

Bartram **THE BLITZ** **and Beyond**

By Peter Daniel

Illustrated by Michael Foreman

Contents

Introduction by Peter Daniel	i
Forward by Roy Bentley	ii

Bartram, the Blitz and Beyond:

My Dad	1-10
Peace in Our Time	11-16
My Valley Hero	17-18
War is Declared	19-23
The Blitz	24-27
Drama on the Golf Course	28-31
Call Up	2-33
War Cup Final 1943	34
The Mysterious Case of J. Rogers	35
War Cup Final 1944	36-37
D-Day	38
Doodlebugs	39-42
Yanks	43-50
Victory	51-53
Two Finals in a Row	54-58
The Magic of the Twin Towers 1998	59-61

Crispin Thomas Poem:

Statue in the Mist: Super Sam Bartram	62
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Bartram, the Blitz and Beyond Activities:

Activity 1: Write a Kenning for Sam	64-65
Activity 2: Censorship & Propaganda	66-70
Activity 3: Exchange Project – The First Day of the Blitz	71-76
Activity 4: Exchange Project – Class Newspaper	77-83
Activity 5: England v Germany 1938	84-85
Activity 6: Sam's War Time Diary	86-89

Unit 9: What was it like for children in the Second World War?

Curriculum Plan for Teachers	90-95
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To discover more about Bexley during World War Two, buy a copy of "Homefires - A Borough at War" available from all Bexley Libraries for £3.50

Cover: Michael Foreman

Some of Michael Foreman's illustrations are from his book "War Boy", published by Pavilion Books.



LONDON BOROUGH OF
BEXLEY

Introduction

When Sam Bartram's statue was built outside the Valley, his daughter Moira donated a case full of Sam memorabilia to Charlton Athletic. This material has now been accepted by Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre and a generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund will hopefully bring Sam's story to a new generation of fans. Sam was a player who was universally respected. He helped to bring people together during his playing days and we hope that the legacy of his archive will help to do so today. This story book and activity pack seeks to link children living in the Charlton heartlands with children in Norfolk through the theme of evacuation.

Sam Bartram was also a fantastic father to his daughter Moira. This is also a key theme to this story. My own dad, John Daniel, took me to my first football match over thirty years ago. However, he was not a football fan...this was his first match too! The sum total of his knowledge of football amounted to the name of a goalkeeper, whose name was on everybody's lips when he grew up in Bexleyheath in the 1940s. This individual was the local hero, a man whose magnificence reached out beyond the terraces to people like my dad who ordinarily had no interest in the game. His name was Sam Bartram and consequently he was the first footballer I ever knew. My dad never saw him play but listened to him playing on the wireless the day Charlton won the F.A. Cup in 1947. Everyone seemed to know him.

When they built the statue of Sam in Charlton's centenary year I worked with some local schools, before the unveiling, to reacquaint them with this local hero. This booklet continues that job.

'Bartram, The Blitz and Beyond' tells Sam's story through the eyes of a child in World War Two so that it fits with the National Curriculum. Although fictional, it is based on the stories my father told me of his wartime childhood, but is set in Crayford the town I grew up in. It reflects my dad's stories of evacuation, where he got to charm American airmen out of their chewing gum, doodlebugs, which he tried to shoot down with a wheelbarrow from the top of his garden shed and Italian prisoners of war, whom he befriended in their huts close to his home.

For most football fans, their love of the game is something that is passed down through their family. In this way, as much as this story is dedicated to the great Sam Bartram, it is dedicated to my dad too, with love.

Peter Daniel, April 2010



*Sam's former team mate Peter Croker with Moira Bartram and Peter Daniel.
Charlton Athletic*



John Daniel far left with his family outside their Anderson shelter at 29, the Quadrant, Bexleyheath during the Blitz in 1940.

P Daniel



*Sam Bartram makes a save
Sam Bartram Collection*

Forward by Roy Bentley Chelsea (1948-56) and England

If you look at the picture of me (right), I'm in the process of kneeling Sam into the back of the goal whilst playing for Chelsea against Charlton at the Valley in 1950. I remember him calling me all the names under the sun at the time, but as soon as the game was over it was all forgotten. That was typical of Sam.

Whenever I think of him, I think of one of football's gentlemen. There really was no more likeable man in the game during my time as a professional footballer. Sam was certainly one of the greatest goalkeepers I ever played against and was more than good enough to play for England.

Like Sam I lost several years of my career because of the war but felt lucky to have got through it all unscathed. Perhaps that's why we could play football with a smile. If I managed to beat him and score he would always congratulate me if it was a good goal, but then tell me that I wouldn't be able to do it again!

Although I have a Championship medal, I never played in the F.A. Cup final. That, I must say, was partly due to Sam. When I played in the semi final against Charlton for Newcastle United in 1947, he was unbeatable.

Sam was quite an unorthodox keeper in our time, as he liked to dribble outside his area with the ball. He would have thrived in modern football because keepers today are expected to be able to do this but back then Sam was quite unique.

I was invited to attend the unveiling of his statue at the Valley back in 2005, but sadly was unable to attend as my late wife was ill. I would have loved to have been there as nobody in football was ever more deserving of such a tribute as Sam.

I think it is fantastic that Sam's memory will live on now that his papers have been deposited with Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre. I am also pleased that they will help to educate children about how we lived through those dark days of war and also how we always managed to play football, like Sam did, with a smile.



Roy Bentley bundles Sam over the line.

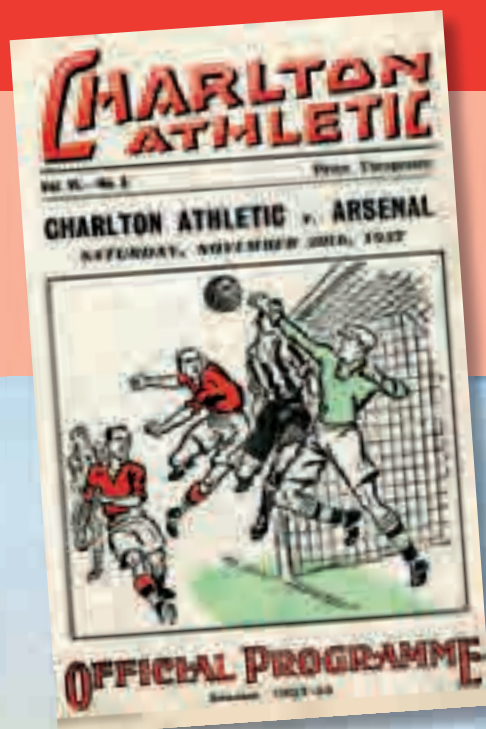


Roy Bentley challenges Sam for the ball at the Valley, 1950.

My Dad

I got to see a side of dad that nobody else ever saw. Football was OUR time. I remember sitting on his shoulders as he carried me along Floyd Road to see 'the Addicks' at The Valley for the very first time. It was against Arsenal, the team he called the 'Woolwich Rejects.'

'My First Game' Michael Foreman



When Charlton rose to the top of English Football it allowed Arsenal to once more play in the area where they had been formed.



The Woolwich Arsenal gatehouse at Beresford Square (above) and Arsenal's Manor Ground in Plumstead (left).

Arsenal Football Club was founded in 1886 as a workers' team based at the Woolwich Arsenal which made guns for the British army and navy – hence their nickname 'the Gunners.'

You can see Arsenal playing at the Manor Ground, Plumstead on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=br5fluCFsxo



Woolwich Arsenal turned professional in 1891 and joined the Football League two years later. They were promoted to the First Division in 1904 but financial problems meant they were close to bankruptcy by 1910.

In 1910, London property magnate and Fulham chairman, Sir Henry Norris bought Arsenal out, and in 1913 decided that to rescue the club they would have to move them from their Manor Ground in Plumstead (close to where Plumstead Bus Garage stands today) to a new Arsenal Stadium in Highbury, north London.





Charlton Athletic were formed in 1905 by a group of boys (above) living in East Street (now Eastmoor Street), near to the present-day site of the Thames Barrier.

The club is nicknamed the 'Addicks' because their first patron was a local fishmonger named Arthur Bryan, who would supply the team with fish suppers following matches. The story goes that if the team lost they would dine on cheaper cod but a victory would secure a haddock supper. The word 'addick' is local slang for 'haddock,' and was adopted by fans who would show their support by parading giant poles with large haddocks on them before games.

In the club's early years its progress was hampered by the nearby presence of Woolwich Arsenal F.C., which was one of the largest clubs in the country, but their move to North London in 1913 gave Charlton the opportunity to develop and become a Football League Club.

Charlton Athletic



If I close my eyes I'm there again, buried at the bottom of that hill of caps and raincoats, which was the East Terrace at The Valley. I can feel him gently lifting me with those huge bucket hands of his and then gliding over a sea of friendly faces to sit on the track at the front.



Watch the 1936 clip of Charlton v Arsenal at the Valley on the ITN Source website:
www.itnsource.com/shotlist/BHC_RT/1936/10/19/BGU407211059/

Imagine you are one of the characters in the picture above and with a partner answer the following questions:

- What happened to you before the picture was taken?
- At the moment the picture was taken how were you feeling?
- What will happen to you after this picture is taken?
- If you could ask your character one question what would it be?

A common pre-war scene on the great East Terrace at The Valley, as a policeman helps a young boy find refuge on the perimeter track.

Greenwich Heritage Centre



Upon the Hands of Fans

upon this mighty sea I sail
so young and wild and free
in endless waves like goalie saves
these arms stretch out for me –
no child on Earth could ere describe
this feeling deep inside
at three foot tall so frail and small
above these heads I glide

so gently passed from man to man
they lift me to and fro
like cans on some conveyor belt
as to the field I go –
to watch in awe along the track
my heroes chase and pass
no man between myself and team
beside this hallowed grass

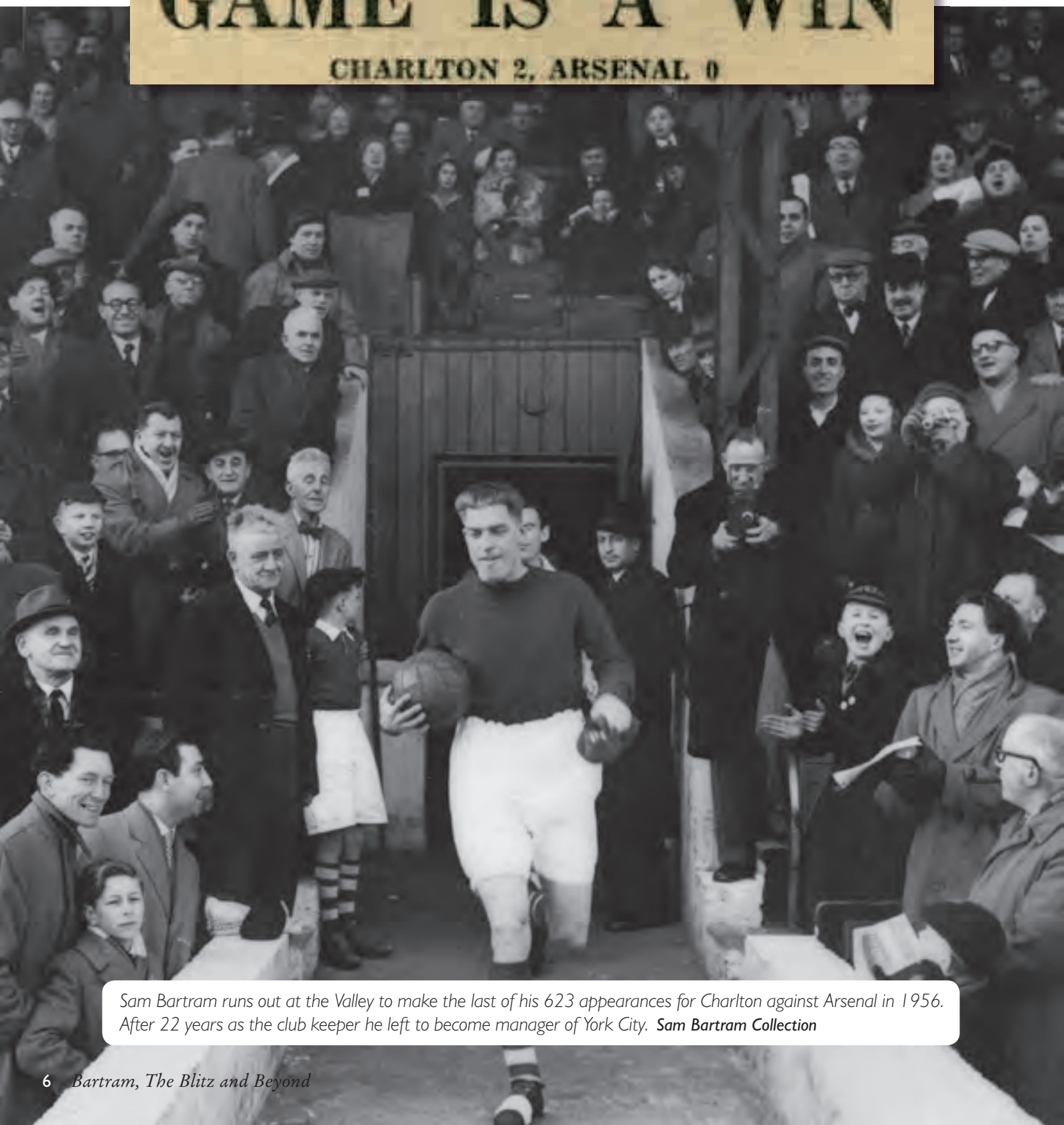
a hill of caps and raincoats
this terrace made of stone
this childhood haunt this ground of dreams
this ancient football home –
all on this mighty sea of life
I've touched on many lands
but still recall those moments passed
upon the hands of fans

© Crispin Thomas

However it's the memories I have of dad himself that I hold most dear. I was the only one in my family, who saw his face light up when we scored and I was the only one who EVER saw my dad cry, when Sam Bartram played his last game for Charlton.

