

16th - 18th Feb 84

I stayed with Hilary in Faversham overnight, so got an early start to Greenham, and was in time to see Shirley before she left the Orange Gate for America, having stayed there for three months. She was wearing a splendid coat made from blue blankets, with bright patch pockets and trimmings and hand carved toggles. Rebekah and Charlie were going with her to Gatwick, and then on to London, so I had their bender. I think it was the nicest one I have slept in, beautifully warm and dry, and lots of decorations and personality. I was very comfortable. Anne Francis was there having ^{just} spent three weeks in Holloway, Sally, Sian, Isia, Liz, another Shirley, a woman whose name I never got, and two women who had walked round from the Blue Gate. We agreed that the bean and vegetable casserole I had made would be plenty with just a bit of rice to go with it, so there was no cooking to do that night. I was introduced to the new resident, Timothy, who is black and white, with one ragged ear, but he has decided that without doubt he prefers sitting on laps and sleeping in Sian's bender, to catching rats. Jill did explain to me in his defence that if you point him in the right direction he does run after the rat, but I don't think he has caught one yet, ^{or ever will.} When we sit round the camp fire in a tight circle, Tim walks from knee to knee until he finds the right lap and settles down. There is a great deal of competition to have him, and not just for the warmth he generates. He is a lovely cat. Jill also says that since he has come, the level of intelligent conversation has definitely gone down!

We sat and talked, made coffee and toast, then most of the women wandered off, and I was left to greet Phil Thomas and the ten Nonington students and give them a grand tour of the Orange Gate. I took them down the fence to the swamp, showed them the benders, and talked to them and answered questions for about two hours. We ended up round the camp fire with cups of coffee, and I think some of them will certainly come back to Greenham again. After they had gone, I found I was in sole charge of the Orange Gate, no one else around at all, so I did some washing up and tidied up a bit, and had a spot of trouble with Danny, Tommy and John from the caravans up the road. In the end I gave them some sweets, then hid the rest ~~of them~~, and also hid in my car some fireworks, which they were about to pull to pieces. The next day they behaved even worse. They stole food from the kitchen bender, poured a large jar of pats all over the road, and cycled over them. Last time I had been

there, they had thrown eggs at my car, and hurled oranges about, but this time we ~~were~~ all felt that this destruction of food was too much, so Sally and Sian went and saw their parents. I'm afraid they will get a beating but they really were making life impossible for the women.

The women who had been away during the day came back, and Jill and Ann from Reading arrived. We had a meal and some wine and beer, and sat and talked round the fire until quite late, and when I crawled into the bender with my hottie, I went to sleep quickly and slept soundly, having had only about three hours sleep the night before. The air was very cold to breathe, as there was a very hard frost, but I kept my ears pretty well covered, so was not worried by the noise of the soldiers shouting, and the usual traffic in the base.

Ann and I thought it was time we ~~knit~~^{dug} a new shit pit, so went off with pick and spade. The ground is hard and stony, but we managed to make quite a deep pit, and then I took some of the soil in a box for Barbara in London to plant her new rose that she has ordered, called Greenpeace. It seems very appropriate to plant such a rose with some Greenham soil round its roots.

Friday was court day. I had promised Sally that I would take her to the Magistrates Court with Ann and Judy, and watch the proceedings. We parked the car in Newbury, had a coffee, and walked to the court. There weren't so many women there as last time I had been, but these cases were all going to take much longer and were more complicated. Isia and I got seats in Court I, and watched Chris, Steph and Phillipa defending themselves. There were on a charge of blocking the road to traffic at the Blue Gate back in November, and their defence was that they had not been blockading, but dancing across the road, when they were suddenly arrested. The police maintained that the women had stopped a car coming out of the gate, and that they had been given a warning before they were arrested. For reasons known only to himself the stipendary magistrate let Phillipa off, but ~~xxxxxx~~ fined Chris and Steph £10 and £5 costs. I believe for an identical offence later, he let Boon and Liz off. All very odd.

