

Wartime Teachers: Stories from the Front

Rachel K. Turner and Eliel Hinojosa, Jr.

Introduction

Nearly fifty years after the end of World War II, Professor O.L. Davis began research related to school aged children evacuee education in England. His interest in curriculum history along with time spent living in England spurred his curiosity. In order to collect information, Davis let space in no less than eight publications. *Saga Magazine*, the *Wirral Globe*, the *Bristol Evening Post*, the *East Anglian Daily Times*, *Home and Country Magazine*, the *1940 Association Newsletter*, *The Christchurch Press*, and the *Jewish Chronicle*. All elicited experiences from student and teacher evacuees from mainland England. Davis also reached beyond mainland England and into parts of the British Commonwealth. His goal was to broadcast his query to an audience whose experiences extended back almost half a century; his purpose was to engage in dialogue that uncovered schooling experiences during evacuations in England between 1939 and 1945.

While the advertisement was simple, it yielded significant correspondence from both students and teachers, whose individual stories of education and schooling during evacuation amass a collection of several hundred folders. An example of an advertisement is seen in Figure 1. Though the majority of the correspondence came from former students, approximately eighty former teachers answered his call for information.

~~● Details of daily classroom~~
work in schools, school life and
childhood in general during the
Second World War. I would
like to hear from teachers and
pupils. — O. L. Davies Jr,
Professor of Curriculum and
Instruction, College of Education,
University of Texas, Austin, TX
78712, USA.

Figure 1. Advertisement from *The Jewish Chronicle*.

In the early 1990s, when Dr. Davis sought evacuee teacher and student recollections of schooling and education, the body of knowledge on this subject was sparse. Though the scholarship on the subject of wartime evacuations in England has expanded in the 28 years since Davis' active correspondence, the knowledge of schooling experiences remains wanting. Even less scholarship exists regarding teacher experiences as evacuee educators.

It is important to understand that Davis' correspondence was not attenuated by his thirty-five-question guide (Appendix A). Instead, he allowed the conversation to develop organically. Upon receiving a letter from a respondent, Davis read it and, in most cases, provided a poignant response aimed at digging deeper into their lives. In several cases both former students and former teachers sent supplemental documents with their replies. These documents included manuscripts of personal written histories, copies of published books, copies of school magazines and yearbooks, selections from personal diaries, journals, and photographs.

The overarching purpose for Davis was to gain an understanding of the effect on schooling and education, specifically as it related to the curriculum for students who were evacuated when England officially declared war with Germany. As a curriculum historian, Davis' interest on the effect of the war on curriculum makes sense. Indeed, student evacuee recollections indicated several changes in the curriculum. The perspectives of the students are significant and the correspondence between student evacuees and Dr. Davis makes up the majority of the collection.

This article focuses on teacher evacuees. Of the several hundred responses from student evacuees, we identified thirty teacher evacuees. As researchers, we are focused on pre-service and in-service teacher education, specifically the relationship between teacher education and teacher curriculum-making and development. This opportunity to understand the experiences of teachers and how wartime conditions and evacuation affected the curriculum and its implementation is stimulating. Therefore, our purpose in this research endeavor seeks to discover the impact evacuations in England had on teacher evacuee curricular experiences between August of 1939 and May of 1945.

Invisible Teachers

Dr. Davis' initial writing on teacher evacuees was his first and only attempt at unveiling the story behind those referred to as invisible evacuees. In his 1992 work, Davis spoke to the preparation involved for Operation Pied Piper and the lengths to which teachers prepared for possible evacuation. In August of 1939, teachers answered the call as evacuations began from urban areas to predetermined rural zones. Davis recalls one teacher's depth of preparation when he references three separate routes from the school to the train station, including timing the route for the slowest, "crocodile" student, by walking the route in reverse while reading the newspaper (Davis, 1992).

Once in rural zones, teachers' primary task was the "billeting of children" with various families. Davis describes the complications associated with housing the influx of students with foster families.

