



Chippenham Museum

Chippenham Town Council

Leaving Home

To escape enemy bombing vast numbers of children from places such as London and Bristol were evacuated to the countryside, a number of them came to stay in Chippenham.

The arrival of these evacuees was greeted with some excitement but also concern. One Chippenham resident remembers:

“A rumour went around school ‘The evacuees are here at the station!’ I saw the evacuees lined up outside the Palace (Cinema on Station Hill)”

Another remembers:

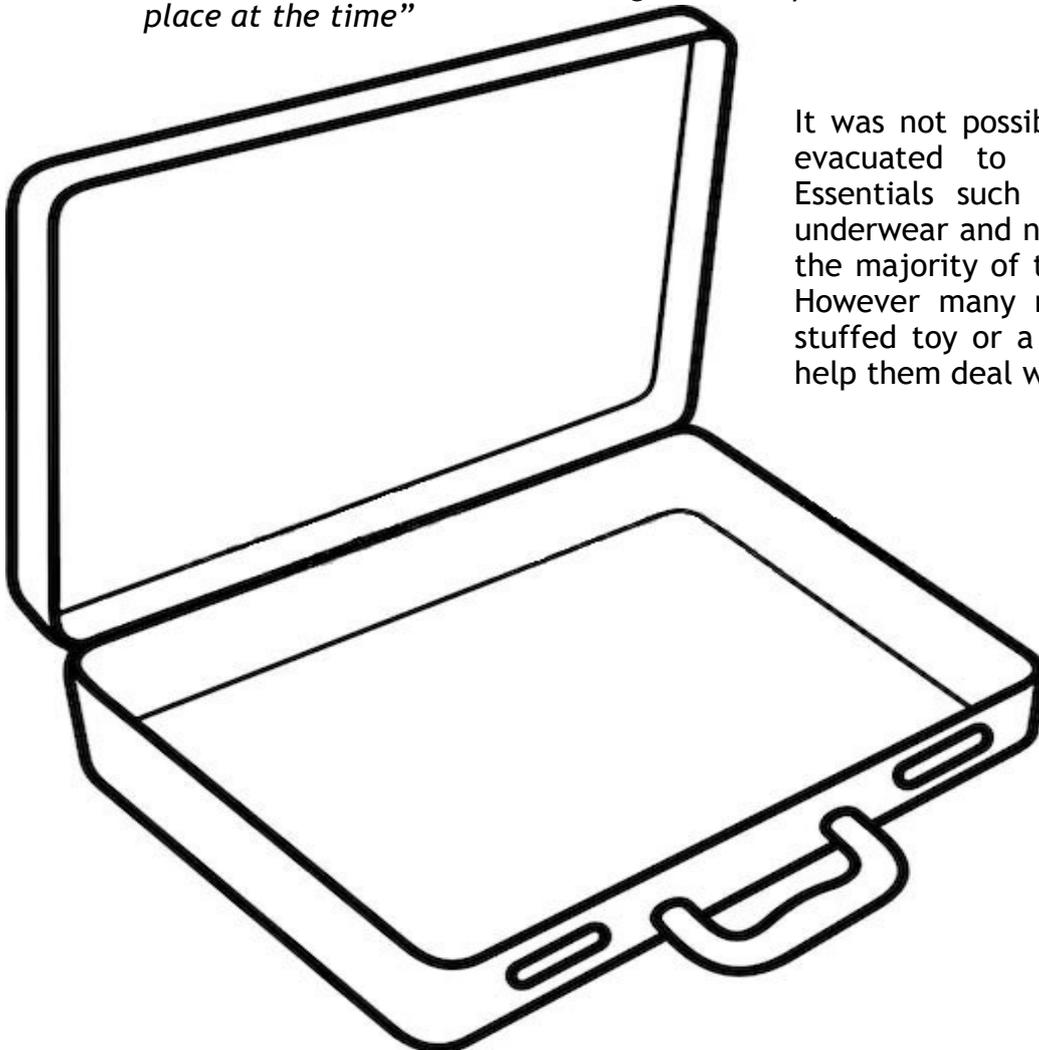
“Most households had to take someone. We were lucky because we had a cousin come to live with us, which was better than a stranger”

It could be very upsetting for those children having to leave the homes. One evacuee from Bristol remembers:

“Chippenham was a very long way away as we had no car. The journey took all day, and we were allowed to take very few possessions with us. We travelled by bus. I was very upset and cried for two days”

For many city children the country was very exciting, one evacuee remembers Market Day in Chippenham:

“This was always great fun for us and we spent lots of time there. One time a bull got loose inside the market and we got into a pen with some cows. It seemed the safest place at the time”



It was not possible for Children who were evacuated to take much with them. Essentials such as a change of clothes, underwear and night clothes would take up the majority of the room in their suitcase. However many managed to squeeze in a stuffed toy or a picture of their family to help them deal with the separation.

Imagine that you are an evacuee.

What two objects that mean a lot to you today would you want to pack in your case?

Draw a picture of them in the suitcase.