



BACK TO SCHOOL 15 JULY 1940

School was postponed for quite a few weeks and then the school system started off again. But all the ordinary schools, our parish schools, were commandeered by the Germans. They put all their ordinary troops in those schools. So us Islanders had to go either into the Sunday Schools or big houses that were commandeered for us to use. We were in the Vale Chapel Schoolroom, next to the Vale School itself.

DAPHNE BRETON

No. 20 Education Council Archive. A letter refers to the inability to educate children in St Saviour's and St Pierre du Bois as there is no place to send them that is near enough. It was three miles to walk there (and three miles back) with no midday meal.

No.29 Education Council Archive. A letter reports that 68 St Saviours children were found temporary accommodation, but 22 children in St. Peter's have nothing yet.

The schools started up again after 2 weeks. Most of the schools were able to reopen in their own premises, only the Forest School was closed right from the start, and that was more because there were only 9 children left than because it was requisitioned by the Germans at that time. However the Germans did take over the schools as barracks and food stores fairly quickly and some, like the Hautes Capelles and St Saviours were moved out within a few months.

G. Lenfestey(Researcher)

I started off school at a private school, at Kingsley House at the top of Berthelot Street which was a prep school for the College. I had to leave there at about 8 years old because the Germans raided the place because they thought there were radios in the place. Two ladies ran it by the name of the Misses Robins. One lady had a stroke and couldn't carry on the schooling any more so I had to move to Vauvert.

JEAN BUDDEN



BACK TO SCHOOL

I think we children felt our parents fear. I remember starting school, the infants were at the Torteval Methodist Schoolroom, and being petrified at being left there by my parents.

LEN LE RAY

I went to school, or started school just before my fifth birthday, but of course I wouldn't have known English at all. I spoke all in patois as did most of the other children in the area. We lived at the Bas Courtils in St Saviours, but went to school at the Trepied at St Saviours. Our teacher was then a Miss Pearl Blondel. She had the job of teaching us, or trying to teach us English before we started proper lessons.

My days at school were very happy, and I enjoyed it. We had to walk quite a long way, and certainly past St Saviours Church and all the tunnels underneath. We'd have been quite used to seeing dozens and dozens of Germans every day. The other thing we did on the way to school was collect wood and pine cones, especially by St Saviours Church, a place called Sous L'Eglise. We used to gather them and take them to school and the teacher would collect them up, and in the wintertime they would help to go into a boiler for fuel and to keep us warm.

We walked to school, which was probably almost two miles I should say. We walked every day, winter and summer. We met other children, other girls on the way, and by the time we got to the last half mile, there were probably five of us.

MARGARET LE CRAS

We had to take our lunches with us. Bearing in mind there was no food, and that was it. I used to have to take my sandwich, because the first thing the Germans did is buy up everything in the shops. Within three months there was nothing left in the shops at all. My Mum and Dad used to complain bitterly that the Jerries had taken everything. They had the marks, they had the money and they bought everything up, everything. And clothing disappeared, back to Germany.

ARTHUR KLEIN



BACK TO SCHOOL

I started school at the Convent School because my mother felt that if anything happened during the war the nuns would look after me and although we certainly weren't Catholics the nuns really were very good to us and did look after us. I then was transferred to Amherst. Now Amherst School was closed, the Germans occupied Amherst School as it is now, and we were sent to school in the Wesley Bouet Playgroup room, the Bouet Chapel, Wesley Chapel in the Bouet. There was Mrs. Roberts, bless her heart, she was the head teacher (I now take her Meals on Wheels.) Mrs. Roberts and Anita Renier and Gwen Pugh were the teachers and we were very well taught and very well looked after. Then I think a disease was traced to a child in the school or something happened and I was sent back to the Convent and then back to Amherst again, it was a bit of like jumping back and forwards to see where you could really get the best education. But we did learn. As far as I can remember I could read very fluently, and I'm sure the education here was as good as they could make it.

MYRTLE TABEL

My schooling had a bit of a hiccup because from an early age I took to smoking and I must have been making a cigarette out of the long seeds in the fields and went into the greenhouse to quietly light a cigarette and set myself alight, and I had about a year in hospital with skin grafts. That was in what is now the Castel Hospital. Then it was called the Country Hospital. So that interrupted my schooling, but I do remember days at Galaad.

ALAN BISSON





BACK TO SCHOOL

Education took a little while to organise, because the States of Guernsey didn't really know at first how many children were left in the island. So after they'd sort of done their sums, the schools were organised. They had to find teachers too, because most of the teachers had gone with the schools. They found teachers and they found the school. The Germans had occupied the Forest School, so we couldn't use that, so I had to go down to the school at St Pierre du Bois. It was a mixed school. I'd been used to going to boys' schools, but, suddenly we had a mixed school.

I remember the teacher telling us that in order to make the bread, or the flour go much longer, we would put potatoes in the bread. She said, "Of course, now when you slice a loaf," she says, "You're not going to find a big potato stuck in the middle – it's all going to be chopped up, so this sort of thing, for example is potato flour." Its very, very good for you, too! I mean, people spend a fortune these days in health shops buying this sort of thing. So this was mixed with the flour to make the bread go a bit further.

FRED GALLIENNE

So after 6 months I think, the letters came round that you had to go along to the parish school, which in my case was the Castel, and they did their best to assemble a motley group of children and teachers as well. There were people who had never taught but who were well qualified, they had degrees in certain things. Others who were retired teachers who had retired either through age or, you know, because the ladies got married and had families and what have you. And so we started in the Castel School. Peter Girard, who was a very young teacher then, was the most highly qualified so he got landed with the job of headmaster. Of course you remember at the Castel there were two schools, there was the Junior School one side of the wall and the Senior School the other.

