

Early memories of Withington by Alma Matthews

My family moved to Harcombe Road house in 1939.

According to my father, he bought the house as it had a "Sunshine lounge", ideal for me to practice walking (I was three months old at the time).

During the Blitz on Manchester, my mum carried me into the Anderson shelter in our next door neighbour's garden. We shared it with the elderly lady and her son. I do remember the noise and vibration when a bomb went off in Ferngate Drive (I think it was). Next air raid we shared a Morrison shelter with neighbours. This was under their kitchen table and far more pleasant as the lady gave us biscuits!

Jimmy and Alan were my sole friends. Together we explored the waste land at the end of Harcombe Road. It was between Jersey House and The Grange. The Grange was sealed off by a brick wall and a ditch that was always filled with water. A huge tree hung over the ditch, ideal for a rope swing. A perfect site for playing Pirates. The rest of the overgrown ground was perfect for playing Cowboys and Indians.

In about 1945/6 troops paraded round the streets and roads, passing our houses. Jimmy, Alan and I stood on our front gate asking, "Any gum chum ?" We were given loads of real American gum.

On Victory Day, we were taken to watch the parade in Hazel Grove, Stockport. Each of us wore some red, white and blue. I had my hair in bunches, tied with red white and blue ribbons. Jimmy and Alan had badges and ties to match.

Wonderful days of growing up in our part of Withington.

Alma Matthews