

18th - 19th March 1984.

16/1

Just two days at Greenham after a tour of southern England. First I stayed with Isobel and Peter and had my interview at Sussex, then on to my mother at Worthing, then to Southampton to stay with Di, then on Sunday morning after breakfast, Greenham. Di and I spent some time discussing the Dover project, but for the time being this has been postponed, but will certainly take place sometime in the future. Di was rather worried how to get a message to American Liz at the Blue Gate about a meeting in Winchester that afternoon, so I drove straight there to give her details and money for the meeting. When I got to Blue Gate I saw Liz and another woman carrying things from the woods ~~out~~ towards the other women. I gave them a hand with a large pallet which was going to be used for a 'portable bender' with trolley wheels.

I didn't stay long, but took a good look at the effect of evictions on all the north gates. It's a very bleak life there now, just the odd bender, rather hastily constructed, and a few tents, and the usual piles of cartons with food, wood, etc in. This weekend we were lucky as the weather was cold but fine and no wind, but this north side is always cold and draughty. I gave a wave to Violet and Indigo and was pleased to see that there was a car and three or four women also at Red which has no constructions at all, just a fire and women who try to be there as often as possible.

At Orange there were a dozen or so women, some whom I hadn't seen for ages. Ruth, and Jane, and Zoe, and Ruth from Skye, as well as Sally, Jill, Ann Francis, Isia with Lucy, and the newcomers Sue, Elie, Christine, Liz and others. The usual influx of visitors arrived all day, with food, clothes, wood, etc etc. We sat and had a meal and caught up on all the news. I heard that Elka had gone back to her special school, but only after a bit of pressure from the social worker. Margaret was on holiday this weekend, but when Cleis had had a word to her, everything and everyone had become extremely fraught and up tight. The incident is over, but not really forgotten, I'm afraid. I read out loud some of my diary pieces to women round the camp fire, and they all seemed to think it was worth while carrying on, so I am! Sue, who had not been to Greenham before, as she was afraid that her past life might catch up with her (she had been stabbed ⁱⁿ seven ~~xxxx~~ places a few years ago) was really over the moon with enthusiasm for more action in the base. Sally, Jill and I agreed to accompany her round and show her as much as possible. We went in my car, first to Yellow where we stopped and talked to Rebecca and others

then went on round to Green, where we walked for a while to show Sue the silos, and the fences, which are now amazing. Rows of them. Jill showed us where she had got in some time before, and we all agreed that this is the area that we must all try to get inside, but it really is a frightening sight. Round to the Blue and along that north fence. It really would be quite easy to get in from there, but it is so far from any important part of the base, that its really not worth it. It is still important to harp~~ass~~ and keep snipping, but not to try to get inside for no real reason. Back at Orange, Ruth felt she would like a little snipping party that night, and as we had two pairs of cutters, mine and one other, half a dozen of us would go and find a good place. Ruth looked for some more cutters hidden on the common, and we found them, but they were enormous, and very hard to use, so we decided to stick to the usual small ones. → A couple of the women went off to get some wine, and we had a meal, then we six took off our ponchos, put on dark clothes and headed for the usual corner towards the Yellow Gate. It was a still night but those bloody guard dogs from the wood yard, started barking, and there were plenty of soldiers around. Ruth and I rather lost the others, but went on round the corner where the Royal Irish Rangers were moaning like hell about discipline, and they were fed up with it. There were too many soldiers around, so we headed back towards our camp. A rather bored soldier was on his own and we said good evening to him. He asked us if we were going to cut the fence, ~~and~~ as far as he was concerned that was fine as he was getting out of the army next Monday. He'd paid £100 to get out and had a job as an electrician lined up in Germany. We said we didn't want to get him into trouble by cutting on his patch, but he told us to go ahead, that was fine by him, as long as it wasn't too big. I cut away happily for some minutes, and then Ruth asked him if he would like a drink, and of course he said yes, so we left him standing in front of a nice sized hole in the fence, and went back to my car and got a bottle of scotch and a plastic cup out, and handed him a cup full through the hole. He said cheers and thanks, and we left him. I hope his job and future life are good for him. Next day I had a look and the hole was still there and the cup was outside the fence on the ground, obviously chucked through the hole!

Back at the camp fire we had some more to drink and lots of chat etc, and after another little walk, I eventually went to bed in Ann from Reading's bender, where I slept soundly until 9

We also found a 'baby' + my orange tow rope. It decided
to leave the there for future use.

By that time quite a lot of the women had gone, Jill to work, Sue and Liz to London, and we thought we were going to have a quiet day. The first priority was to clear up the camp fire area and kitchen bender as it all looked really grotty after a day of visitors, and high living. I tackled the fire area and got rid of a lot of grot, and put the rubbish on the common for the bailiffs to collect, helped a bit in the kitchen, then started talking to two women and a man draped with cameras and notebooks. They were of course reporters. One woman from Brazil, the man from Switzerland, and the photographer from England (she apologised for that!) I took them back to the fire and we all had a coffee and I tried to tell them about Greenham. I know it will come out all wrong, it always does, but I suppose in Brazil, it's just good to know that Greenham news does get there when their own problems such as inflation at 300 per cent per year, existing must be their prime concern.

