

Most of the actual hutments had been dismantled and sold for re-election for civilian use, many of these being converted into dwelling-houses, but their footings remained. So it was a matter of breaking up the foundations, and hauling away the debris, to be stacked in long heaps alongside the field hedges. (Over the next few years, the heaps of concrete and stone found a ready market for contractors' developments. And with the coming of the 1939 war, what remained was snapped up for use as hardcore for new military establishments in the district).

I have no idea of the cruelly hard work that went with the re-establishment of the land, for I was a schoolboy, and at home only in the holidays. But the work entailed breaking concrete with sledge-hammers, and loading the broken pieces by hand into farm carts for transport to the nearest hedge side site.

It was work really for the strongest, and although Father did his fair share by the side of his men, its effect was badly to damage his bodily health in future life. When I look back now to what he and his men achieved, my admiration for him is unbounded. So many farmers in like position merely took the compensation and farmed only what had not been built on, leaving unsightly areas of land of useless field to litter the countryside.

Ever since the coming of the camp, Mary and John had spent most of their time at Quarry Farm, Chicks Grove, leaving more rooms for Mother to let at Fovant in the farmhouse. It also relieved her of some of the work that such a large family would have entailed. At Quar, as we called it for short, they were given the sound rudiments of education by my aunts, one of whom was in fact a qualified teacher. But in the spring of 1918, it was decided that they both needed more advanced teaching, and they were both despatched to boarding school, Mary to a school run by one of