



School Uniform

Kate Eggleston "Jill Ashmore's Shrops and Staffs group discussed their own experiences of school uniform. In my grammar school special gymslips were worn in years 1-13. Years 4-6 wore navy skirts, school blouses and ties and navy cardigans. One girl in year 6 wore a pinafore dress and blouse - she was a gifted pianist and my mother said that the girl could not wear a skirt because she was too thin to keep it up. Looking back, I wonder if she was anorexic."

Mark Taha "I believe there were quite a few schools with rules like that about wearing berets in school if caught without one outside. I believe the infamous Miss Dines [quondam headmistress of Northwich Grammar School for Girls] had such a rule. And were Panama hats so-

called because the girls wanted to throw them in the canal?"

EBD's Sense Of Humour

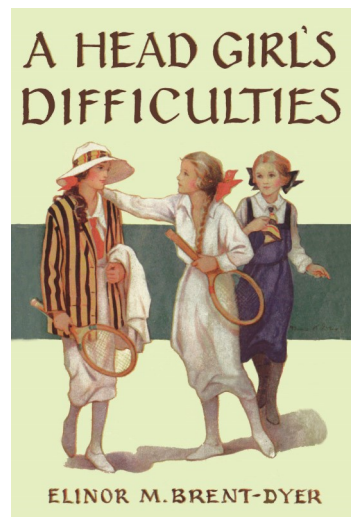
Tricia Green "I agreed with Berenda Haggan re the pantomimes. People seem to roar helplessly with laughter at things I find only very mildly funny at best. Perhaps slapstick was a more popular taste then. Having said that, my husband will fall about at Buster Keaton staggering around on a windowsill or similar which leaves me cold, but will find me helpless with laughter at someone making a mild ironic witticism. A sense of humour is a very individual thing."

La Rochelle Series

Jenny Marshall "Having had a bit of free time this year, I've read the series. It's filled in so many gaps for me and I understand who everyone is and how the storylines fit together. In fact, I think I enjoyed this series more than some of the later CS titles".

The Eleven Plus

Kate Eggleston "Many years ago, I sat and passed the Eleven Plus exam, gaining a scholarship for what was later to be called the local grammar school. For some reason unknown to me, my mother went to see the





landing stage to the train. Unlike Grizel, we didn't turn back half way, but enjoyed a trip along the shores of the lake and down the Rhine until we reached Schaffhausen. After exploring the town, we walked along the north bank to the falls, then crossed the bridge to see them from the other side, before walking back along the south bank to catch a return train. I always felt very sorry for the CS girls in Switzerland who apparently got just one look at the falls. They are spectacular, and it is well worth spending time viewing them from different vantage points.

Then visits to the Achensee were made by flying to and from Munich and using the train on arrival. There is a good train service from Munich to Innsbruck which crosses the border near Kufstein and stops at Jenbach for the bus or train up to the lake. It is also possible to travel via the Achenpass over the border from and to Germany, which involves a train for the Munich-Tegernsee leg and a bus for the rest of the journey to and from Pertisau.

These trips all went without a hitch in the summer months, but I had a problem at the end of December 2009. It was very cold and snowy, and my



journey from Penrith to London took far longer than it should have done, followed by fewer trains than usual from Victoria to Gatwick. This meant that Easyjet closed their check-in desk as I was running through the airport to meet my daughter there, despite her telling them where I was. Eventually (because the flight was delayed due to the weather) she flew, to Munich that day. I was left

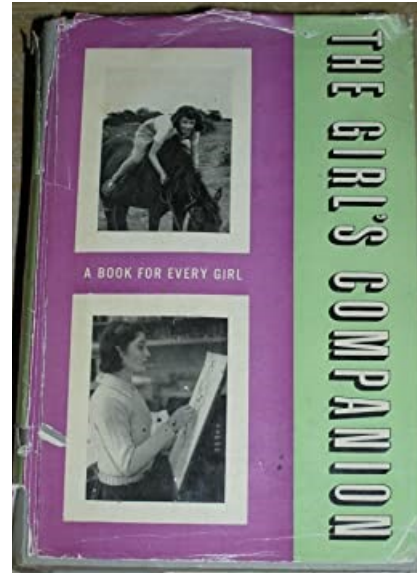
would have had her own room, and her brothers Geoff and Peter probably share. The elderly housekeeper, Florence, would have had the last room.