Isis decided to make us a tortilla, and I wrapped potatoes in foil and put them in the fire. This was for lunch but we didn't get round to eating until about 2.30. We just had scones and coffee at about 12.30. Oh the deprived life style of us poor Greenham women. I don't think we should get the Nobel Peace Prize, but instead we should be definitely put in the Egon Ronay Good Food Guide. I'm not sure whether the hygiene would pass the test, too much grease on the trees round the fire might let us down, but the food and drink are superb, even if we do share the bottle, cup, and plate at times. I don't think germs have much chance with wood smoke and fresh air. Apart from Christine (the lawyer)'s terrible cough which she had brought with her we are very healthy.

Rebecca came round with a load of packs from a swarm of Swedish women who were going to stay at Orange. On the whole we are always pleased to have women, but we all feel that it is far better if these groups break up rather more, two or three at each gate, rather than all at one. Anyway we will suggest this to them when they appear. Soon after this Rose arrived in a panic. It was 4.30 but evictions were starting on the north side. We lept into the only two cars we had, plus some wood, polythene and things to sleep on, plus a large water container. First to Indigo, where the women were sitting around a fire, but seemed to be OK if rather subdued. We left Ruth there, and went on to Violet. Here Liz and Annie showed me the mobile bender which was full of gear, so we went on to Blue. The Council dust cart,

bailiffs, police, dustmen etc, and my most unfavourite local resident were all there in force. I wanted to spit in her eye, but everyone said that she was not worth doing time for, and they were right. There were sad piles of possessions everywhere. I opened the back of my car, and told women to pile everything in that they could and I would take it round to Green for safe keeping. I ended up, not being able to see out of the back ~~window~~^{mirror}, but had the first aid carton, a tent, polythene, food, odds and sods, and took these off to Green with a Blue Gate woman. We put the things by the side of the road, then I went back again to help some more. At one point I found myself with a couple of women pulling a large sheet of polythene away from a bailiff, and when we won, stuffing it in my car. Then I helped to carry the kitchen table up the path into the woods, where we hid it behind a gorse bush. Back by the gate. Annie was singing^a protest song, and we all joined in the chorus. The last of the items was shoved into a van, and we stood around, until eventually the police, bailiffs and dust cart drove off. The dust cart is one of the crusher sort, so anything that goes in will not come out again. It is all very final. Anyway, there was nothing more I could do, so, so I gave the women the rest of the stuff still in my car, and went back to the other gates to pick up my passengers. At Violet, I asked if there was anything I could do to help, as there were nine women there with practically nothing apart from a fire. They asked for fish and chips, so American Liz and another woman came with me back to Orange where I dropped Isia off, and picked up two ~~xxxx~~ Swedish women who were going to Violet for the night. It was quite dark of course by this time, but on the road to Thatcham, I saw a figure with a back pack whom I recognised. I jumped on my brakes, yelled 'Miranda', terrified my passengers, and leapt out of the car. Miranda was looking her usual controlled self, but was glad when I offered to take her gear, as I had no room for her. She went on to Orange, and the rest of us went to Thatcham. The chip shop order was for '12 chips, 9 fish and chips, 4 large chips.' Nobody turned a hair.

I dropped my women off at the various gates and went home to Orange. Supper seems to have come and gone, but I handed round the bottle of red wine I had bought, plus the chips. I'm not sure quite where the bottle of scotch and rum appeared from, but I was very careful that night, as really there are certain things I couldn't remember about the previous night, particularly as to

the wherabouts of my bolt cutters. Actually careful Jill had them put in her bender, and I was pleased to get them back. They have been with me for a long time, and have cut much fence. I should hate to loose them.

I was not sure which bender I was going to sleep in. Ann from Reading was there, so I moved my stuff from her bender, Sally thought I should sleep in Miranda's, but it was so perfect, virginal, white, with flowers in a jam jar, that I didn't feel I could intrude. Jill, Ruth and Margaret from Violet all wanted to stay at Red in Gortex survival bags, as we were all convinced that the Cruise convoy would come out that night. There were masses of extra police being drafted into the base, and all day there had been an exercise inside, with American voices and vehicles tearing about, and yelling over loudspeakers that this is 'a yellow alert'. These exercises make ~~my~~ ^{my} blood run cold. Apart from anything else, the vehicles inside all have fixed ~~motor~~ type guns mounted on them, and I know that most of the soldiers would not question a command to point these at ~~us~~ ^{us} women and fire. Also in my constant driving round the base, I could see a lot of vehicles parked in odd places in the base. Anyway Jill said I could have her bender, and Ellie joined me. It was a rather short night, as by 5 I was awake, and got up soon after as I wanted to leave by six, as I had to go to work in Dover by 9am. I had a coffee, collected Isia and Lucy, said goodbye to Barbara the night watch, Anne who had done an early stint, Sally, who had just got up very early, and Ellie, whom I had thoroughly wakened.

