



Oceans Apart : Stories of Overseas Evacuees in World War Two

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From May 1940 the Childrens Overseas Reception Board began to move children to safety abroad to Australia, South Africa, Canada and New Zealand. The scheme was extremely popular, and over 200,000 applications were made within just four months. In addition, thousands of children were privately evacuated overseas. The `sea-vacs, as they became known, had a variety of experiences. After weeks at sea they began a new life thousands of miles away. Letters home took up to twelve weeks to reach their destinations and many of these children were totally cut off from their families in the UK. Most found their new way of life to be a positive one in which they were well cared for for others it was a miserable, difficult or frightening time as they encountered homesickness, prejudice and even abuse. This book reveals in heartbreaking detail the unique experiences of sea-vacs, and their surprising influence on international wartime policy, used as they were as an attempt to elicit international sympathy and financial support for the British war effort.

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