall, the fine snow had blown under the slates of the house and had completely filled the attic completely solid with snow, Dad erected a tarpaulin over the bed that mother and Stella was in, as the snow started to melt and run through the ceiling, I was sent up into the attic to help dig out some of this snow, and dad was to paint over the joins of the slates with watered down cow muck mixed with flour, to stop more snow from blowing in.

During this winter of 1947 Joe Abel was home on leave and staying with us up Camp Hill, one of his hobbies was shooting, and if and when the Pidgins came down to eat the Greens that were growing in the gardens, such as Brussels that were just poking through the snow where the wind had blown it away from them, Joe would sit up in the bedroom window waiting for them to settle, before shooting them, he was to shoot dozens of pidgins in a very short period, of what he shared out to all that lived in the row of Council Houses, Pidgin Pie was the order of the day, it was not to be the only meat that he bought back home through the period that he was on leave, as we were to have mutton for quite some time, as well as all the different birds that he shot.

2.

While he was at home we never ran out of fuel for heating the home, as at night he would come back with all sorts of wood, boughs from trees etc, and when the snow finally melted, there was to be many gates missing from some of the fields.

He used to say that if they had not stopped the Germans, they would have lost more than the livestock and such like, and what bit he took was nothing in comparison.

War had been declared in the September of 1939, as I was born in the April of the same year, and the start of the food rationing,

As a very young boy growing up in the Period of the second world war, food rationing did not enter my mind, I was told about it but never really understood until later years, I was about four to five years of age, when I was to start to understand about food rationing, being a country boy, surrounded by all the cattle and other animals in the fields, and amongst them running wild were rabbits by the hundreds, in all the hedge rows, and along the canal and railway banks, this was a very valuable source of food, as in later years I was to become very efficient and skilled at catching them, and taking them home for the pot.

I was taught to catch rabbits by Joe Able, and a Mr Reginald Nightingale my school friend Glenn's father, also by a Burt Surridge a close friend of Mr Nightingale's, Burt would be sitting on Barnes Bake House wall for many a hour knitting Long Nets that they used for catching rabbits with when I was a young boy, they would go out at night catching rabbits with them by the score, Mr Nightingales nick name was Rabby due to him constantly being out catching Rabbits for the pot or to sell.

But from my experience, food seemed shorter after the war years than in it, whether because I was starting to eat more as I was growing up I do not know, but one very old man did say to me just after the war, when they were to have elections, and the Labour Party was to get elected, he said that you will start to know what it is like to go hungry now they are in power, he was to tell me that the Americans did not like Communist or Socialist, and that they would send the food to the countries on the continent instead of England, we were to go hungry but whether it was because of the reasons of what I was told I do not know, but I well remember many women travelling down to London to demonstrate over the food rationing that was still enforced until the early 1950s.

I think fortunately during the latter war years of 1944, we were to move home from the cottage opposite Bugbrooke Village Hall, to the Council Houses up Camp Hill, these houses at the time had Forty Pole of land allocated to each house, my eldest brother Sid being a very keen gardener, who had worked and trained as a gardener, for a Mr Flood who ran a Market Garden Business down Church Lane Bugbrooke.

Sid was to set to and cultivate the whole lot on his own, when we first moved in the forty pole had been neglected, and was knee high in weeds and long grass, so it was to be a hard start to get the ground dug and ready for planting, this he did over the first winter so it was ready for planting in the spring, the food that he produced from this ground was unbelievable.

Before the following winter we were to have a barn full of bagged potatoes to last all winter and into the spring, along with large glass jars filled with salted down runner beans, a sack of dried broad beans, and a sack of dried peas, a clamp full of Carrots, Parsnips, and Swedes, many strings full of Onions hanging up from the rafters in the barn, along with ten pole of ground full with greens, with the likes of, Cabbages, White and Red, and Brussels, Cauliflowers, Headers, White and Blue.

And through the summer months we had fresh lettuce's, Celery, Radishes, along with Red and Black Currants, Gooseberries, Rhubarb and many different sorts of flowers for mother that grew alongside of these beds of vegetables, it was to be like that for many of the following years to come.

Another bonus with the new home up Camp Hill, it had a larger Fireplace, and with it came an oven to one side and a water heater the other, along with many attachments to boil kettles and cooking pots ect, in the winter month's mother nearly always had a large stew pot on the go, bread and broth was one of my favourites meals.

