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reading *Roman Woman: Everyday life in Hadrian's Britain* by Lindsay Allason-Jones. Real history! Not like we were taught at school! Can anybody recommend any more books like this? So grateful to live in today's world with hot water and toilets."

Renny Wodynska "Thank you for a fabulous edition of the magazine no 150 issued November 2025. As usual I devoured it very quickly. I really enjoyed the contemporaneous reviews of CS books sent in by Sue Surman. The quote from *The History Boys* (part of Louise Race's article) was so beautiful and so true. I was excited to see Kay Whalley refer to a book she had bought at Bournville Works Library when it closed down. I wonder if we were ever there at the same time? As part of my re-read I have just finished my copy of *Jo to the Rescue* which I purchased from Bournville Works Library for the princely sum of 2½p!"



Girls Friendly Society

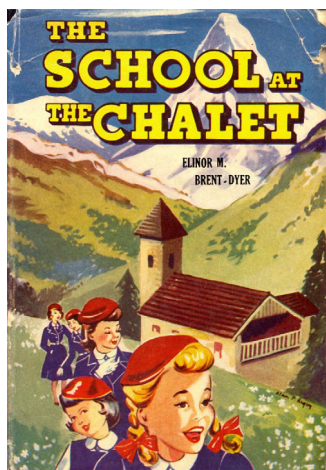
Shirley Sim "I was intrigued to see Helen Rockcliffe's photo of the Girls Friendly Society (GFS) bus. My sister and I were members when we lived in Newcastle and went to the local Methodist church. We were in our early teens in



the 1960s and went there because it was the nearest church to where we lived at the time. Previously we had attended a C of E church because that was closest to that house. My mother was very easy going about which church we attended and I have a feeling it was the Chalet School influence as she read the books as a girl, passing her love of them onto me. I can't remember any of the things we did at the GFS except I know we had little badges, but I seem to remember blue gowns when you reached a certain age. Sadly we left Newcastle just before my sister was old enough for the gown. We moved up to Edinburgh and it didn't seem to be heard of there. I googled it after seeing the photo and I discovered it is only in England and Wales. EBD

promoted Guides, EJO promoted Camp Fire but I don't recall anyone promoting GFS. Please let me know if you find anyone."

Linda Buckingham "There is a thriving GFS in our nearby market town of Atherstone. They have three groups organised by school years and meeting over two evenings in the hall next to the church."



cricket and Girl Guides. It's not always easy though, be aware, pupils may play pranks! Although excursions and educational trips are good, keep a tight rein on your pupils near a dangerous mountain.

Madge reflects, "Our first term, well, it hasn't been a bit what I thought it would. For one thing, I never expected we should get such a large school together so quickly." Mdlle agrees, "It has gone well, ma cherie." They make it all sound so easy!

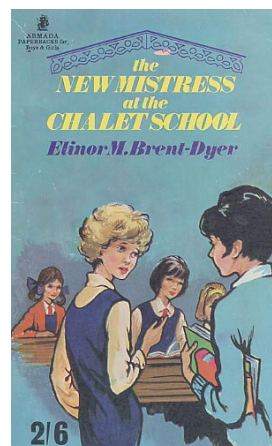
As Head though, you must be prepared to dispense punishment for bad behaviour, "Oh dear!" thought Miss Bettany, "Running a school isn't the easiest thing in the world - especially when there are two such girls as Grizel and Juliet in it!" You also need to make decisions such as

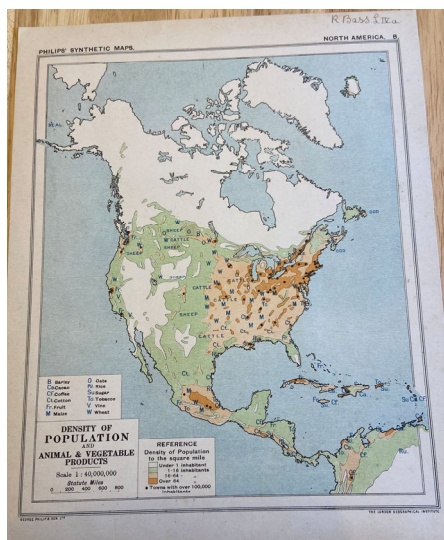
whether to break up early and the need for a prospectus. No wonder Madge declares in the final lines, "Teaching and school generally will be enough for me for the next three or four years, I can assure you."

The career novels often had a romance running through the story. This is not so apparent in *School at*, however observant readers will note that Madge is helped at a time of danger by a certain dashing stranger, "James Russell at your service." He leaves his card with Joey and gets the Chalet address to wire to Miss Maynard. He must be keen as, "Mr James Russell had been better than his word," he goes up to the Chalet and speaks in person instead.

I conclude that Madge is a young woman starting a career and, in between the tales and pranks, there are some pointers to setting up a boarding school business, albeit one in a foreign country. *School at* gives a rosy picture, it simplifies a lot of financial/legal issues (it is a school story after all). The Chalet School proves to be an immediate success, it lasts for more than 25 years and they celebrate their Silver Jubilee. The real life Margaret Roper School did not fare as well.

The New Mistress at the Chalet School was first published in 1957. It is unusual in the series as it focuses on the experiences of a new member of staff, not a 'new girl'. When we first meet Kathie Ferrars, she is twenty two years old and in the process of applying for school teaching posts. There is no





apparently taught there between 1916-1918, which also helps to date the maps.

Eva had taught science at a girls' school after achieving a First Class BSc in Chemistry at the University of London in 1903 and later became a Private Research Assistant to a geographer called A J Herbertson, compiling and drawing maps. Between 1910 and 1916, she co-wrote several geography textbooks and the first in 1910 was called *General and Regional Geography for Students*. It used many maps to show topography, climate and vegetation for various regions. Therefore I think our CS synthetic maps must have been an offshoot from this and I presume the data used must have

been updated over the years as they are mentioned, for example, in *New Mistress at the Chalet School*, first published in 1957, as being 'the last word'.

There is much more information online on E G R Taylor on Wikipedia and also on the website of the Royal Geographical Society as she had a long and distinguished career. In 1959, the RGS established an annual lecture in her name, the most recent of which was held in 2024.

She kept her maiden name, even though she had three sons with her partner. According to Wikipedia, she wrote to Marie Stopes, 'I have taken (from conviction!) the rather drastic step of having children without being legally married to their father, so that I can sign myself, Yours Sincerely, Eva G R Taylor'.

To return to the maps themselves, the amount of detail and information shown is amazing. I think you would have to be an older pupil to use and understand them. In *New Mistress*, Miss Ferrars gives out sets of synthetic maps of Africa for Inter V to use in prep and the book gives the average age of the form as fourteen years and eight months. There is a pupil's name carefully written on my own set of maps giving her form as Lower IVa, which I'm guessing could be comparable to Inter V.

