

Written by Sheila Smith (nee Martin)

As I am born in 1941 my wartime memories are rather scant. My first memory is of standing on the garden gate in Betteshanger Woods and a Canadian sentry calling out 'Do you want any gum chum?' Canadian troops were stationed in Betteshanger Woods and were dropped into France. I was told that most of them perished.

My mother remember that on the eve of the Canadian departure they went to the pubs in Eastry and offered all sorts of commodities to the locals ranging from petrol, rice, corned beef, corrugated iron and scaffolding pipes.

Apparently a stream of [...] left Eastry with prams, [...], wheelbarrows etc. to search for what they had been promised.

Some were lucky and some had been duped and found nothing.

My mother never encountered any problems with the troops, they were very courteous and would have known that she was along with a baby (me). My father was a market gardener and a Sgt. in the Home Guard in Eastry most evenings.