BARTRAM'S LAST GAME IS A WIN

CHARLTON 2, ARSENAL 0



Sam Bartram runs out at the Valley to make the last of his 623 appearances for Charlton against Arsenal in 1956. After 22 years as the club keeper he left to become manager of York City. **Sam Bartram Collection**

VALLEY HEROES

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED
BY DAVID RAMZAN



SAM BARTRAM

GEORDIE BORN SAM BARTRAM FORMS A SCHOOL TEAM IN HIS MINING VILLAGE AT BOLDON COLLIERY. PLAYING AT LEFT HALF SAM IS PICKED TO PLAY IN THE ENGLISH SCHOOLS SHIELD FOR SUNDERLAND BOYS...



...SAM SCORES TWICE IN A SCHOOLS SHIELD MATCH PLAYING AT WING HALF BACK. AFTER A TRIAL AT READING SAM IS SPOTTED BY CHARLTON SCOUT ANTONY SEPT...



...BUT SAM WAS DEPUTISING IN GOAL IN A LOCAL CUP FINAL. SAM JOINS CHARLTON AS A TRIALIST, IN HIS DEBUT CHARLTON RESERVES LOSE 6-0!...



WE'LL GO FAR WITH THIS KEEPER!



...EVEN SO SAM PLAYS SO WELL DURING HIS TRIAL PERIOD...

...CHARLTON SIGN SAM UP IN 1934. WITH SAM IN GOAL 3RD DIVISION CHARLTON WIN PROMOTION AND ARE IN DIVISION 1 BY 1936.

IT IS STATED SAM WAS THE BEST KEEPER NEVER TO HAVE WON A FULL ENGLAND CAP, BUT HE DID REPRESENT ENGLAND IN 3 WAR TIME MATCHES AND 1 MATCH FOR OVER 30'S.



1947, CHARLTON WIN THE FA CUP, SAM KEEPING A CLEAN SHEET AGAINST BURNLEY.



1954 AND 500 MATCHES FOR SAM PLAYING AGAINST PORTSMOUTH, CHARLTON WIN 3-1.



WELL PLAYED SAM!

SAM'S LAST MATCH FOR THE APPLES IS AGAINST ARSENAL AT THE VALLEY IN MARCH 1956, CHARLTON WIN 2-0. AMAZINGLY IT'S SAM'S 623TH GAME, A CHARLTON CLUB RECORD!



SAM JOINS YORK CITY AS MANAGER AND THEN LUTON TOWN IN 1960. IN 1962 SAM BECOMES A NEWSPAPER JOURNALIST WITH THE SUNDAY PEOPLE.

CHARLTON CAREER 1934 - 1956 • LEAGUE & CUP MATCHES: 623

Now dad has gone a picture of his face sometimes springs into my mind - wonderfully, it catches me unawares. When that happens I can see him bathed in the Wembley sunshine, still in his greasy overalls from his shift at Vickers, weariness stripped from him in the sheer joy that comes with football – young again. We're together once more, with Sam Bartram guarding the Charlton goal and I'm happy. Wonderful memories, but they do make me sad sometimes. I miss him.



Michael Foreman

'Bartram Saves the Day!' Pre-war photographs of Sam Bartram in action for Charlton Athletic
Sam Bartram Collection



Now I'm standing in his front room waiting to go to see Charlton v Sunderland in the play off final. It's a room full of memories; some happy, some sad. It's so quiet without him. Just the rhythmic ticking of the clock above the fire place keeps me company. His chair might be empty, but I can feel his presence everywhere. I hope that when I'm at Wembley, if I close my eyes, I'll be able to see him again.



Michael Foreman



Michael Foreman



'His chair might be empty but I can feel his presence everywhere.'

Peace in our Time

That first match, we'd got the 696 trolley bus from where we lived in Crayford to Woolwich and walked the rest of the way to the Valley. They don't have trolley buses anymore but then a lot has changed since those days.



A 696 trolley bus leaves Crayford Clock Tower bound for Woolwich. The windows of the Vickers factory are across the road from the bus stop. The network of overhead cables needed to service the trolley buses gave a vastly different look to Crayford Road from the views below in 2010. *Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre*



The 96 bus replaced the 696 trolley bus in 1959. A lot has changed since then. Compare the original picture of the trolley bus with the one below it which was taken in 2010:

- What differences can you find?
- What similarities can you find?
- What do you notice about the design of the McDonald's restaurant which has replaced the Vickers factory in the original picture?

96 Bus 2010 P Daniel

When I saw my first game the most a player like Sam Bartram could earn was £8 a week. That wasn't much more than what dad earned, so the players lived amongst us fans and travelled to the games like we did on the bus! Their lives outside of match days were not very different from ours.

When Sam Bartram signed his contract a mortgage of 9 shillings and six pence a week (48p) allowed you to buy a house in Barnehurst for £395 whilst a Morris 8 cost £120, one third of the price of a house!



Sam Bartram's 1937-38 Contract
Sam Bartram Collection

The average weekly wage in 1938 was 69 shillings a week (£3.45). A police constable earned about 90 shillings (£4.50). Most footballers at that time would have earned less than Sam.

- What do you notice about Sam Bartram's weekly wage over the course of the year?
- Could Sam afford to buy a house and a car?
- Do you think top players like Sam were well paid?



SERIES I	
THE MORRIS EIGHT (For 20)	THE MORRIS TEN (For 20)
1-First Series (First Year) - £120	1-First Series (First Year) - £120
2-Second Series (Second Year) - £120	2-Second Series (Second Year) - £120
3-Third Series (Third Year) - £120	3-Third Series (Third Year) - £120
4-Fourth Series (Fourth Year) - £120	4-Fourth Series (Fourth Year) - £120
5-Fifth Series (Fifth Year) - £120	5-Fifth Series (Fifth Year) - £120
6-Sixth Series (Sixth Year) - £120	6-Sixth Series (Sixth Year) - £120
7-Seventh Series (Seventh Year) - £120	7-Seventh Series (Seventh Year) - £120
8-Eighth Series (Eighth Year) - £120	8-Eighth Series (Eighth Year) - £120
9-Ninth Series (Ninth Year) - £120	9-Ninth Series (Ninth Year) - £120
10-Tenth Series (Tenth Year) - £120	10-Tenth Series (Tenth Year) - £120

When I look back to the day Neville Chamberlain, the prime minister, came to the Valley in 1938 and the fans and players joined together to pray for 'peace in our time' it reminds me how close we all seemed back then.

INDEPENDENT AND KENTISH MAIL.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1938

WORLD OF SPORT.— PRAYER AND PRAISE AT THE VALLEY

WEAK BIRMINGHAM SIDE TAKE A POINT.

RESERVES PROGRESS IN LONDON CHALLENGE CUP TOURNEY.

ERITH'S STEADY ADVANCE IN THE KENT LEAGUE.

BEXLEYHEATH AND WELLING SHARE EIGHT GOALS IN HECTIC DUEL.

SATURDAY AT THE VALLEY WAS A DAY WHICH WILL LIVE LONG IN THE MINDS OF THE 34,000 SPECTATORS WHO SAW CHARLTON ATHLETIC EFFECT A REMARKABLE 4-4 DRAW WITH BIRMINGHAM.

THE ROYAL ARTILLERY BAND, HAVING RETURNED A FEW DAYS EARLIER FROM ITS CANADIAN VISIT, MET WITH A GREAT RECEPTION AND LED THE VAST AUDIENCE IN THE SINGING OF "LAND OF HOPE AND GLORY."

THREE CHEERS WERE GIVEN FOR THE PRIME MINISTER AND CANON E. SINKER, RECTOR OF CHARLTON, AND A KEEN SUPPORTER OF CHARLTON ATHLETIC FOR THE PAST TWELVE YEARS, READ A SPECIAL PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR PEACE.

IT WAS A MOST IMPRESSIVE SIGHT TO SEE THE TERRACES A MASS OF UNCOVERED HEADS AND REVERENT FIGURES, AND THERE WAS NO DOUBT THE SUPPLICATION WAS SINCERE.



Charlton players gather to give a minutes silence for 'peace in our time' before their 4-4 draw with Birmingham City on 1st October, 1938. Neville Chamberlain's visit to the Valley followed the day after his meeting with Hitler in Munich.

Kentish Independent



Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain making his 'peace in our time' address at Heston Airport on his return from Munich.

Imperial War Museum PN79636



Mussolini, Hitler and Chamberlain pose for photographs after signing the Munich agreement.

Bundes Archiv

Why was Chamberlain at the Valley?

In the early hours of 30th September, 1938, the leaders of the most powerful European states, Adolf Hitler, Neville Chamberlain, Edouard Daladier and Benito Mussolini signed the Munich Agreement. This gave Hitler the Sudetenland, a part of Czechoslovakia which he believed was rightly part of Germany.

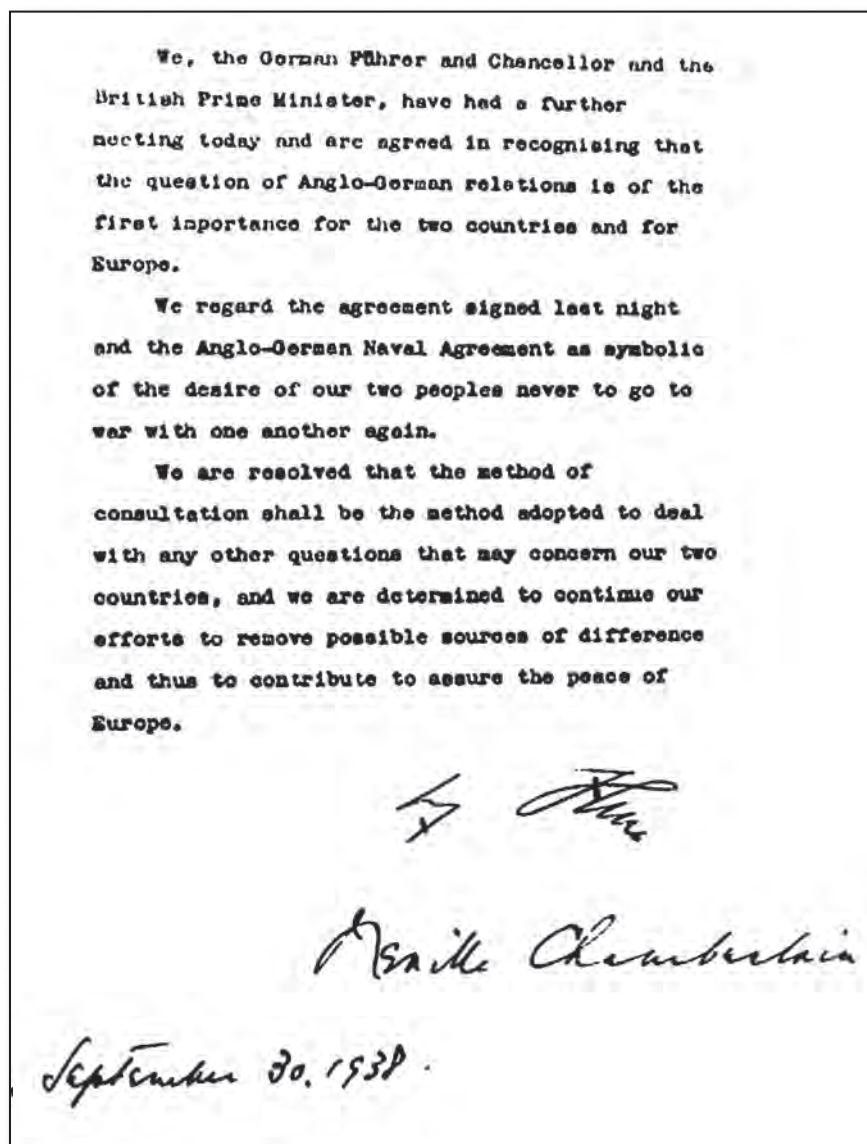
It seems incredible that Chamberlain would choose to support his home town team, Birmingham City, at the Valley just hours after this meeting. However, it seems likely that his much publicised appearance was a carefully planned event organised to calm fears of war and reinforce Chamberlain's message that the Munich agreement had given Britain 'peace in our time.' How could people doubt his claims if he could spend the afternoon watching a match!

The Munich Agreement was at first popular with most people in Britain because it appeared to have prevented a war with Germany. However, some politicians, particularly Winston Churchill, attacked the agreement as dishonourable. In March, 1939 Adolf Hitler broke the Munich Agreement by seizing the rest of Czechoslovakia. The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, now realized that Hitler could never be trusted and war was inevitable. Chamberlain never overcame the shame that the Munich agreement brought him. When war was declared in 1939 Churchill was brought back to the government as First Lord of the Admiralty then on 10th May, 1940 as prime minister.

Watch Neville Chamberlain on the ITN Source website:

www.itnsource.com/shotlist//BHC_RTV/1938/10/06/BGU407231703/

www.itnsource.com/shotlist//BHC_RTV/1938/10/03/BGU407231000/



Chamberlain's famous piece of paper: The Munich Agreement
Imperial War Museum MHI



Kentish Independent cartoon marking Churchill's return to government on 3rd September, 1939 as First Lord of the Admiralty.
Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre

The world before the war seems a different place, a sepia toned world of Brylcreem and cigarette cards. We didn't have WAGS and footballers didn't worry about their hair, well Charlton captain Don Welsh certainly didn't; he didn't have any! Then again, Don had more than enough to worry about back then. He'd seen the future in Berlin in his England kit and it didn't seem too promising.



