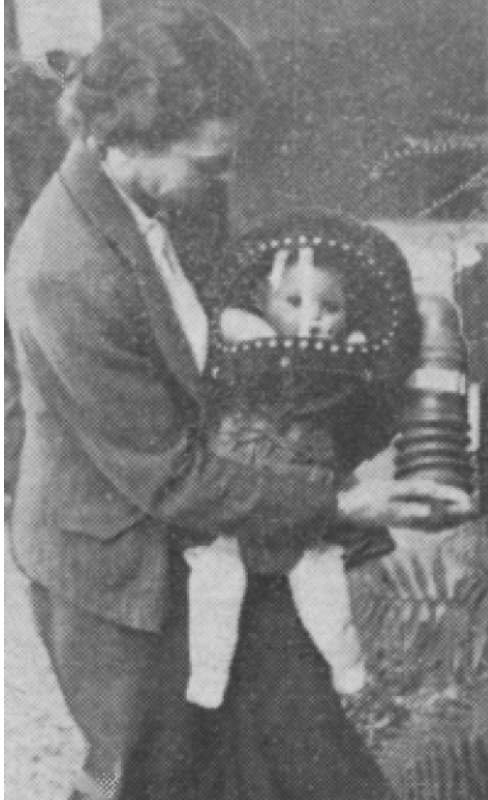


Wartime West Sussex 1939 - 1945

AIR RAIDS - GAS MASKS

Gas masks for children and babies

From the Worthing Gazette, August 30th 1939
A woman demonstrates gas helmets for babies



© Worthing Gazette

"All the children were supplied with gas masks and had to carry them everywhere they went. There were three types of masks: Adults' masks, ones they called Mickey Mouse masks for children, and for babies the masks were rather like a cradle with a Perspex facepiece, which had to be pumped, using the pump attached to the side, every so many minutes, so that the baby inside could breathe."

Frank Cooper, Plaistow
© Frank Cooper

Gas mask for young children

"Gas masks had to be carried, and gas mask drills were hated by children and teachers alike. Everyone looked so grotesque in the black masks, perhaps even more so in the Mickey Mouse variety, made especially for children."

S Brons, East Grinstead
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Wartime West Sussex 1939 - 1945 AIR RAIDS - GAS MASKS

Evacuee children with their gas mask cases, South Harting



© One Tree Books E300165102

"Gas masks had to be carried....Fortunately, in a short time the gas threat faded, and gas mask cases were converted into school satchels."

S Brons, East Grinstead
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"One of my earliest wartime memories was of having to try on a gas mask – I was frankly terrified, and thought that I would not be able to breathe properly. We had to carry them everywhere with us, and each week had a gas mask drill at school, when every child had to try on their mask, breathe in and out a few times and then remove them. Some of the boys quickly learnt how to use their masks to make odd noises, causing great annoyance to the teachers."

By Mrs S. Glaysher
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