The evacuated teachers' first task was to account for their children. Most completed this job the first day. Some, with their children scattered through several villages and on remote farms, needed several days to locate each child. Since most teachers lacked private transport and funds to take a bus, they walked or rode borrowed bicycles along unmapped lanes until they accounted for their children. (Davis, 1992, p. 56)

Significantly, teachers' housing was never as secured and sure as housing for the children.

Teachers received billets last, of course, some late after dark when they had accompanied their last child to a foster home. Some receiving authorities had not planned for teachers in others, teachers believed they were not wanted. Some teachers, left alone at the empty receiving school after children had dispersed, slept on the school floor. A few teachers found only a hay barn in which to sleep. These conditions stood out in sharp contrast to the gracious welcome extended evacuees by waiting hosts in most reception areas.

Whatever the circumstance, child and adult evacuees confronted awkward and strange situations. (Davis, 1992, p. 56)

Further, throughout the evacuation period, teachers remained cognizant of the conditions to which their students were subjected. Moving students from billets deemed unsuitable was within their capabilities.

In countless situations, teachers worked with local billeting officers to transfer children from homes judged unsuitable or ones whose householder refused further billets. Such negotiation would continue throughout the evacuation period. They also worked, sometimes for weeks, to assemble all the school's pupils in the same area so that the school could remain intact. (Davis, 1992, p. 56)

In total, 1,473,000 persons were evacuated to rural areas, which included 826,959 school-aged children (Titmuss, 1950, p. 103). Clearly, the focus was on the children. This was exemplified in a broadcast by American journalist Edward Murrow,

It's dull in London now that the children are gone. For six days I've not heard a child's voice. And that's a strange feeling. No youngsters shouting their way home from school. And that's the way it is in most of Europe's big cities now. One needs the eloquence of the ancients to convey the full meaning of it. There just aren't any more children. (Finkelstein, 2005, p. 67)

There was no mention of the 103,000 'teachers and helpers' who were also evacuated (Titmuss, 1950, p. 103). It is as if the sheer number of evacuated school children as well as the deafening silence caused by their absence left the world unaware that teacher evacuees were instrumental in procuring much of what was needed for their students. Stories of teacher evacuees are eclipsed by stories of student evacuees. The preponderance of correspondence between evacuees and Dr. Davis proves this.

Focus on Narrative

Effectively analyzing curricular experiences requires attentiveness to the narrative. Professor Davis searched for the narratives of student and teacher evacuees in order to understand the effect evacuations had on their schooling experiences. We pick up where he left off in an attempt to reconstruct a portion of the narrative, a narrative focused on teacher evacuees, one that describes the effects evacuations had on the curriculum. As curriculum researchers we stray from looking at effects and influences on curriculum as singularities, focusing all attention on one point, and instead seek to understand effects and influences in aggregate, taking all into account. Accordingly, we look to Joseph Schwab as a guide in which to frame our research.

Schwab's commonplaces provide a back to basics approach when analyzing curriculum. He defined four commonplaces, (1) learner, (2) teacher, (3) subject matter, and (4) milieu (context) in his text, *The Teaching of Science as Inquiry* (1962). These basic ingredients of curriculum, while seemingly simple, reveal complexities whether observed individually or collectively. We believe this framework is most appropriate due to the strong narrative nature of our materials.

Further, this framework provides a systematic and symphonic composition that welcomes varied perspectives that are of independent as well as shared value.

Therefore, it is within the constructs of Schwab's (1962) commonplaces of curriculum that we frame our study, looking to the narrative as the source of knowledge and acknowledging what Joseph refers to as the "fluid narrative stemming from teachers' sense of self and practice" (Joseph, 2010, p. 127). Connelly and Clandinin (1988) characterize the commonplaces in six ways. First, the commonplaces are omnipresent in their universal existence and application to all forms of learning everywhere. Second, the commonplaces distinguish themselves through a collective inclusiveness, rarely existing in the singular and wholly separate from each other or, third, from their own individual complexity. This internal complexity creates multidimensionality within a single commonplace. Fourth, the commonplaces allow for methodological implementation and evaluation of material including, but not limited to, autobiographical narratives. Fifth, the commonplaces are historically illustrative. While curricular trends throughout history draw from various societal contexts (and vice versa), significant historical events necessitate curricular changes that are directly representative of the historical context. Finally, the commonplaces are comparative in that they provide a means for analyzing differing perspectives. (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988).