While living down the Old House any spare cabbage leaves, potato peelings, etc, and such likes of waste food was put into a bucket, to help feed a pig that Dad had a share in, as I remember part of a pig hanging on the wall, covered in cloth to keep the flies and dust off, this fresh bacon always tasted so lovely, and the same was to be after moving up to Camp Hill, but topped up with all the fresh vegetables from the garden. I do not know how some folk managed to survive on the amount that was allocated through the Ration Book, looking back we were very lucky, food wise.

There were not many houses in Bugbrooke that did not have a part or a whole Pig hanging up on the walls in those days.

When the pigs were killed from September onwards, there was to be plenty of bowls full of Collard Head, pig's trotters, Chitling Pie, Brawn, Crackling, Lard, along with several other by products from these pigs, such as Pork Pies and such like.

As I grew up I would do little jobs on Derrick Birds farm, like fetching the cows to be milked, along with learning how to milk them by hand, as well as feeding all the Hens and collecting the Eggs, he would give us a fresh pint of lovely warm milk to drink, and a Egg for my tea or breakfast, at harvest time he would give us a few shillings pocket money, or he would take us all to Silverstone for the day to watch the racing cars, food wise it was just survival, and keeping any hunger away.

One time in Derrick Birds farmyard, John Jeyes came along to cut all the testicles out of the young male pigs, he was to have a small fire in a five-gallon oil drum, and this was to heat up some irons, that he used to burn through the skin of the pigs testicles bag, after doing so he would pop them out and bite through the tube that attached them to the pig, and then was to spit them from out of his mouth into a bucket, it was not long before there was over half a bucket full of them.

Being young and with very sharp teeth he got me to have a go at doing this job, and after a while I could nip them out as quick as he could, I was to go back up home at midday to get something to eat, when mother was to ask who I had been fighting with, due to the pigs blood that was around my mouth, she thought that I had been in some sort of trouble, but when I was to tell her as to what I had been doing, she asked what they had done with these pigs testicles, and if they had not thrown them away to bring them home, I reluctantly was to ask about them when arriving back down in the farm yard, to my surprise I was to be given the lot to take back home, Mother was over the moon when doing so, and to my surprise she was to wash them in salt water, and put a load of them in the frying pan and cooking them, after this was to sit down with some fresh bread and devour them, I now know that they went under the name of Sweet Breads, they were to last her quite some time, (They were only food once again).

Another man who used to give me food and a few pence, for odd jobbing for him, was Mr Harry Lovell the Butcher, who had a Butchers shop at the junction to Pilgrims Lane, at the bottom of Camp Hill, I would collect and clean all his hens eggs up for him, and feed his pigs, pidgins, and rabbits, as well as helping him out with his Sheep and Cattle by fetching and carrying feed for his stock, along with opening and shutting gates etc, one time I was to dig all his potatoes up in his garden, I was to sort them out, along with bagging them all up ready for him to put away for winter, he was to give me a large pork pie, and a faggot to take home for my tea, he asked me the next day how it tasted, and if I had enjoyed them, I replied that I did not, but my eldest brother Sid did, it was after this episode that Mr Lovell made me sit down in his house, and eat up the food that he gave me, along with a nice cup of tea.

Being with Mr Harry Lovell over the years, I was to help him out at lambing time by pulling lambs out when the ewes were having difficulty giving birth, along with sexing hens eggs, ready to be put into the incubators for hatching, the none fertile eggs were sent away to the Egg Marketing Board, he showed me how to do this by the use of a needle on a thread, by watching if it pendulated round in circles that meant it was one sex, or side to side that meant that it was the opposite sex, I had never known it to be wrong, for the proof was in the hatching out of these chicks, this was along with how to help out with the sheep be it lambing time or any other time, regarding the sexing of hens eggs, it would raise a few eyebrows, if and when mentioning it in certain circles.

I still went down to Mr Campions farm for a period in time, due to father working for him, this was when all the Air Craft Factories closed down after the war had ended, It was always nice to be given a rabbit to take home that had been shot when harvesting the wheat crops, and for helping stack some of the Sheaves into Stooks to dry out, ready for when they had time to cart them back to the Rick Yard, when doing this job Mr Campion would wrap strips of sacking, just like putties, around the bottom of my legs and four arms, this was to stop the stubble from making them sore and bleed, and to help stop the thistles from pricking you, after harvest time we used to go into the fields Gleaning, we would collect quite a large amount of grain by doing this, that would be used for feeding the hens that produced lovely fresh eggs for breakfast,

5.

