



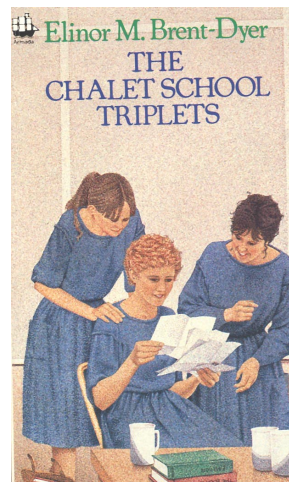
My Favourite Chalet School Book

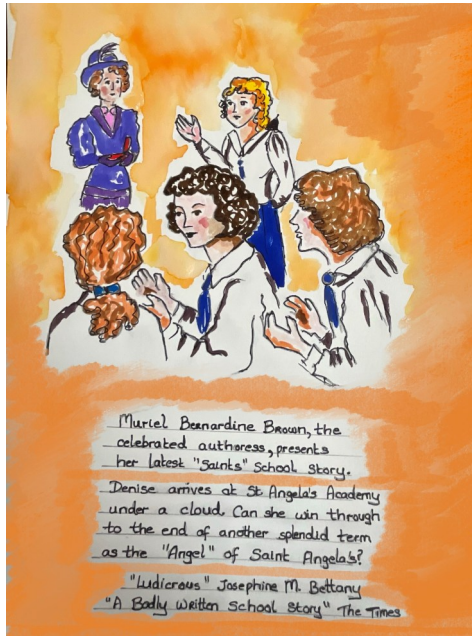
Denise Hadlow “Judy Marsh’s article on her favourite Chalet School books got me thinking. She mentioned several fill ins and it got me thinking about my favourite fill in. I don’t have a lot of the fill ins, but one I do have is *Champion*. I know it might be an unusual choice but it’s one I really relate to. The new girl, Anne, is asthmatic, so am I. I struggled a lot growing up and always having to be careful. I grew up during the 1960s and 1970s so different from Anne. Like Anne I also tried to hide my asthma and I absolutely hated anyone making a fuss of me, still do. I don’t know what the medication would have been like in Anne’s time but it would not have been easy. I feel like it’s a great book with a very real description of asthma, Anne could almost have been me growing up.”

Margot

Mark Taha “I can’t see Margot sticking to life as a nun without having a nervous breakdown. Margot was sent away to Canada, admittedly with her aunt, uncle and two cousins. Madge and Jem, rather than looking after them, sent them to board at a convent school where they weren’t even allowed to speak English! Does anyone know why Margot, Josette and Ailie were the ones who went to Canada?”

Jilly Day “Jessie Collins says ‘few people could like Margot the girl’ but I’ve always felt sorry for Margot. Coddled and indulged as delicate, poor Margot then gets wrenched from her family and triplet sisters and sent off to Canada with Madge and Jem. For Margot, it must have been a wretched time and certainly excluded the poor girl from the close and cosy relationship between Len and Con in the latter Chalet books. To be honest, Jo’s treatment of all three triplets has always irritated me. Instead of treating the three as equals, Len by accident of birth has to become the responsible oldest, Con wisely abdicates all responsibility by retreating into her writing and fictional world. On returning from Canada Margot, previously allowed to coast educationally due to her delicacy, is sharply told to buckle down to her studies and catch up with her sisters. And, then the triplets suffer





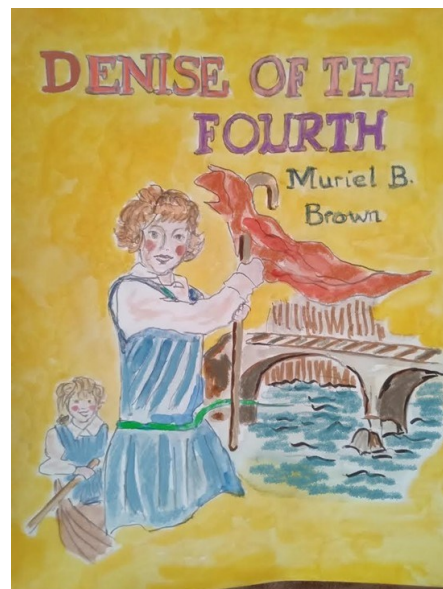
"Denise of the Fourth" by Susanne Harrington-Coady

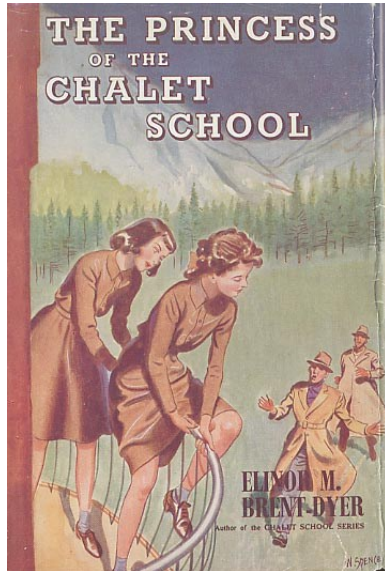
Denise of the Fourth is mentioned in *The School at the Chalet*, in chapter 11. Gisela, the first head girl of the Chalet School, is reading it and has questions that only Jo can answer. She finds it "interesting in parts, though some of it seems impossible." It mentions a celebration of the head's birthday and a school magazine. Jo takes a look, noting the author is Muriel Bernardino Brown, and, having flicked through the book, declares "it's a shriek." In chapter 18, the Chaletian magazine is approved by Madge, but not before "Denise" is mentioned again, dismissed as

