

# **Leckhampton in the Second World War**

**Edited by Eric Miller, John Randall and Amy Woolacott**

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**76 pages illustrated**

From personal recollections and documentary sources, many of them not published before, the Leckhampton Local History Society has compiled this book describing life in the village during the war years.

Immediately after the declaration of war the first evacuees arrived and extensive civil defence and air-raid precautions were taken. Teams of fire watchers were organised, shelters were dug and the irksome blackout regulations were enforced. Reminiscences of members of the Home Guard enliven the narrative, and housewives and others recall the effects of rationing.

A number of the high-explosive bombs that fell in the Cheltenham area landed on Leckhampton, and Pilley Bridge was demolished (see illustration on front cover). Several present-day inhabitants have provided graphic eye-witness descriptions.

Leckhampton Court played an important role, housing US servicemen before the D-Day landings and, after VE-Day, German Prisoners-of-War. Several former inmates have provided their own fond memories.

We learn how local schools and churches responded to wartime conditions, and many details of the civilian war effort are recalled, as well as the way in which people contrived to maintain a social life. The book ends with descriptions of the joyful celebrations of the ending of the war, while paying tribute to those who served during the conflict and to those who lost their lives in it.

There are nearly 50 rare photographs of life at the time, as well as maps showing where the bombs fell and the layout of the POW camp.

This book will appeal to anyone with an interest in the events of 1939-45 and in the history not only of Leckhampton but also of Cheltenham and further afield.



**'The ruins of Pilley Bridge after the raid on December 11 1940'**

## **Contents**

Acknowledgments and Sources

Introduction

Preamble

Chapter 1 Outbreak of War and Air Raid Precautions

Chapter 2 Rationing

Chapter 3 Air Raids

Chapter 4 Leckhampton Court

Chapter 5 Schools and Churches

Chapter 6 Work and Civilian War Effort

Chapter 7 Social and Community Affairs

Chapter 8 End of the War

Appendix A War Diary

Appendix B 'Lest we Forget'

Appendix C Awards for Bravery

Maps: Plots of reported bomb sites

Layout of POW Camp