

After a few days Mother was to catch a Green Line Bus to spend a week with her sister, Edith, widow of the late Dr. Edmund Weld of Windsor.

Lorna and I set off for Cambridge to spend a few days with her Aunt Cissie, wife of Professor Laurie and son Zennie and daughter Mary. The other son, Edward, I have mentioned having called on him at Derby. Here we spent a few very happy days and I remember on the Sunday we went to hear an American Negro preaching in the Methodist church.

The day before we left for London we watched Zennie and a friend of his busy getting their uniforms etc. ready for their Territorial Camp. Britain was undoubtedly preparing for war which was declared a few months later. All sorts of preparations were being made for any eventuality. With that fanatical Nazi Hitler, the Dictator, it was felt that anything any day might happen without warning as it did a little later with the attack on Poland.

We returned to London and Mother returned a few days later from Windsor. I remember going to meet her in Regent Street. How to time these buses do run, it was there right on time.

In London too preparations were being made for eventualities. Bomb proof shelters were being hastily dug in the various parks and fields. Shelters were even being dug by individuals on their properties. There certainly was a feeling of uncertainty everywhere and every one was prepared for the worst.

The next move was Mother and Lorna flying over to Jersey to spend a fortnight with Uncle Frank or Fem as she called him. I went out to the drome with them but after seeing the plane off I returned to the Regent Palace Hotel to do a bit of packing as I had been invited by the C.O. of the 60th (Kings Royal Rifles to whom the Kaffrarian Rifles were affiliated) to spend a while with them at the Head Quarters in Winchester. At the station I was met by one of their officers and given a very fine room in the Officers' Quarters, this room, of an officer who was on leave, was well furnished as he undoubtedly believed in comfort. On the walls hung fine paintings and photographs of horses. He was apparently a keen polo player and also ran a couple of horses in steeplechases. Most of these of course have private means and do not depend on their soldiers pay.

Having settled in the Adjutant came along and said most of the Officers had gone to watch Polo and asked if I would like to go and watch the play. So we drove over to see the play at Coudry Park of which you have no doubt read.

I was most interested in their daily exercises and on could not help feeling that there was the expectancy of war. The officer I walked round with spoke to one or two chaps who he said were on the reserve and had been called up. I was very struck with the friendly feeling there was between Officers and the reservists who had been called up.

One thing that was being tried out was a Bren Gun Carrier, power driven and we were later to use in North Africa. The advantage is that it makes the machine gun and its crew so mobile. However, there were to be a lot of changes in the weapons used. Even the old .303 rifle was superceded by automatic rifles.

The first time I went down to breakfast I found that all the food was set out on a sort of heated dinner wagon and from this one helped yourself. A very fine array of food there was hot and cold.

As I sat down after helping myself I tried to speak to one of the Officers but he just looked up from the paper he was reading and nodded. At first I thought 'What a rude man', but then I remembered that some one had told me that an Englishman speaks to no one during breakfast. All he is interested in is his food and a paper or book he may be reading. Later, however, I found that they were very friendly and interested in what one had to tell them and ask questions about South Africa in which they seemed very interested,

Most of them /