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A week on WW2 Rations

One mum, one child, no pasta!

made with
Beacon

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Introduction

This book is about a week long experiment I had with my 8 year old son to live on WW2 rations for 7 days.

In primary school my son did a project about World War 2. I thought it would be fun, or at least interesting if we tried living on World War 2 rations for a week.

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Our WW2 rations for a week

T is a bit disgruntled that there will be no pasta. We are hoping for some black market goodies.



We have (between us)

- Butter 100g
- Marj 200g
- Sugar 450g
- Milk 4l
- Smoked Salmon (instead of bacon) 200g
- Cheese 100g
- 2 eggs
- Tea 100g
- Jam 100g
- Sweets 120g

This is our Morrison shelter, underneath the table, in case the siren goes off - I downloaded a siren noise on my phone and ran it through the speakers at random intervals!



Meal ideas for WW2 rations

These are ideas for me and my 8 year old who does not eat meat so I'm substituting smoked salmon for bacon. He hardly eats any veg so this will be an interesting week.

Breakfast for both of us:

- porridge with honey, apple sauce, sugar, milk, raisins
- toast and butter/jam/marmite/honey
- dippy egg and toast and butter (can only do this once unless we get more eggs somehow)

Packed Lunch for 8 year old

- Sandwiches:
 - salmon
 - cheese and mushroom
 - marmite
 - jam
 - honey
 - sausage?
- Fruit Juice
- Cold salmon and mushroom pasty
- Raisins/sultanas
- Sliced carrot

Lunch for me

- Vegi soup and bread
- Dahl
- toasted cheese and mushroom sandwich

Dinner for both of us

- Sausage, mash and gravy - 2 vegi sausages each, or 1.5 sausages each saving one for a sandwich (vegis broccoli and peas)
- Home made oven chips and fish (free as we have a fisherman friend) (mixed vegis for me, broccoli for T)
- Vegi/smoked salmon pasties (using some of the marj ration to make pastry) variation on Wooton Pie.
- Mashed potato and smoked salmon and mushrooms, or potato Floddies - <http://cookit.e2bn.org/historycookbook/95-potato-floddies.html>
- Vegi burgers (have to be bought with ration book) with oven chips.
- Baked potatos and cheese
- Sausages, baked beans and chips/mash
- Egg, baked beans and chips

Snacks/Biccies (this is where I see most of the fat ration going)

- shortbread
- buns
- jammy dodgers (home made using jam allowance)
- scones (potato)
- all of these could be used in lunch box too

Puddings

- Baked/stewed apples and custard
- apple crumble and custard
- cake?
- jelly?

A week on WW2 rations - day 1

I've been missing cups of tea, I've been obsessing about food and rations and what best to spend the fat ration on. I've eaten more sugar today than I normally do and we have loads left in our rations.

Breakfast

- Porridge with treacle and left over strawberries cooked down,
- soya milk.

I made tea in a teapot to stretch the bag out to 2 cups.



WW2 packed lunch Cheese and mushroom sandwich, honey sandwich, raisins, propeganda, orange juice and an ignored carrot

T's packed lunch is

- Cheese and mushroom sandwich,
- honey sandwich,
- raisins,
- juice (should be squash but we don't have any)
- and a carrot with propeganda "carrots keep you healthy and help you see in the blackout"

I've saved the crusts to make something else with later in the week.

My lunch is vegetable soup, bread and marj

Dinner

- Mashed potato (mine was mashed with celeriac) no butter
- Half a tin of baked beans between us (bought with ration book)
- Tiny scraping of grated cheese
- Mushrooms and leeks

Dessert

- Jam tarts and custard

I also made Anzac Biscuits which are just lovely little coconutty bundles of sugary niceness.

Day 1 on WW2 rations, conclusions:

T ate all his packed lunch apart from the carrot, he ate almost all of his dinner apart from one large spoonful and the leftover beans and potatos I put in my soup for tomorrow. He ate custard which is a newish one for him and likes Anzac Biscuits a lot! When I woke up this morning I found him googling air raid siren because he wanted to put the noise on his MP3 player. We talked about black market stuff and whether it was ethical, he says he would prefer to swap stuff which is ok. I'm hoping that the neighbours will consider swapping a couple of eggs for some of my sweet ration.

Anzac Biscuits Recipe

Ingredients

- 1 cup of plain flour
- 1 cup of rolled oats
- 1 cup of desiccated coconut
- 1 cup of brown sugar
- ½ cup of butter of your ration.
- 2 ½ tbs golden syrup (or honey)
- 1 tsp bicarb soda
- 2 ½ tbs of boiling water

Method

Combine flour, oats, sugar and coconut into a bowl.