Story provides a unique entry into the narrative of evacuee teachers. As Connelly and Clandinin (2006) explained, "narrative inquiry comes out of a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. Story . . . is a portal through which a person enters the world" (p. 477). This idea displays story as a "means that every experience is encountered in the context of a web of historical meaning and significance" meaning and significance "story" (Xu & Connelly, 2010, p. 352).

Teacher Evacuees

We drew our participant sample from 30 teachers or teachers in training, identified and coded by Professor Davis. Prior to retiring, Professor Davis processed the majority of the correspondence by organizing communications to and from respondents. We processed the remaining correspondence left by Dr. Davis and, in that process, added to existing correspondence or created entirely new folders.

Of the 30 teacher or teachers in training respondents, we drew a sample of ten by utilizing "stratified purposeful sampling" (Hatch, 2002, p. 98). Final selections needed to fully meet the following criteria: 1. Legibility, 2. Clearly addressed Schwab's Commonplaces of Curriculum, 3. Taught in some capacity between 1939 and 1945. Table 1 provides information about our ten participants.

Table 1
Participant Information

Name	Gender	Teaching Status from 1939-1945	Teaching Location	Date of Correspondence with Davis
Dorothy Ebbatson	Female	Teacher	Northholt, Suffolk	1991
E.A. Martin	Female	Teacher	Leafield, Oxfordshire	1992
Thelma Wolfe	Female	Teacher	Dagenham, East London	1986
K.M. Palmer	Female	Teacher	St. Albans, Herts	1991
Esme Dobby	Female	Teacher Trainee, 1939-41 Teacher, 1941 onward	Barnsley, Yorkshire	1992
Margaret List	Female	Teacher	Strood, Kent & Rochester, Kent	1993
Ida Medd	Female	Teacher	Welling, Kent	1991
Pamela Thompson	Female	Teacher	Hollesley, Suffolk	Unknown
Doris Chilvers	Female	Teacher	Bournemouth, Dorset	1991
Elizabeth Fielding	Female	Teacher	Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire	1995

Developing Davis' Process

Davis provided a detailed questionnaire guide to each student or teacher he corresponded with, meant to elicit stored memories of wartime schooling experiences. The questionnaire included some 35 questions that addressed a broad range of subjects. These questions can be divided categorically based on Schwab's commonplaces, including questions about learning, questions about teaching, questions about subject matter and questions about milieu. Example questions from each category are found in Table 2.

Table 2
Question Guide by Commonplace

Commonplace	Example from Davis' Question Guide
Learning	To what extent were external examinations important to your wartime school? Do you remember any special circumstances of children studying for examinations? Any unusual situations in which they wrote their exams? How do you recall children's wartime success on examinations?
Teaching	How do you remember your day interrupted by bombing raids? Did you spend time during the school day in air raid shelters? What kind of lessons did you have while in the shelter? What else did you do on those occasions? How do you remember that you felt during those times?
Subject Matter	Do you recall that teachers placed any special emphasis upon sciences (rather than arts and humanities) as a means of furthering the war effort? Do you recall any personal counseling (pastoral care) which related your school work to wartime or peacetime needs?
Milieu	How do you remember the wartime expansion of services to children (e.g., milk distribution, school meals, nursery schools)?

The materials analyzed included correspondence between Professor Davis and teacher evacuees. The letters are a part of the collected papers Professor Davis intended for research and analysis of the experiences of student and teacher evacuees in England. The extensiveness of the collection required sorting and selection based on the scope of our research question. As previously mentioned, though much of the filing was completed, there remained correspondence that required processing. In order to facilitate this process, we utilized Davis' coding system. The coding system distinguished student (S) from teacher (T) and even pre-service teacher (PT). Additionally, it distinguished male (M) from female (F). Finally, the coding system included an "E" for evacuee, significant because not every piece of correspondence was from an evacuee.