Isia and I drove along the north fence, checked that Jill, Ruth and Margaret were OK. Jill was awake and glad to see us. Then we just saw the other gates with women outside, lying by fires, trying to ~~xxx~~ sleep. We gave them a wave, and I have decided that I will be back on 29th March with the Peace Van, as this will be very helpful with the evictions.

The song of the week at Greenham starts like this:

. The raindrops are falling on my head,
The bailiffs have crushed my bender
And taken ^{away} my bed.....

2.5
12
24 60 2,500

29th March 1984 - 6th April.

711

I've never tried to do this before, actually writing about Greenham from there, sitting in the car on the morning after, in my poncho and mittens. I'd better start with yesterday, as that's the day it all happened.

I heard on the radio that the cruise convoy had been taken out again, and realised that it was from Blue Gate that it had happened, as the familiar routine of pinning the women to the fence was very predictable. Of course I felt that I shouldn't have stayed in London, but I know damn well that my presence at Blue or any other Gate would have made no difference at all. It was a slow drive until I got to the M4 as it was Stop the City day and there were masses of cars around. All was fine until I turned the corner to Orange Gate, and then to my horror I realised that all the fences had gone. Nothing. Just the fence ^{and} rather chewed up ground. I couldn't believe it. It was all so desolate. But the camp fire was there and the Orange Gate Women. Sian, Ann, Ann and Jill (these three turned up a bit later as they were in court) Maureen, Christine, Sally, Rebeckah, Miranda, ^{Anne with the hair} ~~Elizabeth~~, Julie who is new, and Jane and Liz who arrived much later. We sat for a while and had a coffee, but I was feeling restless and we heard that evictions were going on, including Green Gate so Christine and I went to see what was happening. All the north road gates were looking very empty indeed, just a few women at each, with a small fire, and practically no possessions, just odd bits of food and polythene bags. We stopped and talked to some, and although they were feeling very low at the thought of the cruise convoy coming out just a few hours before, there was no way that they were going to be moved from their gates. It appears that the police had been very rough in their handling of the women and it had been quite unnecessary, so they were upset by this, as much as the bringing out of the convoy.

By the time we got round to Green Gate, the munchers had done ~~their~~ ^{their} work and there was practically nothing there except ~~a~~ group of women talking to TVS and a muncher waiting to get past them as they stood in the road. The interview was given accompanied by the roar of lorry engine, and when eventually the lorry went off, Christine and I decided to go to Yellow to see what was happening there.

There are always a lot of women there, and it was no exception today. Just after we got there the usual traffic was driving in and out including a couple of big army lorries. Then a small convoy of three more started driving out, Someone said it was part

of a NATO exercise, and quite spontaneously half a dozen women stood in front of the first vehicle and stopped it. Then more women joined them, and these three vehicles just ^{waited} ~~stood~~ there with engines revving. The driver wound up his window so he couldn't talk to us. A woman came up with a spray can of paint and carefully sprayed twofeminist symbols on the front of the vehicle when the police weren't looking. I went and had a look at the trailer and pulled the cover off and looked at the ~~rather~~ equipment in it. I think it was communication electronic stuff. The police came and covered it up again, but we just walked round behind them lifting the cover again. Then we went back to the first lorry. The police told the driver to switch off his engine, so we got our beer and sandwiches out, and prepared for a long blockade. By this time the TV cameras and other media people were about, and all the normal traffic which uses this main gate constantly, had to be turned back down the road to use other gates. After nearly an hour the order was for the lorries to go back inside the gate, so we watched, with a lot of laughter, the trailer being unhitched and pushed back by the police, then the most inept piece of driving I've seen for a long time by a soldier, whose glasses completely steamed up in his frustration as he tried to back his big lorry, with the 'help' of women shouting 'left hand down, no right hand down' and even the police were roaring with laughter. Eventually they were back inside, and within minutes there appeared right across the entrance an old ambulance belonging to the women, which they parked sideways on to the gate, and let the tyres down. Two women climbed onto the roof, and a mattress and various loads of rubbish were taken from it and piled against the gate. The electric gate inside the ordinary one had been bugged by women throwing little pebbles into the grooved track, and outside more and more rubbish was piling up hard against the gate. I went to get my bolt cutters as we thought a little action might be useful, but ended up helping a woman heave the largest 'yuletide' log you have ever seen. By now a bonfire had been started between the gate and the ambulance and we put the log on, to get a really good sized fire going.

The police were completely stuck. They had two or three officers trying to control the traffic in the road, and the rest were trapped inside the base. We blockaded the gate completely successfully for some hours with no planning or any idea that we might want to, or be able to, do such a thing. That's Greenham for you.