ARTHUR KLEIN





BACK TO SCHOOL

We went back to school after there was a notice in the paper. I don't think we went back to the Capelles, but I do know we went to tearooms at the Picquerel, right at the end of Grand Havre, by the Salvation Army fortress as it is now. Our classes were all dispersed. I think there were 2 classes at the tearooms and there were some down at Salem. I know that we went later on to Ker Maria with several classes and then we went for a short time to a little room by the Catholic chapel at St Magloire, there was one class there I went to. Then we went to a place called the Salines, which was quite a large house up at Claque, and from there I went to Grand Maison at the bottom of the Rue Sauvage, Rousset's vinery.

The schools were dispersed. The Germans had taken over the main school as a dormitory, or barracks I suppose. They turned everyone out of the schools and we were dispersed, which was marvellous, because you got to know friends without the problems of big schools and knowing people, and as you moved on a year you went to another house, the schools were just rooms in the houses. The tearooms were a school for about 8 months and then the Germans decided they wanted those as well so we were turned out of there.

The teachers moved around with the class. It must have been very hard for them, they could not move around, you had the same teacher for all the subjects. Whether this was normal or not I don't know. The school was divided up for the whole of the Occupation. The first time I went to a 'proper' school was when I passed to the Intermediate, which was at Burnt Lane, and that was the first time I had seen lots of classes and lots of teachers all in the same place.

MALCOLM WOODLAND



SCHOOL MOVES

In the Castel there were classes at Rockmount Hotel, which had been closed down. It had already been occupied by slave workers for a bit. There had been a typhus epidemic but it had all been fumigated. There were lots of houses round Cobo that had been sealed up and fumigated, and then they were put in there. Cobo Mission, which is my church, was used for school during the week. Miss Martin's house, Albecq House at Albecq was used then. One way of stopping the Germans taking over your house was if you allowed classes in to part of your house, to use it, or your church, then the Germans wouldn't take it over. It was a sort of a trade off, really.

ARTHUR KLEIN

The Castel Senior School log book names five sites in all on 13.7.43.

Castel School ended up on six sites, and was moved out of some of those after a while and had to find other alternatives.

Hautes Capelles School had perhaps the most disruption, with at least ten different moves during the five years. It was housed at Ker Maria Roman Catholic Infants School, the Salvation Army Citadel at L'Islet, Salem Methodist Church Sunday School at L'Islet, Grande Havre Tearooms, St Magloire Roman Catholic Sunday School, Galaad Methodist Sunday Schoolroom, Les Landes Baptist Church schoolroom and private houses at Grande Maison ,Les Salines and in a room at Pleinheume.

Hautes Capelles School was moved on 18.11.40, 4.12.40, 6.1.41, 21.6.41, 7.7.41, 1.8.41, 17.10.41, 20.2.42, 31.8.42, 14.9.44

Torteval was the only parish school allowed to remain in its own premises during the occupation. All the other schools had to move elsewhere as the Germans requisitioned their buildings.

G. LENFESTEY (RESEARCHER)



SCHOOL MOVES

Mrs. P Robert taught at **Amherst Infants** before the war. One day she turned up to school to find the Germans had stabled horses in the classrooms! The school went first to St Johns Church Schools, [now Les Amballes Auction Rooms], then to St Georges Hall which was huge and cold. Then to Mr Harry Dredge's house in the Amballes and then to Wesley Chapel in the Bouet where they stayed. She remembers being cold and hungry. About 70 children were left at Amherst after the evacuation, but some then went on to the Intermediate. She felt they had enough books and paper, and there was no interference in what was taught.

St Andrews moved to a private house at La Brigade on 8.9.41

The Vale School moved next door to the Vale Methodist Chapel Sunday Schoolroom on 25/26.6.41

St Saviours School was requisitioned on 25.6.41, and it moved to the Congregational Chapel Sunday Schoolroom in the Grande Rue in Sept. 41, with classes for infants at Sarel, at the other end of the Grande Rue, and at Le Trepied at the top of the parish.
GILLIAN LENFESTEY (RESEARCHER)

As we got older, we were moved to the Haye du Puits. Now that was Jurat Roussel's house, the Haye du Puits, at that time. He lived there with his daughter who acted as his housekeeper. First of all we started in what was called the Hall. This was hung with tapestries and paintings and all sorts. And the trouble was, children used to flick, we had the old ink wells on the desk, so we used to flick wads of blotting paper at the paintings on the wall. There were 60 children in that class, and the master, Mr Reynolds, used to sit at the end with his desk, with his cane on top of his desk and his little dog sitting by the side of the desk. He was very good, actually. How he controlled such a motley mob I don't know, because there was a wide age range. I was about 9 or 10 when I went there and there were boys of up to 14, and girls, you know, varying in ages just the same.

ARTHUR KLEIN



SETTING UP OF THE OCCUPATION INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, APRIL 1941

Meeting held 17.2.41

Present, Rev. Frossard & Kilshaw, Jurat Roussel, Messrs E Wheadon & A Martin, teachers PJ Girard, JC Hayes, Miss A Moon
Full time Secondary education not yet possible. Attendance compulsory and children should stay on till 15 yrs old. Fees no more than parents can reasonably pay. Need to find people to teach the subjects needed for School Cert.

Meeting held 3.3.41

Subjects to be taught – Algebra, Geometry, French, English, Geography, History and Science. School will open for a total of 450 minutes in 1½ days initially. 65 applications so far, will have an eliminating test in English, French and Arithmetic. Further names can be submitted. Scholarship Exam. Papers for 1940 still unopened, so they will be used. Exams will be marked by persons named. Admission restricted to children from elementary [i.e. parish] schools. Committee unanimous that PJ Girard be teacher in charge, and Mr. Hayes and Miss Moon to help.

