

AUNTIE PEG And keep my Billy with them and all – he’s the only one I’ve got!

SFX: GUARD’S WHISTLE

CD track 17

MISS ALBRIGHT Oh dear, time to go. No time for roll call now. Line up and follow me.

AUNTIE PEG Billy boy? You stay right by cousin Duggie. Hang on to his coat!

MRS DAWSON *(Waving a hanky)* Stick together and *(with emphasis)* remember what I told you about the JAM!

MUM 1 Don’t forget to wash behind your ears!

MUM 2 Say hello to the cows for me!

MUM 3 Write me a letter!

MUM 4 Say your prayers!

MUM 5 Don’t lose that gas mask!

ALL Bye! God bless.

The children should be divided into three groups that move about the stage looking busy, with Mums fussing and fretting around the kids.

Song 1. THE EVACUATION

CD track 1/8

SFX: TRAIN LEAVING

CD track 18

The Mums exit at the end of the song and the children sit on the floor as though on a train.

MISS ALBRIGHT *(Trying to be jolly)* I have some good news, children! The train is taking us all the way to Devon. We might even see the sea!

EVACUEE 1 That sounds like heaven to me. Heaven in Devon! Hear that, Miss? I made a rhyme.

EVACUEE 2 Cor, I’ve never seen the sea. Is it bigger than the River Thames?

EVACUEE 3 Course it is. You can’t even see to the other side!

EVACUEE 4 But will we still see fields and cows and all that?

EVACUEE 5 I don’t like cows, ‘cause they’re big with horns and they smell!

EVACUEE 6 How do you know? Have you ever seen one?

EVACUEE 5 Not a real one. Just a picture. They give you milk!

DUGGIE Miss, is it true that in the country you get food without a ration book?

MISS ALBRIGHT I should think so, Duggie, because there’s plenty of room to grow fruit and vegetables. I know, let’s take it in turns to say the name of our favourite vegetables.

EVACUEE 1 I hate slimy cabbage – yuck!

- EVACUEE 2** And I hate lettuce with slugs in it!
- EVACUEE 3** *(Longingly)* Mash – pie ‘n’ mash, that’s my favourite!
- EVACUEE 4** Carrots are good, Miss. They make you see in the dark. Fighter pilots have to eat carrots every day.
- EVACUEE 5** That’s so they can see where to drop a bomb on the Germans in the middle of the night.
- LIZZIE** *(Sniffing miserably)* Do they grow chips in Devon, Miss? I like chips.
- EVACUEE 6** *(Teasingly)* Course they do. We’ll see fields and fields of chip trees when we get there. *(Sniggers behind hand)*

Lizzie looks wide-eyed and amazed. The others nudge each other and laugh.

- JOSIE** *(Indignantly)* Don’t be so mean to our Lizzie, she’s only little!
- ROSIE** Our Mum says...
- MISS ALBRIGHT** *(Interrupting)* Your Mum says lots of things, Rosie! When we were at the station she said, ‘Remember what I told you about the jam.’ What did she mean?

Lizzie cries loudly. Josie and Rosie look worried and put their fingers to their lips. They have a family secret.

- DUGGIE** *(Hastily covering up for them)* Oh Miss! You’ve set our Lizzie off now!
- JOSIE** *(Spelling it out)* If you mention ‘M–U–M’ it makes her cry.
- BILLY** And if you keep going on about jam we’ll ALL cry!
- ALL** We LOVE jam!
- ROSIE** *(Spelling it out)* ‘M–U–M’ says we’ll have jam on our bread every day in the country.
- JOSIE** We made up a song about jam last night.
- DUGGIE** Shall we sing it to you?
- MISS ALBRIGHT** *(With exaggerated patience)* That would be, um, lovely.

The Dawson children – Billy, Duggie, Josie, Rosie and Lizzie – take a deep breath and sing, unaccompanied, to the tune of ‘One Man Went To Mow’ (CD track 15 for reference).