Another job I was given at harvest time was to help take fresh hot tea and cakes to all the personnel working in the fields.

We rarely went back home empty handed in those days, if it was not food of some sort from the hedgerows, like blackberries etc, it would be a large bundle of wood, or a pram full of sticks, these were for fire lighting, as well for heating, Cooking, and warming up the bathwater for our weekly Bath night!

Another food product we were encouraged to harvest from the hedge rows when ripe, were the Rose Hips that were in abundance in all the hedge rows, we were paid three pence a pound for these when taking them back to school, along with badges for the amount that one collected.

I remember one winter evening while sitting around the table at Camp Hill having a meal, when a knock came on the door, two army Officers stood there, one being English and the other a American, they asked how many personnel lived in the house, and according as to how many there were of us, they were to give mother some extra food for us all, we were to be given packets of powdered eggs, along with a very large blocks of cheese, tubs of cooking fat and Margarine, dried fruit, sugar, tined tomatoes, and several other commodities of food stuff, it was quite a surprise to have such a unexpected gift.

On another day at School we were to be given a tin of stewed steak each to take home, this was also quite a treat for us to have.

And on another occasion, we were given some food that was sent from Russia, in return for the help that England had done for them during the war years, I think that some of it was Whale Meat, so I was told, but what ever it was it got eaten.

But thanks to Sid and all his hard work we had more than most to eat, and as I grew up and got stronger I was able to help out in my own small way, I used to love to sit with him while he worked out, as to what seed he would need for the following year, as he would let me order the odd packet of Peas or Beans to grow and set myself.

I well remember when the Second World War was finally over; we were to have a very big feast to celebrate this occasion, for those of us that lived up Camp Hill, were to have some long tables out on the grass, on the spare ground in front of the Council Houses, next to the hedge opposite the track way up to Jimmy Rainbows Crossing.

We were to have sandwiches galore, as many as we could eat, followed by jellies, custard, and cakes etc.

My brother Malcolm did not like eating the jelly or custards that were made in the large tin bathes, that they served out to us on that day, because that we normally had baths in them, or they were used for washing of our dirty cloths in, I was to eat all mine up as well as his with no ill effects, this was followed by going up to the top of Bugbrooke Downs to a very large Bonfire, where there were many barrels of beer etc for the elders to celebrate with.

After all these celebrations were over, it was back to normal, with the likes of Rabbit or Hare stew, Chitling Pie, Collard Head, Brawn, Pigs Trotters, Shin Beef, or Boiled Beef, and on the odd occasion a Broiler Hen, if and when Dad was to have Fried Kippers for his Tea, mother would fry us some bread up in this Kipper Fat, myself and Malcolm my younger brother used to relish in this sort of meal, as we just loved the taste of them, it was to be a few years before we were to have a real kipper for ourselves, this was to be when we started work and could afford to buy ourselves a Kipper each.

The norm was bread spread with, lard, or dripping with plenty of salt on it, we did have to eat on the odd occasion, Bacon and Egg, or we would have fried tomatoes on many occasions, Breakfast, Dinner and tea, this was due to mother working for a catering and Hotelier person, she would bring home very large catering tins of these tomatoes.

In the winter months we would have porridge for Breakfast, as mother would put it in the oven next to the fire grate, to cook over night in a large baking tin,

While at school we were given a third of a pint of milk a day, and at times different types of vitamins, such a Cod-liver Oil and Malt.

But in the early 1950s food was to eventually come off ration, and along with starting work at Mr Harold Wards down Church Lane Bugbrooke, Ladder Making and Undertaking in the month of April 1954, I was to really start to eat well, due to the fact of starting to work hard, along with filling out very rapidly body wise, as well as having a few special treats for my self food wise, especially fresh Kippers, now that I was earning some money for myself, what bit I had left after mother taking all but a few shilling.

One type of food that I really did like, was Beastnings, it was to be some of the first lot of milk that a cow produced when it had down calved, the young calves could not suckle all of this rich milk, so the rest had to be took off, and the surplus was beautiful When put in a slow oven, and cooked very gently, it was when cooked, just like egg pudding, lovely, creamy and yellow, it was just like after eating a good stew, for it gave you a glowing feeling, you knew soon after eating it the wonderful feeling you got, you could work for hours on end, without feeling tired in any way at all.

Stanley Joseph Clark.