"awful tosh" by Joey. Wanda notes she had also read another book featuring Gilly, the Girl Guide (*Guide Gilly Adventurer* by Dorothea Moore), that she "liked very good".

I have done some research but cannot find any mention online of what book Denise may have been based on, or even fanfiction fillers of the story. The following is an imagined fragment of its covers and what it may contain (in comic book format). I have liberally used reference images from book and magazine covers featuring school stories of the era. Note - I have taken some art classes, but still have much to learn.

In terms of plot, we know only that the head girl, called Mervyn, calls for three cheers for the head, after presenting a "slender gold chain on which was swung an exquisite pendant studded with diamonds," for her birthday. Jo mentions "a really decent desk lamp" was the best the girls could come up with at the High School in Devon. As I generally start reading a book by its back cover, I have designed the back cover representing the scene.





Book Dustwrapper Pictures by Louise Waterman

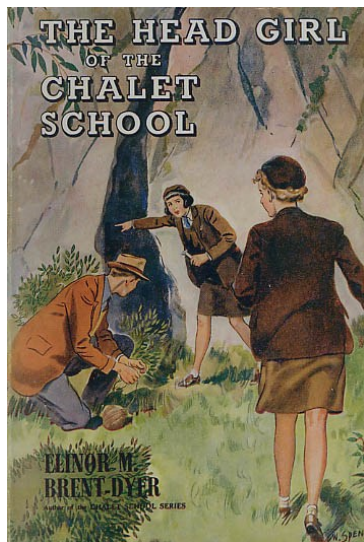
In reply to Katherine Porter's note about the illustrations on book covers looking like something else, this has happened to me several times recently. I have started a read through of CS books, this time they are all hardbacks so as well as the uncut text there are unfamiliar dustwrapper pictures to look at.

So far, I have mistaken the picture of Jo and Elisaveta in *Princess*, climbing over a balcony down to Cosimo as the girls riding off on a tandem bike.

And the wrapper of *Head Girl* with Joey, Grizel and Friedel von Gluck I took to be him lighting a long fuse on a bomb! In fact he is unravelling a ball of string to mark the way through the caves.

The other illustration I have only recently realised I had wrong is my favourite wrapper - *Rescue*, with the toddler triplets. I always thought Jo was carrying a basket of either laundry or eggs, until I saw a comment somewhere saying it was actually baby Stephen in the basket. Though it does look a very awkward way to carry him around!

I'm a very fast reader and think I must have a tendency to only glance at things as I must admit I never noticed any of EBD's famous inconsistencies either until they were pointed out to me.



South Shields Local History Group by Susan French

I found this website, southshieldslocalhistorygroup.co.uk recently which will be of interest to Friends of the Chalet School members. The group was founded in 2006 for people with an interest in the history of South Shields to meet, learn and share knowledge. They also hold talks in a local library.

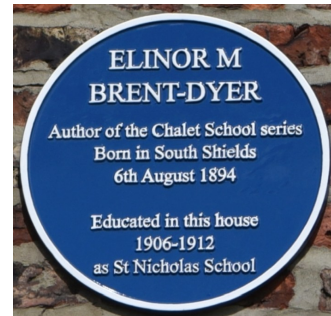


I think the website is fascinating, some of it is still 'under construction' but there is a lot in which to be interested.

Some of the different sections include: blue plaques, cinemas/theatres, listed local buildings, memorials, parks, schools, shipyards and more.

Elinor Brent-Dyer is listed under the 'blue plaques' and there is a good photo of St Nicholas School, Westoe Village (above), with the caption, 'educated in this house 1906-1912'. There is also a blue plaque to St Hilda's colliery brass band who achieved the feat of winning the World Championship five times in 1912, 1920, 1921, 1924 and 1926. EBD lived at home for part of the 1920s and may well have heard them play and known them.

I found it really engaging to view the buildings in EBD's background. It shows lots of photos of listed buildings in Westoe village which she may have passed on her way to school.



There is St Hilda's church and a photo of 22 Winchester Street, left, the premises of the British Legion, while Elinor lived at number 52 at the turn of the century.

Another photo shows the caretaker's lodge of the old Boys' High School which opened in 1885. This was one of Elinor's first teaching posts. I thought Hensell Dyer attended this school too, if anyone can confirm.

There are photos and information on the

