

Evacuees



Friday afternoon September 1st 1939 saw the first train load of Evacuees from Manchester arrive in Bacup with a second train arriving in the evening. All in all 2,400 children had been expected to arrive with more children due to arrive the following day Saturday 2nd September. The first trainload of children and teachers arrived in Bacup station at around 4.10, each child labelled with a card and carrying an array of bags, boxes, suitcases. Three double Decker buses, as well as other coaches, were waiting to take the children to their de-transportation points which were situated at schools and Sunday schools throughout Bacup and Stacksteads these included; Sharneyford, Britannia, Central, St Johns, Western, and Acre Mill with a further centre at the British Legion Club.

Six months prior to the evacuee's arrival a billeting survey had been taken in order to ascertain who would be able to offer accommodation to the children some mothers and teachers who had accompanied them. Billeting officers had been given powers under the defence regulations to exercise compulsory billeting were needed householders had no choice in the case of compulsory billeting and had to accept the evacuee's children into their homes.

They could, however, appeal against the decision and so in each town including Bacup and Stacksteads appeal boards chosen by the Mayor were set up for such cases. Children who were ready to go to their billets were given a carrier bag which contained; A tin of Bully Beef, a tin of Sweet Milk, a tine of Unsweetened Milk, 1lb of Biscuits and 2 bars of Plain Chocolate. Before the month of September was over it is estimated that over a quarter of the population had changed their addresses. This

included 825,00 schoolchildren, 624,00 Mothers with children under school age, 13,00 Expectant Mothers, 7,000 Blind people and 113,00 Teachers. Bacup and Rawtenstall received between 2,000 and 3000 evacuees from Salford and Manchester during the later months of 1939.

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