The case against Ann, Judy and Sally was very complex. They were all arrested for fence cutting the day after the big demo on 29th Oct. Ann particularly felt it was a 'grudge' arrest as she had made a complaint about one of the policemen

only the week before. Anyway, the three women went for a walk along the fence quite late at night and were pulling at the fence as it was in a hell of a state, having been chopped by about two ~~xxx~~ thousand women the previous day. They saw the headlights of a vehicle inside, so Judy sat down and the other two strolled off. Almost instantly police came along and arrested them and took them to Newbury nick. The RAF police gave evidence ~~xxxxx~~ The first ~~xxxxxxx~~ one said that he was in the back of the Land Rover and saw the three women cutting the fence in the lights of the vehicle, and the one in the purple poncho (Judy) who had done the cutting passed something to another woman, then sat down on the ground. The prosecuting lawyer asked him a lot of questions, and then the women had their turn. They asked many questions, mainly about the actual cutting, how many snips taken had the RAF man seen, what angle was the Land Rover to them and the fence, how big were the cutters, which hand had Judy held them in, could he see them being passed, etc etc? The most telling point was that he insisted that Judy had cut with her right hand only, and of course the wire is too thick to use only one hand. Also he could not swear (ha ha) whether she had taken two or three cuts. In the end the questioning was finished, and the three magistrates decided to break for lunch. They warned the man not to talk about it to his colleague, but he went straight out of the court to have lunch with him, and Isia followed ~~him~~ and heard him say, 'Don't say anything now, that woman's listening to us.' ~~xxxxxx~~ Hester who was waiting outside the court also heard this, but by the time Anne, Judy and Sally joined us, Hester had gone, and we needed her to be a witness for the women. Isia couldn't do this as she ~~was~~ had been in the court room. ^{all morning} Panic stations all round. The three ^{defendants} ~~charged~~ went off to have lunch and Isia and I charged round Newbury to try to find Hester. In the end I told Isia to keep looking, and I rushed round in the car to all the gates in case she had turned up there. No sign of her at all, and I just got back to the court before it started, and Hester was there!

Ann straight away tried to get the case dismissed, but was told that at that point in the proceedings it was impossible. The second RAF witness was brought in and he was even more unpleasant than the first. He ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ was asked on oath whether the case had been discussed over lunch and said that it hadn't, and then proceeded to read out the statement which he had written up at the time of the arrest.

He said more or less the same as the first bloke and there was a lot more questioning about the actual cutting, but the same unsatisfactory answers were given. It really was like trying to wade through thick cotton wool. The first policeman called was the one who had arrested Ann, and had also been accused by her on a previous occasion of behaving incorrectly. He was of course asked if this had affected his judgement of her, but ~~of~~ ~~course~~ he denied this with a look of complete innocence and horror on his face. As with the RAF men Ann and the others were allowed to read the statements and question the officers about things in them. The point that Ann picked up was the fact that although he stated that when he arrested her she had a piece of wire about a foot long in her hand, he didn't take this from her as evidence, but produced a couple of little pieces which he had found in the van on the way back to Newbury. It seemed to me in the main that Judy was the woman they were really after. They kept saying that she was the one who had done the cutting, and she asked her arresting officer where he had arrested her, and kept saying that she ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ hadn't done it, and the whole fence was cut anyway, so how could they possibly know which hole had been cut at which time, and also, they all said, if they had cut the fence, they would be happy to admit it. Sally's officer said that he thought she was being uncooperative, and this upset her, quite rightly so. They were all under a tremendous strain. Then when the prosecution's witnesses had finished Ann was allowed to say that she thought the case should be dismissed, and the three magistrates went off to have their huddle. When they came back, they said that they were not prepared ~~for this~~ to do this, and as it was getting late, 4 o'clock, the case would be adjourned until Tuesday! We were all shattered at this, and left the court feeling very depressed. Annee, with the patchwork jeans, had her bike to go home on, but I wasn't prepared to take ~~seven~~ women home in my car so Hester and Pat said they'd get a bus to the main gate and I'd pick them up from there at about 6.

Isia and I did some shopping, mainly food for Timothy, and we went back to Orange Gate. I was glad that I had some wine which Phil and the students had given us, as we all needed a drink. We had bought Guinness for Sally, and we started on that on the way home in the car. It was all so unsatisfactory being left in the air like that. The three women were all very subdued, but Sally and Judy decided to go to London the next day

and I said I'd take them in the car.