The Intermediate School was set up, eventually settling at Burnt Lane Roman Catholic school premises. It was soon able to offer fulltime teaching and School Certificate exams which were later acknowledged by the UK education authorities.

Extracted from the Education Council Minutes.





INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL LOG

Apr 22 1941

Wartime Intermediate School opened at Melrose School. 4 classrooms made available for 68 boys & girls selected by examination from the primary schools. PJ Girard, teacher in charge, Teachers JC Hayes, Mr. F Dowding, Miss A Moon and Miss Marion Leale.

Only open 2 days a week (initially), but plenty of homework was given to children as they continued to go to their local parish/elementary schools. School to open every Tuesday & Saturday. Tuesday to be a full day and Saturday a half day.

Finished first term with a visit to the 'Wizard of Oz.'

Art & Divinity added in September. Teachers were Mrs Trouteaud and Rev. Kilshaw respectively. Also opened on Thursday a.m. as well.

Extracted from the Intermediate School Log Book kept by Peter Girard.





LIFE AT SCHOOL

I attended a private school nearby during the 5 years. Here too shortages became common and one had to use a pencil until the top of it no longer protruded above the hand before receiving a new one. We were not allowed to sharpen our own pencils because of possible wastage. Ink came from France and was so full of grit that nibs clogged up and much spattering of it on copy books. Blotting paper did not blot. For reading the teacher chose classics of which we all had a copy and we each brought our copy. But as there were many versions we vied with each other for squeaking: "I haven't got that bit", or "I've got another paragraph before the end of the chapter", etc.

Those of us over the age of 10 were obliged to learn German from the text books provided by the German authorities. The schools inspector was a German and made a great impression on me as an 11-year old by bowing over my hand and clicking together his heels in their high black boots as he thanked me for showing him my work.

KAYE LE CHEMINANT

School was just school. I can't remember anything awful about school. All I remember was Mrs. Roberts' cook heating our milk up and bringing it in to us and looking after us and teaching us, and again as I say I just remember that as being a very happy time, and the same with Cordier Hill and the nuns.

We all had these funny tatty books and these great hard lumps of plasticine, which we played with and thought wonderful.

MYRTLE TABEL



LIFE AT SCHOOL

My mother was a schoolteacher and prior to the war she taught at St Peters. But you come across the social changes when I say this, because as soon as people like her got married she could no longer teach. And, so that is what happened. But when it came to 1940 with so many people leaving, and so many teachers leaving, there was then a real shortage. I think it was a Mr. Winterflood who was secretary of the Board of Education over here who phoned her up and asked if she could go and teach. And she taught in a little school called Galaad, which is by the current church. In fact it is part of their schoolroom now, and that is where I went to school, probably about 1941, that's where I started.

ALAN BISSON

Unfortunately in a way, after about three months it was, the Germans decided they needed our school, so we had to move, and so half of the school went to Torteval School, and the other half went to St Saviours School, and I had to go to St Saviours School. I wasn't too happy there, actually, because I was in a class lower than I had been at St Pierre du Bois School, and secondly, I think the teacher, the headmistress didn't like me very much. I always remember the first day there at school; I was given a brand new exercise book, so, eager to give a good impression, I was writing down in my best as the master was giving a dictation, The next day, the book was returned and that page had been torn out. Apparently, all the other children in the class were printing. So, the headmistress came in and she wasn't too pleased, she gave me a good telling-off, struck me across the ears a few times, and forced me to go back to printing. However, two months later, and this is the one thing, only one thing I've really been grateful to the Germans for, was the fact that they took over St Saviours School, which meant that I could leave!

I then went to Torteval School, where we were packed in like sardines. It's a very small school and we were all in rows. If the person against the wall wanted to go to the toilet, everyone had to move out and let him or her out, and go back, and as they returned we all had to move out again!



My mother wasn't too happy with the situation there, because I wasn't doing an awful lot of work. All we were doing all day long was copying pictures out of a book. We all got very good at it, but it wasn't going to be of much benefit to me in later life.

However, fortunately several parents, probably those whose children were in the same position, approached Brother Victor, who was the Director of Les Vauxbelets College to see if he would reopen the school, which he did. So my mother got me there. I always remember January 1942, we had to walk there because the snow was about this high on the roads, and you couldn't walk through the airport; we had to walk all the way round. Anyway, there were twelve boys there when I got there and no girls! We got down to the usual type of lessons one would have been accustomed to, like Algebra, Trigonometry, English language, Literature, instead of copying out of books.

There was one interesting thing we used to do at Les Vauxbelets, they used to have a lot of cider apple trees at the Vauxbelets during the Occupation and they used to make cider, I think it's the clockmakers who now have that particular building now. There was a large cider press there with a big vat, and the Brothers would crush the grapes. During the lunch hour when all the Brothers were having their lunch, some of us would go with our lunch tins and scoop up some of the cider and drink away. It didn't take Brother Victor very long to realise that we were far less attentive in the afternoon than we had been in the morning, so he realised what had happened and he set one of his Brothers on guard duty, as it were. Anyway we did enjoy the cider for a few days!

After the war, my mother sent me to Elizabeth College. Seeing all these boys coming back from England who had probably had a far better education than I'd had, I was a bit worried that they would be miles ahead of me, and I'd be struggling. But fortunately at the first end of term report, I was halfway up the class, instead of halfway down. So that was a great relief on my part. I was doing that without chemistry and physics, and Latin, because those were the three subjects that we didn't learn during the Occupation, so I was always very weak at those subjects.

