

# 75th Anniversary of VE Day

The 8th May this year marks the 75th anniversary of VE Day (Victory in Europe). This did not mark the end of World War II as Japan did not surrender until August 15, 1945. This is celebrated among the Allied nations as VJ Day (Victory Over Japan).

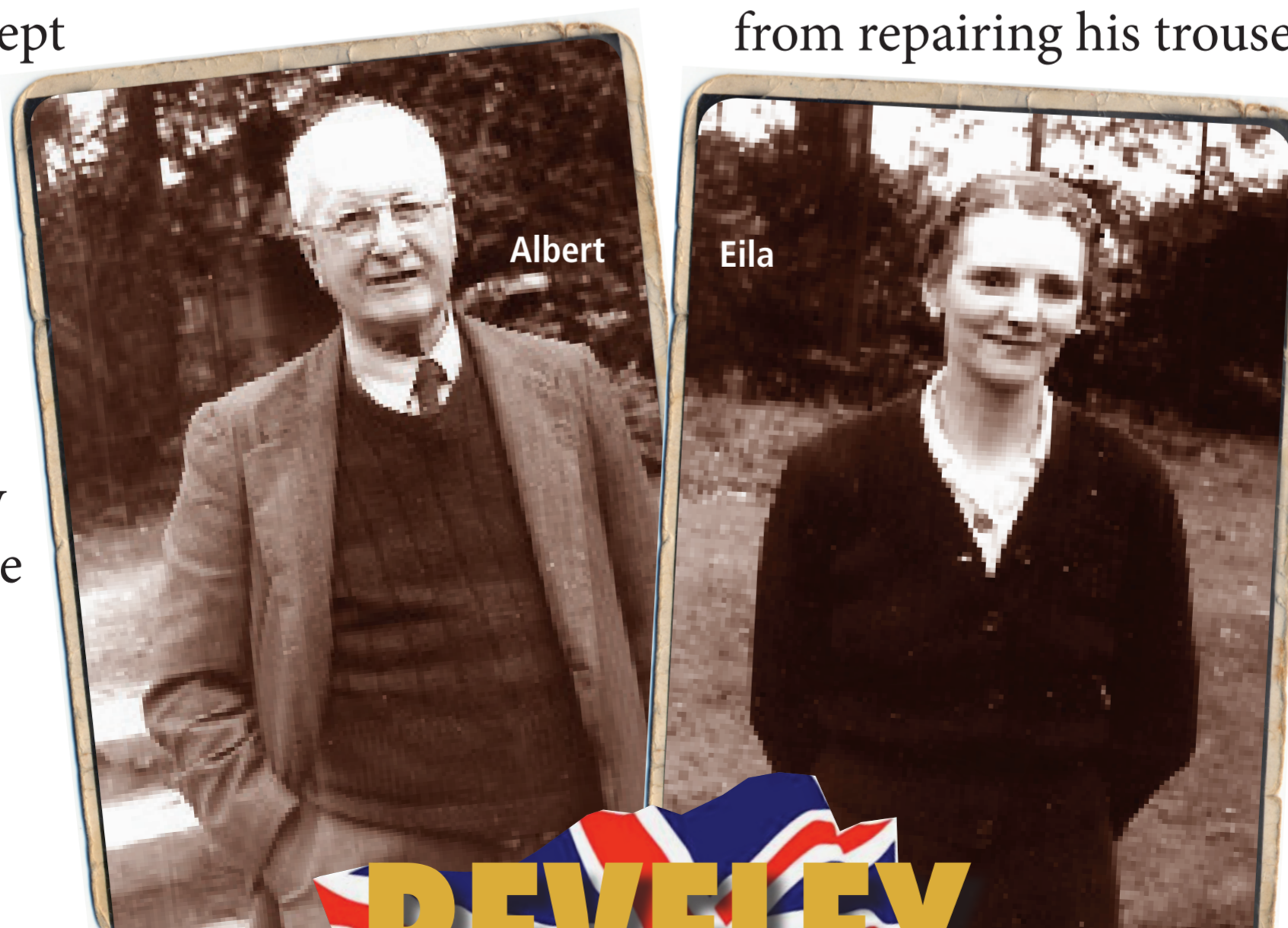
The historian Max Hastings wrote, "Men and women from scores of nations struggled to find words to describe what happened to them. Hundreds of millions of people were plucked from peaceful ordered existences to face ordeals that in many cases lasted for years, and for at least sixty million was terminated by death."

The last owners of Reveley Lodge, Albert and Eila Chewett, were living here during the Second World War. They both kept diaries, a few of which survive. They rarely commented on how they felt about the outbreak of war or its progress.

Albert and Eila's diary extracts, which were never intended to be read by others, give us an insight into life at Reveley during the war years. Albert's entries focused on the mundane but frustrating matter of daily life lived overshadowed by rationing, the blackout, air raids, travel restrictions, billeting and "making do." Thirty-four years his junior, Eila's concentrate on her having a good time - shopping, dancing and learning to play the accordion.

They were a well-off, middle class couple living in a large comfortable house and able to employ a number of staff. As the war dragged on some staff were called up and it's clear from their diaries that finding replacements was difficult to impossible. Albert in particular turned his hand to numerous household tasks from repairing his trousers, laying lino

to wringing the necks of chickens in the spirit of "make do and mend" that everyone was encouraged to adopt and because there was no alternative.



**REVELEY  
AT WAR**