After sorting and processing all the correspondence ,we determined it was best to digitize all materials. We made this decision based on the desire to preserve the condition of the original documents. We meticulously scanned all materials by folder. Scanned materials included letters, notes, journal and personal diary entries, photographs, examples of curriculum, and other supporting documents included by respondents.

Working within our theoretical framework, we next coded the contents of each folder, line by line, based on Schwab's (1962) commonplaces of curriculum using methods of investigator triangulation. In this process, we initiated a full analysis of all material using color coding, each color associated with a particular commonplace. It is important to note that Schwab's commonplaces of curriculum do not operate exclusive to one another. Therefore, while the foci of one commonplace may dominate, in nearly every circumstance, other commonplaces emerge. We find this significant because we do not want to present Schwab's commonplaces of

curriculum as singularities and thus, in error. Because the potential for bias exists in analysis, each author engaged in analyzing each document independently. This process helped alleviate some of the predisposition or partiality of a single analysis of the documents.

After completing our document analysis, we created a spreadsheet in which we disaggregated our findings. We separated each individual in the sample along with each line from the text that was sorted based on the four commonplaces. In cases when portions of correspondence warranted multiple color codes, portions of correspondence found a place within each individual commonplace column. The process of disaggregation allowed us the opportunity for further analysis of emergent themes across our participant sample.

From this analysis, separate themes emerged within each commonplace. For the learning commonplace we identified themes of collections and savings, interruptions and low supplies. Themes regarding teaching include large classes, zone of proximal curriculum development, teaching in shelters, and oral response. Subject Matter themes include home grown content and current events. Lastly, milieu themes of school buildings and school day emerged.

Emerging Themes

Learners. The first theme identified in the learning commonplace was collections and savings. Many of the teachers discussed how, during this time, they wished to do their part in supporting the war effort. For many teachers, this came through collections of materials and money. Ms. Thompson, a teacher in Hollesley wrote,

Older children followed the course of the war and took part in the many collections for things like war weapons week - spitfire week (when we collected aluminum and parents sacrificed pots and pans) to help. We had a national savings group which the children ran and learned some of the rudiments of bookkeeping. (unknown)

Ms. List (1993), who taught in Strood, also recalled doing their part to save supplies stating, “one of the ways we ‘did our bit’ was to save paper. Used envelopes were opened out to make a flat sheet on which to write.” Ms. Fielding (1995), a teacher in Stoke-on-Trent, recalled “another task the girls did was the collection of money for national savings.”

Another theme that emerged was interruptions to learning. Ms. Palmer (1991), a teacher in St. Albans described,

After really bad nights we advised parents to keep their children at home for the next morning so that they could get some sleep. Most would be back at school by mid-day so that they could have the school meal. This was quite important because of food rationing.

It was common for students to lose sleep from the air raids and other disruptions as Ms. Dobby (1992), teaching in Barnsley, described “children lost sleep in shelters in the worst period.” In some cases, the interruptions were greeted positively as Ms. Palmer (1991) mentioned, “in fact many welcomed the sirens going as a diversion from ordinary lessons.” Ms. Thompson

(unknown) explained “it was often quite difficult to persuade the boys to hurry to shelter when they wanted to look.”

The low supply of materials was an issue that affected all aspects of classroom life. This was an aspect every teacher talked about in some manner. Ms. Thompson (unknown) said “I think the chief impressions I now have of the teaching conditions were the disruptions for air raids and the shortages of materials, especially paper. We used all we could lay hands on, nothing was thrown away.” We also saw from Ms. Ebbatson (1991), a teacher in Northholt, that “stationary was in very short supply and textbooks had to be shared and little renewed.” Ms. Palmer (1991) mentioned that while supplies were low and many times classes like needlework were not offered, in her school there was “enough material for each girl to make at least one garment without giving up coupons.”

