

Willie Chamberland MBE is probably the most prolific letter writer in the history of the Gibraltar media. He has a fixed opinion on a wide range of external and internal problems and has rarely been known to alter his view.

William, 73, was born in Gibraltar and during the Second World War evacuated to England. The family stuck it out in Kensington for two and a half years where the family was billeted at the Royal Palace Hotel and Willie was educated at the Latymer School in Hammersmith, then at the private Carroll school.

As his grandmother could not stand the air raids, after two and a half years in Kensington the family went north to Yorkshire. His grandmother, alas, died in Colston and so never returned to Gibraltar.

The family moved back to London and by a stroke of good fortune was able to be billeted in the same hotel. Willie had joined the Cubs in Yorkshire and was able to transfer to a Hammersmith pack.

Surprisingly some families were repatriated back to the Rock before D Day. The Chamber-

land family was moved up to Glasgow to await a ship and eventually boarded the *Stirling Castle* which was escorted to Cape Spartel by no less than a cruiser and two destroyers. He remembers seeing the escorting men of war turn about

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Willie's mother's nerves had been badly affected by the bombing and she found it difficult to sleep. One beneficial side effect, probably the only one, of the *Bedenham* explosion was, she was having a bath at the time of the blast and the noise and blast did something to her hearing and she was able to sleep again! There was no medical explanation for this pleasant surprise.

A look in the Gibraltar Telephone Book shows there is only one male Chamberland on the Rock. How did this come about? Does this mean he will be the last Chamberland to be a Gibraltarian and so represent the end of the line?

It turns out there have been only four generations on the Rock.

Great Grandfather Chamberland was a French Canadian, who married in Canada,