FRED GALLIENNE



LIFE AT SCHOOL

I started school at beginning of 1940 at Hautes Capelles and lived at what is now the Ann Dawn Hotel. The school was taken over by the Germans and we were taught in scattered private houses, at Pleinheume, L'Islet, Grandes Maisons of Roussel, in a spare upstairs room up outside steps.

We wore 'sabots' in winter, car tyre soles, cloth tops, metal horseshoes to protect the soles, which meant you could skate down the Rue Sauvage on a frosty winter's day.

The lessons we had were mainly Maths and English. We obviously wrote stories and did our sums and general knowledge, but it seems to me a lot of our lessons depended on the particular teacher we had and their particular interests. I remember doing things like Nature Study, and I think at the back of the Grande Maison there was a quarry where we used to go and see some kingfishers and that became part of the lesson. We used to write in books, I can't remember whether it was ink or pencil, but I remember we used to fill up a book and when we'd filled it up we had to turn the book on its side and write across the page so that, to save the paper, because of the shortage of books. Playtimes we'd play in the front garden.

We used to play marbles in the road on the way home. We used glass marbles, I think some of them came from old 'pop' bottles, but if you owned a 'steely', which was a ball bearing, that was worth about ten glass marbles, a prized possession.

BRIAN LE CONTE



LIFE AT SCHOOL

I remember one incident at St Magloire. We had one particular boy who was a bit lively, a bit troublesome, maybe a bit of a bully, but we used to have different gangs, and for some reason the main game, was to play on our buggies, or bogeys. We would get some old pram wheels and make a sort of go-cart out of it. One way of getting to school, actually! We'd push each other, and take turns, because there was no traffic on the roads, just the odd horse and cart and bicycles and that was it. Anyway, this boy being some trouble, we, as a group were going round the church for some unknown reason. Unfortunately there was an old lady, I think she was the caretaker who used to live at one end of the building, and for some reason the game was to go as fast as we could and smash into her back door, and see how hard we could go into it. I don't think it was because we disliked the lady, it was just some silly thing that we did.

Anyway, obviously this was a bit of a problem, and I remember Mr Winterflood was then the Director of Education, though we didn't know him then. We soon did though. One morning he appeared with a cane. Now whether he had come with it strapped to the crossbar of his bicycle, or he had just cut a bamboo from outside I don't know, but anyway this boy was dealt with. I think that was the only time I saw the cane ever used.

BRIAN LE CONTE

Once at school, we were at Albecq House School at the time, there was an explosion in the trees. I think it was a shell or something that exploded. We all ran inside and sat down and the person next to me, who happened to be my friend Ernest de Garis suddenly started whimpering, and he'd been hit, actually, in the leg. He had a piece of shrapnel in the leg, and he had to go into hospital to have it removed. There was also a girl, I think her name was Valerie Le Cheminant, and she was hit as well, I'm not quite sure where, but it could have been serious. They both got over it.

HIRZEL DOREY



LIFE AT SCHOOL

Mr Hillier, was a student teacher and he had great difficulty controlling the class. Of course he was young, it wasn't fair, they used to torment him. And then there used to be a cry of 'Lids up', and he used to start throwing chalk, blackboard dusters and various objects at the boys who had annoyed him.

All sorts of pranks went on. I can remember one boy. The Germans used to have target practices, you mentioned earlier, but they also used to have like, machine gun pits and rifle pits in all the fields around. And they used to leave all these blank cartridges, and sometimes live ammunition as well. And there was this great big fireplace in there, and one day this particular boy, who I can remember well, actually, he's still alive, I won't mention his name, but he walked into the class and he was grinning at us. And the fire was burning, it was just sort of coal dust and peat, you know, because they excavated peat from the Grande Mare, and he chucked a couple of these into the fire, and of course they went off, and there was soot and dust everywhere!

ARTHUR KLEIN



THE TEACHING OF GERMAN

One thing we had to do at the Vauxbelets was that we were forced to learn German. None of the boys were too keen on that. I'm afraid the poor man who was teaching us (he was a Guernsey man) was given a pretty rough time, and I really felt sorry for him afterwards.

Eventually he gave up, so that was that, although a German officer came in sometimes. I don't know whether it was to try and inject some enthusiasm into the thing, but I've still got it, a little dictionary, German-English dictionary, and he wrote in it in German, with my name on it and everything, signed October 1943. but I'm afraid we didn't learn much German.

FRED GALLIENNE

Mrs. Tait was the German mistress, a German woman who had married a Scot. She also translated the RAF leaflets which were dropped, as they were usually written in German for the soldiers.

DON SMITH

I can remember learning German; we had to learn German, because I was at an intermediate school, which was equivalent of the Grammar School now, and we had to pass an exam to get in. But the Germans, they used to come towards the end of the school week, maybe, or school fortnight, and they used to ask us questions to see how we were getting along in German. And some of them ... an officer used to give us a little medal if we were very good. Well, we weren't all very good, and we did not like our German teacher!

MOLLY BIHET

German was voluntary at first, and then it became compulsory. I didn't get on with it very well.

DAPHNE BRETON



THE TEACHING OF GERMAN

When I was at the Intermediate, we had to learn German. I was tested by a German officer and we had the German teacher. Actually, I was getting on quite well with German, rather better than French, oddly enough. We knew he was coming, and the doors flew open, and this German with his big wide pantaloons and big jackboots, clonk, clonk, clonk, walked in. He was going to cross-examine us on what we had learned so far. Well, I was only a first year. He asked questions of the boys, -“ You, what’s so and so in German.” Very simple words. Fortunately, I knew what he said when he got to me, “What’s ‘green’ in German,”

“Grune” I said in a little voice.