Michael Foreman

Most footballers in the 30s and 40s were known only for their performances on the field. Denis Compton (left) was the exception. He was the Beckham of the 1940s. His movie star good looks coupled with his football performances for Arsenal and England in the winter and cricketing exploits for Middlesex and England in the summer made him an advertising man's dream. His Brylcreem adverts made him the closest thing to a Hollywood star in English football. This wasn't something his balding England team mate and Charlton captain Don Welsh could ever aspire to!



Don Welsh in 1935 when he joined Charlton from Torquay and with a lot less hair 10 years later!



"..the worst moment of my life, and one I would not willingly go through again, was giving the Nazi salute in Berlin."

Eddie Hapgood, England captain.

Watch the Gaumont British News clip of the match:

www.itnsource.com/shotlist//BHC_RT/1938/05/19/BGU407230562/

- What does the clip miss out?
- Why do you think it is missed out?

England beat Germany 6-3 in a friendly at the Olympic Stadium, Berlin on 14th May, 1938, in front of a crowd of 110,000 people. Before kick-off the English players, including Charlton captain Don Welsh, who was making his debut, were ordered by the Foreign Office to line up and perform a Nazi salute as the German national anthem was played and Nazi leaders watched. The friendly game effectively helped clear the way for Chamberlain's 'peace in our time' deal with Hitler, which, in turn, led to Germany's invasion of Czechoslovakia. The one man who refused to give the salute – Stan Cullis – was quietly dropped from the team. **Empics 555475**

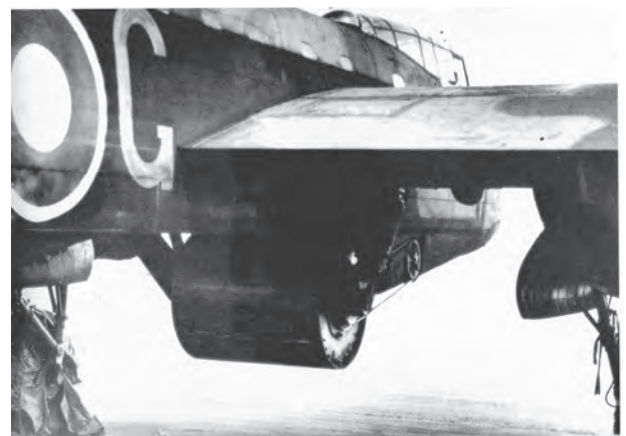
Dad had seen it too in his oil smeared overalls. He'd worked at Vickers, Crayford, since he'd left school. That's how he seemed to know that war was coming. Chamberlain might have been talking about 'peace in our time' but Vickers was so busy making guns it could mean only one thing in his opinion.



Sir Hiram Maxim came to Crayford in 1888 to build his machine gun. Soon afterwards he went into partnership with Vickers and by the end of World War One, in 1918, 15,000 people worked there (above). In addition to machine guns they made famous planes like the Vickers Vimy, which was the first plane to fly the Atlantic in 1919.

By the end of 1940, Vickers Armstrong Crayford produced 19,690 machine and gas operated guns out of a national total of 40,000. Later in the war, they also famously made the casings for the Barnes Wallis bouncing bombs of 'Dam Busters' fame.

On the night of 16th May, 1943, 617 Squadron's Lancaster bombers destroyed the Mohne and Eder dams in Germany. The bouncing bombs used to destroy the dams were designed by the Assistant Chief Designer at Vickers Armstrong, Barnes Wallis. Special lights on the bombers converged when they reached 60 feet, the height at which the bombs were released with enough back spin to bounce across the water to destroy the dams and devastate the German factories that depended on the hydro electric power that came from them.



*Lancaster bomber with a bouncing bomb slung beneath
Imperial War Museum HU69915*

My Valley Hero

Dad was a Charlton encyclopaedia and I was a willing learner. He told me all about how manager Jimmy Seed had taken the 'Addicks' from the 3rd Division to 1st Division runners up in successive seasons. However, looking back now one figure stands like a giant over my childhood, a flame haired colossus of a man in knee length shorts, stripy socks and a woolly green sweater; my hero, dad's hero, Sam Bartram.

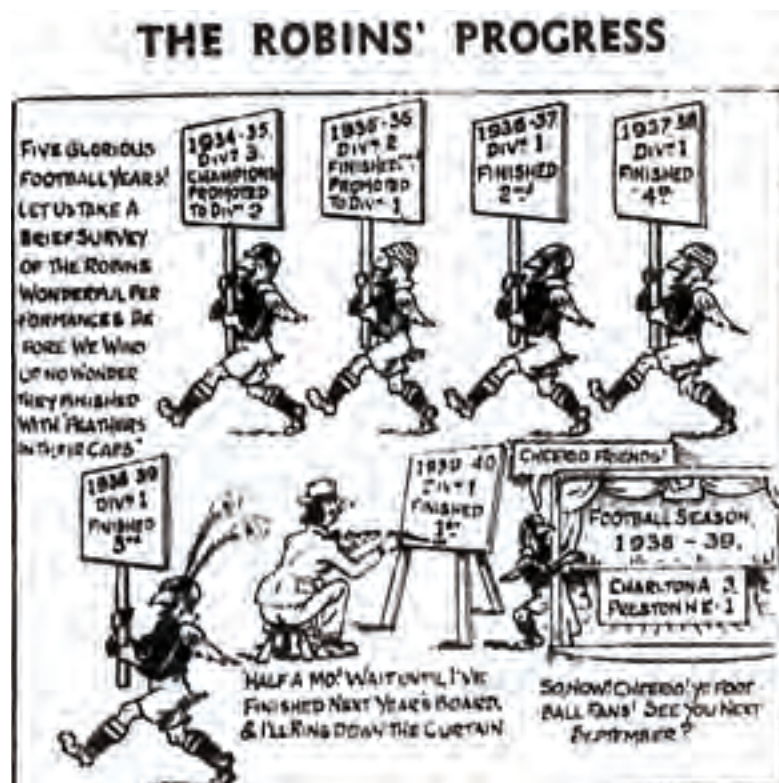


Sam Bartram and his team mates who took the club to new heights during the 1930s. *Sam Bartram Collection*



Charlton Athletic goalkeeper Sam Bartram with his manager Jimmy Seed. Together they helped to establish the 'Addicks' as a force in the First Division before World War Two.

Sam Bartram Collection



How the Kentish Independent saw Charlton's rise to the First Division. Sadly they predicted that Charlton would win the 1st Division Championship in 1940!

Kentish Independent May 1939, Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre

You can watch Pathé News describe Charlton's rise to the First Division:

www.britishpathe.com



In those days what we knew about film stars and footballers could be summed up on the back of a cigarette card. However, that's not to say that they belonged to the same species. Film stars were part of a Saturday morning fantasy world, Sam and his Charlton team mates were part of the real world that filled a Saturday afternoon. Today a Beckham can live in both of these worlds but back then I remember how strange it seemed to see Sam filling the cinema screen of the Regal, in Bexleyheath, when he appeared in a news reel about England's 1939 tour of South Africa.



Michael Foreman

Sam Bartram toured South Africa with an English F.A. team just before the outbreak of war in 1939. It was an eventful trip. Sam in his autobiography mentions how the players were kept up all night by stalking lions whilst staying in a hotel before a game in Johannesburg.

Sam Bartram's time in South Africa coincided with the beginning of a long standing relationship between Charlton and South Africa. Great players like Hewie, Leary and Firmani in the 50s were followed by Fish and Bartlett in the 2000s. Today the club continue links through coaching and community projects.



Postcard featuring the 1939 tour of South Africa
Sam Bartram Collection



Cigarette cards were a popular craze for children in the 1930s and 1940s. Nobody knew the dangers of smoking so there were no warnings on cigarette packets and cigarette companies could market brands to young children through taking advantage of their interest in footballers like Sam Bartram.

Watch a newsreel clip of England's South African tour on the ITN Source website:

www.itnsource.com/shotlist//BHC_RTIV/1939/06/19/BGU407240869/

War is Declared

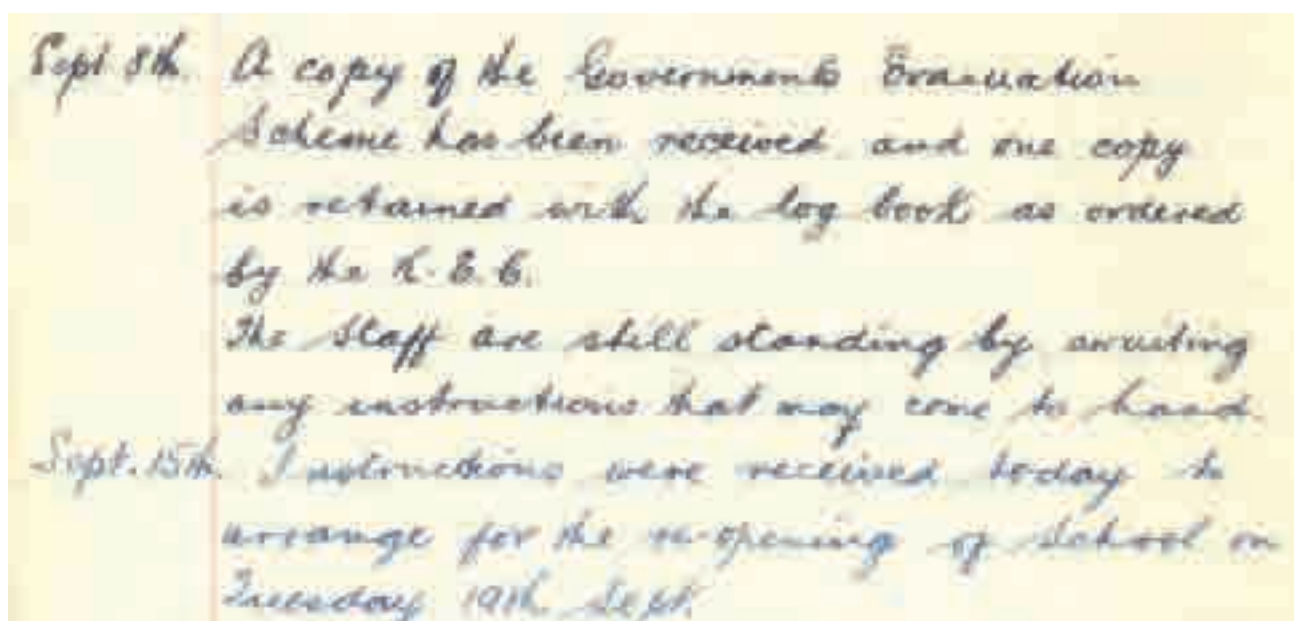
War, before it came, seemed part of that fantasy world too. I could look like Mickey Mouse in my gas mask and imagine our Anderson shelter was the cabin of a pirate ship. I took none of it seriously until they started mentioning evacuation at Crayford C.E. Junior School.



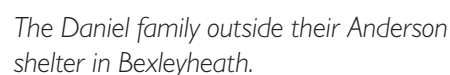
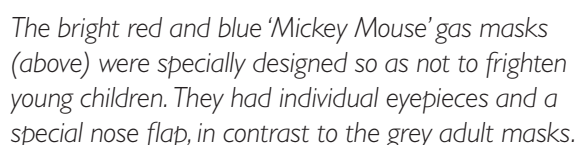
Imperial War Museum PST13854



Evacuees from Bedonwell School (above) arrive at Charing Cross as they make their way to the safety of the countryside. Although schools like this in Bexleyheath were evacuated, Crayford C.E. School (now St. Paulinus) was considered to be in a rural area and so it was decided not to evacuate them. The head teacher's log book (below) announced that the school was re-opened on 19th September, 1939. This was despite the school being right next to the Vickers armament factory!



Crayford C.E. Junior School's (St. Paulinus) log book September 1939
Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre



P Daniel

AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS IN YOUR HOME

497

19

BACK, SIDE SHEETS
 BACK, CENTRE BOTTOM SHEET
 BACK, ANGLE SECTION
 BACK, CENTRE TOP SHEET (REMOVABLE)
 CENTRE ARCH
 BACK ARCH
 FRONT ARCH
 FRONT, CENTRE TOP SHEET
 FRONT, CENTRE BOTTOM SHEET
 FRONT, ANGLE SECTION
 FRONT SIDE SHEETS
 END TEE SECTIONS
 SIDE CHANNELS
 CLIP FIXING FOR REMOVABLE SHEET
 SHEET FIXING - (NUT, WASHER & BOLT)
 FRAME FIXING - (RIVET)
 SPANNER
 RAT TAILER HANDLE FOR USE AS A TOMMY BAR

20

6 FT
 1 1/2 FT

21

3-4 FT
 1 1/2 FT
 KEEP EARTH AWAY FROM HOLE & FROM ENTRANCE

22

10. The individual parts of the Government Steel Shelter as they are delivered, with details of each part. 20. The actual site chosen should first be marked out in this manner. 21. This diagram shows the hole dug to its final depth. 22. Erecting the steel arches. Two men are required for this part of the task.

Luckily dad wasn't having any of that. Nobody was going to split up his family. Hitler might have invaded Poland but he made his point by taking me to The Valley to see Charlton play Manchester United!

