

meant many ex-teachers had to be recalled to the colours, as it were.”

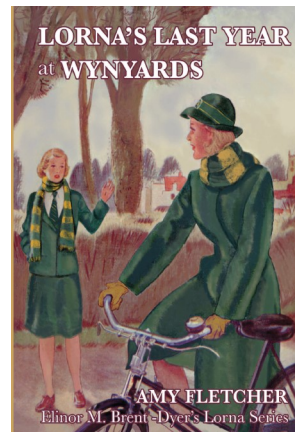
**Marcella McCarthy** “Ireland was one of the last countries to enforce a marriage bar on working women. It ended for female primary school teachers in Ireland in 1958 due to a temporary shortage of teachers. The marriage bar in the Civil Service in Ireland ended in 1973 as a direct consequence of joining the EEC and in the wider public sector in 1974. However it was still legal in non public sector work places such as banks. My mother worked in a bank and had to give up her job when she got married in February 1977. Due to European anti-discrimination law, Ireland was obliged to end the marriage bar in the privates sector later that year. The Employment Equality Act, 1977 was signed on 1 June 1977 and took effect on 1 July 1977.”

#### *Lorna's Last Year at Wynyards*

**Jean Ainley** “Lorna has always been one of my favourite EBD characters. Congratulations, Amy, on perfectly capturing the personalities of the family at Wynyards and giving us another enjoyable ‘fill in’.”

**Susan Barlow** “I enjoyed this book, but unlike some, I don’t like long descriptions of cooking, or other domestic details. (Unless there is some disaster, so that something happens.....).”

**Karen Jones** “The Lorna books are my favourite non-Chalet books by EBD. I always wished that there were more than two titles. It was a delight to receive my copy of this book. Thank you to Amy Fletcher for writing such a wonderful story about Lorna and co.”



#### *Jem's Car*

**Jessie Collins** “Reading about cars made me think about the cars we owned at different times. My parents never had a car, but my husband loved driving and was delighted when we acquired our first car – a Morris 10 – very basic indeed but it got us from A to B very well. Eventually we progressed to large 3 litre cars, very useful when we went on holiday or on outings with our three children and my parents. Names elude me now, but I remember a great favourite with us all – a car which had little drop-down shelves to act as picnic tables when the weather was unsuitable for picnics outdoors.”

#### *The Cruel Triplets?*

**Denise Hadlow** “The articles on whether the triplets were cruel got me thinking. Not just about how they treated Rosli but in general. I don’t think Len was cruel, but she is so responsible I think she puts too much pressure on herself. I honestly think she just snapped. This is her younger sister and she is in charge. In general Len is definitely not cruel, she is caring and thoughtful, maybe a little bit bossy. Con is definitely not cruel, her problem is she is so

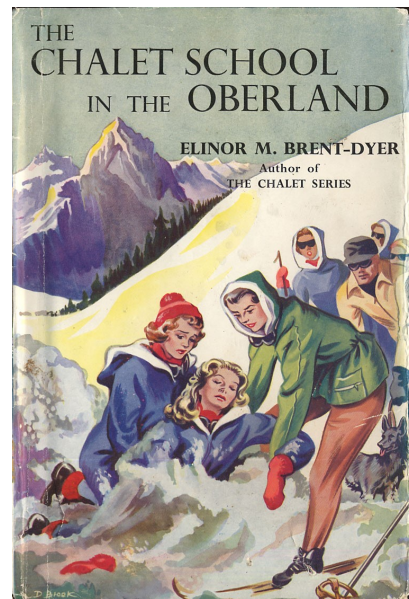
difficult. And occasionally I have panicked and jerked away...just as Eustacia does when Joey wants to hold on to her.

Finally over the course of the book Eustacia twice steals someone's key to access a room that she is forbidden to enter. Her reason for this is that she wanted "somewhere to read in peace". Which, if I were in an environment like a boarding school where you are expected to be with people the whole time, is

exactly what I would need. Actually, it's very frequently what I need anyway. Somewhere quiet and calm with no people around where I can read and let myself unwind.

