

Evacuees return home for Christmas

Worthing Herald, December 15<sup>th</sup> 1944

# Children Back Home For Christmas

## EVACUEES WELCOMED AT JOLLY PARTY

**WORTHING'S EVACUEE SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE  
ALL HOME AGAIN.**

**THE LAST PARTY OF CHILDREN OFFICIALLY  
EVACUATED FROM THE BOROUGH, SEVENTY-  
THREE BOYS AND GIRLS IN ALL, RETURNED  
TO THEIR HOMES FROM THE MIDLANDS LAST  
FRIDAY EVENING.**

The children had a long day. They travelled in a special train which brought similar parties of evacuated children back to a number of South Coast towns.

The train was well on time until it reached London. Then it was shunted this way and that

and held up by other traffic, and the Worthing children, who were expected in Worthing soon after 5. p.m. did not reach the Central Station until 7 p.m. But their troubles were all over then!

### HAPPY MEETINGS

Worthing Education Department threw a gay little party at the Sussex-road Senior Girls School to welcome the children.

Buses and cars were waiting at the station, and the children were driven in them to Sussex-road. And at Sussex-road, in the gaily decorated assembly hall of the Senior Girls School, there was the Mayor of Worthing, Councillor H. W. Shalders, wearing his official robe and chain (he had been waiting there for over an hour!) and he shook hands with each boy and girl as they entered the hall.

And then—there was "Mum" who had been waiting for over an hour too!) sitting on a chair like a lot of other "Mums" at the side of the hall, until she sprang up and made a sudden dive at Tom, Dick, or Elsie, and hugged him, or her, loaded as he or she, was with suitcase, parcel and gas mask and all.

### GIRLS PREPARED TEA

Tea, which had been prepared by the Senior School girls who the W.V.S. was served to the children (plenty of appetising sandwiches and plenty of cakes) by the Senior School girls who made most capable waitresses (they had been responsible under the direction of Miss Riley for the most attractive decoration of the hall) and while tea was served the roll was called by Mr C. Gilbert Wood who, with the assistance of a large handbell, acted under Mr F. Dutton's direction as Master of the Ceremonies.

### "ALL PRESENT"

The seventy-three boys and girls were found to be all present—"All present and all late" as the Mayor put it—at which Mr W. J. Beale, the Senior evacuated teacher who had been in charge of the party and had brought them home, must have heaved a sigh of relief.

Mr Beale, who confessed to a "Herald" reporter that he like the children was very glad to be back, said that the evacuees had

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been treated with every kindness by the Midland folk, but life was very different in the industrial area where they had been from what it was in Worthing.

### PRESENTS FROM AMERICA

"Look at them!" Mr Beale said, when asked about the youngsters' health. And the reply was just. The children were tired and travel stained but they were full of beans and energy, as they demonstrated when they gave three lusty cheers at the Mayor's request for the Sussex-road girls, the W.V.S. and the owners of cars who were doing taxi-work for them.

After tea Mrs F. C. Stern, as head of the W.V.S. gave each child a cardboard box containing gifts sent by school children in the United States as a Christmas present to English school children. The gifts came for the most part from New Jersey in the State of New York, and the boxes contained the sort of presents American children thought English children might like—marbles, balls, hair ribands for girls, pencils, pens, indiarubbers, writing pads, picture books and, the "Herald" reporter ascertained, at least one toothbrush!

### AND SO TO BED

Mr Dutton, and Mr Wood, with his handbell, then got busy again and the children and their parents were sorted out and put into the buses and cars to be driven to their homes. The homebound convoy was cleared by 8 p.m.

This "Welcome back to Worthing" party was a very jolly party. "I would rather be here than at a big banquet," the Mayor remarked.

Councillor E. W. Farrell, chairman of the Education Committee, was unable to be present owing to a severe cold. Among those present were the Mayoress, Mrs H. W. Shalders, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor E. R. Willoughby, Alderman Mrs Knight, Councillor Mrs Cale, and Col. F. C. Stern, O.B.E., M.C.

Note: Midland accents are likely to be overheard in Worthing. "I'm proper Leicestershire I am," one mischievous girl in the party assured the "Herald" reporter.

The children, and many of their mothers, said they had had very good billets while they had been away.

Some of the returned children are now making the acquaintance of small brothers and sisters born since they themselves were evacuated whom they had never seen until their return home on Friday.

In one family three children have come home to meet three of these newly arrived brothers and sisters.

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