FOOTBALL GIVES WAY TO WAR



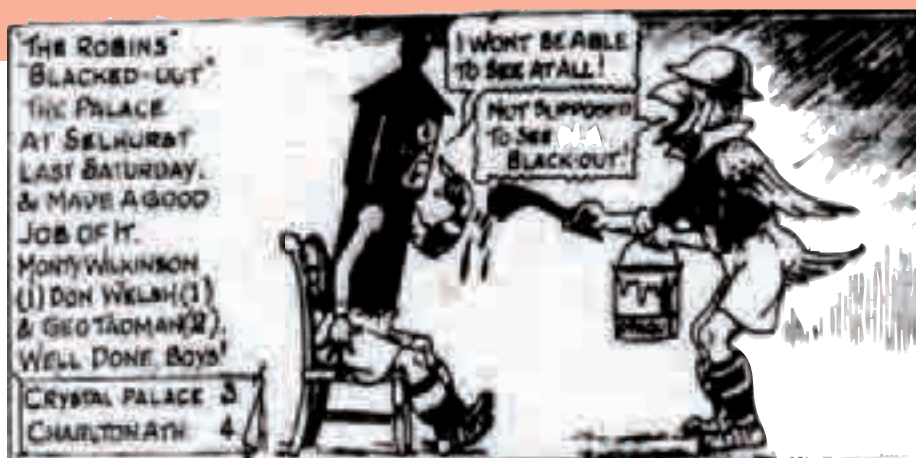
Watch an original newsreel about evacuation and the outbreak of war on the ITN Source website:

www.itnsource.com/shotlist//BHC_RTV/1939/09/04/BGU407241088/

This cartoon 'Football Gives Way to War' describes Charlton Athletic's 2-0 win over Manchester United on the Saturday before war was declared. It appeared in the Kentish Independent and caricatures the situation Britain faced at the outbreak of war. All of the main countries involved in the outbreak of war on 3rd September, 1939 are shown.

Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre

The months that followed were called the 'Phoney War.' Dad said that if they were still playing football at The Valley things couldn't be that bad! The crowds were tiny though and Charlton were often hopeless, although it was hard to be too critical when most of the team were up all night as air raid wardens on blackout duty.



Everyone had to hang thick dark curtains in their window to avoid allowing lights to be visible that could guide an enemy bomber.

Sam Bartram and many of the other Charlton's players had signed up as wardens, whose duty was to ensure the blackout was enforced throughout the night.

Above a cartoon from 1939 for Charlton's match against Crystal Palace and below a cartoon and headline for the match that November against Norwich City.

Kentish Independent, Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre



Charlton's gate for the match against Norwich City in November 1939 was only 2,500. It made the club ponder whether to give up war time football.

After the return match at Carrow Road in January 1940, Sam Bartram joined the RAF. Norwich themselves decided to abandon league football shortly afterwards.

CHARLTON ATHLETIC PERTURBED BY SMALL GATES

ERITH AND BELVEDERE AWAY TO BROMLEY

BIG ACHIEVEMENT BY PLUMSTEAD GARAGE BOWLS PLAYERS

ONE OF THE MYSTERIES OF WAR-TIME FOOTBALL IS, WHY THE REGIONAL MATCHES FAIL TO DRAW THE CROWDS. THIS APPLIES PARTICULARLY TO CHARLTON'S MATCHES AT THE VALLEY. THE LAST THREE GAMES THERE HAVE BEEN VERY POORLY SUPPORTED, AND SATURDAY'S MATCH WITH NORWICH CITY, ONE OF THE MOST ATTRACTIVE TEAMS IN THE COMPETITION, ATTRACTED THE MEDIOCRE ATTENDANCE OF 2,500.

THE CHARLTON MANAGEMENT MAKES NO SECRET OF THE FACT THAT THEY ARE DISAPPOINTED. THE TEAM IS SECOND IN THE TABLE, AND THEY HAVE A SPLENDID GOAL-SCORING RECORD. YET THE WEEKLY ATTENDANCES ARE AMONGST THE LOWEST IN THE COUNTRY.

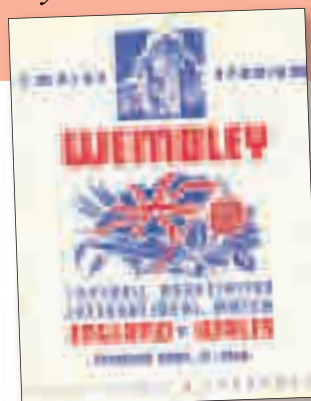
AT NEW CROSS, SOME THREE MILES AWAY FROM THE VALLEY, MILLWALL CAN DRAW ANYTHING FROM 2,000 TO 12,000. THEY ARE A SECOND DIVISION SIDE, AND RARELY PRODUCE FOOTBALL OF THE CLASSIC VARIETY. THEIR PLAY IS OF THE BOISTEROUS, FULL-BLOODED TYPE. THIS SEEMS TO APPEAL TO THE CLUB'S FOLLOWERS.

THE LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR THE CHARLTON CLUB IS LAMENTABLE. IN PRE-WAR DAYS 28,000 WAS THE AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT THE VALLEY.

Early in 1940, when Sam Bartram was called up by the R.A.F., dad persuaded me to let the scrap metal men take my old pedal car by telling me it would be melted down to make Sam a Spitfire. I didn't realise he was having me on until I found out Sam was a P.E. instructor and had even been picked to play for England at Wembley! Looking back, that time was like a fantasy bubble and Hitler's Luftwaffe was about to pop it.



Flt Sgt Sam Bartram. Sam joined the R.A.F. as a physical training instructor at the outbreak of war. He was still allowed to play football and was selected to play for England v Wales at Wembley in April 1940. Sadly this never counted as a full international cap because the game was played in wartime. **Sam Bartram Collection**



(Above) The Kent Messenger appealed to the people of Kent to raise enough money to build its own squadron of Spitfires. £108,000 was raised to build 22 Spitfires each named after a Kent town. Bexley paid for one of the Spitfires that made up 131 (County of Kent) Squadron.

Topham Picture Library



An appeal was made to collect aluminium so that it could be used to build aircraft like the Spitfire. This boy in Blackfen demonstrated where his family's pots and pans were going!

Topham Picture Library

The Blitz

I'll never forget the first day of the Blitz, 7th September, 1940. Hitler decided to bomb the Woolwich Arsenal and dad and I were practically next door at the Valley. The 'Addicks' were 4-2 down against local rivals Millwall when the sirens started. From where we stood high up on the great East Terrace, we could see that the barrage balloons had been raised in a vain attempt to stop the waves of German bombers that were now flying along the river towards us.



Barrage balloons were placed at the Valley to help protect the Woolwich Arsenal.
Kentish Independent



This cigarette card shows how balloons were placed along the river to protect London's docklands. The wires of the balloons were meant to deter low flying planes.

One of the German Luftwaffe's key targets was the Woolwich Arsenal, which was so close to the Valley that spotters had to be placed around the ground to ensure the safety of the crowd.

Topham Picture Library

Soon the anti aircraft guns started up and the first bombs started to fall. Large columns of soot black smoke could be seen rising from the direction of the Woolwich Arsenal. Dad held me tightly against him as a far deadlier match then the one against Millwall took place above us. Planes twisted and turned in the air, engines screaming, as bombs exploded all around. The sky seemed to be bouncing above me as dad carried me away from the ground to the public shelter beside Charlton House.



A minute from the close German planes were seen in the vicinity and heavy anti-aircraft fire was heard. The players left the field, but were recalled by the referee. The game finished as two German planes were seen hurtling to earth.

The pontoons of the Woolwich ferry (above) can be seen clearly below the German Dornier bombers.

Hulton Getty

Two Luftwaffe Dornier Do 17 bombers flying over the Woolwich Arsenal on the first day of the Blitz, September 7th, 1940. This photograph was taken by one of the bombers. The two planes described as 'hurtling to earth' in the Kentish Independent report (above) were probably Dorniers.

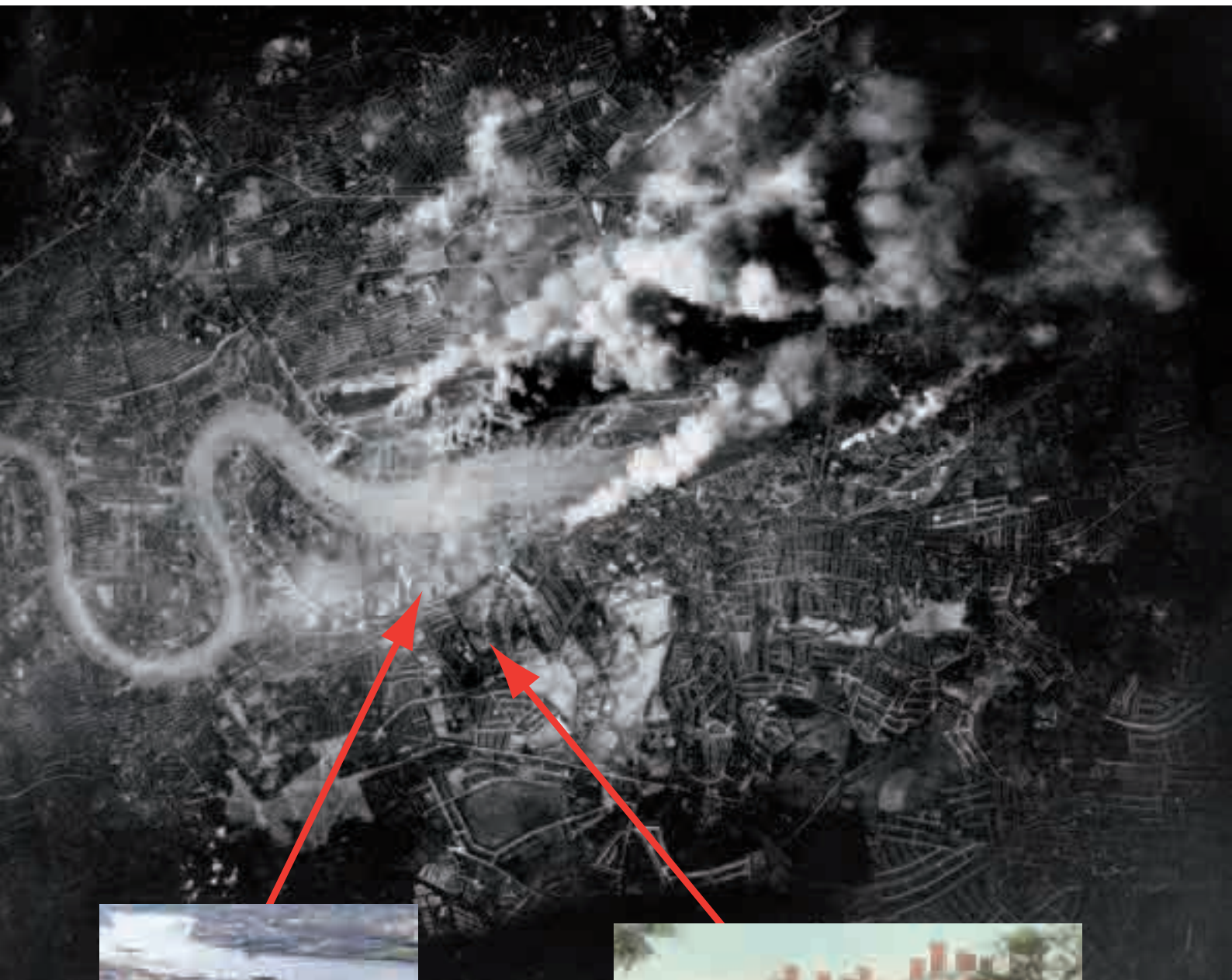
Charlton's match with Millwall was abandoned a minute from normal time because of this raid with Millwall winning 4-2.

Imperial War Museum C5424

THE AIR WAR COMES TO TOWN
**LONDON SUBURBS BECOME THE BATTLEFIELD OF
 THE AIR ATTACK ON THE CAPITAL**
 RAIDERS TRY IN VAIN TO PARALYSE DOCKS AND FACTORIES
 PEOPLE RENDERED HOMELESS BY HIGH EXPLOSIVE, DELAYED ACTION AND INCENDIARY BOMBS

WORLD OF SPORT
SHOULD SOCCER BE CONTINUED?
 TO-MORROW'S PROGRAMME TO BE FULFILLED
 CHARLTON'S DOUBLE DEFEAT BY MILLWALL
 JUNIORS OUTCLASSED AT THE DER

German Luftwaffe photograph showing the Blitz over Charlton on the 7th September, 1940 Library of Congress



The Valley Charlton Athletic FC



Charlton House

Why Woolwich was bombed



Siemens Cable factory
The area in front of the Siemen's factory (left), Siemen's Meadows, was where Charlton Athletic was formed by a group of local boys in 1905.
Greenwich Heritage Centre

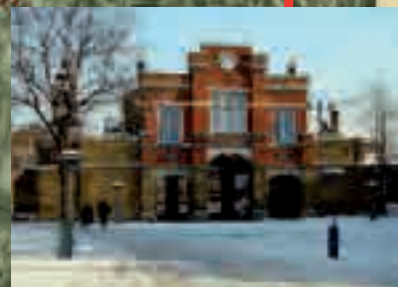


The Royal Docks



The Valley **Charlton Athletic**

Luftwaffe Target Map for Woolwich.
Sam Bartram's wife, Helen, worked in the Woolwich Arsenal and her sister worked at Siemens.
Greenwich Heritage Centre



Woolwich Arsenal
Greenwich Heritage Centre

Drama on the Golf Course

A week later on the 15th September, 1940, the Blitz came much closer to home. It was Sunday lunchtime and we were at my Nan's house in Barnehurst. That afternoon the air was filled with the deep throbbing of engines as the blue sky was filled with the contrails of German bombers. Dad and I stood entranced as the Spitfires and Hurricanes engaged the enemy planes in a deadly dance of death.