Fortunately the war ended and we never had to go through that again. But a German officer in full regalia and full ‘meanness’ could be a bit scary.

MALCOLM WOODLAND

One thing we learnt at school I remember, we had to learn German. It was brought in as part of the curriculum. I don’t think the teacher knew any German. I remember a German coming into the classroom, and the only German I can remember now is the fact that I can count up to 20. I could go on a little bit further, but not much more, and that’s about the only German I remember, apart from ‘nicht furst stein’ which was our answer when we were asked anything by a German – ‘We don’t understand’, ‘We don’t know’.

BRIAN LE CONTE



We had Mrs. Tait the German lady who taught us German. She was married to an Englishman and they were really holding a gun to her head because if she didn't do what she was told, to teach the Guernsey children German her husband would have been deported, you see, because he was an Englishman, and there was another bargain there.

She was very good, and she was actually very pro-British. We used to collect these leaflets once they started being dropped, stuff our bags full of them and take them to school, although that was against the rules and we were threatened with a caning if we got caught. She used to come into the class for a German lesson and she used to say 'Anybody got any news today?' and somebody would produce a leaflet from their desk, and she would read it and translate it as she went along, you know, all about the Normandy landings and what was going on and all that. Then if we heard somebody at the door, schiff, schiff, she would sit on it.

ARTHUR KLEIN





From THE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL Log 1941-1945

22.4.41

School re-opened at Melrose, 68 boys and girls selected by examination.

Mr Girard, Mr Hayes, Mr Dowding, Miss Moon and Miss Leale. These teachers were initially seconded from their schools to the IS part time.

12.11.41

Germans occupied Melrose, so everything was moved to Burnt Lane RC School

5.1.42

Opened after holidays as a full-time school, but teachers still on part time secondment

7.1.42

The French-speaking nuns at Burnt Lane started to provide soup for lunch when the children were at school all day. Vegetables were brought by the children and bones obtained through the Essential Commodities Committee.

Feb. 1942

The Education Committee decided to grant a Local School Certificate and to combine with Jersey in taking a School Certificate, which might later be recognized by the UK authorities.

May 23, 1942.

Prize giving at Brock Road School

June 1942

Concerns over fuel for the coming winter, as the peat that had been promised had been stolen.

July 1942

Decided that a Guernsey School Leaving Cert. be organized independently of Jersey as it was very difficult to forecast the amount of work which could be accomplished in one year because of the very uncertain conditions especially with regard to fuel, light, food, transport, etc.



Sept 26 1942

Very heavy rain, children came to school literally soaked to the skin. Fires lit, clothes dried off and children meanwhile dressed in theatrical costumes. (*Arthur Klein remembers this and says they put the clothes on, and got on with their lessons as if it was the most ordinary thing in the world for Charles II to sit next to Queen Elizabeth 1!*)

Dec 19 1942.

Christmas party, food, piano and drums. So enjoyable children did not want to go home.

Jan 18 1943

German now compulsory.

Mar 6 1943

The upper bicycle stored at Sarnia Cycle Works is within the infected area of a typhus epidemic. [*Children stored their bicycles during the day at Sarnia Cycle Works*]. Armed Operation Todt sentries to prevent children from entering the yard. (*This happened during the day and they had to negotiate to get the bikes out so the children could go home that evening*)

May 7 1943

Commemoration service at Holy Trinity Church for 60th anniversary of foundation of first Intermediate School, in 1883.

Sports Day, Prize giving.

Nov 6 1943

Prizes awarded by German Authorities for proficiency in the German Language. Books on German folk tales, the sagas, etc.

Dec. 16 1943

Impressive carol service at Holy Trinity Church.

Dec 18 1943

School Christmas dinner, and party.



THE SOUP KITCHENS

Soup kitchens were set up in most of the parishes to provide a hot meal for children at lunchtime so that they did not have to use vital energy going back home, and they also helped to conserve fuel. The children would bring what vegetables they could, the Education Council would provide bones and the organizers would cook a nutritious soup which often also contained dumplings for a cost of 1d. or 2d. per child per day.

Other helpers also provided vegetables and towards the end of the Occupation one gentleman in particular could often be seen with his horse and cart removing vegetables from one end of a field whilst the Germans, who had requisitioned the vegetables, were removing them from the other end.

The kitchens in St Martins and St Peter Port closed down fairly soon due to lack of support, but the kitchens associated with the Hautes Capelles, Castel, Vale and St Saviours schools lasted throughout the Occupation.

They were usually set up in private houses or packing sheds within easy walking distance of the school. When the Intermediate School moved to the Roman Catholic School at Burnt Lane the nuns provided soup for the children on the days when the children were there all day. The children were expected to help clear up afterwards, and one boy remembers being told off by them for not drying the metal pans properly. Another boy said "The nuns did not speak a word of English but they made us understand what they wanted us to do."

Hautes Capelles. 9.1.41

Soup kitchen re-opened at Hautes Capelles Methodist Sunday School and over 120 children availed themselves of the opportunity of a good dinner.

Vale. 3.3.42

Over 70 children attended the kitchen. They are still getting a very good meal of potatoes, beans and 'dough balls' in good beef gravy.



SOUP KITCHENS

I can remember the Germans sending in sweets for the children to have, during that time. We used to go and have dinners at a soup kitchen, the States used to provide special meals for the children, bean jar and duff [dumplings] and whatnot. We used to have a jolly good feed. The kitchen was at the Blanche Carriere, in the Vale. We used to ride down there on our bicycles.

