

Tuesday June 29th 1943

My First Day At New Park Farm²

I wakened at quarter to four, to see a red dawn lighting the sky and three hours later, when I was cycling along the narrow bumpy track to my work across the Moor, the sun was already bright and warm and the air like ice - a glorious morning. And what a wonderful ride across the dew-laden moor then into the dark, still forest and along the wide cart track to the farm.



Anne's diary of her time at New Park Farm was handwritten in two notebooks. This is the cover of the first book. She cycled to work early every day in all weathers from her lodging, Holbrook House, in Brockenhurst. The illustration shows her daily route.

I was sent to watch “Freda”³ in the Dairy - a trim, efficient little girl with brown arms and a Brown, fresh face, dressed in the khaki dungarees and green jersey of the Land Army. She was carefully preparing the milk cooler for the new milk which was already being brought in by the men. This we poured in at the top and it came seeping rough in tiny trickles and down into the churn. Freda then got busy filling the bottles and placing them in iron carriers for the “Round”. There are two rounds; Freda takes one and Eileen takes the other.

Soon Eileen⁴ arrived “late as usual” and asked me to watch her harness the pony, as I was to go with her. We went into the paddock and caught Peter, harnessed him into the float and set off.

Eileen is a tall, blonde, very attractive, provocative creature - with a retroussé nose and a ridiculously small red mouth. She was very long, agile, colt-like legs, dressed in tight, washed-out blue dungarees. Above this, she wears highly embroidered woolly jacket, gay Swiss gloves, and her back hair hung in a net with coloured spots dangling all over it. She really looked a Queen Boadicea in this little chariot with her carefree abandonment and her sulky mien which I soon saw was her chief method of attack.



The initial coolness on the farm towards Anne - perhaps because she was the well-spoken, well-educated wife of a Royal Air Force officer - soon melted away. At thirty-eight, she was also quite a lot older than the other girls. Perhaps this is why she is content to remain in the background in this photo. From the left to right are Dorothy Gosling, the farmer's daughter, Eileen (surname unknown); Barbara Carter; Anne; and Freda Sque.