Watch an original Blitz newsreel from 15th September 1940 on the ITN Source website:

www.itnsource.com/shotlist//BHC_RTV/1940/09/19/BGU408020029/



Paul Nash painted the amazing spirals created by planes engaged in dog fights during the Battle of Britain. These contrails are clouds formed when water vapour condenses and freezes around small particles (aerosols) that exist in aircraft exhaust.

Imperial War Museum IWM ART LD 1550

The first we heard of the Dornier bomber was a low drone coming in across the rooftops to the back of us. It was so low we could see the faces of the pilot and the nose gunner at the front of the plane. It was obviously in trouble and hoping to crash land, but before it had a chance to do so, a Hurricane dived down upon it and with a burst of machine gun fire, sent it crashing to the ground. We cheered as the Hurricane executed a dashing victory roll above us before disappearing over the horizon.



Picture by Geoff Nutkins mail@aviartnutkins.com

(Right) Children of hop pickers take shelter during the Battle of Britain. Sidcup photographer John Topham's picture was one of the most published in the war and was said to have helped persuade America to enter the war with Britain.

Topham Picture Library



Squadron Leader John Sample and the Barnehurst Incident

At 14:00 on 15th September, 1940, Squadron Leader John Sample (right) of 504 Squadron was scrambled from Hornchurch and attacked a formation of Dornier 17 bombers near Gravesend. He noticed a lone Dornier trying to escape after it had been damaged by anti aircraft fire and carried out four attacks against it. Its pilot, Lt Herbert Michaelis, was temporarily blinded when a dye-bag, used for air-sea rescue purposes, burst as one of Sample's bullets from his Hurricane fighter pierced the cockpit of the Dornier.

With one engine disabled two of the German crew, Uffzs Burballa and Hansburg, took to their parachutes but were killed because they bailed out at too low an altitude. The stricken bomber, Werke No 3457 code 5K+JM, then crashed on Barnehurst Golf Course at 2-45pm. John Sample is reported to then have carried out a 'victory roll' over the stricken bomber.

Part of the Dornier's bomb load exploded at 3pm, killing one souvenir hunter outright, and fatally injuring 28 year old Special Constable Leonard Francis Clarke of Parkside Avenue, Barnehurst. He died on 26th September at Woolwich and District Memorial Hospital, Shooters Hill. Two Civil Defence personnel and another civilian were also fatally injured as a result of this incident.

Michaelis was captured wounded, after which he spent some time on one of the Luftwaffe wards at the Royal Herbert Hospital, Shooters Hill, Woolwich. For Michaelis, the war was over as he was taken prisoner. He was later sent to Canada as a P.O.W and was not released until 1947.

Another Luftwaffe pilot, Wilhelm Wolff, who was killed on the 13th September, 1940 was buried in St. Paulinus churchyard, Crayford. His body was removed in 1963 for reburial in the German war cemetery in Cannock Chase.



John Sample
February 1913 –
28 October 1941

Photo: Håkan Gustavsson

The Dornier drew us to it like moths to a flame. Dad and I arrived to find a policeman already trying to warn off an army of souvenir hunters. He had his work cut out. What happened next is still a bit of a blur, I know dad flung himself at me as if he was Sam Bartram but after that I can't remember a thing. I found out later that one of the plane's bombs exploded killing several people including the policeman.

DORNIER CRASHES ON GOLF COURSE.

SIGHTSEERS AND SPECIAL CONSTABLE KILLED.

A Dornier 17, pursued by a Hurricane, crashed on a golf course on Sunday. Anti-aircraft fire is credited with a share in the destruction of the bomber, and as the fighter flew away in a "victory roll," clouds of black smoke rose from the wreckage of the Dornier.

There were several explosions of light ammunition while the fire lasted, and soon after one of the load of bombs exploded. By this time crowds of spectators had arrived at the scene, and some approached near to the bomber, in search of souvenirs.

Four persons were killed, including a Special Constable, who was endeavouring to keep the crowd away, and fourteen others were injured.

In the same area a man and three boys were killed while viewing a crater in which a bomb exploded.

Kentish Times report of the Barnehurst incident
Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre

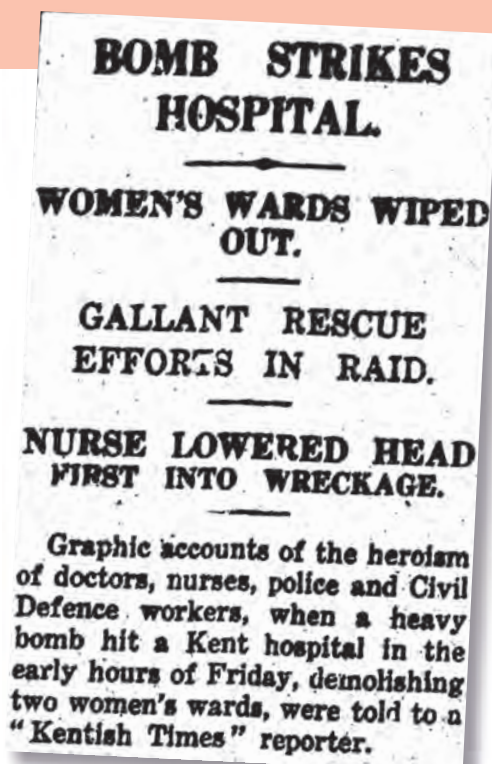


Barnehurst Golf Course
Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre

A Dornier similar to the one brought down on Barnehurst Golf course.
Imperial War Museum HU3121



Dad and I spent a few days in West Hill Hospital in Dartford, which itself had been bombed just the week before. I'd suffered concussion from the blast of the bomb but if it wasn't for dad pushing me to the ground I wouldn't be here. You could say that 'Bartram' had made the best save of his life.



Kentish Times report on the bombing of West Hill Hospital, Dartford on 8th September, 1940. One nurse, Sister Gantry, crawled in and out of the wreckage giving morphine injections to trapped patients.

Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre

Ann Hibbert (left) still lives in the same house in Station Road, Crayford that she lived in during the war. By 1940 many men like her husband had joined up so women like Ann had to take over important jobs that were previously only done by men. Soon after her husband was captured at Dunkirk Ann found herself an ambulance driver in Dartford. She was 21 when she was pictured with her best friend Sylvia Childs with the ambulance she had learnt to drive after just six driving lessons. She has vivid memories of driving it through the Blitz.

"The scariest memory was when the German bombers dropped flares as Sylvia and I were driving down East Hill, Dartford. We went from the complete darkness of the blackout to the brightness of day in a matter of seconds. We were petrified as we knew the flares were dropped to mark the bombers target. There was no turning back though, we had to get to whoever needed us and get them to West Hill Hospital."



About a month later dad received his call up papers. Luckily he was posted to the Royal Artillery and conveniently ended up on the anti-aircraft guns on Dartford Heath that were defending Vickers. I had often sat in the entrance to our shelter to watch the searchlights trace their careful webs across the night sky. Now I knew that when they locked upon the silvery silhouette of an enemy plane and the guns opened fire, I could sleep soundly knowing that dad, as always, would be protecting me.



Anti-Aircraft Guns, C.R. Nevinson, Imperial War Museum

The guns on Dartford Heath were an important part of the air defence of London. The gunners themselves were very proud of their work and would display on a notice board the number of enemy aircraft they had shot down.

In addition to Vickers, these guns defended a 'secret' factory in a disused sand-pit on Dartford Heath, which is now the site of the Braeburn Park estate in Crayford. This factory made aircraft cannon and although it was supposed to be 'secret' the noise of them being tested made everyone locally aware of what was being made there. An enormous net was draped across the site to form a false floor to the pit and with a few gorse bushes placed over it the factory was invisible from the air. Crude paraffin burners were also positioned every few yards along local roads and were lit at night to obscure the view of enemy bombers. Security was very strict. Buses passing the anti-aircraft guns on the heath would be stopped so that a policeman could check everyone's ID card.



Many of the guns and searchlight teams were manned by women from the A.T.S.

P Daniel

About this time you would see Italian prisoners of war wearing their distinctive overalls covered with patches, repairing damage to homes around the town. Sometimes they would ask if they could join dad and me when we had a kick about. Afterwards we used to chat to one of them about our trips to the Valley and he would tell us how he would take his own son to games back home. It made me sad to think that some boy, just like me, had been separated from his dad. It made me wonder how I would cope if dad was sent far away. I soon found out, as in 1942 dad was posted to Norfolk.

'Italian Prisoners of War' Michael Foreman



A large prisoner of war camp, No 1020, was based at Woodlands Farm, Shooters Hill. Prisoners from here were put to work in the surrounding area. Some Italian prisoners of war (P.O.W.) lived in a series of temporary Nissen huts erected on a bomb site at Westbourne Road, near to where Bostall Library stands in King Harold's Way, Bexleyheath. The prisoners' patched uniforms made them stand out but they were not heavily guarded and worked on repairing local houses damaged by the bombing. This group may well have been the Italians who built a road in Belvedere they named Appian Way after a road in Italy but is now called Rutland Gate.



War Cup Final 1943

That was the first time that I'd ever really been apart from dad. I wrote to him, of course, but it was hard not being able to talk to him. What really brought it home to me was not being with him at Wembley when Charlton got there for the very first time in the 1943 War (South) Cup Final. Maybe it was lucky as we lost 7-1 to Arsenal. Dad always reckoned that we'd lost to the 'Woolwich Rejects' because Sam wasn't in goal for us.



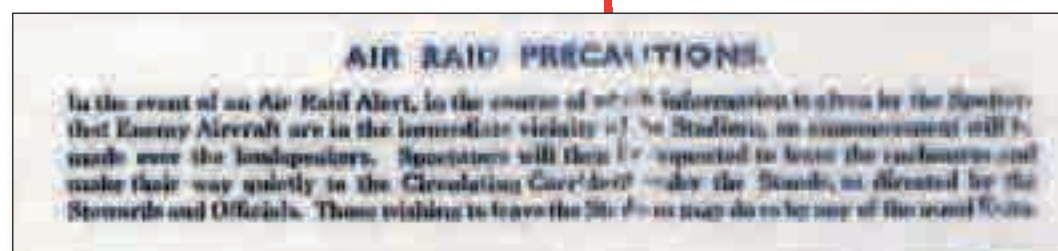
A pre-war cigarette card showing the famous twin towers and a full house of 100,000 people



Spotters were placed all around Wembley Stadium to warn the crowd of the approach of enemy aircraft. Earlier in the war it had been assumed that football would have to be stopped because of the danger of large crowds being gathered in one place during an air raid. The Spotter system, however, allowed football to continue and after the cancellation of a few fixtures at the start of the war in September, 1939, football continued to be played albeit in regional leagues for the rest of the war.

You can watch Pathé News describe Arsenal v Charlton in the 1943 War Cup Final:

www.britishpathe.com



War Cup final programme for Charlton's 7-1 defeat to Arsenal in 1943. Sam Bartram was not able to play in Charlton's first appearance at Wembley.

The Mysterious Case of J. Rogers



Don Welsh in uniform

A few months after war broke out football resumed, but was played regionally to avoid travelling unnecessarily. Players who had been called up and who had been posted far away from their clubs were allowed to guest for other teams. For example, both Sam Bartram and his Charlton captain, Don Welsh, an army P.E. instructor, guested for Liverpool.

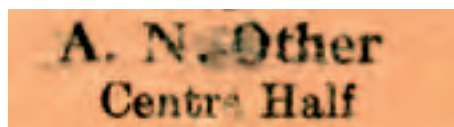
With teams so uncertain, scores were often quite erratic. Charlton lost their first regional league game to Arsenal 8-4! Teams also played in the Football League War Cup that took the place of the FA Cup, which was cancelled during the war. There was a southern and northern section, with the winners of these sections meeting in a grand final.

The southern clubs were fortunate that their final was played at Wembley. Although Sam Bartram didn't play in the Arsenal game, he would afterwards play in four successive Wembley finals between 1944 and 1947. Only three of these were for Charlton as in 1945, he guested for Millwall when they lost the last War Cup final 2-0 to Chelsea.



Sam on guard with fellow P.E. instructor, Arsenal's Ted Drake, 1940

Sam Bartram Collection



'A. N. Other' was often seen in the match programme. Clubs were often forced into making an appeal to spectators for any professionals present to help fill in at the last moment. One enterprising fan at the Valley made the most of this to join his heroes on the pitch.

When Charlton's regular guest player, Fred Scott, was unavailable for their home game with Chelsea on the 2nd October, 1943, Charlton fielded a player called J. Rogers in a 1-0 defeat. 'Rogers' had posed as a well known player but the crowd soon recognised him as a fraud and barracked him for the rest of the match.

In the following match programme Charlton Manager Jimmy Seed admitted he had been 'hoodwinked' by 'Rogers' claims that he had once played for Arsenal, Newcastle United and Chester. He apologised to fans for his 'inept display that was sure evidence of his inability to play football.'

The mysterious J. Rogers was never seen or heard of again.

War Cup Final 1944

It hit me more not being there the following year when we actually won it. I had to make do with the commentary on the wireless as Charlton, with Sam back in goal, beat Chelsea, 3-1. A couple of months later I heard that the very same General Eisenhower, who had presented Don Welsh with the Cup that day, had been the mastermind of what they were calling 'D-Day.' People were saying that the war was all over bar the shouting, but a few days later they were eating their words.