Christine and I felt we ought to come home to Orange, as we were hungry and also we thought there might be another eviction

I helped push the Pack Larry Sack. I held a to the radiator
grill, hoping that I could go inside with it, but the police had
the ideas I pulled me off. They had also previously taken a
wance in, but released her, so as the gate was still shut, she climbed
out over the gate.

there and we should be around to help, particularly as the car was essential to pile possessions into.

We'd only been back a short while when the bailiffs and muncher and muncher men arrived. They were in a ruthless mood, and although we tried to direct them to the rubbish and non-essentials they crushed a lot of things. I piled everything I could first inside the car, then on top of it. No one tried to touch these things, but we had to argue like mad that the food and water were ~~xxxx~~ picnic material, and women sat firmly on water containers and food bins, claiming them. It can't have been nearly so bad as the benders all going four days before, but we all hated seeing stuff just disappear and being chewed up. I rescued abhair which I pulled from some man's hand, and swore it was my personal property as well as various other items, and my passing shot was to pull a wooden spoon tied to a piece of wood from out of the back of the muncher. Not an item of any vital importance I admit, but everything needs rescuing from bailiffs. Jill had insisted ~~to~~ reading the actual piece of paper which authorised the eviction to take place, and has now come up with the idea that we can claim for personal possessions which have been destroyed by the muncher. In fact later that afternoon they went into Newbury and saw someone in the legal department of the council who was more than slightly startled when Jill informed him that she had talked to her barrister who said that she must claim for her possessions. Jill was first asked her name and address, which she gave as Lovejoy Peace and her address as the Orange Gate, Greenham Common. When the legal bloke objected Jill told him that this address had been accepted by the magistrates, so he shut up. He then asked her what she was claiming for and when she told him one sleeping bag and ten blankets, he turned really pale. If all the women made claims like this it really could upset the authorities greatly, and would be very interesting.

After the bailiffs left I brought out my bottle of wine, as not only was the sun over the yard arm, but we were all feeling rather shattered, sad, furious, upset, but not defeated or downhearted for more than a short while. We cleared up and got ourselves sorted out and decided that Indian take-away would be nice for supper that night, so Ann and I ended up with an enormous and complicated list for curries for 12. We made our phone calls in there and had a good wash in boiling hot water, and had a glass of beer each, so our time wasn't wasted. Back at the camp the food was passed round and the drink, but none of us wanted a late night as for various reasons (mainly cruise!) the women were tired. I did offer to stay up for the night watch, but luckily three women from Wales came, and then three more so I left them to fight out who was going to stay where and who was going to another gate, and I got my hottie and crawled into my two sleeping bags in the car.

I had no idea it was going to be such a cold night, but I slept soundly and when Jill and Anne woke me at 6.45 I was amazed to ~~xx~~ find the frost was as thick inside the car as outside. The night watch had already left, so there was no one near the camp fire, and I got up and stayed there, tied up and got some breakfast. So the start of another day.

The days go by, and now it is Monday the 2nd April, the day they told us that no woman would be left at Greenham Common. Well I'm still here and so are a lot of my friends, although some of us are a little physically battered having just done a partial blockade of Orange Gate. There weren't enough of us to be really successful, but at least we held up the flow of traffic for a while. My poncho is torn and my shoulder and arm rather sore, but nothing worse than that. A quiet sit in the car with Kes looking at me, away from women and police, seems necessary for a while, as it is only 8.30 now, and so far I've had coffee in bed (brought by Sue), coffee and toast at the camp fire, ^{done} a blockade at the gate, then coffee and hard boiled egg and toast and honey and now typewriter. Its going to be a long day!

Friday was a quiet day, in fact I can't remember a thing that happened, except that the weather was awful and it rained on and off all day. We cleared up the camp site cooked, communicated, went for a walk along the fence, greeted visitors and women who came to stay, and coped with 8 Danish women who turned up. It seems to take a long time to do even a quite simple thing, when the rain and wind are lashing down, and ^{the} cover over the fire is falling ^{down}, so it has to be propped up with a long piece of wood, and then that falls down on Maureen, so we stick it in the fire grid, and that works, until the wind blows it sideways ^{again} and you have to start all over again. It is not easy to live here, but the humour and companionship certainly make it all worth while. One problem now is that as there are no benders, there is nowhere to retreat to. Survival bags are all very well, but apart from not being all that easy to get in and out of, you can only lie down when you are in it, and the rain beating on it and you is not all that pleasant. Sally has just come to sit in the car (its getting crowded as now it has Sue, Kes, Sally, ~~me~~, and camping equipment for about 20 women) and she can't remember a thing about Friday either.

It is now Tuesday 7.30am. We have just done another blockade, and once again it is nice to retreat into the car and quiet, especially as I can't see out, or be seen as the frost is so thick on the windows.