We had the usual good evening. Pat, who is the woman who had been sacked by Leeds Council then reinstated, was telling us about this and other arrests, Shirley about a visit from Naomi Mitchison to the Yellow Gate some time previously, and general chat. Camilla arrived, and told me that she had an excellent colour slide of me standing on my hands against the Orange Gate on New Year's Eve, which she was showing to various groups around the country. Fame at last! Then the night watch turned up from Guildford. They come every Friday night, and just sit up and relieve all the tension of being overnight at Orange Gate. Jo arrived from Glasgow, and by this time I had collected Hester and Pat, and Jill and Ann came back again. Sally was feeling very low and let down, so she went off to her bender early, but the rest of us stayed up for ages, and in the end let off the fireworks which I had hidden in my car. Just to check, I stood on my hands. In fact I think I can do it better when I'm drunk rather than sober. Actually I wasn't that drunk, just a little merry. A new batch of soldiers had arrived that day, so were very quiet and well behaved. The previous lot, as usual, had been offensive on their last night, so Friday is always treated as being a good night by the women. I did feel that we should have done a little damage to the nice new bit of fence which was being put up near the gate, but in the end we decided to leave it for another day, or night.

One interesting thing did happen that evening. A police van drew up, and we all went rather stiff, until the sergeant said that there was an odd man, a peeping tom, on the prowl, and he was warning us to be on our guard, and if we did see someone like that around, to tell them at the gate, and the information would be put through to the civil police. It appeared that Jo had come on the coach with him, and was able to give a good description of the man, but we certainly didn't see him round our gate that night.

. Another beautiful clear, cold night. Greenham would be fantastic without the American Air Base and Cruise missiles, but where would we all be? I slept soundly and was up in good time to take myself, Sally, Judy and the Greenham soil to London.

Feb 4th '84.

14/1

I always like to take my visitors to Dover Castle for a visit, but this time it was a bit different. We didn't go inside the castle to see the armour, or throw pennies down the well, we went to see if we could find a good way to break into the underground bunker, or Regional Seat of Government, as it used to be called.

Originally there were going to be five or six women coming at 11am, but in the end only two arrived at 1pm. Having met in Deal in the most Conservative coffee bar I know, we came back to my house, grabbed a sandwich and went over to Dover in the hire car, with no CND stickers anywhere in sight. Di actually donned a headscarfe, and apart from Blue's nose stud and my rather dirty jeans, we were a trio of utmost respectability.

I showed them where the coaches parked ^{so} ~~with~~ their visitors ^{had to} walking ~~into~~ the castle grounds, then we drove through the very narrow car entrance past the traffic signals. They agreed that there was no way a coach could get ^{near} ~~there~~, but mini buses would be fine. We parked the car in the official car park, then walked back to the main entrance of the bunker. They were both very intrigued by the bell and spy hole in the door, but thought it might be tempting fate too much to ring the bell. There was a newly cemented manhole cover by the entrance, but we felt that would be too difficult to move, so we walked all round the area, paying special attention to the large abandoned building quite close. Most of the windows were broken or nailed up with perspex or wood, and when we had gone right round it, we found that quite a lot of the below ground level doors and windows were completely missing. It meant climbing over a spiked fence to get down to that area, but without doubt it could ^{we even found a rope} ~~easily be done~~. ^A Di felt that there might be a trap door from there leading towards the bunker, but in the end we decided that it was so easy to get into, by children or anyone, that it wasn't really worth going down there at that time. Just as we had ~~finished~~ completed our circuit of the building, we saw coming towards us, a custodian in uniform, carrying a large red torch. (A torch in broad daylight!) We strolled towards the high bank where we could see over the cliff edge, and I gave a loud lecture on Shakespeare Cliff, and the glories of Dover Harbour. This was the first person we had seen since our arrival, but as it was a very dull and damp day, it wasn't surprising.