Teachers. We move onto the teaching commonplace where almost all the participants’ letters discussed large classes. Ms. Dobby (1992) wrote that “large classes did not help. 48-50 was common.” Ms. Chilvers (1991), teaching in Bournemouth, had similar experiences when she mentioned “this left me and 4 elderly men to copy, and we had huge classes. I had seats for 48, but the men who had larger rooms had many more boys.” Due to the low supply of materials, students were having to share items as Ms. Palmer (1991) mentioned “one textbook was being shared by two or sometimes three pupils.”

During this time, teachers had to be creative and utilize their context in order to facilitate student learning due to the low supply of materials. Ms. Wolf (1986), who taught in Dagenham stated, “consequently a variety of home-grown activities, such as music, dancing, handicrafts and cub scouts and guides were run by the Dagenham teachers, in co-operation with their Run-on counterparts.” Additionally, Ms. Dobby (1992) mentions,

Shortages of paper, paint, craft materials even to pencils, all made life difficult in art, geography, history and needlework. Painting was done on kitchen paper which was really unprinted newspaper and not very good. The paint sank in and wet it. We were even asked to dry off the sheets and use them on the other side which was not really feasible.

Ms. Medd (1991), teaching in Welling, shared a picture of her students engaged in a geography lesson at a local farm. This example shows how teachers were looking into their communities to help students learn given the lack of equipment, materials and supports. The picture she shared with Dr. Davis is in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Mrs. Medd's class engaging in a geography lesson in 1940 at a local farm.

Ms. Thompson (unknown) allowed for self-directed learning at times stating, "one child found out about the witches of Salem and that became the theme for a great project."

We discovered that teachers spent considerable time teaching in shelters. During the war, shelters were built on school grounds or close by that allowed students and teachers a safe place for cover during air raids and other war situations. But this did not mean teaching stopped. Ms. List (1993) stated,

Of course one never knew when the siren was going to wail. Then it was out to the surface shelters. There were strong brick structures with openings, but no doors, bare concrete floors, no seating, no lighting. So we walked from the classroom into the shelter where amongst other things we marched up and down, stamping our feet, clapping our hands and singing our multiplication tables. This kept us reasonably warm and helped our memories. As time went on, seating, lighting and floor covering were installed and even doors.

Many times, it was up to the students to keep themselves occupied as Ms. Palmer (1991) explains "students were supposed to take with them (into the corridors during air raids) books or games if possible to keep them occupied."

Due to students and teachers spending so much time in shelters, oral response was utilized as a teaching method. This was probably due to the lack of paper and supplies. Ms. Chilvers (1991) stated "they used to chant tables and spellings, do mental arithmetic, read and sing. They had some song sheets, but it was difficult to see these or to read, because of the dim light." This focus on oral response was something they learned as they spent time in the shelters as Ms. Fielding (1995) stated, "after the first time or two we were told by the headmistress to have some oral work prepared."

Subject Matter. An emerging theme for the subject matter commonplace included teachers utilizing what was around them. We saw examples in the teacher letters where time spent exploring the outdoors and places nearby was a part of their science or nature-study course. Ms. Chilvers (1991) described,

[W]e used to go to a pond in search of frog-spawn and would see all kinds of wildlife. There was some lovely country in the area then, with lizards and snakes, caterpillars and butterflies and the ponds were full of interesting creatures.

Ms. Medd (1991) mentioned how “when we were not inside we went on nature walks or did P.E. exercises and oral lessons.” This utilization of nature may have been due to the lack of materials these teachers had. Ms. Medd (1991) also stated “during our early nature study lessons we collaborated with one of the local teachers, a dear soul, and gathered quantities of wild flowers such as foxgloves, for our supplies of herbs from Poland had of course, completely stopped.” For some teachers, like Ms. Chilvers (1991), nature study was expected. She stated “the teachers had to adhere to the syllabus which included arithmetic, reading, composition, history, geography and nature study.” Ms. Medd (1991) described how each year at Christmas time the school did a play or performance of some sort and that in 1940, the preparations for the play was much more extensive than planned. Students prepared for the play over the course of the semester. An example of her students in the nativity play is in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Ms. Medd’s students from their 1940 nativity play.