The other character is a much less prominent one. In fact she only appears in one book and does not even have a major role in that. Her name is Edna Purdon and she is one of Peggy's schoolmates in *The Chalet School in the Oberland*. And she is not presented as a particularly likeable character. However, even more strongly than with Stacie, I felt sure that Edna was

autistic and felt a lot of sympathy for her throughout the book. Like Eustacia, Edna is described as a "prig", largely due to her manner of speaking, which is very stilted. She also is also very clever and knows a lot of facts, which she frequently tells people, not understanding that they normally don't want to hear them and that it looks like showing off. Edna has no friends as she does not understand the informal rules. A common misconception is that autistic people don't want or need friends; this is not true. I always want friends, I just find it extremely hard to make them. Like Edna, who feels very miserable and lonely throughout the book. Edna, like Eustacia, also has a strict code about what's right and wrong. At one point a group of girls are playing cards on a Sunday, something which Edna feels very strongly is unacceptable. Instead of ignoring it she dives right in and tries to get the girls to stop, something which makes her decidedly unpopular.





of the Chalet School, and could have written a balanced but affectionate account of the establishment for the Silver Jubilee. Peggy was a noted letter writer, and her credentials for authorship blossomed while at Welsen, the finishing branch of the Chalet School in the Oberland. When the girls decided to perform the pantomime *Sleeping Beauty* it was suggested Peggy had better write a new version, "Isn't her aunt a well-known authoress?" An outraged Peggy protested writing talent wasn't hereditary, but on reading the completed script, Miss Wilson commended Peggy's effort as "hilarious," and the pantomime was performed to acclaim.

Whether Miss Annersley suggested the eventual choice of author, or whether Jo made the initial proposal, the commission to write a history of the school was offered to Stacie Benson - not perhaps the most logical choice to write a history of the school, as Stacie had hated her first days at the Chalet School and eventually ran away. During her flight from the school, Stacie sustained a back injury which necessitated months of recovery, and which she and others credited with her becoming a reformed character who passed the remainder of her schooldays pleasantly enough.

Having always been a scholar Stacie, on leaving school, returned to Oxford and immersed herself in academia. As Dr Eustacia Benson, she was acclaimed as the leading authority on Aeschylus, having produced an impressive tome on her favourite subject. Somewhat formally, Miss Annersley announced to her assembled pupils that Dr Benson "kindly consented to begin the history." Although known as Stacie to her peers, it seems



probable that it would be "Dr Eustacia Benson" who would rigorously examine the school's history and record it in erudite prose. One fears a chronicle of the first twenty-five years of the Chalet School, as written by Dr Eustacia Benson, could prove to be a very dull read!

My choice of author, goes to Peggy Bettany.

But, who would you choose?



out there. When they return on furlough to England, Aunt Caroline tells them that she has continued to welcome Musaka and his friends, who visit her each week. Hurray for Aunt Caroline!

Tom Gay is also a missionary. In spite of the drawback of not being born a boy, Tom enjoyed her schooling, thriving at the Chalet School and carrying its



principles and precepts on to her work life. After an early flirtation with other careers, “shall I be an analytic chemist?,” Tom doesn’t deviate from her desire to become a missionary. But not to go abroad – a different type of missionary. For many years rich women and men had striven to alleviate the miserable and very hard lot of poor peoples in Britain. Elizabeth Fry improved prisons, Geraldine and Barrow Cadbury built houses with baths throughout Bournville Village Trust, Titus Salt built a model village, Saltaire, to alleviate the slums of Leeds, and settlements were founded in great cities, such as London and Birmingham, to alleviate the slums where the poorest of the poor struggled to survive. Tom had a solidly Christian background – father a Vicar, mother “a brisk Vicar’s wife,” who had successfully run the Parish for several

months when Mr Gay was ill – and had also lived under the ethos of the Chalet School for six years. Her father will put her through Oxford University (as per so many of the Chalet School books exams aren’t mentioned!), and then a year at Theological College. Besides all these advantages, Tom has one other tremendous plus. Well, two actually: a fairly minor one in that she had led a Baden-Powell Wolf Club pack in her village, so she was used to dealing with boys between the ages of 8 and 12; and the unique advantage of her school hobby: designing and building dolls’ houses. While possibly not quite as magnificent as Queen Mary’s Dolls’ House, and certainly not as large as Y Bwthyn Bach, the garden house presented by the people of Wales to Princess Elizabeth in 1932 – both on view at Windsor Castle – Tom presented the Chalet School with increasingly elaborate dolls’ houses or miniature villages, which



were either sold or raffled to benefit a local charity.