

the story of wooler hostel

the

Doreen Woodcock

ROOM



Doreen (née Linton) Woodcock in July 1986 aged 62



Doreen Woodcock's war service began in 1943 when she joined the Norwegian army in exile, through a connection with a Norwegian sailor who lodged with her parents. At the age of 19 she went off to join Norwegian soldiers training with British Commandos in the highlands of Scotland. She sailed to Norway with an allied force who liberated the country in 1945 as the Germans retreated at the end of the war.

Doreen joined the land army in 1946 and was the cook in the Wooler hostel from early 1947 until she left to get married in 1948. Her first land army posting was as cook for a hostel in Forest Hall, just outside Newcastle. While there she met and started courting her future husband, and future Wooler school-teacher, George Woodcock, who was back home in Newcastle having been demobbed from the RAF. As this relationship developed, she was dismayed to discover that she was about to be posted to "a place called Wooler". But George promised to make the long journey up to Wooler on the bus to see her and to write to her every day.

Doreen took over as cook for the Wooler hostel early in 1947, during one of the worst winters in living memory. She was amazed to see the fields thickly covered in snow. During the bad weather George was unable to get up to Wooler to see her, but he kept up the flow of letters. These daily letters led to Doreen striking up a friendship with the new postman in Wooler, Charles Lippie, a Devon man married to a local Wooler girl who moved up to Wooler after serving in the Royal Navy, and like Doreen was amazed by the Arctic conditions in Wooler.

Doreen and George married in December 1948 after George finished his training to become a teacher and, like so many land army girls, Doreen ended up settling down in Wooler when George got a job teaching in the village school.



In the Norwegian Army. Christmas 1944.

Training in Callender with the Norwegian Army 1944

At Wooler hostel with her friend Hannah Dunn