Saturday and the visitors started to arrive, as well as regulars. Sue, and Zoe and Cleis.etc etc. plus ~~hundreds~~ ^{dozens} of other women, some whom I recognised and some I didn't. We all felt that there would not be any evictions with number of women around, so we could relax. One sad thing that happened was that the secret bender on the common had been discovered. Sue was just getting out of it when a man came along and took a photo of her and said that he was a councillor and she was not allowed to camp on the common, and must go. Later that day we took all the hidden goods out of the bender and put them in my car, and then we carried the bender in one piece back near the fire where it has been used ever since. Christine went back home and I did some shopping and tour of the gates. I have been made Orange Gate money woman while I am here as I have a car to keep cash in. I took Julie and ^{with} me to Thatcham for food and still the wind blew and women (too many of them) tried to huddle round one fire. The Danish women have built themselves a bender in the woods, but they join us for meals, and the whole place gets very crowded. Ellie arrived about tea time the evening became fairly hectic and noisy. Some of the residents gave up the unequal struggle and retired to the portable bender in peace and quiet. I drove the car well away from the noise and Ellie and I had an undisturbed night, with Jill and Sue in their car a bit up the road. At one time I thought there was snow on the windscreen, but decided that it was

just my imagination. Unfortunately it was not. We had snow flurries and icy north east winds all day. The women in the gortex and survival bags ~~are~~ having a tough time. One morning I went quietly into the rabbit warren where they are, and the only thing to be seen are a dozen or so bright orange bags, filled with something lumpy. The lumpy object is a woman, plus clothes, sleeping bag, boots, rucksack, in fact all her worldly possessions. There is no sign of hair or head, and the only sure way of finding out which end the head is, is the fact that the frost is melted and the bag is its proper bright colour, not coated with white.

On Saturday afternoon Sue and I gave a long interview for a German woman who is a free lance journalist. She asked the usual questions about Greenham, and we answered to the best of our ability why we were here etc, and then tried to persuade her to come herself, then she would know more about it. She said that she didn't like camping, and we had some difficulty in persuading her that we didn't either, but this had not stopped our coming or involvement with Greenham. I'm certain that it will be the same old type of article that she produces in the end, just like everyone else's. I must say that the longer I stay here, the less in some ways I seem to do, and the more I talk in agreement and harmony. We all do I think.

At the moment the sun is shining and it is now beautiful. the frost is melting on the windows, so I can see more and more. Its very quiet here. I don't know about round the rest of the base, perhaps they are evicting Yellow at the moment. Quite soon I must have a really good wash. Personal hygiene is important, especially after nearly a week!

I don't know where all the women came from on Sunday, but they turned up all day, and stayed and made benders on the places where the benders had been evicted. There were picnics, women from other gates turned up and the whole day was a sort of a party. Allright. I must admit it. The residents felt pushed out from their own fire, and found they couldn't even get a coffee. The litter that was left was horrible, particularly as we felt that the women who come on these demos should be much more careful and ecology minded. It sounds really foul to bitch like this when it is all support, but I'm afraid to varying degrees we did get a bit resentful. I helped Ann to build a bender and we encouraged other women standing around to do the same thing. Afterwards we felt that too much wood had been cut and the trees would not recover, and we were certain that in no time at all they would be 'munched'. The odd thing is, that ~~they~~ are still there, and women have spent the past couple of nights in them, right under the soldiers noses. The previous night young Julie had taken her survival bag over near the fence, and she had been chucked off again and again by the MOD police, but when there are a lot of us around, they are not quite so keen. ~~macho~~.

Ellie and Julie and many others went home that evening, and later I ~~want~~ and phoned John, my mother and Mark. When I came back I got the car sorted out for Lynne to move in with me for the night, as the rabbit warren was pretty ~~knxy~~ full. Sue said she would wake us in the morning with tea and coffee at 6.45. [We had a fairly quiet evening, I think we were all tired after the activity and movement of so many people during the day. There is nowhere to retreat to without benders, but this is still home, for women and we want quiet and space, time to think, read, write and perhaps communicate just on a one to one basis. I'm particularly aware of this 'space' need this time, and I do have a car I can shut myself in. Home at Greenham is something very special and it can be destroyed by the invasion of privacy and tactlessness

who are insensitive to the fact that just a fire and no real structure can mean security, ~~xxxxxxx~~^{love}, and perhaps be the most important place in the world to some women. Its not easy for an outsider to see a lump of fence and rather muddy ground and a few broken down old chairs, and a palette, which is called a coffee table, to mean so much, and actually to be a living room.

Sue brought us our early morning tea and coffee and about 20 of us tried a blockade. We were too far from the gate, and it was not much of a success, but we did hold things up for a while. We shoved masses of things in my car in case the bailiffs came, but after a while we heard that nothing was happening anywhere very much, so decided to go round to the other gates as we had promised Jill to remind them to tell everyone, word of mouth only about painting the fence on 7th May. Sue, Lynne and I set off, but the back of the car was so piled up that I backed into a visitors car and bust my rear cover on the brake light. We did the rounds and there were dozens of women sitting around, and at Yellow, the media were very much in evidence. Anyway, nothing happened, it was all quiet and peaceful, and so we came home, again. I sat in the car and talked to Sue for ages, then to Rebeckah, and when Ruth and Penny came, then Moira and Jan from Tunbridge Wells, I knew it was going to be an evening of good singing, not the usual tuneless stuff. Then Rebecca from Yellow came, and I was glad Jane and I had done a quick wine run, as the ballads and songs were really good. [We went to bed quite early, but I should mention that at 5pm all the gates were doing another blockade. I don't think ours was the best. We always seem to have about an equal number of women versus police, and without doubt they are bigger, stronger and definitely more brutal than we are. We had another blockade this morning, and as that is three I have done in two days, that's enough for me. Let my bruises fade before I do any more.