DAPHNE BRETON

We went to school at the Cobo Mission Hall. Parents were allowed to plant vegetables at the side of the Hall, it was mostly turnips. The mothers had a rota and each day we children were taken across the road into a cottage and given a bowl of watery turnip soup. That's what we had nearly every day, and that's what kept us going.

ANN QUERPEL

Peter Girard had this racehorse called 'Irish Eyes', which had been trained also to pull a trap or a cart and a light van, and the Germans, who we always considered rather thick between the ears, would be in a field that they had commandeered, of vegetables. Now they'd paid for it, but of course they just printed their own marks, they didn't really mean much. They would be digging them at one end and Peter's father with an assistant would be at the other end loading up. Nobody ever asked any questions! Quite unbelievable, you know. And we always had plenty of soup.

ARTHUR KLEIN





SOUP KITCHENS

At the Intermediate School the children washed up after the nuns had provided the midday soup meal. I got into trouble once, as they said the metal pans were not properly dry!

DON SMITH

The Vauxbelets College was occupied by the Germans, so the school never opened up in the college, it opened up in the farm buildings. That's an interesting thing, we were in the farm, and we were being taught in the farm. I remember that the food situation got that bad that if it was devised by Brother Victor and the parents that those that could, on a Monday morning would bring what vegetables they could and that would form a basis of providing soup for us at school.

RAYMOND TOSTEVIN

When we went to the scholarship school, we went 6 days a week. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays we went all day and the Sisters provided soup. We all had enamel bowls and spoons and we would all queue up to get this, and they were very good. The only bind was, there was a rota and we had to go and help with the washing up after. But no, they were very good. And they couldn't speak a word of English, it was quite funny really, and we didn't have much French anyway, really, but they pointed and we knew what to do, so that was it.

ARTHUR KLEIN



FREE MILK

I had the milk ration, and I have never drunk plain milk since. I took my own cup to drink out of.

BRIAN LE CONTE

The other thing that was quite different then, was that we were allowed milk. We were allowed a certain amount of milk every day but glasses were in very short supply, and probably as children we'd have broken them anyway, so we used to drink out of jam jars. The milk was measured every day in a jam jar and we drank the milk. I always enjoyed milk then, as I do now.

I remember one particular boy didn't like milk at all, but Miss Blondel knew how important it was with the food shortage that he should drink the milk. She reminded me a while ago how she persuaded him to drink the milk by giving it to him in a thimble. She persuaded him to just drink one thimble of milk, and then gradually she increased it and introduced it into the jam jar, so that within a short time he got used to drinking the milk which it very important.

MARGARET LE CRAS

We children, when we started school, had a pint of milk a day. I never drank it because I didn't like milk. They tried to help the children as much as they could, and expectant mums.

DAPHNE BRETON



CHRISTMAS GIFTS, PARTIES, END OF TERM CONCERTS

Towards the end of 1940 Mr Winterflood, the secretary to the Education Council, realized that because the Germans had bought up so many goods from local shops there was a very real possibility that there would be very few gifts available for the children at Christmas.

He clearly felt that children should have as good a Christmas as possible, whatever else happened during the year, so he asked the 'Star' newspaper to organize what for a better word could be called a Christmas fund, and people donated books and toys they no longer needed, and money.

Each school was thus able to organize a party every Christmas for their children, with some kind of hot meal, 'sweets', party games, and Father Christmas who gave each child a present. There were often enough gifts for the pre-school children to have a gift as well.

Vale School 1.4.42

School closes today for ten days. We are having a concert amongst ourselves, each class contributing some item which has been learned during the term.

Vale School 18.12.42

The school was closed for lessons Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday being devoted to pictures, etc. On Monday all scholars over nine years of age went to the Regal cinema for a performance. On Tuesday afternoon the children had games at school supervised by the [Parish Education] Committee, their wives and the staff. They were treated to a drink and the rest of their biscuits. On Wednesday all met at the Vale Communal Kitchen for a dinner. 132 had a good meal of rabbit, baked potatoes, vegetables, pudding and sauce followed by a jam tart and a Guernsey biscuit.



Castel Senior School. 21 – 23.12.42

Entertainment at Regal cinema (films and dancing) for children.

Afternoon party for Haye du Puits children at Delisles. Prize giving at Delisles. [*the Methodist Church Sunday Schoolroom*]

Hautes Capelles School 15 – 18.12.44

St Magloire children gave parents a small concert in their own schoolroom. The Salines Infants dept. gave their parents a very fine concert and enjoyed a party at Salem Schoolroom. Galaad Infants entertained their parents with a fine little concert and play. The Pleinheume dept. entertained their parents this afternoon in their crowded little room, a very happy little concert too, at the end of which each child received either a game, book or a pair of gloves or stockings knitted by a friend. The Grande Maison children received a book each, secondhand of course, as in other years.

St Andrews School 21.12.44

An enjoyable party was held at Bailiffs Cross Mission Hall from 2.30 to 4.30. Tea was served by the wives of the [Parish School] Committee members. The cakes were provided by kind friends. Santa Claus distributed books and toys to the children.



GIFTS OF BISCUITS FROM THE FRENCH SOCIETY LE SECOUR NATIONAL

In June 1942 the French organization known as Le Secour National de France started to send consignments of plain sweet biscuits to Guernsey schoolchildren. They were similar to present-day 'Nice' biscuits and were very much appreciated by the children.

Over the next three years seven or eight more consignments were received, with approximately 2 lb of biscuits per child every time. These were distributed through the schools, with most children receiving three or four biscuits a day at the same time as they had their milk.