I don't know if ~~the~~^{he} was taken in by my discourse, but he just looked hard at us as he went past, and we clambered up a man-made mound to have another look round. A moment later, Blue called Di and me, and said that she had found an entrance in the mound under where we were standing. It had been blocked off by breeze blocks, but the top couple of rows had been broken and knocked out, and there was a hole, just big enough to crawl through, about five feet above the ground. I got my torch out, stood on the broken breeze blocks, and looked in. I couldn't see a lot, but in the gloom, there appeared to be a brick staircase leading down, in the direction of the bunker entrance, which was only about a hundred yards away. We couldn't really be seen by anyone, as there was a short path ^{cut out of the mound} leading to this entrance, so Di said she wanted to have ~~another~~ look for herself. She clambered up, and I hitched her up a bit higher, and when she came down, we discussed what we had seen, and she said she wanted to take her skirt off and go in there in her tights. Just as she was saying this, we heard a noise which sounded like a cough ^{and a rustle}. Blue said it was leaves rustling in the wind, but to be on the safe side, we walked back up the path, and as we did so, we heard the sound of what Di positively identified as keys rattling. Di had just spent a week in Holloway, so she was the expert on that. We beat a very hasty retreat up the road, (actually running like hell for a few yards), then slowed down, and I looked back. There was a young man walking away from the little path, wearing a light blue tee shirt and dark trousers, carrying a jacket, brushing dirt off his shoulders! Without doubt the only place he could have come from was the hole in the breeze blocks.

Di, Blue and I just kept walking away. Who was he? If he'd been a workman, and this was a Saturday afternoon, he wouldn't have been in such a hurry to get away from us. Had he heard what we'd been saying? There were many places in the area which would have made a far easier squat, the abandoned building for example. We made our way back to the car, then I went off on my own to see if I could see him, but he'd obviously gone off down the road away from the castle. I came back and we sat and talked for a while. Had we been pre-empted? The mystery still remains. Apart from anything else, we felt awful fools. Enid Blyton and the adventurous five (or three) had nothing on us!

I had been told that some boys had climbed into the bunker sometime previously from above Athol Terrace, so we drove round there and looked up. There was a ^{distinctive} ~~definite~~ blue air vent coming

out from the white cliffs quite high up, and a bit of blue building near it. We couldn't see how to get very close, then I wondered about the talk about other entrances ~~and~~ and long tunnels on the Langon Cliffs and ⁱⁿ the new coastguard station. We drove round that way, but realised that it is really quite a long way from there to the bunker site, and as I know there are masses of tunnels and hollowed out chambers in the cliffs, ^{which probably don't go near the bunker,} we decided to walk back along the footpath under Jubilee Way and see if we could see anything like the pipe that Di had been told about, coming down on to the beach. We passed right under the air vent, and agreed that it would be quite possible to climb up the steep but grassy hill to it, and over the fence. That would be no problem, but obviously it must be done at night. Di and Blue said they would have to come back in a few weeks time, and try then, and I could do the driving and wait for them. This seems our best hope, but just to check this pipe that Di mentioned, we went on down to the beach, and as I thought, couldn't see any sign of anything like that. Blue took a photo of the blue air vent, pretending that she was taking a picture of us, draped tastefully on a boat, but as it was very dusky by that time, I doubt if she'll get much out of it.

We walked back to the car, and drove home. Di and Blue had to get back that night, so we had supper, and arranged to find out more, and meet at Greenham on the 16th Feb. Di informed me to be careful about making contact with her, as without doubt her phone was tapped, and also some mail was opened. Its a very odd world I'm living in, and ~~the~~ ^{it's} certainly was not the usual visitors-to-Dover type of trip.

1st to 5th March 1984

Its not hard to balls up the most perfectly laid plans, and this is what happened to my early morning start to Greenham. Staying with Hilary in Faversham cuts down milage and time, in theory, but not always in practice. Actually she forgot I was coming, O.K., but then her car wouldn't start in the morning so I gave her a lift into Canterbury, which was going completely back wards before I started forwards. All right. No real hassle, I arrived at the Orange Gate at 11.30. For a bit, I felt the outsider. There were eleven Swedish women there, all lovely, nice, etc, etc, but they didn't know me, and I didn't know them. To be fair, the more I heard about them, the nicer they became. They did most of the work, were supportive, kind, lovely, but there was a sort of language barrier, and when nine of them climbed into their vehicle, I did have a sense of relief. I also feel that if I had been there earlier, ^{we} they could have got to know ^{each other & have got on better} ~~me~~ ^{if we would all}

