

Pack an Evacuee Suitcase



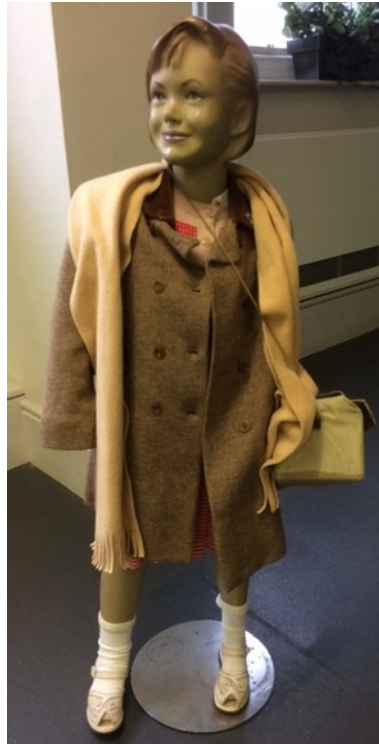
Evacuees arriving at Exeter St. David's Station by train

The government scheme to evacuate children from places that were likely to be bombed was called Operation Pied Piper. Families were sent a list of suggestions for what children should take with them.

Read about it [here](#) and then think about what you would take if you were being sent away for a while. What would you choose to comfort you and remind you of home? What would you need if you were going to be away for months, or even years?

Remember, you have to be able to carry everything easily, and it all has to fit in a very small suitcase.

- Make a picture of your suitcase, and what you would put in it. You could print the picture of the empty suitcase from this worksheet, or draw your own.
- Write a description of what your case looks like from the outside, and why each object in it is important to you.
- Find a rucksack or suitcase and pack it with all the things you think you need.



Doris is RAMM's evacuee mannequin. She helps school children learn about evacuation when they visit the museum.

Some background facts

- ▶ Government planning to evacuate all children from major cities began in the summer of 1938, before the war had even started
- ▶ The man in charge of the scheme was called Sir John Anderson.
- ▶ Anderson decided that people living in rural areas would have no choice about taking in the evacuees. Some people complained.
- ▶ Billeting Officers were placed in charge of finding homes for the children
- ▶ A billetor (someone who housed one or more children) received payment from the government. Sometimes mothers would be billeted with their children.
- ▶ Many billetors complained about the health and behaviour of children from the cities. A lot of the children had fleas and head lice. Some had impetigo (a nasty skin infection) and scabies (an itchy red rash caused by mites).
- ▶ About five out of 100 evacuees had no proper toilet training. One billetor reported how, when a six-year-old boy went to the toilet in the front room, his mother shouted, "You dirty thing, messing up the lady's carpet. Go and do it in the corner."
- ▶ Some evacuees were extremely unhappy. But many really enjoyed living in the countryside, and made strong bonds with their host families.

Here is the information the government sent to parents. Read it before you pack your own case.

GOVERNMENT EVACUATION SCHEME

TO PARENTS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

The Government have decided that parents of schoolchildren in this area are to have the opportunity of sending their children away to a safer district while present enemy activity continues. If you wish your children to go with the organised scheme, please fill in the form attached to this notice and get your child to bring it to school.

Arrangements to be made

Clothing. Your child should take the following in addition to what he or she is wearing, and all articles must be darned and mended. If any of these articles cannot be provided please notify the teacher at once

BOYS	GIRLS
2 vests	2 vests
2 underpants	2 liberty bodices (if worn)
2 shirts	2 knickers
2 pyjamas and night shirts	2 nightdresses or pyjamas
2 pair socks	2 pairs of socks or stockings
2 pairs boots or shoes	2 pair shoes
1 wellingtons (if possible)	1 wellingtons if possible
1 warm coat and/or mackintosh (if not being worn)	1 warm coat and/or mackintosh (if not being worn)
1 pair knickers or trousers	1 warm dress or tunic and jersey
1 pullover	1 cardigan
6 handkerchiefs	2 cotton frocks
1 toothbrush	6 handkerchiefs
1 face flannel	1 toothbrush
1 comb	1 face flannel
2 towels	1 comb
	2 towels

Gas mask, identity card, ration book, clothing and personal coupons

You will wish to do everything possible to ensure that your child goes away with clean clothes, clean hair and a clean body.

Luggage. The child should wear their warmest and thickest footwear. The inventory above is to be taken as minimum requirements, but do remember that your child should not be taking more than they can carry comfortably.

Food. Each child should take sufficient food for one day. Be sure your child has his ration book and if pages of coupons out of his book have been deposited with retailers, ask for their return and pin the loose pages in the ration book. Your child's ration book, identity card and personal coupons should be paced inside the gas mask case.

PLEASE keep this notice for reference and return the form to your child's school immediately if you want him or her to take part in the evacuation scheme.