The biscuits were free, but at one point the organization asked for donations towards the cost of carriage and cartage and the not inconsiderable sum in those days of over £131 was collected from the schoolchildren and sent to France.

The last consignment appears to have arrived at the end of 1944, when there would probably have been at least 1,400 children at school. At 2 lb per child, this means an incredible 2,800 lbs of biscuits were sent by this French society in this consignment. It is possible that upwards of 20,000lbs of biscuits in total were sent to local children.

Hautes Capelles School 25.10.42
Third issue of biscuits from Secours National.

Hautes Capelles School 8.11.43
Children finished third gift of biscuits, 2 lb each, 4 eaten daily at school, a very great treat!

Hautes Capelles School 5.3.44
Seventh gift of biscuits from Secours National, amid great rejoicings, 2 lb per head.

Hautes Capelles School 31.3.44
Over £12 was collected from our children to be sent to Le Secours National of France in acknowledgement for biscuits sent.



SPORTS FIXTURES

In an effort to make school life as normal as possible, sporting fixtures were arranged regularly for the older children. Football, netball and tennis were played between the schools, and as individual schools the children did gymnastics and went swimming.

BA/52-7

No.132.

Letter, 14 November 1943, from Hautes Capelles Junior School

Dear Sir

Would it be at all possible to obtain football boots left in Guernsey by evacuees? Our twenty senior boys are now playing and badly in need of boots. Are there any at all available even for the team? If for the latter, we should need 3 pairs size 4, three size 3 and one size 5. The game is doing these boys untold good but as you know footwear is the main difficulty with schoolchildren today. If you should know of a football available I should willingly buy it – the boys have only one very small one.

Yours faithfully

(from The Education Council's log)

One boy said that one of the pleasures of attending the Intermediate School was that they organized a wide range of after-school sporting activities, and one never needed to be bored.

Extracted from School log books

Vale School 5.8.40

Bathing parade this afternoon at Bordeaux. Mrs. Gale and Miss Leale were in charge.

Hautes Capelles. 13.2.41

A netball team and a football team in charge of Mr Hillier went to Castel School to play first matches. Both won by Castel, 35-2 and 3-2.

Vale 15.9.43

About 20 of the senior children who have been playing tennis during the summer are entering for a tournament to conclude the season.



Vale School 10.2.44

A team of boys went down to L'Ancrese to play football for an hour with boys from the Hautes Capelles.

Vale School 15.2.44

The senior boys who are in the football team went to Beau Sejour to play against the Vauxbelets. They won this match 2-1.

Castel School 18.11.43

Played Vauxbelets at football, won 5-0.

Castel School 30.11.43

Played Intermediate at football, lost 2-1

Castel 18.2.44

Played football match against St Martins at Jerbourg, won 2-1

We played football on Home Farm I can remember, but it seems, from what I can remember, that it was mainly between the scholarship school and the Castel, partly because Peter Girard was headmaster of both. But of course the Germans took over Home Farm completely in the end so you couldn't use it, you know.

ARTHUR KLEIN



ARP (Air Raid Precautions) FIRE DRILL PRACTICES & PRACTICE FIRING OF GUNS

We could hear the shells going over when they fired the Mirus battery guns, they used to fire over Herm and up the Channel.
DAPHNE BRETON

I remember people passing our house at 9 and 10 o'clock at night, from Pleinmont. The Germans had told them to evacuate, as they were going to practice shooting, I'm not sure from where. My parents invited them in and they stayed the night. Their ceilings came down, that was at Le Refuge, Gallienne, Jack Ferbrache and his brother. One of the shells hit Torteval Methodist church, I remember going the following day. The top of the gable and the pinnacle had been blown off, and there was so much dust on the table you could write your name on it. A shell fell on Mr Norman's greenhouse, at Le Belle.
GORDON HOTTON

There were regular Air Raid Precaution and Fire Drill practices. The children were taught to take shelter not so much because of the danger of being hit by bullets but by the shrapnel from the exploding shells.

ARP shelters were built in every school, and the schools were regularly closed when the Germans practiced firing of the guns around the island. Children and staff were sometimes unable to get to school because they were forbidden to cross restricted areas. Occasionally large groups of people were evacuated en masse, with large scale disruption to school life.

The Hautes Capelles School was evacuated to other premises for several weeks at the beginning of the occupation because of unexploded bombs in the vicinity of the school.

The children do not appear to have been aware of the reason for the regular school closures, but they clearly caused considerable disruption to the staff.



Most schools had ARP drill on a weekly basis. Capt. Henderson and latterly Mr Dear were in charge of ARP precautions and they inspected the schools, made sure the shelters built were adequate and timed the Drill. One school was able to get 120 children safely into their shelter in just over one minute.

One shelter was built underneath the church organ and the older children were taught in there during the very cold winter of 1944/45 as it was warmer than in their [temporary] classroom.

The German Army regularly test-fired their guns and would give between 12 and 48 hours notice to people and schools which were within / underneath the range of the guns.

The schools were usually only closed for half a day.

G Lenfestey (Researcher)



MORE SHORTAGES

As the Occupation wore on fuel became increasingly scarce. Some of the premises taken over as classrooms had no heating, and although stoves were installed they often smoked so badly that the children had to be sent home.

Bad weather, snow, pouring rain and extreme cold often prevented children going to school. The winters during the Occupation seem to have been quite severe, and with an increasing lack of fuel it was sometimes very difficult to heat the classrooms.

The bad weather and poor diet meant that children caught colds quickly and were unable to throw them off. Some children were ill for weeks.