Two months after presenting the War (South) Cup to Charlton's Don Welsh and Sam Bartram, General Eisenhower was masterminding the invasion of Europe, at Normandy on D-Day, 6th June, 1944.

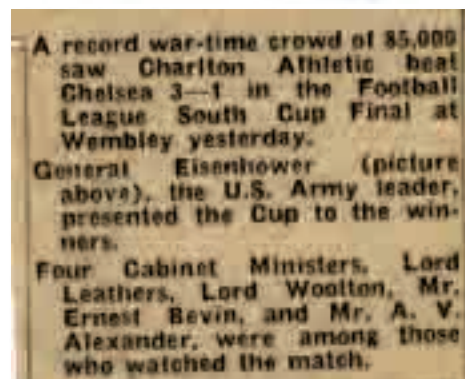
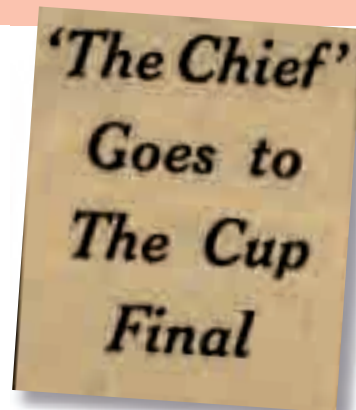
Sam Bartram Collection

Why was Eisenhower at Wembley?

General Dwight D. Eisenhower attended Charlton's 3-1 victory over Chelsea in the Football League (South) War Cup Final at Wembley on 15th April, 1944. This was just a few weeks before D-Day, the invasion of Normandy, which he had been planning for 18 months.

Speaking after the game Eisenhower is reported to have said: "I started cheering for the Blues but after the Reds took the lead, well I had to cheer for them instead." However, the question has to be asked, why with an invasion only weeks away was Eisenhower cheering anyone that day?

Eisenhower's high-profile appearance featured prominently in newspapers and on cinema news reels. It is likely this was all part of 'Operation Fortitude,' a carefully-planned deception organised to fool the Germans as to where and when the Allies would invade. This plan included placing inflatable tanks in the Kent area to make it look as if the invasion would target Calais.



War Cup final programme for Charlton's 3-1 victory over Chelsea in 1944.



General Eisenhower talks to Charlton's Chris Duffy with Sam Bartram in the background.
Sam Bartram Collection



Chris Duffy was a guest player for Charlton in the 1944 War Cup Final. He normally played for Scottish club Leith Athletic. After the match Duffy returned to his army unit and took part in the D-Day landings. The horror of what he saw on the beaches of Normandy led to shell shock and a discharge from the army.

When the war ended Charlton signed him for just £325. It was to be a bargain. He scored both Charlton goals in the 1946 F.A. Cup semi final win over Bolton and played in their losing team at Wembley that year. More importantly, it was Duffy who scored the brilliant volley that helped Charlton beat Burnley 1-0 to win the 1947 F.A. Cup final.

HAD BATTLE EXHAUSTION
 Duffy, the Charlton outside-left, was discharged from the Army suffering from battle exhaustion. He served in France with the Royal Welch Fusiliers.
 Duffy's transfer fee from Leith Athletic to Charlton was £325. To-day his transfer value is at least ten times greater. He has scored more than 20 goals this season, including a hat-trick against Preston in a Cup-tie.



Sam Bartram punches a Chelsea attack clear during the 1944 War Cup (South) Final.
Sam Bartram Collection

You can watch Eisenhower and the 1944 War Cup Final Charlton 3 Chelsea 1 on the ITN Source website:

www.itnsource.com/shotlist//BHC_RTV/1944/04/20/BGU409140009/

D-Day

D-Day, the invasion of occupied Europe, commenced on Tuesday, 6th June, 1944 along a 50-mile (80 km) stretch of the Normandy coast divided into five sectors: Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword. The assault was conducted in two phases: an air assault landing of 24,000 American, British, Canadian and Free French airborne troops shortly after midnight, and an amphibious landing of Allied infantry and armoured divisions on the coast of France commencing at 6:30am. The operation was the largest amphibious invasion of all time, with over 175,000 troops landing on 6th June, 1944.



Six weeks after greeting the Charlton squad before their match against Chelsea, Eisenhower was greeting another group of men for a very different reason...the invasion of Europe.

Library of Congress



British troops come ashore on D-Day

Imperial War Museum

Doodlebugs

At the time we didn't have a name for them, but a few weeks later everyone was talking about them, the 'doodlebugs.' You had to listen very carefully to the sound of their engines. They made a terrible racket, but at least when you heard this you knew you were safe. The danger came when the engines stopped. In that terrible moment of silence, you knew you had a matter of seconds to find shelter, before the inevitable explosion came. In Crayford, we came to rely on a couple of local lads, who would blow an old bugle to warn us when to take shelter.



A V1 flying bomb photographed immediately after launching. The 'doodlebug' was a pilotless aircraft, 25 feet in length with a wingspan of 16 feet. Its original range was 160 miles but this was later extended to 250 miles, allowing missiles to be launched at London from sites in Holland.

Imperial War Museum CL3433



'Doodlebuglers'

When the 'doodlebugs' were coming over thick and furious the alert would go off but sometimes it was hours, or even days, before we heard the 'all clear.' I was living in Crayford and realised that someone had to warn people of the approach of a doodlebug and of the short lulls before the next batch came over. It would at least give housewives the chance to do their chores.

My brother and I had in our house a bugle taken from a dead German in the First World War by my uncle Fred and it was just what we needed in our plan for a 'doodlebug' alert system. Paul and I decided to take turns "on duty" on the roof of our shed. We had one distinctive blast for the approach of a V1 and a clear signal when it exploded or flew on.

We lived at Lower Station Road and when the campaign was over there was a street collection. For our efforts in "doodlebug bugling" we were awarded the princely sum of £3.

Peter Fender quoted in 'Doodlebugs and Rockets'
Bob Ogley Froglets Publications



The German bugle



The 'Doodlebuglers': Peter and Paul Fender of Lower Station Road, Crayford.

'Doodlebugs and Rockets'
Bob Ogley Froglets Publications

At school we used to mimic this in a new game we played. We would run around the playground, arms stretched sideways making weird noises before suddenly falling silent and diving in front of an unsuspecting classmate shouting 'BANG!' The reality was more serious and when a doodlebug killed 56 people outside the Post Office in Crayford, dad decided it was time for me to leave what they were calling 'Bomb Alley' and join him in Norfolk.

KENTISH TIMES, FRIDAY, JULY 21, 1944.

W.V.S. WORKERS AND EVACUEES KILLED.

FLY-BOMB HITS SHOPS.

Three W.V.S. workers and a number of mothers and children about to be evacuated were killed and others injured when a flying bomb fell on a South Georgian street last week.

The W.V.S. workers were Mrs. Hayward and Mrs. G. Evans. Two other W.V.S. members, Mrs. J. Dine and Mrs. H. G. Carter, sustained serious injuries.

They were engaged in sorting clothing and footwear for children who were being evacuated from the area, a number of whom were awaiting for the purpose with their mothers.

The flying bomb made a direct hit on a shop one of which was used by the W.V.S. A fatal result and four were killed. Mrs. Hayward was instantly killed. Mrs. Dine and Mrs. Carter were seriously injured.

Mrs. Dine and Mrs. Carter are making a recovery as remarkable as their escape from fatal injury was miraculous. Mrs. Dine recalls that, imprisoned in the darkness, she called for help and with her one eye blind, tried away at the door, until an aperture appeared through which she saw the sky and the bombers.

Property in the vicinity was damaged.

All the Civil Defence services, including the N.F.S., got to work expeditiously, and in their neighbourhood work were speedily helped by men of the Auxiliary Army.

It was the 13th July, 1944; I was a 17 year old Junior Clerk, employed by the Crayford Urban District Council in the Treasurers Department in Crayford Town Hall. This particular afternoon we knew the air raid warning had sounded, but if we took shelter every time there was a warning, our work would never be done. It was very naughty of us but we decided to go up the High Street to a shop near the Crayford Arms and buy some cherries. There were quite a few people around that day. The W.V.S. were very busy there, as mothers and children were queuing to register for evacuation. However, fortunately for my colleague and myself we saw some lovely cherries in a shop lower down the High Street and bought some there. We started to hurry back to work and had just crossed Crayford Bridge when we looked up.... And saw something that will stay in my memory until my dying day. There just above our heads was a huge silent evil looking doodlebug-flying bomb. They made a noise while flying high, but as soon as this monster went quiet it was on its way down. We threw ourselves to the ground and as the doodlebug hit the High Street the earth shook beneath us. We got up thankful we were still alive. And turned round. Behind us was a mass of thick swirling dust, we could not see the shops at all, it was like thick fog.

As we were both only 17, it was better to leave the rescue work to the trained wardens, rescue parties and First Aid workers, we would probably have got in the way. We ran back towards the Town Hall and were met by Mr Hodgson-Clerk of the Council – dashing towards us asking if we were all right. Crayford was a very close community in those days, and we were all known as individuals to our seniors.

Enid Shed now Mrs Cherry

July 14th This school was further damaged by blast from a flying bomb which fell in Crayford High Street yesterday afternoon. The staff have been present all the week for evacuation purposes.

When a V1 flying bomb struck Crayford High Street on the 13th July, 1944 it killed 56 people. The tragic irony was that many of the victims were mothers and their children queuing to register for evacuation with the Women's Voluntary Service (W.V.S.) because of the threat from doodlebugs. Shortly afterwards a large number of Crayford children were evacuated. Crayford C.E. Junior School (St. Paulinus) was badly damaged by the High Street doodlebug, as the log book above shows; this prompted a major effort to evacuate children from the school. However, some parents, frustrated by the official delays, decided to organise their own evacuations through family and friends.

Crayford CE Junior School's (St. Paulinus) log book 1944

Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre



On Doodlebugs and Carrying On

What calls us here is simple
 The need to feel the same
 But in our hearts such fear is felt
 As we survey the game
 The 'spotters' strain upon the roofs
 They gaze upon the stand
 A whistle ever close to lips
 Binoculars in hand
 Last night in early evening
 As we sat down to eat
 A doodlebug so suddenly
 Destroyed a nearby street
 I heard the engine slowly stall
 And hover overhead
 A young girl screamed "Oh God not here"
 We never knew the dead
 Nor can we know when they will come
 Or if we will survive
 But like this match before me
 We carry on with life
 So little time to face the threat
 We count four minutes down
 What mayhem here should they appear
 For mother dad or friend
 We keep our 'small talk' going
 Defiant to the end
 But this is how we face each day
 With fear and baited breath
 This afternoon perhaps tonight
 These dreaded bombs of death

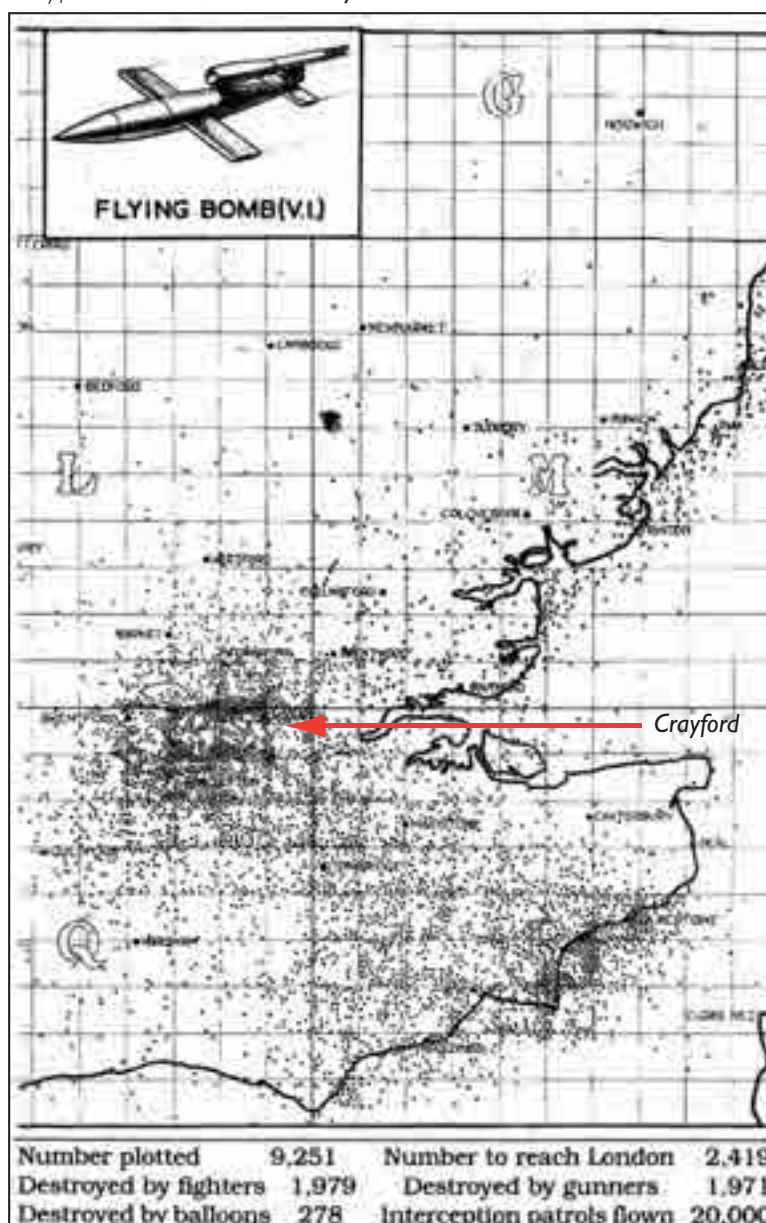
© Crispin Thomas

You can watch how London tried to defend itself against the VI flying bombs on the ITN Source website:

http://www.itnsource.com/shotlist//BHC_RTV/1944/09/07/BGU409190026/



Crayford evacuees, 1944 Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre



R.A.F. map plotting where V1 'doodlebugs' landed
 courtesy of Bob Ogley Froglets Publications

Crayford born Derek Ufton played alongside Sam Bartram in the post war Charlton side and went on to represent England. He also played cricket for Kent.

