



# *The Colyton Evacuees*

## *Arriving in Colyton*



Did you know....?

Trains used to travel from London to Seaton and would stop at Colyton Station. Many stations and railway lines were closed during the 1960's, including Colyton Station which closed in 1966 (can you work out how many years ago that was?). In 1970 Seaton Tramway opened, running along the 3 mile stretch between Seaton and Colyton. The Colyton evacuees arrived at the station which is now the tram station.



Colyton Railway Station



Colyton Station -  
now a busy tram station



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On arrival at Colyton Station the evacuees were amazed at what they saw. One of them later said,

*"We had never seen cows, nor even a green hill. We had come from Southwark, in London, where all was buildings and pavements and street noise. We had never been anywhere else. Now there were fields all around us and as many cows as you would ever want to see."*

### Talking point:

What other things might the evacuees have seen for the first time when they arrived in Devon?

When the children arrived at the station they were met by billeting officers who were responsible for finding suitable homes for the evacuees.

The children were lined up and people who had agreed to give a home to evacuated children were able to choose the child or children that they wished to take. Some children stayed for just a few nights with different families before finding more permanent homes. That must have been very unsettling for them!



This is a photo of 3 billeting officers from Colyton: Mrs Ridley, Mrs Tyson and Mrs Raunton. It was taken 20 years after the war ended.



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Some children settled down well in Colyton, but for others it wasn't so easy. One man called Frankie Bryant moved to Colyton when he was a child to live with his granny during the war. He remembers that evacuees used to stay with the family for one or two nights before moving to permanent homes.

He remembers:

*"One boy I remember in particular was called Derek Bond...on his arrival he was so upset at leaving his family and took a while to settle".*

It's hard to imagine being separated from your family now, isn't it? How do you think you would feel if you had to travel to a part of the country that you had never been to before and had to live with a family that you didn't know?

Imagine you have just spent your first night in Colyton. In the space below, write a short letter to your parents explaining how you feel.

*Dear Mum and Dad,*