Sally was there, Sian, who quite soon went to London for a few days, Kay, Marion, Marta, Margaret, ~~Ellen~~, Natasha from NZ and two Swedish Women. The supper I had taken of chili con carne was fine for that number, and also the vegetables from Thanet, which I distributed round the gates during the afternoon, as Kay had to sign on in Newbury, and Sally came for the ride. It was a lovely day, spring was in the air, and I felt very optimistic about the future and the present, and meeting and greeting my friends again. Carola at Violet, and then Marion came back to Orange, and then Anne from Reading. I was home again without doubt.

Sometime during the evening, a woman came round from another gate with a present of some special flares for us. It appears that these had been pinched on a raid into a bunker from somewhere, and the woman told us to be careful of them, showed us how they worked, and demonstrated that the paper covering had a piece of string attached, and if this string was broken, the flare would go off. Well, Sally put these two flares carefully in her bender, and we hoped that the other gates had been as careful. I didn't go to bed that early, ^{although} ~~as~~ Marion and I had come to an agreement that we would do a night watch with ~~Edna~~, and she would do the first one, then wake me. I was in Miranda's bender, which was lovely, high, peaceful, but a little spartan, with the bed area on planks, covered with just a couple of blankets, not the ~~softest~~ softest thing in the world to sleep on, but the bender was warm and dry. I left the camp fire at about 11 pm, but frankly didn't sleep all that well. The soldiers were on their last night, therefore were noisy, and anyway it takes a while to get

used to Greenham type sleeping.

Eventually I dropped off, having been brave enough to take off my trousers and two sweaters, and ^{then} was aware of a lot of talking, over the intercoms, as well as just outside the bender in the road, with flashing car lights. I took my ear outside sleeping bag number two and listened. The voices were American, and English, police and army, and in effect what had happened was that, at the Violet gate, someone had seen the flares, pulled them apart, the string had broken, and the 'object' had started ticking in an ominous way. One of the women had told the MOD cops about this, and all hell had been let loose. From what I could hear from my bender, these flares should be dropped from planes. Once the string had been broken, they could take up to three hours before they went off, and they were filled with phosphorus and therefore extremely dangerous up to an area of 445 feet away. I decided it was time I got up when I heard that, as I was much closer than forty five feet, and I felt very lonely and vulnerable on my own. I struggled back into all my clothes (that'll teach me to take my trousers off at night at Greenham!) and went to the camp fire. Sally, Anne, Marion, and the night watch were there, ^{plus} ~~and~~ ~~the~~ police being rather officious, so Sally, Anne and I decided the best and safest thing was for the three of us to go round the other gates and warn the women there what was happening, rather than have the police go round, snooping and disturbing.

At Yellow Gate, they also had tried out one of the flares, and when it didn't go off, the women chucked it in the gorse bushes. Luckily these flares must have been old and dud, as no one had been hurt. It was hard to find anyone who knew what was happening, as the night watch women had no idea, and it's hard to wake up bender inhabitants. We did succeed and in the end went from the Yellow to the Green, to the Blue, Indigo Violet and back home again. A nice little drive at 2.30am. We decided that Marion and I could go to bed, but it didn't seem very long before Edna was calling outside my bender, that she had to go and couldn't wake anyone except me ~~so~~, so could I get ~~and~~ up and keep an eye on things. Mindyou Anne had already gone off to work, so I sat by the fire and lots of cups of coffee before Margaret appeared briefly before her day off to Quaker friends in Newbury.

The wind was blowing cold and really hard from the north west. It was going to be a long cold, hard day. I had time to think about how Sally, Anne and Judy had been found not guilty

the previous week at the magistrates court. Sally told me that she couldn't believe it herself. They had arrived in the court with lots of supporters, including Ruth who had a huge piece of fence, almost like chain mail round her neck, and clanked as she moved. The other women also ^{had} pieces of fence in clear view, and one woman had her baby with her. She was told to take the baby out of the court, so all the women took turns in caring for the child on the landing, and when it was Ruth's turn, she carefully put her piece of 'chain mail' round another woman's neck. Anne, Sally and Judy gave their evidence in defence of themselves, and the magistrates deliberated for at least half an hour. When they came back and found them 'not guilty' the three couldn't believe it. The only woman who took it in straight away was 'clanking' Ruth! Anyway all was well, and in this instance justice was done.