Maureen has told me she will put on a kettle for coffee and a large container for washing. It sounds too good to be true!

4th ~~xxxx~~ April

Well I had a fantastic bath, starting with hair, then body, feet, and then clothes all in the same water, with hottie water for rinsing. I really felt clean after that. The only slight annoyance was the plane with the trailer reading 'Ratepayers say good riddance, girls' but I was not put off, just stood there naked and waved to the pilot. It was a really beautiful day after the early frost. ~~Really~~ Hot sunshine, and in the afternoon after I had been to Thatcham for shopping and to try to get the part for my car, we sat in the warren and sunbathed. Actually the car part was quite funny, as the garage hadn't got ~~it~~ in stock, so they promised to have it for me by this morning. The storeman was extremely polite, called me madam, and asked for my name. I then waited for him to ask my address, and if he had and I answered Orange Gate, Greenham Common, I've an awful feeling that his tone might have altered.

We really relaxed in the rabbit warren. It ~~really~~ felt good to do nothing and just sit and talk and play the fool generally.

All this took place with silly French accents, but its a good way to unwind, and wait for the next event. Jane actually wore shorts, and I got down to tee shirt and removed leg warmers. Unfortunately this sort of existance doesn't go on for ever, and at about 4.30 we were aware of a lot of MOD cops in vans and all round the place. Suddenly they moved in and started removing women and benders over by the fence. We all went over to support the women there and sat down by the fire. We were asked to move, and when we refused, they carried and dragged us across the road. I actually got carried in style on the chair I was sitting on, but

they were getting rather heavy and unpleasant, so we were a bit careful. I did a head count and found there were at least 30 police, they far outnumbered us. Then they pulled the benders down and dragged them to the base gate, so we pulled all our rubbish over the road for them to take inside as well. The police didn't like this and hurled the bags back across the road to us, and tempers were starting to flare. They told us that we must not go on MOD property, even just to walk on it was trespass. In the end we gave up, and they went home, so we had supper. The Danish women were still here, they were going very early the next day and said they would do a night watch for us.

I had bought a bottle of wine, but there were so many women round the fire, it would have meant about 1 sip each, so on the way to get something from the car I passed Rebeckah ^{and her} to have a drink, then Ann from Reading arrived, then Sally, Miranda, Lynne, Jane, and in the end when we were drunk and stoned, ~~I~~ we felt we should not leave Anne and vicar's wife out, so I was delegated to fetch her tactfully. Well by the time she was also in the car, that made 8 of us. We decided (very drunkenly) that we ought to cut a hole in the fence big enough to drive the car in, turn sharp right and then out through the base gate! Well it was a novel idea, and very funny indeed at the time, although the soldiers didn't think so. They all got quite worried, and we were making enough noise to waken the dead. Maureen then arrived with the idea that if I drove the car fast at the fence with Sally on top, then stopped hard, she would perhaps fly over, or through, the fence. Eventually we decided it was time for bed, and filled hotties and went our separate ways. The trouble was that I had had some unbelievably strong coffee and didn't get to sleep for a while, then at 2.30am Astrid knocked politely on the car window, woke me, and told me that the bailiffs would definitely be here at 4.am. I'm not sure where she got her information from, but when she suggested waking the others to tell them, I advised her not to, nor to rouse them at 3.30, but when the bailiffs arrived would be time enough. I got to sleep again, and the next thing I knew was Astrid once more knocking politely at the car window to say goodbye to me. She is a nice woman, and yesterday I had done a recording for her into her machine, and afterwards I had suggested that in future I'm sure the Danish women would gain much more, and so would we, if they split themselves into smaller groups of only two or three per gate. We did find them a little overpowering, but they are marvellous to come to Greenham at all, and I think we must be sure to communicate on a more personal basis, rather than a huge unwieldy bunch, with language problems to boot. Women who come to Greenham should always come in ones or twos, otherwise they ~~xxxxxx~~ are a group, not individuals, and as Miranda describes it, it is hard to make eye contact.

Well today is not so quiet. The eviction of Yellow took place in the early hours of the morning. We sorted out the rabbit warren, piled stuff into my car and waited. One problem was that Margaret's car wouldn't start, so I drove her and Ann to Thatcham to get a train for Reading and the Crown Court. They have to go every day for a fortnight. They come back each night very tired and drained.

