

# mtp

matthew townshend productions

## The Second World War

### What's going on?

It is **May 1940**. Britain has been at war with Germany since September the previous year. Here on the **home front**, there is a night time **blackout** and children continue to be evacuated from the cities to areas of the country that are considered safe from bombing. Food is now rationed. Over the past few weeks, the German army has pushed French and British soldiers into a corner of northern France. A huge rescue operation has been mounted to bring troops home from the beaches of **Dunkirk**. France has surrendered to Germany, Britain is on her own and has a new prime minister – **Winston Churchill**.

### Who am I going to meet?



**Captain Vere** - a British Army officer recently evacuated from Dunkirk.

## What's my role?

You are somebody living on the home front. You might be:

A **teacher** or **parent**, responsible for a group of **evacuees**.

A **Volunteer** who has joined one of the services such as the ARP (Air Raid Wardens) the AFS (Auxiliary Fire Service) or the LDV (Local Defence Volunteers, later called the **Home Guard**)

The local **billeting officer**, responsible for finding homes for evacuees.

A **land girl**, member of the Womens' Land Army.

## Why am I here?

Today is the day when a new group of evacuees are leaving or arriving. Today is also going to be a training day – new volunteers are having their first lesson or parade. You decide what makes the most sense: if the session is taking place in school, make the hall the training centre and the assembly point for evacuees. If you are visiting an historic house, this is where the evacuees are going to stay. It will almost certainly be very different from their imaginary 1940's home!

## Useful to know about:

The road to War: appeasement, re-armament in Europe, **Chamberlain** and Munich.

The recent **Civil War in Spain**, the involvement of the Luftwaffe – the German Air Force – and the horror of the bombing of towns such as **Guernica**.

Why children are being evacuated from English cities.

Why food is being rationed.

## Questions to consider:

What other countries might provide Britain with help?

What will happen to historic buildings or to large country houses in wartime?