We ain’t ‘ad jam today,
 We won’t ‘ave jam t’morrer,
 There ain’t no jam in London Town
 To beg or steal or borrar.
 So we’ve got to go
 Where Mum and Dad can’t foller,
 Off to the country on a train
 To find some jam t’morrer.

Repeat song with everyone joining in raucously.

DUGGIE (Grinning) See, Miss? That cheered them all up!

MISS ALBRIGHT It did indeed, Duggie. Now quieten down everyone. Try to go to sleep and when you wake up we'll be there!

The lights dim and the children step down to sit on the floor below the stage area.

SCENE 2

KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON

(Set: the barn at Traitors' Quay – the family home of The Honourable Eggin-Drake)

CHURCHILL Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duty and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say: 'This was their finest hour'.*

The stage is lit up to display a selection of wartime posters such as 'Dig for victory' / 'Make do and mend' / 'Loose lips sink ships'.

The Eggin-Drakes have called a meeting of staff and villagers to announce arrangements for the evacuees. Mrs Lovham, the housekeeper, and her husband PC Lovham are on stage fussing round the barn when Harbour Master (HM) Grogg enters.

HM GROGG (Waving a poster) Morning PC Lovham. Morning Mrs Lovham.

THE LOVHAMS Morning Harbour Master Grogg.

HM GROGG I'm a bit early for the meeting because I've been told to try out this new poster.

PC LOVHAM Not another one! What does this one say?

HM GROGG 'KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON'. I'll pin it up here. (He sticks it up)

MRS LOVHAM Keep calm and carry on? That's a good one! I'll remember that when those evacuees arrive.

PC LOVHAM They're coming from a bombed-out school in London.

HM GROGG How many of the kids are being billeted here at Traitors' Quay?

MRS LOVHAM Five, love 'em! Plus their teacher. The rest will go to the village.

PC LOVHAM She's got to live here because she's using this barn as a school room.

HM GROGG Oh dear! Mr Mulch won't like that. He's planning on using this barn for his headquarters now that the Honourable Eggin-Drake has made him the Chief Air Raid Warden.

MRS LOVHAM And don't we know it!

PC LOVHAM He's gone all bossy now he's not just the gardener!

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MRS LOVHAM Is dear old Eggy-Drake in charge of people like air-raid wardens now then?

PC LOVHAM I don't think so. What exactly does he do in London, Grogg?

HM GROGG (*Proudly*) He works at the War Office. He is the Honourable Eggin-Drake, Minister of Information.

MRS LOVHAM Does that mean that he makes all these posters?

PC LOVHAM (*Laughing*) Probably! But they can call him what they like in London...

MRS LOVHAM ...to us he's just Eggy-Drake!

HM GROGG Did I ever tell you that the Eggy-Drakes have a place in history?

PC LOVHAM (*Hastily cutting him off*) Yes you did. You said they were related to Sir Francis Drake, the one who went to war with Spain.

MRS LOVHAM Blooming wars. Why can't we all learn to live in peace?

PC LOVHAM Don't worry, love, here comes Mr Mulch wearing his new tin hat. He'll protect you.

MRS LOVHAM I bet he's dying to blow that new whistle!

Mr Mulch enters and looks around critically.

MR MULCH (*Bossily*) Have you got blackout in this barn yet, Mrs Lovham? I'll be checking when it gets dark and if I see one chink of light, you'll hear this. (*He blows his whistle*)

They all block their ears at the sound of the whistle. More air-raid (A-R) wardens dash in wearing tin hats with 'ARP' painted on them, but their clothes depict their day jobs, e.g. a butcher's striped apron/bus driver's uniform etc.

A-R WARDEN 1 Did you whistle for us, Mr Mulch?

A-R WARDEN 2 (*Indignantly*) That whistle makes me feel like a sheep dog!

A-R WARDEN 3 (*To Warden 2*) Down boy!

A-R WARDEN 4 (*Miming a begging dog*) Chuck us some sausages!