Who knows how the rest of the day will be. We'll get food, talk, exist, and wait for our eviction. Yellow Gate women are right, it is almost a relief when it comes, but while it is actually happening, it is degrading and unbelievably horrible. My car is full of my friends personal possessions, and we have had a lot of visitors already this morning. We shall just have to wait and see.

5th April

Well it happened, but we were quite ready for the eviction. By the time it came, in the afternoon we had a mass of visitors with cars as well as mine and Marion's (she turned up just in time!) The Orange Gate was in an awful mess and we carefully left a lot of rubbish around in bags in secret places so that the bailiffs men could take them. It worked a treat. They lept into the gorse with the police and really had a good search. They did, unfortunately, find the other hidden bender, which was a shame, and they tried to take away Miranda's little half bender which she uses to cover her gortex and survival bag. She had painted on it in large clear letters 'Miranda's personal property', so although they tried to evict it, we shouted at them and they left it, and managed to run over it but didn't do a lot of damage. My car was packed with items as usual, including the cover for the fire which was tied, not very securely on the roof. All the cars were full of food bins, wood, and personal goods and water containers, polythene, the tools, chairs, etc etc. Everything important. We did leave in a very prominent place the Charles and Diana mug, and this was taken, luckily, and also a tin opener, which didn't open tins.

The police were being quite heavy. They thought they had us by the short and curlies as we were informed that we couldn't park our cars on the Common as the bailiffs would have us, and if we parked on the road, the police would have us. So we drove off. I had a notice sticking out of my back window, saying 'Business as Usual' and 'We are still Here', and the polythene flapping around. We went round to Violet, and found three women sitting round a fire with nothing there, but after a few minutes other women came back from the bushes carrying water and wood. Someone had hurled a tin full of herbal teabags and some mugs in my car just as I was driving off, so, they found me some coffee and I handed over the tea. We did discuss parking the cars that night in a big lay-by near Violet, but in the end it wasn't necessary. I came back to Orange and found the police were still wandering around. There was a slight panic as Sian had been caught. She was under some sort of warrent for non payment of fine, so Rebekah took £100 from the money box and went to find her, and I removed the sheeting from the car and decided to do the grand tour.

On my way to Yellow I was stopped. I think the notice sticking out of the car window may have alerted the police to me. They asked to see my driving licence and insurance papers. Of course the insurance stuff is back home, so I have to go to the local cop shop on Monday in Deal. At Yellow the women were all sitting on the ground opposite their normal area. There is now a wooden fence surrounding the area with police every few yards guarding it. Already ^{women} ~~they~~ had set up a kitchen area, and were sorting out their food. Others just sat round talking and gaining strength, before starting to live again in their normal style. There were a lot of women there and they were strong and are certainly not going to be moved.

At Green it was as if nothing had happened, except that they had not lit their fire again. All there goods had been stashed in the sanctuary, so they just to to put everything back again when they felt the time was right.

At Blue, the women were just sitting around on the muddy ground, assuring me and everyone that they were so used to being evicted and having a hard time, that this was no different and of course they would survive, and if they weren't allowed fires, they were strong, and would just be a bit cold for a while. Violet still had the mobile bender and their furniture was just being returned to them from a van. I knew Lizzie, Annie, Judy

and so would survive with much humour and happiness. It is another gate like ours with this awful French accent, which we cannot stop doing. It becomes very exhausting, especially when I looked at my watch early this morning and said to myself in an awful pseudo accent 'Ah yeess, eet ~~ees~~ neerly zeven.' We do manage to laugh a lot with it though. I have a feeling that this is what has made me loose my voice today. I am being really quite silent by my standards.

I got back to Orange the same time as Marion and found that our fire had been relighted and the possessions put back in place. Marion had brought food with her, so we didn't even have to cook, just heat everything up. It was magnificent. I passed the bottle of scotch round as we were all rather exhausted, if not downhearted, and so the evening started. The night watch turned up, some fairly local visitors to find out if we had survived and to see how we were managing. Visitors, including Liz and Hannah came, and went, and although we all felt that cruise might come out that night we were too tired to bother much. Maureen felt she ought to stay up for a while with the night watch, but as the fire was so nice, I don't think it was much of a hardship.

It was an icy night, but the frost cleared quite quickly in the sunshine. Another beautiful day. I decided that after breakfast I would have a bath and wash my hair in the bowl. On the whole its been a pretty quiet day. The police came round here twice this morning with an old fashioned galvanised watering can, and piddled with it on the fire to put it out. There is this stupid by-law about no fires on the common, so just to harrass us, they put our fire out and we light it again when they are not looking or have gone away.