Let's explore the bookshelves in the living-room. It's possible that we shall find a copy of *The Girl's Companion*. Plenty of articles in it to appeal to Elfie – a large section on different sports such as athletics, hockey, gymnastics, lacrosse, netball and swimming. As a guide she might enjoy the chapters on camping and knots. And with fond memories of the Hobbies Club she could read up on felt-work, cane-work, printing on textiles and knitting. But the most helpful chapter would be "Housekeeper for a week". This is full of ideas for "Mary", who is stepping in for her mother who is to go away for a week to help Mary's

grandmother. Mary needs to run things, provide meals for her father and brother, and go to school and do her homework. The sound advice is to just do the essentials – don't try to do too much. The essentials are – providing good meals, having a warm and tidy fireside, making the beds every day, and doing the washing-up regularly. Other chores include, putting out the ashes, and empty tins and bottles. Any food scraps should go in the street brock-pot, or burn them.



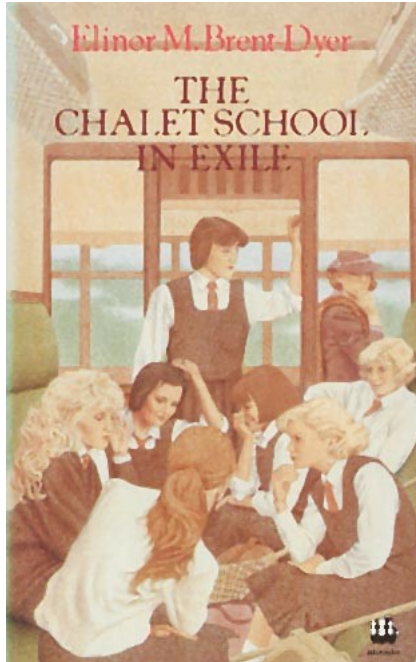
Remember to wind the clock, water the plants, always have plenty of bread and potatoes in, and use up any milk before going to bed. As a Chalet School girl, Elfie would have been used to dusting her cubicle every morning, but Mary is advised to spread the dusting, sweeping and mopping over the week. A day would be earmarked for washing, and another for ironing. Every day the fire has to be laid and lit, meals have to be planned and cooked. When Mary's father comes home at tea-time he would expect a hot meal and a warm fire. There are menu ideas in this chapter. Personally I think that while they are easy enough to make and can be quickly prepared by Mary before she dashes off to school, and cooked when she gets home, they are tremendously dull and not particularly healthy. Menus are given for a week in winter and a week in summer. In winter the only vegetable is on Friday and that is cabbage. Hopefully, Elfie,



not having discussed her plan with others in the know, she was not aware that the bell was designed to wake up the whole valley in times of disaster. Now in Polly's beloved school books, perpetrators of such mischief either got a tremendous wiggling from the Head or the Head couldn't stop laughing. Mademoiselle did neither and couldn't get a reasonable explanation to why Polly had rung the bell. She sent in Jo— and when has Jo not been able to find out why? Turned out it was the school stories. So, Jo said, just because the heroines of your favourite books do silly things, does that mean you have to do the same? Punishment was to read what the Three had to say about old Prout in *Stalky and Co.* And the everlasting effect here – well that was on Jo who reviewed her 'book in progress' and with a stern hand "remorselessly removed any pranks therefrom that might be supposed to incite brainless Juniors to imitation thereof!" The success of Josephine M Bettany as a popular writer of school and other children's stories was assured.



The next we hear of Polly is in *The Chalet School in Exile* (Chapter 3) where



Polly put her back, with its long mane of red hair, against the railway carriage window when the girls were returning to the Chalet School after half term. Giovanna was talking about the 'disease' in Germany that wouldn't attack any who knew what freedom means when a weasly looking woman stared into the carriage trying to see who had spoken – Polly's actions and the change of the topic of conversation to lacrosse hopefully disavowed the spy from reporting their conversation. The woman turns up later in the book as the Frau Eisen who spied on the girls at their visit to the cave to hide the Chalet School Peace League document. At the end of *Exile*, Polly is one of the girls who rescues the German airmen from the plane when it crash lands on Rocquaine Bay, and that is almost the last we hear of Polly.

She reappears briefly in *The Chalet School Goes To It* (chapter 4) when the