Melt the butter and golden syrup or honey in a pot over low heat

Mix the bicarb soda with the water and then add to the butter and golden syrup or honey

Pour the liquid mixture into the dry mixture and mix it all well.

Teaspoon dollops of the mixture onto a greased tray make sure you leave space for spreading.

Bake in a 350F for 15 to 20 mins

In reality I melted the butter, syrup and sugar, poured this into the dry ingredients, added the water and bicarb and mixed up. I messed up the weighing so my ratios are all wrong but they taste fantastic!



Anzac biscuits are a big hit

A week on WW2 rations - day 2

I'm feeling the sugar overload and a lack of protein. Have arranged to trade my sweet ration for a couple of eggs with the neighbours. None of the recipes I can find make much use of pulses which would be my usual protein boost in times of no money.

Breakfast

- Porridge and honey
- juice

Packed Lunch

- smoked salmon sandwich (instead of bacon)
- anzac biscuits
- juice
- raisins

My lunch

- vegi soup
- toasted tomato sandwich
- salad
- smoked salmon
- anzac biscuits

Dinner

- smoked salmon, potato and mushroom pasty for T, mixed veg pasty for me with oven chips for both of us salad and beetroot for me
- coconut biccies

A week on WW2 rations - day 3

I should have weighed myself on Monday but I forgot - I'm 10st 1.4 I can't imagine with all the sugar on the ration I will be anything less on Sunday.

Breakfast

- Porridge and honey
- Juice

We are out of honey and treacle, I think we will use our ration book to buy a pot of honey.

Packed Lunch for T

- Cheese and lettuce sandwich
- half a honey sandwich
- juice
- 2 Anzac biscuits
- 1 small coconut biscuit
- A Satsuma!

We are out of bread too, hence half a honey sandwich.

T went on a school trip yesterday and was given crossants and pineapple!
Like dining at the Ritz!

My lunch

- Vegi soup (extended from Monday's) and bread if I buy some

Dinner

- Soup
- Fish and veg
- fresh bread rolls and some of the butter ration

Pudding

- a Toffee
- Chelsea Buns! (which we were too full to eat)

Cunning plan - I'm going to use the mashed potato in a bread dough so we can have nice fresh bread with fish and veg for tea and use the rest of the dough to make chelsea buns to use up some sugar ration! 90% of my brain is now taken up with how to make meals stretch and how to eke out the fat ration.

It's an inset day on Friday so we will eat out, my son asked if we could eat somewhere that does starters! He went on a school trip yesterday and they had croissants and pineapple so at breakfast we talked about how rich people could eat pretty much whatever they wanted and he was a rich person for that day. I don't know how people managed on rations without cafes and restaurants. I haven't rationed bread for this week as I can't find out how many loaves we should have but we are eating more than we usually do.

I am carbohydrate girl. Swapped my sweet ration for 2 eggs, T very nicely said he would share his sweet ration with me on Saturday. We have loads of sugar left, most of the butter, most of the cheese, a third of the marj, all of the jam, half of the smoked salmon, 4 vegi sausages, 2 vegi burgers and we are going to eat on on Friday.

All is well.

A week on WW2 rations - day 4

Day 4 and my 8 year old has only just started to complain about rations. He wanted marshmallows and I said he could but he had to swap some of his sweet ration for them. I'm really proud of the way he has thrown himself into this. Tomorrow we are looking forward to eating out!

Halfway already!

I weigh 10st today, 1.4 down from yesterday.

My neighbour has just come over with a lovely smoked rainbow trout so that is lunch for me! I still have extended soup to eat and I'm looking forward to the leftover mushroom soup, which was so easy to make despite using a little of the butter ration. Onions and garlic softened in butter, add mushrooms, cook a while, add water, cook til soft, whizz up, add milk - I used soya 'cos that is what we like.

Breakfast

- Porridge and treacle or honey
- juice

T's packed lunch

- Salmon sandwich
- 6 little coconut biccies
- juice
- a chelsea bun

T has afterschool club so he will get toast or crumpets at around 4.30.

My lunch

- Vegi soup and bread with smoked trout!

Dinner

- Toad in the hole with 2 of the vegi sausages and one egg from our 4 (having swapped my sweet ration for 2 eggs)
- Fried Mushrooms
- Gravy

Dessert

- Chelsea Buns (made with mashed potato in the dough)

Mashed Potato Bread Recipe

Ingredients

- Cold Mashed Potato
- Flour to make it up to 500g
- mix together with fingers
- add a splash of oil
- teaspoon of dried yeast
- 200 to 300 ml of warm water

Knead lightly (it is very sticky) and leave to rise. Bake in a medium oven until golden brown for buns or sounding hollow when tapped underneath if a loaf. With these quantities I made 4 Chelsea Buns and a loaf big enough to share as the main carbs in yesterdays dinner.



