

Henry Jeston's only child, Denys, was born at Birchington in 1919 and spent his early years at Fleet House School Westgate. He then went to Sherborne Abbey College, Dorset and Merton College, Oxford, before spending some time at Sandhurst. At the outbreak of the 2nd World War he joined the East Kent Regiment (the Buffs). He was posted abroad in 1941 and fought with the Eighth Army in the Desert against Rommel, until he was captured nine months later.

During Denys's time in the prisoner of war camp in Germany, he met up with Michael Smith, who later owned and ran Monkton Court Farm at Monkton. Michael said of that time that Denys was always trying to make things easier for the rest of the prisoners, including Michael, and was constantly giving up his rations to help those in greater need. After the war, when the two met up again in Civvy Street, Michael said he could never refuse any request from Denys, because he was only too glad to be able to return in some small measure all that he had done for himself and others during those dreadful years in Germany.

During his time as a POW, Denys made many daring escape attempts, tunnelling and escaping through gaps in the camp fencing, but he was always recaptured. In 1945 he was released from a POW camp in Brunswick, Germany. On returning to England, the War Office gave him the job of de-requisitioning properties in East Kent, including Grenham House. But a year later he left for Cairo as an Embarkation Officer, and there he met up with Jack Lidgate, eight years his senior. Jack later became his partner in running Grenham House School.