



The White House, on Heath End Road, was purchased in 1937 by the wife of Sir Frederick Pile, Hester Melba Pile. It was a safe retreat from the London bombs, and both Sir Frederick and his wife (plus their maid) made use of this Buckinghamshire bolt-hole throughout the war. It was close to various establishments in the surrounding area that had been requisitioned for the war effort: Hughenden Manor, Danesfield House, Walters Ash, Wilton Park, and of course the Prime Minister's country retreat, Chequers.

Sir Frederick, who was always known as Tim, had served in WWI. In 1937 he became General Officer Commanding 1st Anti-Aircraft Division and in 1939, at the start of the war, he was made General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Anti-Aircraft Command. He commanded the anti-aircraft defences of Britain and Northern Ireland throughout the war, encouraged women to join anti-aircraft batteries and was involved in Britain's defence against the V1 and V2 rockets. It was his responsibility to shoot them down.

Although Hester preferred to stay in London, when she could, her diaries refer to her time in Flackwell Heath when she and her maid would travel down here to be away from the threat of heavy bombing. She and Tim were both members of the Flackwell Heath Golf Club and supported village events when they could. He took on the Presidency of the Flackwell Heath Home-Coming Forces Fund. The boundaries for the fund were Stoney Rock, Rock Lane, Pigeon House Farm, Sheepridge, Mr Fairley's House, Chapman Lane, Mr Putman's house, Blind lane, White Pit Cottages, White Pit Lane and Loudwater Station.



The Hostel, accessed via Fennels Way, was built to meet the need for wartime accommodation for workers coming to work in the factories in and around High Wycombe. It was also known as the Broom and Wade Hostel because this company, we believe, had a vested interest in its development. Certainly many of the hostel residents worked for them.

The hostel provided rooms for men and women with a dining hall, washrooms and leisure facilities all available. Some of the residents were refugees from war torn Europe and several were to marry local people and remain in the area.

The living conditions at the hostel were considered to be very good for the time and village residents were invited to attend dances, film shows and other activities to aid integration. It was demolished for the Oakwood housing estate in the early 1970s.

So ends our east-west tour of Flackwell Heath during WW2. When peace was finally declared the village celebrated by holding street parties (for VE and also VJ Day) in various locations. Photographs of these show a village which had formed a strong wartime community and, through thick and thin, had soldiered on and been victorious on the Home Front.