



**Museum**

# Wartime Evacuation and Propaganda

**A day's suggested activities for schools visiting the South Devon Railway**

**1. Pupils and staff arrive at Totnes to catch the 11.30am steam train to the safety of rural Buckfastleigh. Our station is a 500m walk from Totnes National Rail station.**

*Many schools choose to have staff and pupils wear 1940s clothes, with the "evacuees" carrying a few possessions in a cardboard suitcase, their packed lunch (spam sandwiches, of course), an identification label and a gas mask.*



**2. The train journey to Buckfastleigh takes 30 minutes. There are some toilets on the train, and there is a buffet car for teachers and helpers! Pupils can write postcards home while on the journey.**

*SDR steam trains include coaches built by the Great Western Railway, so wartime evacuees could have travelled in them.*



**3. The train carrying the evacuees arrives at Buckfastleigh at 12.00 noon. Pupils and staff have the opportunity for a lunch and loo break – we have extensive facilities at our café, and there are more toilets on the station platform.**

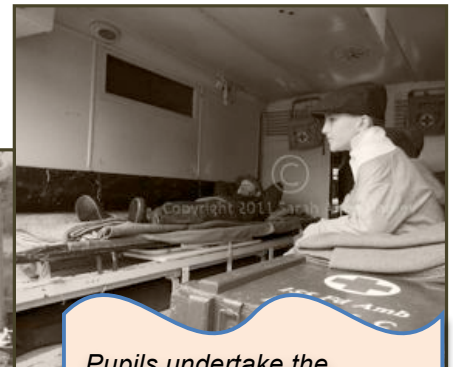
## After lunch:

**4. Dig for Victory: everything has to be grown – we can't get it from overseas any more.**

*Pupils use the station garden to see what crops are being grown, making compost, raising chickens and saving seed – and some good old rhubarb.*



**5. Meantime, there's a war on – and there may be casualties. Pupils see and use a military ambulance and a despatch rider's motor bike, as well as some of the 1940s medical equipment used in the field.**



*Pupils undertake the different activities in groups of up to 20, and rotate between them. The number of groups depends on the total number of pupils.*

**6. In the museum pupils see what happened on the railway during wartime, and learn about propaganda. Posters and newspapers of the time help illustrate the point.**

*Working in the museum with wartime objects, posters and propaganda. Careless talk costs lives!*



**7. Pupils board the 2.15pm train and their reserved seats for the journey back to Totnes and their waiting coach. Teachers and helpers can relax for the 30 minute journey with a cup of tea from the buffet car.**

**Details of school and party bookings:** South Devon Railway, Buckfastleigh station, Devon TQ11 0DZ.  
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