A week on WW2 rations - day 5

Thinking about snacks. I have loads of sugar left so could make more Anzac biccies as they went down well, or we could have oven chips as potato's are not rationed. I also have some batter left from the toad in the hole so I could make blinis to eat with some of the smoked salmon. We also have most of the Chelsea bun left that would be fine heated up with a bit of custard.

Friday is an inset day at school so we plan to have a late Breakfast/Brunch

- Toast
- Vegi Sausage
- Baked Beans
- Fried Egg

That will leave us just one egg until Monday and no more baked beans or sausages. It will also use up some of the butter ration with the toast.

Late Lunch/Early Dinner

Eating out! Yippee, hooray, I might even have a glass of wine, I am sure they served wine at the Ritz during the war, we will go to Bella Italia which isn't very WW2 but we have Tesco vouchers.

We are also going to look at the Anderson shelter at the museum.

Rations left are looking like this and they have to last Today, Saturday and Sunday.

- An egg
- 2 vegi burgers
- 100g smoked salmon
- block of cheese smaller than the size of a matchbox
- half a smoked rainbow trout!
- a third of the original marj
- 3/4 of the original butter
- loads of sugar
- some sweets



The rations we have til monday

Without swapping sweets for 2 eggs and being given a huge smoked rainbow trout this would be really difficult.

Good things about this week have been my son (who has a pretty self restricted diet and is funny about a lot of food) eating almost all of his food, including his packed lunches, he has tried almost everything I have cooked, decided he likes lettuce in sandwiches and has become more open minded about trying different textured food like soup.

9pm update on day 5 We ate like kings at Bella Italia, had no room for pudding but did get some take out icecream and a cake for me from a posh bakers. Both totally stuffed and had no room for snacks in the evening.



Ahh, inset day Dining ww2 style at the ritz aka Bella Italia with Tesco Vouchers

A week on WW2 Rations - day 6

One more day to go. If I had more butter it would be a lot easier!

Breakfast

- cornflakes and a small spoonful of sugar although there is loads of it left
- juice

Lunch

- Toasted sandwiches, 2 x smoked salmon (bacon substitute) and mushroom for T
- 1 smoked salmon and mushroom for me and a bowl of vegi soup

Dinner thoughts at 2pm

something potato based, possibly pasties (again) We have most of my ration of cheese left, some fish, 2 vegi burgers, possibly mashed potato so I can save some potato for potato pastry tomorrow. We also have 2 eggs still and a mountain of sugar.

Snack

- Jam biscuits

Dinner



- Pizza with potato bread base, smoked salmon, mushroom and the rest of the cheese ration
- Steamed treacle pudding and custard

That is all the fat ration gone, and my son ate the rest of his sweets today.
This is what is left:

- enough smoked salmon for one sandwich,
- one slice of processed cheese (my son prefers it to real cheese)
- loads of sugar
- 2 vegi burgers
- one egg

The chelsea buns I have ditched (not very thrifty I know but they hardened up!)

A week on WW2 rations - day 7

I didn't lose any weight in case you were wondering but that wasn't the goal anyway.

Breakfast

Toast and dippy egg, juice

some cheating here with an extra egg but this used the last of the butter ration

Lunch

Eating out, T had chips, I had a sandwich

Dinner

Vegi sausages (in ration, I was intending vegi burgers but these were easier)

mashed potato with some out of ration butter, sprouts and broccoli

The week is done

T had some black market pretzls, we used one extra egg and about a teaspoon of butter extra, but we did it!

Conclusion

I'd do this again, but not for a while.

Some thoughts about our week long experiment:

- I'm amazed we had so much sugar.
- It was a struggle cooking with so little fat
- I enjoyed the challenge.
- My son will eat lettuce sandwiches in the name of research

Overall I think both of us enjoyed the week. It made me think about our food more and respect what we had. I wasted very little.

We managed one week, and ate out one of those nights. I was reliant on my son getting fed at after school club because without those couple of crumpets I'm not sure we would have had enough to go round.

If I had to do this in real life I know I could cope. It would be easier if you teamed up with people to pool resources. It would be lots easier if you grew your own veg.

This is what we have left



What is left of the sweet ration

This was probably more fun for me than for my 8 year old but it was good for both of us to do. The week after we were in awe of how much butter and cheese we would normally use, it seemed so extravagant to make a normal 21st century sandwich. I'd do it again. He won't.

If you had access to lentils and fresh veg then living on rations would only be difficult because of the fat ration. I missed butter badly.

The logo for 'Less Stuff' is displayed in a white rectangular box. The word 'less' is in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font, with a blue dot on the 'e'. The word 'stuff' is in a larger, bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. The background of the entire page is dark with a faint, repeating pattern of a textured surface, possibly a book cover or a stone wall.

less stuff

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