

# Fireweed – trip to wales!

[Sport & Tourism](#), [Trip](#)



I am called Bill and I live with my auntie and father in London. My mother is dead and my father always said I was never to be sent away as an evacuee. When my father was called up for active service in the army I was left with my auntie. We wrote numerous letters to my father but he never replied to any of them. My auntie started to moan and groan about not being able to manage me. So, she decided to send me off as an evacuee, even though it was against my father's wishes. Auntie wrote to my father and said that I was being sent to another part of the country as an evacuee (not explaining why she sent me).

I didn't even know where I was going, all alone without any money at all, not even a penny for a stamp to write to my father. The station was jam packed with children of all ages. Everyone had a bag, enclosed was a change of clothes and a label attached with an address written in capital letters to make it stand out. Two trains passed before, ours finally arrived. I was stuck in a carriage with mostly girls in uniform. Opposite me sat a great fat woman dressed all in blue, hairy tweed. As the journey progressed we passed station after station, nobody knew where we were going.

Until finally the train stopped and everyone disembarked. Darkness was falling and after waiting half an hour another train came and our carriage was joined on the back. By now it was pitch black. Eventually we reached our destination, which turned out to be Wales. Once off loaded everyone was counted and put with a billeting officer who would find us billets in which to stay. One by one each child was chosen and I was last to go. The man took me up a pathway and by this stage I was feeling a tiny bit unwanted, neglected, and rather orphaned.

He spoke in welsh to the people and after some persuasion they took me in. I stepped inside into a big farm kitchen where a great log fire was blazing like a forest rapidly burning down. The heat was inconceivable. Served on the tabletop there was bread, cheese and also a cold roast chicken. My stomach felt empty I was famished and the sight of food made the rumbling noises even worse. They asked my age and I replied fifteen. At last I was offered something to eat and then shown to my bedroom. The couple I was staying with were called Mr and Mrs Williams living with them were two shepherds, David and Evan.

They hardly spoke a word of English just enough to cope with telling me things. In this welsh valley there were two chapels, no church and no cottages only rows of terraced houses. It was rather poor at that. I spent a lot of time on my bed reading an aged copy of the woman's weekly, which Mrs Williams stored under the staircase. When the billeting officer came round to see how I was getting on with the Williams, they seemed quite content with me. Feeling rather bored, I finally plucked up the courage and asked if there was a school nearby which I could attend.

In the village there was only a primary school that was for juvenile children, but Mrs Williams suggested the grammar school on the other side of the mountains. The only trouble was how would I get there? The only option would be to get the bus. Yet again a problem arose. The bus fare! I had no money. So out came pen and paper to write a letter to my auntie telling her about the grammar school and asking if she could write to father and ask him to send me money for the bus fare. I also asked for my father's address.

I posted the letter in the post office at the back of the village shop I waited for a reply but no letter came. An unusual thing happened one day, Mrs Williams approached me saying that she needed to check my hair for lice. Naturally enough I refused argued and ran out of the house until I came to a dip. I decided to jump but slipped and fell into heavy disinfectant that burnt my mouth and nose. I swallowed several mouthfuls. David and Evan who had been trying to catch me were in stitches of laughter. I was so angry I felt like a raging bull.

When I gathered myself together I began to shake all over this made David and Evan very concerned. They took me back to the house and as I stood by the fire they stripped my wet clothes that were laden with disinfectant of me. Afterwards I went to bed. The following morning to my delight Mrs Jones informed me that there was post for me. My heart pounded like the footsteps of an elephant. In actual fact I received two letters! The first opened was from my auntie. Enclosed was my father's address, a book of stamps and she hoped I would write to him often.

The other letter, number two was from my father. He missed me a lot. My father had sent me three whole pounds! This was the biggest amount of money I had ever been given in my life. This overwhelmed me. My first thoughts were to calculate how many bus fares would this pay for. Then I got to thinking about Auntie and home and decided that I would use the money for my train fare back to London. Leaving Mr and Mrs Williams, David, Evan and the terraced houses behind I left for the station. The timetable showed only one train per day at the village.

The man at the ticket desk stared at me as though he were looking right through me. When I saw him, I was frightened that he would recognise me so I put plan B into action. I walked to the crossroads. 'Owestry = 15 miles'. I looked down at my worn shoes; there was a station at Owestry. I bought a pair of boots so I could walk to Owestry as I had a funny feeling my old shoes wouldn't make it. I set off not having the foggiest how long it would take me to walk there. I bought a brown bap from a bakery van, which I met outside the village. When I arrived in Owestry it was late afternoon.

I found the station and waited for the train to leave. It left an hour and a half late. Once I reached London I caught the bus home. Suddenly it took a wrong turn! Then I was told that the street no longer stood. I got off the bus as quick as my legs could carry me. I walked to my auntie's house and everything was grand until a warden stopped me asking where I was going. I was totally bewildered they wouldn't even let me my own home. Nobody was there to look after me. My auntie was not there any more. I was going to stay but I decided at least until my father came home. I was determined about this.