We also identified the impact current events had on the curriculum, yet there were a mix of ideas on the matter. Ms. Martin (1992), a teacher in Leaffield, stated “they had no formal teaching on the progress of the war.” Yet Ms. Medd (1991) mentions how they “had to add current events to their curriculum - a weekly lesson of great current interest based largely on daily papers and wireless reports.” This may have to do with the age and grade of students whom they were teaching. Ms. Medd later mentions more specifics with regard to her current event lessons stating, “I was given current events which certainly included keeping up to date with D Day, the Italian front, Rhine crossing, etc. These all connected with geography lessons and the excitement of peace being declared.” Due to the low supplies it was not always easy to keep up with the current war events. Ms. Dobby’s class (1992) “raised money for a radio which the older classes listened to for news and current affairs while younger pupils had music and story programmes.”

Milieu. During the war many school buildings were adapted or changed at times to help the war efforts or enhance student safety. Ms. Fielding (1995) discussed how,

during the worst period of the war 1940-1943, the school fabric deteriorated; no decoration was carried out; the outer metal boundary railings were cut off and sent for

smelting to help the war efforts; the windows were covered in muslin and could not be cleaned inside and everywhere looked unkempt.

Some of these buildings added to student learning as Ms. Thompson (unknown) mentions “during this time we witnessed the building of two large airfields being built nearby, mostly by US personnel, and the boys were expert plane spotters and we all knew the different engines.”

It was clear that the school day was impacted continuously during the evacuation period. Ms. Medd (1991) describes how “afternoon school was shorter so that the children could walk home in daylight.” Ms. Palmer (1991) said,

After really bad nights we advised parents to keep their children at home for the next morning so that they could get some sleep. Most would be back at school by midday so that they could have the school meal. This was quite important because of food rationing.

Due to the time spent in shelters as mentioned above, students and teachers had to find ways of getting by. Ms. Fielding (1995) mentioned, “we found many ways of passing the time, [such as] playing cards.”

Conclusion

Through these evacuee stories we discovered how *learners*, impacted by scarce materials and continuous interruptions to their daily lives, still provided support to the war effort by collecting materials and supplies. *Teachers*, with numerous duties and large classes, pushed themselves to find learning opportunities for their students on family farms, local ponds, and inside shelters. While traditional *subject matter* activities were not always possible, teachers utilized what was around them in an effort to build educational experiences like plays, projects, and current event studies. Constant interruption, building changes, and billeting issues made the *context* in which these teachers found themselves less than ideal. Yet they made the most of their time for the sake of their students’ learning.

A void in the narrative exists without the experiences of teacher evacuees. Murrow’s melancholic reflection of vacant and silent streets, where autumn winds replaced the sounds of exuberant youth as they returned home, failed to remember the teacher, the artist and crafter of educational experience. While, communities welcomed their children home, royalty paid a debt of gratitude to those families who cared for evacuee children. “In May 1940, Queen Elizabeth sent a letter and a handsome certificate to foster parents who had ‘opened your door to strangers.’ Nobody greeted the returning school teachers” (Davis, 1992, p. 58). Therefore, it is incumbent teachers’ stories comprise the narrative of wartime evacuees. Without teachers’ stories, the narrative is incomplete and they remain invisible.

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Rachel K. Turner (rkt002@tamu.edu) is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Teaching, Learning & Culture at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX.

Eliel Hinojosa, Jr. (elielhinojosajr@tamu.edu) is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Teaching, Learning & Culture at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX.