The shortage of clothing and shoes also affected their attendance, and eventually some children were excused school because they had grown out of their shoes and could not find any more to wear.

The Education Council tried to help by buying up stocks of shoes and issuing them to parents through the schools but eventually even their stocks were exhausted.

G Lenfestey (Researcher)

Extracts from School Log Books 1941-1945

Hautes Capelles. 10.7.41

Forty six pairs of rubber soled shoes bought by parents for children from the Education Council, and distributed at school.

Hautes Capelles. 17.11.41

Galaad dept. had to be closed for the afternoon as the stove smoked so badly ...

Hautes Capelles. 14.3.42

Some children have no shoes, others have been ill for many months, and many are just recovering from heavy, lasting colds. Three boys of one family have been at home nine weeks, now have no fit clothing for school.



Vale School 29.10.42

For the second time this week the weather is very wet and windy. Consequently the attendance is very poor. Many of the children have inadequate footwear.

Vale School 30.11.43

Attendance in top class very poor, several have colds and several of the big boys are unable to procure footwear.

Vale School 21.2.44

Because of the gas restriction the senior class has had several lessons down in the air raid shelter which is heated by pipes from the boiler. *[the air raid shelter was constructed underneath the church organ]*

St Saviours School 21.2.44

Very poor attendance owing to prevalence of influenza and colds, and extremely cold weather.

Vale School 22.8.44

The footwear problem is becoming acute and quite a few of the children are attending barefoot.

Hautes Capelles School 3.11.44

The Fuel Controller having declared it impossible to provide fuel for any of the island schools this winter, each parish committee was told that if donations of trees could be obtained from private individuals the cost of labour and transport to the schools would be paid. After much enquiry we were offered a tree from each of the following – Pere Jameau, Mr Peter Carre, Mr Roussel and Mr Falla.

Vale School 10.11.44

The temperature in the rooms today is 44 degrees F.





OTHER EVENTS

Various other events are recorded in the school Log Books, some of which are listed below.

St Saviours/Sarel Schools 6.11.41

School closed this afternoon for the funeral of Mr EA Brouard. He was the secretary/treasurer of the Parish School Committee and was greatly esteemed and did a great deal of work for the school. He was accidentally killed in his house on November 3rd. The German soldier billeted in the house was cleaning his revolver and it went off by accident. The bullet went through the wall and killed Mr Brouard instantly. The staff of the Sarel and St Saviour's schools are going to the funeral this afternoon.

Vale School 9.7.42

The two infant classes were sent home after they had had their milk so that the teachers could attend lessons being given at St Martins demonstrating the teaching of infants. These lessons were given by Miss Carthew, a fully trained teacher at St Martins School.

[As the number of infants starting school increased during the occupation extra classes had to be started and more people brought in to teach these children.

Torteval School 3.9.42

Although all our wireless sets have been taken by the Germans twice (this time permanently) and we have become isolated from the outer world for any news it is still possible, though risky, to hear items of news secretly... In this way some of us heard that the King had fixed this day for a 'National Day of Prayer'; and although nothing was done in the island to follow such direction, I am determined to make the School aware of this date. At 11 a.m. all stood to attention for 2 minutes after explanation of the significance of the day and how each one could think during the silence. At the end, as the singing of 'God save the King' has been expressly prohibited ever since the Occupation, we said the words and, I hope, felt better for doing so.

[Capt. Boon, the headmaster of Torteval, was subsequently deported and died in an internment camp in October 1943]



Castel Senior School 13.10.43

A German officer came to present prizes for German in the afternoon. One in Mr Roussel's class and 3 in Mr Hillier's class.

Castel Senior School 17.11.43

In the afternoon only 21 children present out of 55, the remainder gone to Foulon Cemetery to attend the funeral of 17 naval ratings picked up around the coast. *[This was the sinking of HMS Charybdis and Limbourne]*

Vale School 12.3.43

Mrs. Bisson [a teacher] has received a letter from John Smith who was evacuated recently. He is in a temporary camp at Compiègne, France and seems quite happy.

In September 1942 the Germans ordered the deportation to Germany of all people born in England. The local authorities sought to mitigate this order as much as possible but even so many hundreds of people with their families were deported over the course of the next few months, mainly to Biberach and Laufen.

Castel Senior School 23.3.44

65 quarter pound tins of cocoa sent from Germany for the school children, 210.

St Andrews School 24.3.44

Eleven tins of cocoa to be divided amongst 33 children, sent by the internees at Biberach, Germany.

Those people who had been sent from Guernsey to be interned in Germany were eligible to receive Red Cross food parcels. They put aside items and sent them back to Guernsey. When the Red Cross found out they stopped it, as it was the responsibility of the German authorities to feed Guernsey civilians.



LIFE AT SCHOOL

May 16 1944

Decided to aim to take the Oxford School Cert. for 1945, regulations and syllabuses being available through the kind efforts of Advocate Sherwill, at present confined to the German internment camp in Germany.

[Sherwill could write to Guernsey, and could also write to the UK, so the Education Council told Sherwill what they wanted, and he wrote to Oxford. Oxford replied to him in Germany and he sent it on to Guernsey]

Vale School 5.6.44

School re-opened after the Whitsun break. Attendance not very good owing partly to the air raids. One was taking place at 9 o'clock as children were leaving for school.

June 4 1944

Number of children had narrow escape whilst bathing at the Bathing Pools when Fort George and Castle Cornet were attacked. They were between the two objectives and could only shelter in an open shed.

6 June 1944

Schools closed due to enormous amount of falling shrapnel, and compulsory attendance no longer required.

The shrapnel came from the exploding shells as the Germans fired on the Invasion forces overhead.....