



Dyrons

decided to send him to his grandmother in Torquay, even though he was only three. They put him on the train, in the care of the guard, but at Newton Abbot the train caught fire and everyone had to get off. A replacement train eventually came, but in the

chaos Roderick lost contact with the guard; he just followed everyone else onto the new train. At Torquay there was no one to meet him, but a kind woman took him under her wing and took him to his grandmother in a taxi.

NEWTON ABBOT STORIES



Evacuees at Newton Abbot Grammar School from Southwark School, London

World War II Visitors

**NOTICING
NEWTON ABBOT**

AN EXPLORATION OF THE TOWN'S BUILDINGS, PEOPLE AND EVENTS

Leaflet written by Katy and Michael Bennie

Evacuee children find shelter in Newton Abbot

During the Second World War, many major cities, including London and Bristol, were very badly bombed. The Government therefore arranged to evacuate children from the worst affected areas and send them to more rural places, where there was very little bombing. A number of children came to Newton Abbot.

One girl recalls being put on the train at Paddington Station in London with a number of other children and being met at Newton Abbot by a local family who had agreed to take her in. She lived with them for several years – in fact many evacuees lived with their host families for a long time without seeing their

parents. And they came from big cities, so they were not used to the more rural way of life in Newton Abbot. So it wasn't easy for them or their host families. One girl whose family took in two evacuees remembers them constantly getting into



Bearnes School



trouble. And some had to be given a good wash when they arrived to get rid of fleas and lice because there were few washing facilities where many of them came from.

Many of the evacuees came in school groups with their teachers, and the local schools gave up some of their classrooms to the newcomers. At Bearnes School, half of the classrooms and the gym were taken over by a London school, and Newton Abbot Grammar School (now Newton Abbot College) shared its premises with Southwark School.

Some children were sent by their parents to stay with relatives rather than under the government scheme. Loveday Robinson, for example, was sent to her uncle and aunt, Mr and Mrs Vicary, who lived in Dyrons House (now part of Newton Abbot College). The Vicarys also took in a family of six evacuees, including the mother, who lived in the billiard room of the house.

Another child who came to Devon to live with family was Roderick Butler from Bristol. The bombing was so bad there that his parents