Appendix A

**Going to School in Wartime (1939-45):
Some Questions to Prompt Memory**

Thanks very much for agreeing to remember and to share your experiences about going to school during the second world war. The questions in this Guide have a simple purpose. They should help you begin to remember. They are *prompts*, only. PLEASE do NOT think you should answer each question! Still, think and write about *any* of these and other matters about which you recall. Recollections which include reference to *specific* events, places, textbooks, schools, etc., are valuable. Please write as much and as fully as your memory permits. **Everything you remember is important.**

So, let's begin. The time period is late August, 1939 - August, 1945.

- * Where did you (and your family) live during the war? How many in your family? What kind of work did your parent(s) do? What kind of neighborhood, house or flat did you live in? How near to school did you live?
- * Your school(s): Which school(s) (names) did you attend? Please describe your school (e.g., type, ages and numbers of pupils, general condition, special rooms and equipment). During the war, was it used by other agencies (e.g., ARP)? If your school used different premises (e.g., chapel), describe this environment.
- * Your teachers. How do you remember your wartime teachers? Did your teachers teach throughout the war? or did some enter the forces or industrial work? How do you recall any new teachers who joined the staff during the war (e.g., female or male teachers, young or old, new graduates, women teachers in boys' schools, sharing teachers between different schools)? Were your teachers strict or easy, sensitive or insensitive to individual pupils?
- * How do you remember schooling at the beginning of the war?
- * Were you evacuated? If so, how do you remember your evacuation to ___? your billeting? your activities during the two weeks before the term began? any changes in your schooling (e.g., timetable, books, premises, assignments) due to evacuation? How do you remember the expected standards of achievement during evacuation? When did you return home? Were you evacuated again later in the war?

* If you were not evacuated,

a) and you lived in an evacuation area: what did you do during this period? How long were schools closed in your city? When schooling began again, what form did it take? home tutorials? going to school to receive assignments and to turn in homework? How long did you wait for full-time schooling to begin again? How do you recall your schooling during the time that many children were evacuated? How do you remember the standards of expected achievement during that time (e.g., higher, lower, about the same as pre-war standards)? or,

b) and you lived in a reception area: did evacuees come to your school, your town? How did evacuee and local children relate? at school? out of school? How do you remember evacuation of schoolchildren?

- * How do you remember your school day interrupted by bombing raids? Did you spend time during the school day in air raid shelters? What kind of lessons did you have while in the shelter? What else did you do on those occasions? How do you remember that you felt during those times?
- * Was your school damaged or destroyed by bombing? How did your schooling then change?
- * In general, how do you remember your schooling during the war? To what extent did the war interrupt your attendance at school? the quality of your schooling?
- * How do you recall wartime changes in school routine (e.g., school assemblies, pageants, special school programs, sports competitions, ceremonies, daily timetable, examinations, release of pupils to harvest crops, duties of pupils to clean school)? Were some routines continued normally (e.g., school uniforms for children, gowns for teachers, festivals, Empire Day, choirs, excursions, special prize and speech days)?
- * How do you remember new programs introduced into many schools (e.g., first aid instruction, war savings programs, scrap metal drives, "Spitfire" fund appeals, war gardening, knitting for men in the forces, new course content about the US and about Russia)?
- * For boys in the ATC or ACF, do you remember what kind of relationship existed, if any, between regular school courses and the special military courses and training (e.g., aviation maths, physical training)? How do you remember reasons that you joined the unit? How do you

recall reasons for establishing such units? Did your cadet experience relate to your own later military service?