MR MULCH Fat chance of getting sausages with all this rationing!

HM GROGG Hey, Mr Mulch! I've been thinking...

A-R WARDEN 1 (*Aside*) That sounds dangerous!

HM GROGG If the invasion comes to Traitors' Quay, where will we all go?

MR MULCH Well, we have a ready-made shelter in the smugglers' caves down at the Quay.

A-R WARDEN 2 *(Sarcastically)* Brilliant plan! We'll all be slithering and sliding about in the dark.

A-R WARDEN 3 What about high tide when we all get cut off?

A-R WARDEN 4 No one's been in those caves for years!

MR MULCH All right, all right, I'm still working on the plan.

ALL A-R WARDENS *(Shaking heads gloomily)* We should have joined the Home Guard!

PC LOVHAM And here they come!

Marching feet are heard, along with 'Left, left, left, right, left' as the Home Guard enter led by Captain Kitchener. They are wearing an assortment of old army uniforms and carrying broomsticks as rifles.

KITCHENER PLATOON HALT! STAND AT EASE.

There is much shuffling and stamping as they stand in a line to one side. Wheeler and Dealer stand at the end of the line.

WHEELER Excuse me Captain Kitchener, but will Eggy-Drake be inspecting our uniforms?

KITCHENER He might well do, Sergeant Wheeler.

They begin to inspect each other's scrappy uniforms anxiously. Wheeler and Dealer turn away from the platoon to talk to each other, towards the audience. Dealer's jacket is bulging with items hidden inside it.

DEALER Do you think he'll notice my fat jacket?

WHEELER What have you got in there?

DEALER Sixteen pairs of silk stockings, a dozen bars of chocolate and fourteen packets of tea!

WHEELER *(Looking round to make sure that no one is listening)* I've found a cave down near the Quay where we can hide all this black-market stuff.

DEALER A cave? That's perfect. We can hide all this gear down there after our meeting with Eggy-Drake.

WHEELER I'll meet you at the Quay.

HM GROGG *(Hearing the word 'quay')* What was that about the Quay?

KITCHENER *(Pompously)* I will deal with my men if you don't mind, Grogg! Now, what was I saying?

DEALER *(Swiftly)* About the inspection, Captain Kitchener.

KITCHENER *(Vaguely)* Was I?

PRIVATE JOLLY *(Holding his broomstick like a rifle and taking aim)* Well, it won't take long to inspect our rifles, will it Captain Kitchener?

PRIVATE JAPE I couldn't get the brush off mine! *(He holds up a complete broom)*

KITCHENER In the last war, when I was at the Somme, our rifles were...

PRIVATE JOLLY *(To Private Jape)* Oh no! Not the Somme again!

PRIVATE JAPE He'll talk about his Old Pals regiment next.

PRIVATE JOLLY Actually, they never sound all that pally to me!

PRIVATE JAPE *(Shrugging)* But then we weren't there, were we? Because we weren't OLD enough, right?

PRIVATE JOLLY *(Triumphantly)* Wrong! We weren't there 'cause we weren't even born!

They 'fire' at each other with their broomsticks and laugh.

KITCHENER *(Angrily)* You won't laugh when you get your call-up papers, my boys! It's no joke fighting the enemy. Never mind, we'll soon lick you into shape with our drill sessions.

MR MULCH Drill sessions? Where?

KITCHENER Here in this barn, where else? After all, we are the Traitors' Quay Platoon!

MR MULCH *(Angrily)* But... but!

KITCHENER Oh get over it Mr Mulch, there's a war on!

PC LOVHAM *(To Mrs Lovham)* Hang on to your gas mask, Mrs Lovham, war is breaking out right here!

MRS LOVHAM *(Pointing to the new poster)* KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON everyone!

The land girls (Lily, Daisy, Poppy, Ivy and May) distract everyone by dancing in, humming The Jitterbug tune and practising their jitterbug steps. They stop and look round at the open-mouthed spectators.

