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EVACUEES.

During World War 2 most children living in large towns like Edinburgh & Glasgow were sent to live in the country with people who had spare accommodation & were willing to take extra child(ren) into their homes. I was 5 when the War began in 1939 & lived in Forth with my parents & my younger sister, Betty. My parents were friendly with a couple from Edinburgh & their son & daughter were evacuated with the other children from Bellevue Crescent, but they were very unhappy with their new situation. Mr & Mrs Mills told my Mum & Dad about this & that is how Betty & I soon had an “adopted” brother & sister, Dan & Jessie, who lived with us for the duration of the War. They went to Forth Primary School, Dan joined the Scouts & Jessie the Girl Guides, & they were our brother & sister for the rest of their lives. When I was young most of us spent “holidays” with an aunt & uncle & I was often at Greenfield Farm with Aunt Jean & Uncle Peter (who was my Dad’s uncle).

They received 2 brothers from Glasgow, Hugh & Tom Gavigan, & I got to know them quite well. They were Catholics & walked up to Tarbrax Chapel every Sunday. They had to fast before the service so Aunt Jean gave them a wrapped sandwich each, which they hid in the stone dyke before entering St. Magdalene’s. It always amazes me the details of life which stick in your memory so long, I mean 70 odd years.

Johnny was 12 when the War started & remembered the Tarbrax evacuees better than me. If you are not a newcomer you may remember a while ago I told you about the initiation that the evacuees had to complete to join the Tarbrax “gang” – they had to go down the east side of the bing on a makeshift sledge which was a corrugated sheet or “berge” bent up at the front, preferably landing in the Burn at the bottom. I