Ufton lost his mother in the Crayford doodlebug attack. She was one of the Women's Voluntary Service volunteers (W.V.S.) killed in Crayford High Street, whilst helping families to register for evacuation. She is remembered on a stained glass window in St. Paulinus Church, Crayford, alongside of Winifred and Ethel Hayward, fellow W.V.S. volunteers, who were also killed.



Dad found me a place to stay in Norfolk with a family he knew who lived at Hall farm, Hethel. It lay right alongside the United States Army Air Force (U.S.A.A.F.) base near to where dad was based with his anti-aircraft guns. There had been Yanks back home at Hall Place in Bexley, but not this many!

I was staying so close to the airfield I could count the Liberator bombers taking off and count them back in when they returned. Some never did and many were often shot to pieces. These planes would sometimes shoot out coloured red flares to signal they had wounded aboard.



From 1st March, 1944 'Operation Ultra' came to Bexley. American soldiers from the 6811th Security Section were based at Hall Place, to intercept incoming coded messages from the Luftwaffe. Their transcripts were sent to Bletchley Park where experts had broken the German Enigma code and were able to read them.

Hall Place Bexley (left)

Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre



Only a hedge separates this dairy herd from B24 Liberators at Rackheath. Farmer's fields surrounded Hethel too. Hethel was home to the United States Army Air Force (U.S.A.A.F.) 389th Bombardment Group who flew B24 Liberators, a four-engined, heavy bomber.

Norfolk Record Office



You can watch American daylight bombers attack Wilhelmshaven on the ITN Source website:

www.itnsource.com/shotlist/BHC_RTV/1943/11/11/BGU409090061/

'Witchcraft,' a U.S.A.A.F. Liberator bomber on her hardstand, next to farm buildings at Rackheath, Norfolk.

*Norfolk Record Office
(MC376/299 723x1)*

If you went into the nearby town of Wymondham, you would always see groups of Yanks from the airfield outside the Green Dragon pub. I used to say, "Got any gum chum" and they would give me chewing gum, or sweets they called candy. I soon found out from them that Jimmy Stewart, the famous Hollywood actor, was a pilot at nearby Tibenham airfield.

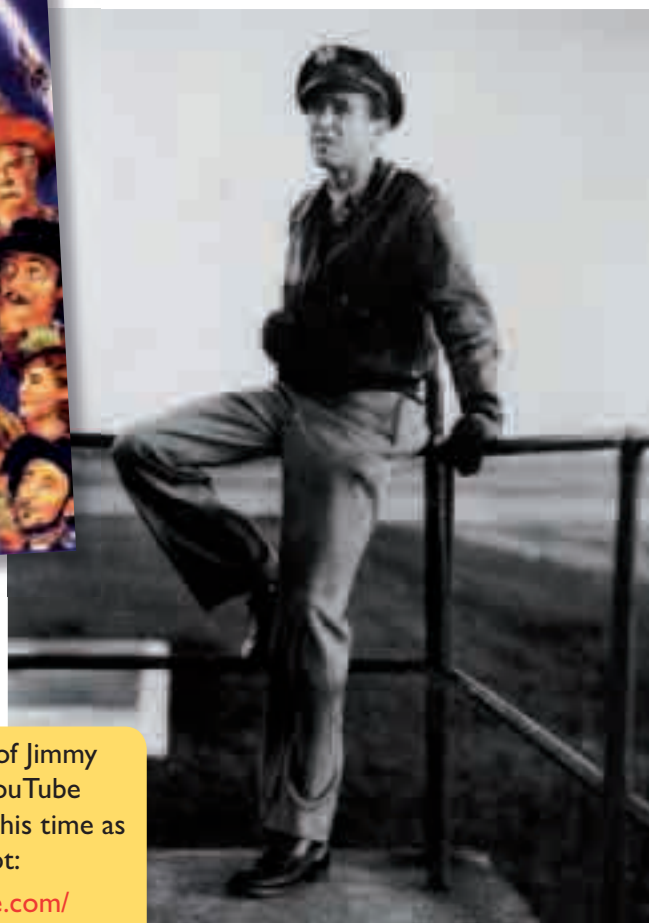
James Stewart was the star of Hollywood cowboy film 'Destry Rides Again', which was released in 1939.

By 1943 he was a pilot of a B24 Liberator bomber with the 445th Bomb Group at Tibenham, Norfolk. When word got out, every child in Norfolk wanted to meet him.

By the time he returned to making films he was a Colonel. He went on to become one of the most famous film stars of the 1940s and 50s.

The 389th Bomb Group's airfield at Hethel is now the base of Lotus cars. The 389th called itself the Green Dragons after the Green Dragon pub in Wymondham, which was the local pub for the crews who manned its Liberator bombers.

Norfolk Record Office



Watch a clip of Jimmy Stewart on YouTube talking about his time as a bomber pilot:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoY8CjIlarg



'Yanks' Michael Foreman

I found it hard to settle when I started at school. I always felt an outsider when they laughed at my accent. It was football that in the end helped to begin to break the ice. At first it was just swapping cigarette cards and then I'd nod to some of the lads at Wymondham station, when I sometimes went to see Norwich City play at Carrow Road. I still stuck out though – the only kid wearing a red and white scarf on the train!



'Going to see Norwich City at Carrow Road'
Michael Foreman



'A Game at Carrow Road'
Michael Foreman



In 1933, Billy Warnes and Jack Vinnall both scored 21 goals each as Norwich City became Division 3 (South) Champions. A year later, Sam Bartram helped Charlton succeed Norwich as champions.

Norwich stars of the 30s and 40s Jack Vinnall and W.H. (Billy) Warnes (above) and the club mascot, 'the Canary' (right) featured on cigarette cards.

Norwich was a centre of canary breeding and it quickly became the nickname of the club after it was formed in 1902. The club have worn canary yellow and green shirts since 1907.



Dad would tell me that you should never be ashamed of where you came from or how you spoke. It took another visit to Carrow Road to show me that he was right. This wasn't for football but for the United States Army Air Force Rodeo. At school my class mates were mad about meeting Jimmy Stewart. I was too and dreamed of being whisked off to Hollywood. Sadly all of our cowboy accents were dreadful, so I suppose it was lucky that none of us ever got to meet him. It didn't matter, though, we all learnt to laugh at each other's accents and as a result I finally felt accepted as one of the gang.



Air crew attempt to milk a cow at the U.S.A.A.F. 8th Air Force Charity Rodeo. There were two rodeos held at Norwich City's Carrow Road ground, one in August, 1943, and another a year later. Events included bronco busting, steer riding, rope twirling and milking. The rodeo shown in these pictures is the one in 1943. Seven thousand people attended, which raised £700 for charity. **Norfolk Record Office**



Air crew attempt steer riding at the U.S.A.A.F. 8th Air Force Charity Rodeo. A steer is a bull. At a rodeo cowboys compete to see who can stay on the back of a steer the longest. **Norfolk Record Office**

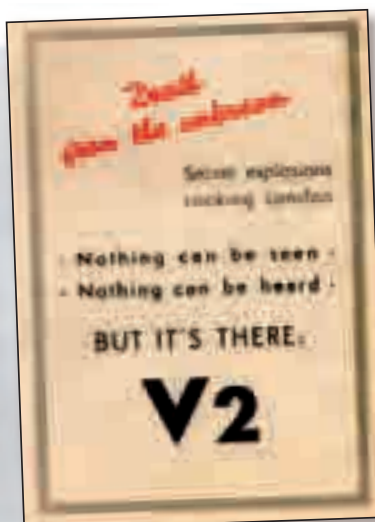
When Hitler started his V2 rocket attacks towards the end of 1944, I know dad was glad that I was no longer living in 'Bomb Alley.' That's not to say it was entirely safe in Norfolk. One day in November, 1944, I was walking towards the farm when a huge explosion blew me off my feet. Looking across the fields I saw this huge column of smoke and later discovered that two Liberators had collided in mid air over Hethel killing both the crews.



In June, 1946, a memorial plaque was dedicated in Carleton Rode Church, in memory of 17 members of the 389th Bomb Group who were killed in a mid-air collision over the parish on 21st, November, 1944. A stained glass window in the church is also dedicated to the crew members killed in this collision.

Liberators (left) flying in close formation during a raid over Germany. Getting into formation was necessary to gain protection from German fighter planes but sometimes led to collisions like the one at Hethel.

Library of Congress



This V2 propaganda leaflet was dropped on British troops in Italy in November, 1944. It played on soldier's fears that death could come from the unknown to their family back home at any moment.

*Imperial War Museum
A1-167-11-44*

You can watch the launch of a V2 rocket on the ITN Source website:

www.itnsource.com/shotlist/BHC_RT/1945/10/22/BGU410020081/

(Left) A V2 rocket before launching.

The V2 measured 46 feet (14 metres) in length. Its range was 200-220 miles. It flew faster than the speed of sound so it exploded before you even heard it approach.

Imperial War Museum CL3407

The farm where I was staying employed lots of Land Army girls. They would go to dances at the local airfields where the Yanks would teach them how to dance the jitterbug. One night I even tagged along to see the legendary Glenn Miller play at nearby Attlebridge airfield.



'The Jitterbug' Michael Foreman

You can watch dancers dance the jitterbug on the ITN Source website:

www.itnsource.com/shotlist//BHC_RTV/1941/12/29/BGU408170034/



The government wanted to increase the amount of home grown food and so it started the Women's Land Army in June, 1939. By 1944, it had over 80,000 members. The W.L.A. lasted until its official disbandment on 21st October, 1950.

Imperial War Museum



Glenn Miller and singer Irene Manning broadcast from London, November, 1944.
Imperial War Museum OWIL54492

The Glenn Miller Army Air Force Band played at Attlebridge on 18 August 1944. The popularity of Miller's Big Band music helped make popular a dance craze known as the 'Jitterbug.' This was a fast moving dance brought to this country by the American GI's. At the height of his popularity, Glenn Miller was killed on 15th, December, 1944, whilst flying from London to Paris.

One of the girls at Hall farm even became a G.I. bride. Everybody pooled their ration coupons for her wedding and the party that followed was a sign of things to come.



A Norfolk girl becomes another G.I. Bride (left).

Norfolk Record Office

Many girls married G.I.'s (American servicemen). G.I.'s had smarter uniforms and better pay than British servicemen. After the war many new wives went back with their G.I. husbands to the U.S.A. Some girls returned home disillusioned when their lives failed to match the 'Hollywood' glamour they expected.

Clothes rationing meant that many wedding dresses were used several times over.

'G.I. Bride' Michael Foreman





Food and clothing ration books and ambulance driver Ann Hibbert's identity card



NUMBER OF COUPONS REQUIRED					
Men and Boys				Adults	Children
Unlined mackintosh or cape	..	..	..	9	7
Other mackintoshes, raincoat, overcoat	..	..	..	10	11
Coat, jacket, blazer and like garments	..	..	..	13	8
Wandcoat, pull-over, cardigan, jersey	..	..	..	5	3
Trousers (other than flannel or corduroy)	..	..	..	8	6
Fustian or corduroy trousers	..	..	..	5	5
Shorts	..	..	..	5	3
Overalls, dungarees and like garments	..	..	..	8	4
Dressing-gown, bathing-gown, or pair of pyjamas	..	..	..	8	6
Shirt, combinations—woollen	..	..	..	8	6
Shirt, combinations—other material	..	..	..	5	4
Pants, vest, bathing costume, child's frock	..	..	..	4	2
Pair of socks or stockings	..	..	..	3	1
Collar, tie, or two handkerchiefs	..	..	..	1	1
Scarf, pair of gloves or mittens	..	..	..	2	2
Pair of slippers or gelosons	..	..	..	4	2
Pair of boots or shoes	..	..	..	7	3
Pair of leggings, gaiters or spats	..	..	..	3	2
Women and Girls				Adults	Children
Coat, raincoat, lined mackintosh	..	..	..	14	11
Jacket, short coat	..	..	..	11	8
Dress, gown, frock—woollen	..	..	..	11	8
Dress, gown, frock—other material	..	..	..	7	5
Gown, tunic, girl's skirt with bodice	..	..	..	8	5
Blouse, sports shirt, cardigan, jumper	..	..	..	5	3
Skirt, divided skirt	..	..	..	7	5
Overalls, dungarees and like garments	..	..	..	6	4
Apron, pinafore	..	..	..	3	2
Pyjamas	..	..	..	8	5
Nightdress	..	..	..	6	4
Petticoat, slip, combinations, cambric drawers	..	..	..	4	3
Other undergarments, including corsets	..	..	..	3	2
Pair of stockings	..	..	..	2	1
Pair of socks, collar, tie, or two handkerchiefs	..	..	..	1	1
Scarf, pair of gloves or mittens, mail	..	..	..	2	2
Pair of slippers, boots or shoes	..	..	..	5	3
Cloth.—Coupons needed per yard depend on the weight, for example, a yard of woollen cloth (19ins. wide) requires 4 coupons and cotton or other cloth 2 coupons.					
Killing Wool.—1 coupon is needed for two ounces.					