- * Do you recall that teachers placed any special emphasis upon sciences (rather than arts and humanities) as a means of furthering the war effort? Do you recall any personal counselling (pastoral care) which related your school work to wartime or peacetime needs?
- * How do you recall any of your teachers talking about the war in your lessons? talking privately with you and your friends about aspects of the war?
- * How do you remember your school timetable of courses?
- * Do you remember any war-related changes in choice of topics in any of your courses? Do you recall your teachers reminding you of the war as a way to motivate pupils to work harder, to do their part? Do you recall teachers noting that some of the course work would be helpful to those serving in the forces or doing war work or especially during peacetime?
- * How do you recall the specific inclusion (if any) of war-related topics in your courses and lessons? Please think of examples (e.g., maths problems about food rationing, bombing and artillery, and war savings; geography emphases on places of wartime battles, of allied and enemy countries; lessons based on current events read about in the newspapers or heard about on the wireless; lessons about allies (e.g., USA, USSR), their leaders, resources, government, etc.; literary study of poems, plays, essays, and articles with war settings, events, or concerns (like WWI trench poets); writing compositions about war events or concerns; scientific studies of developments related to the war (like radar, atomic energy); wartime shortages of foods and clothing in domestic science classes; new types of exercises and conditioning programs in physical education). Try to think of *topics and studies* in courses which had a contemporary, war relationship.
- * Do you remember wondering why your teachers and school ignored dimensions of the war in your courses?
- * How do you remember curricular losses due to the war (e.g., elimination of courses because teachers left to join the forces; reduction in quality of courses due to lack of necessary equipment; specific shortages of books, supplies, equipment; cancellation of sports contests; decrease/cancellation of school excursions; reduction/cancellation of school magazine)?

- * How do you remember "make-do" efforts in school to cope with wartime conditions and shortages (e.g., repairing equipment, reusing exercise books and other supplies, shortages of textbooks, paper, etc.)?
- * How was the war given "notice" in your school (e.g., recognition of former pupils in the forces, former pupils receiving military decorations, former pupils killed in action; announcement of military victories; special patriotic programs at school; display of patriotic posters, including ones made by pupils; chart of school days and hours missed because of bombing raids; routine comments by teachers)?
- * How do you remember homework during wartime? Do you reckon it was more or less than during peacetime? Do you remember homework that had to do with war situations (e.g., essays, historical analogies, map work, composition of letters, listening to wireless programs)? Do you remember situations (e.g., air raids) which prevented you from completing homework? Was some or much homework completed at school?
- * How did your teachers treat situations in which children had spent the night in shelters and were tired and sleepy during lessons? in which (a) parent(s) or siblings were killed or wounded in air raids?
- * How do you recall acknowledgement at school of especially dramatic war events (e.g., Dunkirk evacuation, victory at El Alamein, D-Day invasion, surrender of Germany and Japan)?
- * To what extent were external examinations (e.g., School Certificate, RSA exams) important in your wartime school? Do you remember any special circumstances of children studying for examinations? Any unusual situations in which they wrote their exams? How do you recall children's wartime success on examinations?
- * How do you remember the wartime expansion of services to children (e.g., milk distribution, school meals, nursery schools)?
- * How do you remember patriotism being fostered at your school? Were there special activities, observances, or rituals that were deemed important to patriotism? Do you recall the school's teachers and your lessons fostering special "feelings" about "conscientious objectors", about the "enemy" (e.g., Hitler, German military and civilians), about the "justness" of the British/allied cause? Was attention to patriotism related to "citizenship" studies?

- * How do you recall the availability and use of normal school supplies and educational media (e.g., use of BBC school broadcasts in your courses/lessons; use of recordings, photographs, slides, maps and globes)?
- * What kinds of books did you read out of school? Kinds of games did you play in and out of school? Kinds of songs did you sing in and out of school? Do you recall some of these books, games, and songs being related specifically to wartime? Do you remember making collections of shrapnel, etc.? What were your favorite leisure activities?
- * How do you recall special "kerb drills" for school children to help them avoid injuries while walking during "black out" time? Any other special drills in school?
- * Do you remember school leavers having opportunities during the last year of school to prepare for specific jobs they might later take?
- * Were you a Scout or a Guide? Were these groups related to your school? What kinds of special wartime activities did you and your group engage? What kinds of "normal" activities (e.g., summer camp outs, hikes) were engaged during the war?
- * Do you remember wartime schooling as relevant to living in those wartime years? As just a normal part of growing up? As little if any different from schooling during peacetime?

Note: Do you still have tucked away in your home any of the following items that relate specifically to schooling in the war years?

- Diary, letters?
- Copies of school essays? homework?
- School reports?
- Textbooks?
- School magazine(s)?
- Other?