It is now the next day, Friday I think, and it has been all go, since I was so rudely interrupted yesterday. Liz and Hannah from Indigo came for a visit and said they wanted action. A huge transporter plane came in during the afternoon, (just before Bruce Kent arrived with mars bars and a bottle of scotch, we were honoured!) and Liz had watched carefully and saw that what was taken from the plane wasn't put into the silo, but in one of the large hangers which is almost equidistant from Orange and Violet. Liz and Hannah felt it was worth going inside to find out what it was, and we discussed the possibility of two or three actions taking place at the same time. Jane, MohicAnne and I joined them on an extraordinary cross country expedition in the area of the golf club. Most of the time we seemed to be going completely in the wrong direction, away from the fence, crashing through undergrowth fording muddy streams, etc etc. It was all quite fun but not really very helpful. We walked miles, and in the end got back to Violet and then Indigo and then I drove MohicAnne back to Orange when it was quite dark and there were hundreds of women around, all eating fantastic food. By this time the vegetarian diet was having some effect on me, and all I wanted was good solidifying scrambled eggs. I had them with garlic bread and flapjacks, wine, scotch etc, and they did me a power of good.

We then discussed the action in some detail and decided that there was absolutely no reason for us to do our action with Indigo, but if we did it vaguely at the same time it might be a good idea. We then discussed numbers. Seven of us were prepared, and so we donned dark clothes and set off. I'm afraid I was being a bit Brown Owlsh and suggested that we went through the common, down the road and then climbed up the hill through the trees. This was fine but the bracken and brambles made it hard going. MohicAnne had the other cutters and we went ahead. There was a lovely piece of fence with only one spotlight shining on me, and so I sat down

and started snipping. It was a very still and quiet night and the noise of each snip sounded like gunfire to me. The soldiers could hear me but couldn't locate my position, and torches were flashing like mad all over the place. In the end I cut a hole low down, large enough to crawl through, so I stuck my feet inside and started cutting the barbed wire. Then there was a shout. I had been spotted, so I got out and we all tore down the hill, then waited quietly before going home along the road, in an exaggeratedly drunken fashion. When we turned up our road, there were police and cars around, and Maureen and I decided that it would be a good idea to hide the cutters for a while by a tree. (We retræved then later) Back at the fire we had another drink or two and Christine arranged that she would sleep in my car, but would come to bed later on. It was a bit of a squash, as I had two or three rucksacks as well as other things. We did manage and Ruth brought me coffee in bed in the morning. Incidentally we found out that we had been much more successful than Liz and co. They hadn't even got to the fence, much less cut it. I think they were quite impressed with our effort.

Today. Well, eviction this morning, but we were pretty well prepared for it, although that doesn't make it any better. We put all our food etc in the van which doesn't go, and masses of other things in my car and everywhere. I don't think they got all that much stuff, its just the hassle and tiredness that it all produces. I went round with my load to Violet, then came back here again, and so far during the rest of the day (its now 6pm) the police have been round with their piddling little fire extinguishers and put out our fire for either the 5th or 6th time. Its pathetic, it really is. I shall never have respect for police again after the way I have seen them behave at Greenham this week.

Back home again now, with Gus sitting next to me. Those ten days are very important in my life. They reaffirm the importance of the place, or to be more accurate, the women who are there. It is the trust and unity of us, against them, the 'them' being authority, particularly when represented by men in uniform. Oddly enough the incident which made me most furious, was when I was stopped in my car, when driving round with a load of stuff after one eviction. This was an enormous invasion of privacy. I am a law abiding citizen on the road, my car is in excellent repair, and I bitterly resent that I can be pulled into the side by cops and asked for my credentials. They were polite, fine, but it is the principal I'm against. When I took my insurance note into Deak police station on Sunday afternoon, the officer made a note of everything, and when he had finished he asked me if I'd had a bump in the car in Berkshire, and I firmly told him I hadn't, but I'd been stopped because I was a Greenham Woman.

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10th April

At home I realise how tired I am. Mentally rather than physically, although it is an effort to do all cooking, washing up, living, etc at ground level. My knees get a bit stiff, particularly with sitting on the ground or a log, and also crawling through bracken and brambles and gorse can be quite tiring. Even sleeping for a lot of nights in the car, although it is fairly comfortable, isn't exactly luxury, although without doubt I sleep longer and sounder there than I do at home, although I wake up a bit stiff. Actually, now at home I've been opening the window over my head really wide, and it does work. I'm not sure it isn't due to the breathing of really cold air, which does the trick for me. Back here one of my problems is to do and think which are not connected with Greenham. I live and love it, but I do have ~~another~~ ^{another} life back here and University soon which I must prepare for in many ways. Its no help having Mother in hospital and a trip to Worthing for the day yesterday is really not what I wanted. Poor old girl. When I first saw her she looked so old and vulnerable and lost. I just hope that my end will be with a bang not a whimper, but how long does one go on? I keep thinking of the time I have wasted, but I suppose we all think this. One of the ways that Greenham has helped me, is that Deal is now no longer the only place where I have friends. I can pick up the phone and call many women and I'm certain that I would be made welcome for a few days anyway. This is chance to get away, and it will happen more and more. This weekend I have to be the Greenham woman talker at the demo in Dover. The following I'm going to Liverpool to see Mark, then the next two weekends at Greenham again. Ouch! I haven't told John this yet.