



# Evacuations - Play 2

A documentary producer interviews elderly people about their WW2 experience as evacuees...

## WHAT WAS IT LIKE FOR A CHILD TO BE EVACUATED?

Person 1 - Being an evacuee was scary and exciting at the same time.

Person 2 - We had to leave our families and homes behind and try to fit in with host families in the country.

Person 3 - We were taken to the railway station. We had labels attached to us, as though we were parcels.

## I'M CURIOUS - WHAT WERE YOU THINKING WAITING AT THE STATION?

Person 4 - We did not really know where we were going nor if we would be split from our brothers and sisters.

Person 1 - Many of us felt sad and scared about being away from our families but we were also excited about going to a place we had never seen before and only read about in books.

## AND THEN, WHAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU GOT TO THE COUNTRYSIDE?

Person 3 - We arrived in the countryside, tired, hungry and uncertain whether we would ever see our families again.

Person 2 - We were taken to the village hall, where we were met by the billeting officer - the person in charge of finding us homes.

Person 4 - Then there was a sort of a 'pick-you-own evacuee' session! The host families - the people that the children were going to live with - tried to get the most presentable children while the sicklier and grubbier children were left until last.

## SO WHEN WERE YOU FIRST EVACUATED?

Person 3 - It started even before the war started. At the end of August in 1939 the government started the evacuations because they were concerned that Hitler may bomb large towns and cities.

## AND DID THE BOMBINGS OF BRITISH CITIES START IMMEDIATELY, AS EXPECTED?

Person 2 - No. There were no big bombing raids on Britain in the first months of the war. So by early 1940 many children had returned home!

Person 1 - But then later in the war children were evacuated again.



### **OH, WHEN WERE THE CHILDREN EVACUATED AGAIN?**

Person 4 - They were evacuated again when heavy bombing raids started in the autumn of 1940. This was called "The Blitz".

Person 2 - And then again later, in 1944, when Germany attacked Britain with V1 Flying Bombs and V2 rockets.

### **WHAT WAS A V-1 FLYING BOMB?**

Person 1 - These were German cruise missiles. They made a noise as they flew through the air and were therefore nicknamed "buzz bombs".

### **AND A V-2 ROCKET?**

Person 2 - V-2 Rockets were long range missiles. They could be launched from very far away.

### **AND HOW MANY PEOPLE DO YOU THINK WERE EVACUATED DURING THE WAR?**

Person 3 - They say that by the end of the war around 3.5 million people, mainly children had experienced evacuation.

Person 4 - No one was forced to go but parents were encouraged by posters and explained that their children would be safer from German bombs if they moved to the country.

### **YOU MUST HAVE BEEN SO HAPPY WHEN IT WAS ALLOVER AND YOU COULD RETURN HOME?**

Person 2 - Oh yes! It was lovely to be with mum and dad again and to eat the familiar meals that mum used to make for us!

Person 1 - Yes! And to sleep in your own bed again was so lovely!

### **I'M SURE IT MUST HAVE BEEN LOVELY. THANK YOU FOR THE INTERVIEW.**

All - You're welcome!