Friday was a day of doing things, and trying to keep warm in that biting wind. A new batch of soldiers took over, the Coldstream Guards who proudly informed us that they had just been doing guard duty at Buckingham Palace. Bully for them. I hope they didn't yell at the Queen at the tops of their voices 'cunt' or 'this is a four minute warning, the Russians have just launched their missiles.' She mightn't have liked it any more than I did. Marta left for somewhere, and Isia arrived with Lucy, her little black cat. We now have four cats at the Orange Gate. Tim is of course the first feline resident, beloved by all, but Margaret has brought her two cats who are really very good rat catchers, which is ~~really~~ what we want. Visitors came and went. One brought a bottle of vodka, a man brought a load of wood from Gloucester, and I decided that a quiet kip would be nice, except that when I went into the bender, the wind was blowing so much, that I felt I should be holding the whole structure down, as it was creaking. Actually it is incredibly strong, and as I sit writing this I fear that those bailiffs and bulldozers may have done or are doing what a gale couldn't. We'll build better and stronger if necessary. Greenham women are a bit like their benders. They may sway a bit in the wind, but they will stand up to anything, and come back again and again.

Sleep was impossible so I went back to the camp fire. Emma joined me with the bottle of donated vodka and orange juice. I told her that we shared donations, and didn't start drinking them in the middle of the afternoon. She agreed quite readily, but we will have problems with that young woman who is in a special school, which she has run away from to come to Greenham, and

has already gone round the gates, looking for something, and playing a tape recorder far too loudly for ^{the comfort of} most of the women. Sally asked me to come for a walk with her and showed me the hidden bender on the common. This will sleep 4 or 5 women in secrecy and comfort when they are evicted from the benders by the fence. What has happened is that Newbury Council, Berkshire County Council and the MOD have all got together so they can evict from anywhere round the base and won't tread on each others toes. Actually I'm amazed they didn't do this ages ago. We still have the bailiffs coming to Orange once or twice a day and they take away our rubbish ~~xxx~~ which we leave out in bags for them on the common. The hidden bender is lovely, and then Sally showed me another place where she thought we could build one, and I suggested that if we propped up a fallen silver birch with another fallen tree at the forked piece, we could build round and under and it could easily be hidden. We said we would have a go the next day, then on our way back to camp we saw Marion wilding a pick for a new shit pit, so we helped her ~~to~~ ^{plus} great howls of laughter, and the super refinement we added was carefully cut posts with loo rolls on top, covered with polythene bags to keep the paper dry. The paper can be pulled and unrolled without taking the bags off. My God, the ingenuity of women at Greenham!

It was still blowing like hell, but the snow flurries had stopped by this time, and Marion and I carried across our magnificent vegetable stew which we had prepared earlier. The trouble is, its impossible to guess how many women will be around for supper, as particularly at weekends women just turn up, which is great. We hoped that our night watch women from Guildford would ~~xxxxxxx~~ come as usual, and they did. This is one of the most dedicated tasks. Just sitting up round a fire in a howling gale or rain, to make sure that 'they' don't try to take the cruise convoys out while we are all asleep. As soon as its light, these women clear up the chaos of the previous night's supper and booze from ~~round~~ the fire, wash up, and the Guildford ones even do a water run, before going back home to their own lives. They don't get publicity as Greenham women and they should. I suppose the media would find them too respectable, clean, & ordinary!