A bride would certainly have needed the help of her friends and family to get together enough ration tokens for her dress! Making one from stolen parachute silk was often the only way a bride could have a new dress. *Norfolk Record Office*

Victory

When victory finally came, I was back home in Crayford. To celebrate V.E. Day, 8th May, 1945, we built a huge bonfire to burn an effigy of Hitler on one of the local bombsites.



An image of Hitler being hanged from a lamp post in Welling. Hitler took over from Guy Fawkes as the villain to burn on the communal bonfire for V.E. day.

Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre

'V.E. Day Bonfire' Michael Foreman

However, the street party that followed was a little flat for me as dad had still not been demobbed from the army.*



V.E. Day celebrations in Heath Road, Crayford, Kent

Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre

** slang for demobilization or release from the army*



'V.E. Party' Michael Foreman

Charlton, meanwhile, were having a great run in the F.A. Cup and when they won the semi-final to reach the first post war F.A. cup final dad wrote and promised me we would go.

**It's Chris Duffy after
that 'dizzy' goal**

**DUFFY WONDER GOAL
PUSH CHARLTON ON**



Charlton with Sam Bartram beat Bolton Wanderers 2-0 to reach the first post war F.A. Cup Final in 1946. The cup had been in Portsmouth's hands since their victory in 1939.

Sam Bartram Collection

You can watch the Charlton v Bolton Wanderers F.A. Cup Semi Final 1946 on the Pathé News website:

www.britishpathe.com

Two Finals in a Row

The final was against Derby County on the 27th April, 1946, and dad knew he had to get tickets. Charlton's allocation had long sold out and the black market prices from the touts were beyond him. He had almost given up hope when he noticed that the local paper was running a competition to win a pair of tickets for the final. They were asking for Charlton fans to draw caricatures of the Charlton Cup final squad. Dad didn't tell me he'd entered and won until Cup final day itself.



Caricatures of Charlton Athletic's 1946 F.A. Cup Final Squad
Mike Blake

You can watch highlights of the 1946 F.A. Cup Final on the ITN Source website:
www.itnsource.com/shotlist/BHC_RTV/1946/04/29/BGU410080047/



1946 F.A. Cup Final Ticket

The day of the final arrived, a glorious sunny day, but not for me. CHARLTON WERE IN THE CUP FINAL – but once again I wouldn't be going, or at least I thought I wasn't! At least Dad was home now and back working at Vickers. He'd just been demobbed and said we'd go anyway – just to soak up the Wembley atmosphere. When we got there and he produced the tickets, well I could have died and gone to heaven!



THIS, THEN, IS CUP DAY—

John Thompson's Sportfolios

In the desert and across Europe and in the jungle during the long years that are over the singular magic of our greatest game was a constant star. . . .

IN the orchards of Normandy and sand-swept camps of Libya, the talk came always to memories of football's greatest day. . . . Of the tension and tradition which lift the final game of the F.A. Cup into something considerably more than the spectacle of twenty-two young men kicking a football around on a green field at Wembley.

And this, then, is Cup Final Day, the first since war ended.



Chris Duffy



Arthur Turner

♦ ♦ ♦

IT is in their forward line that Charlton's strength lies: Leslie Fell and Chris Duffy, the wingers; Albert Brown, the funny man of the party, and Donald Welsh, the captain, who emerged yesterday from a slight motor-car accident as unruffled as usual; and Arthur Turner, who revels in a heavy ground, to spearhead the attack.

Turner, Coastal Command bomb-aimer, was fished out of the sea after his machine had crashed. Little could he have dreamed as he waited for rescue of this day at Wembley.

♦ ♦ ♦

The 1946 F.A. Cup final symbolised for many people that the war was over. It was particularly sweet for two Charlton players lining up at Wembley that day. Chris Duffy was a survivor of the D-Day landings. Arthur Turner was a gunner aboard a Wellington bomber serving with No.172 Squadron, Coastal Command. He was the only survivor when his plane was shot down by a German U boat and crashed in the Bay of Biscay.

You can watch Arthur Turner speak about his experience:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=vu5hwwe4tug&NR=1

We had fantastic seats right by the newsreel cameramen on the half way line quite close to the Royal Box, where the King, Queen and Princess Elizabeth were sitting. Derby scored first, or should I say Bert Turner did for them with an own goal. Then he made up for it by going up the other end and equalising for the 'Addicks.'

News reel camera
on the half way line
at Wembley

Sam Bartram
Collection



Bert Turner



Sam punches a Derby
attack clear

PA Photo, Sam Bartram
Collection



It was a strange game with the ball bursting, before the game went into extra time. Sadly Charlton were stuffed 4-1, but somehow it didn't seem to matter. That ball bursting marked the real end of the war for me. It burst just before the final whistle and that's when I caught sight of dad, bathed in the bright Wembley sunshine, still in his greasy Vickers overalls, but smiling, smiling as I'd never seen him smile before.

1946 F.A. Cup final programme for Charlton's 4-1 defeat after extra time against Derby County. Charlton's Bert Turner had scored at both ends to make it 1-1 after normal time.

The ball burst just before the end of the match after Sam Bartram had saved a shot. He had to throw it into touch at the half way line to avoid giving away a bounce up on his goal line.

1946 F.A. Cup Final programme



Whilst the game was taking place talks with Soviet Russia over the future of the atom bomb had broken down. This cartoon uses the Wembley incident to mark the beginning of the Cold War era.

Kent University



Charlton fans celebrating at the first Cup final after the war.

Empics

I'll never forget the trip back from the F.A. Cup Final. Dad and I never stopped talking. Charlton may have lost, but we were together again and I realised there were more important things in life than football. Sharing that day at Wembley with dad made me realise how lucky I was. Not every family had made it through the war unscathed. "There's nothing more important than family," he told me and I guess he was right. "The 'Addicks' will be back next year and this time they'll win," dad predicted. And do you know he was right about that too!



Sam and Don Welsh are about to lift the Cup! Charlton's scorer, Erith resident Chris Duffy, is in the far right of the picture. He had been a soldier at D-Day just three years before. Miraculously, the ball burst again as it had in the 1946 final.

Mike Blake



1947 Cup Final programme

Charlton returned to Wembley in 1947 and this time a 1-0 victory over Burnley gave them the cup. Captain Don Welsh is seen here being chaired around Wembley stadium by Sam Bartram and Charlton full-back and Barnehurst resident Peter Croker. **Empics**

You can watch highlights of Charlton beating Burnley in the 1947 F.A. Cup Final on the ITN Source website:

www.itnsource.com/shotlist//BHC_RT/1947/04/28/BGU410200024/

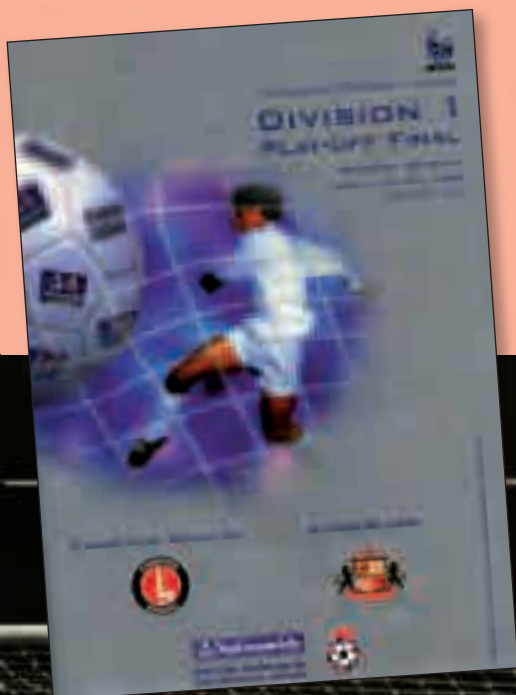


The Magic of the Twin Towers – 1998

Returning to Wembley had been hard. I wanted to go and I wanted to leave from dad's house, just like we always did when we went to football together. He would have loved this game, 4-4 after extra time and then penalties. Now the stadium scoreboard read Charlton Athletic 7, Sunderland 6. Nobody had missed a penalty yet.

Somebody soon was going to be a hero or villain; such is the narrow dividing line between success and failure in a penalty shoot out. Would it be Sunderland's Michael Gray, who was now taking the long walk to the penalty spot, or Charlton's goalkeeper, Sasa Illic that would take the role of hero? I desperately wanted it to be Illic, but thought how much more confident I would be if it was Sam Bartram between those posts.

I'm not sure if I would have watched in any case, but it was then that the sun's rays broke between the twin towers and I blinked and in that fraction of a second dad's smiling face flashed through my mind's eye. In that same blinking of an eye, Michael Gray struck the ball so with my eyes closed, I never saw Illic save it. I heard him save it!



(Left) 1998 Play off final programme Charlton v Sunderland
Football League

You can watch Charlton vs Sunderland in the 1998 Division I Play-off Final on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwbiaTz7Yvs

Sam Bartram stands ready to save a penalty.
Sam Bartram Collection

The crowd around me just went crazy. An eruption of noise that told me Illic had saved it and taken the 'Addicks' into the Premier League. Then again I'm not sure it was him who saved it! I'd like to think dad had asked Sam to give our keeper a helping hand; that somewhere, up there, dad had sorted it for me, looking out for me as he always did.



Michael Foreman

Some years have passed since that play off game now. I'm glad that a few years later, in their centenary year, Charlton decided to build a statue of Sam Bartram outside the Valley. Not that I needed one to be built for him to be my hero. I realise now that your heroes never die, they live on in your memory making them immortal. I take comfort from that because dad will always be my greatest hero of all.



Sam Bartram's statue was erected outside the West Stand main entrance to the Valley in 2005, Charlton Athletic's centenary year.
Charlton Athletic

Statue In the Mist – Super Sam Bartram

born when we were verging on the eve of World War One
at fourteen he was working down the mine
and while so many years have passed since first he ventured South
Sam Bartram's still a legend in his time –
in knee length shorts with stripy socks and those misshapen hands
in classic old green polo neck and cap
he never played for England but still they claim with pride
how Sam put Charlton firmly on the map –
in three successive seasons Sam's exploits helped his team
rise three leagues up to reach Division One
when War broke out the RAF saw Bartram teach P.T.
to interrupt the glory he'd begun –

and some will judge the best these days by titles and by cups
the honours and the goals that some 'greats' score
they never stopped to tally all those countless saves he made
but Bartram's name will live for ever more –
and others speak of loyalty but few can understand
the passion that he brought to ev'ry game
the moments shared with fans who gazed in awe behind his goal
is something we will never see again –
for twenty one long seasons in that awesome Valley home
before those mighty banks of crowds long gone
the frame of Sam would fill the goal and barely miss a match
for 'Addicks' fans the memories will go on –
the club's own record holder he – who played til forty-two
the games he played six hundred-twenty three
from balls that burst in Finals to a sports shop near the ground
he surely will go down in history –

and some recall the time the fog rolled thick across the field
when Sam could neither see nor hear a sound
til rescued by a 'copper' from that long abandoned game
with teams and fans all long gone from the ground!*

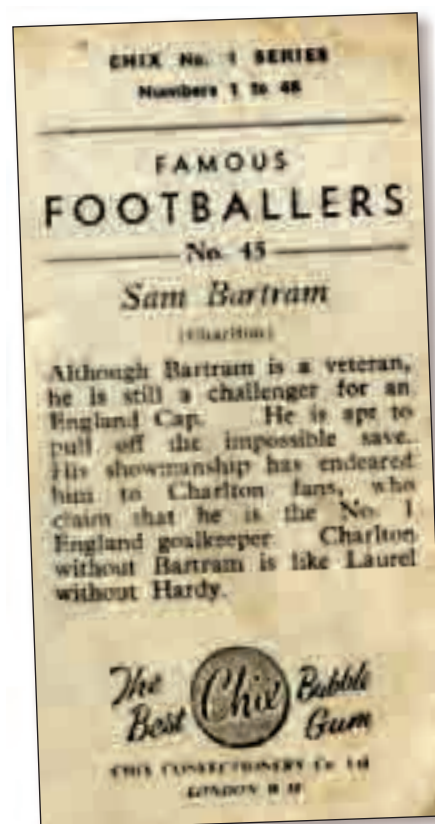
but Sam was so much more than just a giant on the pitch
to mighty forwards he so oft' denied
four finals in a row he played against the very best
the heart and soul of his beloved side –

imposing and commanding in old and sewn-up gloves
sheer bravery was something he'd not lack
athletic as the team he loved and clung to all his life
reliable un-flinching at the back –
and often from his area he'd run to meet the ball
then 'doff' his cap revealing such red hair
then nonchalantly jump above the prowling forward's leap
to elegantly nod that danger clear –

flamboyant and formidable that graceful striking pose
like 'Boy's Own' keepers leaping off the page
a look-alike Burt Lancaster when flying in 'Trapeze'
a superstar in this or any age –
and if there is a heaven then he's there between the sticks
for when it came to keepers there's none better
and I can see him peering now through clouds to spot that ball
with trusty hands and fifties roll-neck sweater –

for legends come and legends go like players in his time
but Sam refused or longed to leave the party
a bubble card from then recalls how "Charlton without Sam –
was just like having Laurel without Hardy!
and I suppose for some he's but a blur in black and white
an image from a time that fades so fast
a gentleman and role model a statue in the mist
but long may his great name and glory last

© Crispin Thomas



Chix Bubble gum card

* During a game against Chelsea in 1937, when thick fog made visibility impossible, Sam patrolled his line faithfully assuming his team were keeping the Pensioners in their own half. Unbeknown to Sam, the game had been abandoned fifteen minutes earlier... and he was finally discovered alone on the pitch!