LILY Sorry! Are we late for the meeting?

DAISY *(Pushing May forward)* May here has been teaching us the jitterbug.

POPPY Shall we show you how to do it?

IVY Mrs Eggy-Drake has given us permission to use this barn for a dance.

MAY Hey, why don't I start some regular dance classes?

LILY Where?

DAISY (Looking round the barn) Here – in the barn!

Kitchener and Mulch look furious.

POPPY You can all come along.

MAY I'll start next week!

IVY You'll soon learn – watch!

Song 2. THE JITTERBUG

CD track 2/9

During the dance instrumental the land girls do a jitterbug-style dance. Please see the Out of the Ark website for some suggested choreography (www.outoftheark.com/TTQdances). The Eggin-Drakes enter and Hennie and Duccie try to dance along.

HENNIE I say, that was fun!

DUCCIE Can you teach us the right steps?

EGGIN-DRAKE Quite! Well I mean no, er... are we all here?

PC LOVHAM No, sir. Parker has taken his gun to chase after some poachers.

WHEELER Is Parker the new gamekeeper?

DEALER Yes, they've given him the old watchtower in the woods to live in.

WHEELER (*Aside to Dealer*) Do you think we could tap him for a few pheasants to sell?

DEALER Rather you than me, mate!

EGGIN-DRAKE Quite! Well I mean no, er... may I continue?

KITCHENER So sorry, sir. Yes, do go on! Pay attention men!

EGGIN-DRAKE Quite! Well I mean no, er...

HENNIE Oh Daddy, do get on with it!

DUCCIE We've got to go soon. We're hacking with the Martingales.

PRIVATE JOLLY Hey Jape, I bet the Martingales will be...

PRIVATE JAPE HACKED OFF!

They gleefully give each other a high five.

EGGIN-DRAKE Quite! Well I mean no, er... in my position as, er...

HENNIE & DUCCIE (*Impatiently*) Minister of Information.

EGGIN-DRAKE Quite! Well I mean no, er... I must do my bit for the, er... evacuees from London. Terrible business these, er... air raids, er...

HENNIE & DUCCIE *(More impatiently)* Please hurry up!

EGGIN-DRAKE Quite! Well I mean no, er... I am putting this barn at the disposal of the er... evacuees for the duration of the, er... war. But there must be, er...

HENNIE Rules?

DUCCIE *(Aside)* Daddy LOVES rules!

EGGIN-DRAKE Quite! Well I mean no, er... rules are essential because, er...

ETTA *(Bustling forward with a chart)* Oh just let me give them the information!

She reads from the chart.

ETTA RULE 1. This barn will become a schoolroom for all evacuees. *(She looks up)* You others must work round them somehow. It will be fine!

There is annoyed muttering from the wardens, the Home Guard and the land girls.

ETTA RULE 2. The five evacuees sent to the house will only be allowed to use the back door and the back stairs. They will sleep in the attic and eat their meals in the kitchen. *(Looking up at Mrs Lovham)* Is that clear, Mrs Lovham?

MRS LOVHAM *(Sadly)* Ah, love 'em!

ETTA RULE 3. Evacuees will be strictly forbidden to go near the front of the house. The front door is for VIPs only. *(Looking up at Mr Mulch)* So keep an eye on them, Mr Mulch!

MR MULCH If they stray I'll blow my whistle, ma'am.

He blows his whistle and everyone covers their ears. Etta interrupts the whistle by saying 'RULE 4' very loudly.

ETTA RULE 4. No evacuees will be allowed in the woods. The pheasants must not be disturbed. *(She looks up)* Who will tell Parker, the new gamekeeper?

HM GROGG *(Eagerly)* I will, ma'am.

ETTA Excellent, Harbour Master Grogg. And it's your job to stop these evacuees from getting into mischief down at the Quay.

HM GROGG You're right, ma'am. We can't have them getting lost in the old smugglers' caves. Don't worry, I'm always on the lookout!

He peers around through his telescope.