We sat and talked round the fire; Margaret came back from her day off, and we had a little sing song. ~~El~~ got her vodka and orange, and Isia had too much on an empty stomach, and the rest of us just got quite merry. I was going to do a bit of fence cutting, but the evening didn't seem quite right. You

have to do these things at exactly the right time. *Biorhythms or instinct tell you when.*

I didn't think the wind was quite so strong that night, and I did sleep quite well, but Marian had moved her van a little, and ^{said she} thought it was going to blow right over. The wind must have just caught her at the wrong angle. Saturday ~~was~~ another day of coming and going. I was going to go shopping in the car, but somehow there was never enough time to get round to it. ~~Marian~~ told me that she had had to act as a 'mother figure' to young ~~E~~ the night before, as the kid was in a state, and wanted to talk. ~~Marian~~ said that she had stayed in the bender with her, and had tried to sort out her problems. Anne came during the morning, and at about lunch time, Sally, ~~Kay~~ ^{Anne} and I decided it was time to make a start on the new bender on the common. We took a saw, rope, and some green bender making material off with us. We spent some time there, as these jobs shouldn't be rushed, but also have to be hidden all the time. At one point I managed to gash my thumb, and went back to get a plaster, and there was Cleis. No body had seen her since I had taken her to Thatcham a month before, but she has been sorting out her life, and is now living in a women's cooperative in London. It was good to see her again, so she came with me, and we talked with Marion who was practising (with a lot of interruptions) her accordion ^{in privacy} on an out of the way path. We went on to the bender and did some more work on it, tying it down and covering it with gorse, etc. We were rather peturbed to see two stangers gathering wood on the common, and Cleis, Marion and I decided to find out who they were. I had seen two vast mobile homes on lorry bases parked not far from us, so we went along there. The first thing we saw as we approached, were half a dozen bantams coming out of their home, down a ramp at the bottom of one van! Terry and Dominique introduced themselves and asked us in. They live in luxury, but they assured us, everthing they had and ate, came out of dustbins. They travel all the time, Dominique mainly in the mountains in France, and Terry, wherever the whim takes him. He described himself as an aged hippy, and he certainly had the right length ~~hair~~ red hair and beard. We talked to them for ages, and in the end asked Dominique to the camp fire for supper with us. Their life style is happy and free, and they seemed not only contented but peaceful and assured. It makes you wonder why *people* ~~anyone~~ live in houses with tellys and all mod cons. They had made all the bodywork on the two vans, and had one each as they didn't always want to go to the same places at the same time,

They did their scavenging on their bikes, which they kept tied to the back of their vans. Terry said that he spent quite a lot of time cleaning up the area that he was parked in, so that on the whole the councils accepted him on their ground.

Back at the camp there was a feeling of tension around, and Isia told us what had happened. ~~Ella~~ had been talking to her, and she maintained that ~~Maria~~ had been rather more than just motherly to her, and ~~Ella~~ was very upset and wanted to leave. Oh God, that's all we want in the way of problems. Cruise, wind, soldiers, cold, etc, fade into insignificance compared with this. We all know that ~~Maria~~, to put it mildly is in a bad mental state at present, ^{while} ~~Ella~~ admits she is in care at a special school. There was no sign of ~~Maria~~ that evening; she had gone off to bed early, and the Swedish women said that ~~Ella~~ could stay in their bender with them, as it was not a good thing for her to be on her own. We decided to leave this problem until the next day.

Sunday was mild, soft and damp, more like autumn than spring, with uncovered hair changing colour as the tiny rain drops built up ⁱⁿ Kay, Isia and I decided to go shopping in Thatcham for milk and staples, as no one had got anything for a couple of days. I really think our most important item was cat's food! The people of Thatcham seem to accept us quite well, and although we are occasionally stared at, there is no abuse. We weren't there long, but ~~but~~ the time we got back to Orange Gate, the visitors were there in full force. Sitting round the camp fire with camera, ~~and~~ mike and dolly birds was a black man whose face was familiar to me from the telly. He said that he and his friend had been to Greenham to do some filming at Christmas time, and they had come back again to do some more. I sat down next to Ann and Kay, while Margaret talked to this bloke who told us his name was Kenny (Lynch). It was all rather predictable, but after only a few minutes Sally and Cleis appeared through the trees, looking very determined. They asked Kenny what the film was for, and he and the other man said for the archives. 'What archives?' asked Cleis. 'My archives' the camera ^{man} admitted. They were then asked what right had they to burst into someone's sitting room (which is what our camp fire area is) and record us without so much as a by-your-leave. Cleis said that she remembered that rather the same thing had happened at Christmas time, and she felt they should leave. Wow, they were shattered, but after a bit of argument, got up and left us, with comments about belligerent women etc. but what was

interesting was that even when the two women with them were asked direct questions, they were, so male dominated that they hardly answered. I know damn well that this does not do the Greenham 'image' much good but the intrusion of this sort is done without any sympathy or understanding of what we are doing. Another type of tourist we get is the car, ^{full of cameras} which drives very slowly past, perhaps stops and takes a photo, then moves on. Who the hell are these people? They have come to see the freaks in the zoo, but daren't stop and get involved, although to get to our gate, they have to drive off the road and do an actual detour, so there ^{is} ~~is~~ no ^{like} excuse of just driving past. If you stand and look them in the eye, they turn away, we are just a spectacle like a burnt down building which made the news on the telly the night before. They just want to say that they've seen us. I must say that most of our visitors are lovely. They come to give support, open the boots of their cars, produce food, wood, clothes, blankets, drink, money. Most of them wear good warm clothes and footwear and when they are sitting round the fire, having a coffee, sometimes I'm not sure if they are residents from other gates, or just day visitors. The one sure way to tell is to look at their hands. The colour is quite different.

A couple of hours after the Kenny Lynch episode, a mini bus drew up with male and female students from Leicester University. They wanted to film us! They were a bit surprised but in the end quite agreeable that all the filming and interviewing should be done by the women and the men could watch, but not enter into the discussion. They just asked permission to take a few still pics, which was ^{fine}. After the interview, which Kay, Anne and I mostly gave (with Bruce Kent turning up in the middle of, to distribute Mars Bars, which he said he thought would be rather different from the usual gifts) the women crew agreed that we were correct in wanting them to keep the men out of the way, and they said that they would be back on their own sometime soon.

Nice as all these people were, I needed a bit of fresh air and peace, so went for a walk with Cleis, having done some wood chopping and sorting for relaxation. We went along the fence towards the yellow Gate, ~~and went~~ some of the way with a young woman whose father is a Kent County Councillor, very Conservative and right wing. His daughter lives in Derbyshire. I don't think you'll ever get her to your political way of thinking, Mr Peter Heath.

Jill was there when we got back, so we had a talk with her and others. By this time the visitors were leaving, so it was getting quiet~~er~~. Kay and Isia were going to come to London with me in the car, so we arranged a 7am start. Our night watch was from Wales, Mag had come earlier and her two friends came after supper. The Swedish women cooked the meal, and we found the bottle of ~~Scotch~~ scotch and wine donated during the day. I also felt a great urge to do a little cutting, so Ann said she would come with me. Unfortunately it was a very quiet, still night, but we did a detour round past the shit pits and up to the road ~~and~~^{to} the little cluster of trees. We hid quietly in them for a moment or two until the patrolling soldier was some way off, then I snipped happily for some moments, I almost got my triangle in fact, before Anne said he was coming back. We retreated into the trees and went back to the camp fire. All very satisfying, I do think that I have to keep my hand in, and the fence in disrepair. [There was no sign of Margaret. Sally, Cleis, Margaret and I felt that we should talk to her, but although we looked quite a few times in the evening, there was no sign of her. Actually in the end we found that she had been down to the travelling people and spent hours with them. When she came back to the camp she talked to the night watch for hours, and seemed quite alright, rather high, but not too bad, then went off and slept in her car. Jill and I had to leave any discussion with Margaret to Sally and Cleis after we have gone.

The next morning I got up before six and had some breakfast with Anne and the night watch, before waking Kay and Isia. I left a note in Marion's car as she had gone to bed early the night before. Jill was wandering around, about to go to work, but the others were all asleep. I knew I couldn't go there again for about three to four weeks. Sally's mother would have come and gone by that time, and perhaps the whole Orange Gate would be flattened by the bailiffs. I feel an essential part of Greenham, but I'm not, or not more than most others. As long as we know why we are there what we are doing, we will come back and be essential for the time we are there, then go again, but always return. But that world goes on without me, however hateful that thought may be.