

Non-Chalet titles that link to the Chalet School series

Titles in **BOLD** have a synopsis below. Be aware that there are spoilers.

[The La Rochelle series](#)

GERRY GOES TO SCHOOL (1922)
A HEAD GIRL'S DIFFICULTIES (1923)
THE MAIDS OF LA ROCHELLE (1924)
SEVEN SCAMPS (1927)
HEATHER LEAVES SCHOOL (1929)
JANIE OF LA ROCHELLE (1932)
JANIE STEPS IN (1953)

['Stand-alone' books](#)

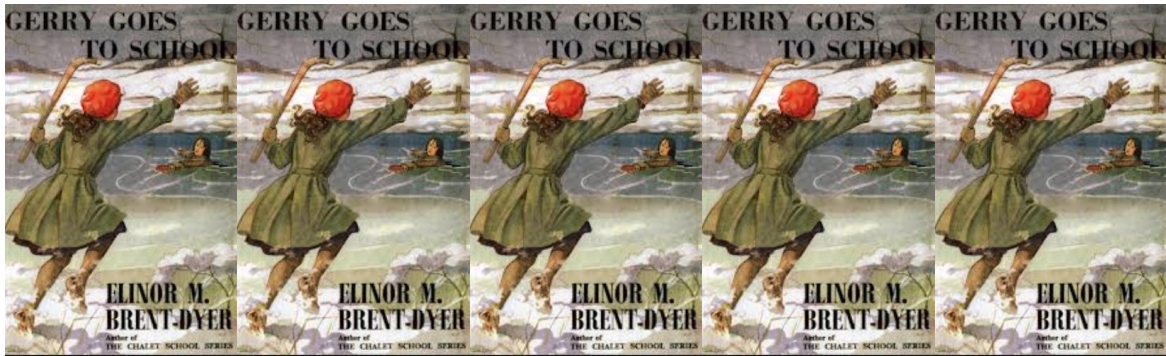
THE LOST STAIRCASE (1946)
MONICA TURNS UP TRUMPS (1936)

[Annuals](#)

THE CHALET BOOK FOR GIRLS (1947)
THE SECOND CHALET BOOK FOR GIRLS (1948)
THE THIRD CHALET BOOK FOR GIRLS (1949)

[Recipe book](#)

THE CHALET GIRLS' COOKBOOK (1953)



Gerry Goes To School (LR1)

Synopsis

Contributed by Susan Vass, Scotland — working from a hardback edition

Geraldine Challoner has been brought up by her two elderly aunts, following the death of her parents in a tornado ten years previously. When her aunts are forced to go abroad she is entrusted to the care of the Trevennors.

Geraldine has been brought up in the style of a girl of the Victorian era, but manages to settle in with the Trevennors and their 10 children. Nell swiftly christens her Gerry and Mrs Trevennor discretely replaces her own clothes with some of her daughter's. Gerry becomes close friends with the oldest boy, Paul, much to the annoyance of his younger sister, Jill.

Gerry is enrolled at St Peter's School where the rest of the Trevennor girls go. She is initiated into the Middle School and quickly settles in. That night Jill appears in Gerry's bedroom and the girls quarrel. The quarrel develops into a physical fight and they are discovered by Paul. This leads to more friction between Jill and Gerry. At school the Middle School decides to strike against the Upper School, and Gerry becomes very involved in this.

Jill is then involved in a skating accident, but is saved by Gerry. The incident leads to Gerry and Jill becoming firm friends, and at school Gerry is delighted to learn that she has gained her remove to IVB.

Key Facts (Possible Spoilers)

On the train to school on Gerry's first day, Jill ignores her, but Rosamund Atherton takes pity on her and introduces her to her younger sister Con and to Muriel Hatherley.

The staff at St Peter's are rather surprised at Gerry's unusual education, but Gerry is surprised and pleased to be placed in IIIA with Con and Muriel.

Paul offers to help Gerry with her maths homework, which antagonises Jill. After supper Gerry accompanies some of the family on the piano and Paul recognises that she has a gift for music.

The following weekend Gerry accompanies Larry and Nell on a visit to the Comptons, who take her to the cinema. By the end of the day Gerry has developed a hero worship of Marcia Compton, who is also the head girl of St Peter's. On the way home from the Comptons, the horse bolts but Larry manages to hold her and none of the party are injured.

At school the Middle School decides to strike. Gerry writes out a letter, which they all. The prefects call for a delegation of the strikers, and Gerry is among those who visit the Prefects' room. Gerry has a conflict of loyalties because of her admiration for Marcia, but decides to stick with the other Middles.

Back home, the family plan a skating trip for the following day but that evening brings a thaw. Paul and Nell forget to tell the rest of the family this, and Jill decides to go skating alone - being seen only by Gerry. A short while later Gerry hears that the ice isn't safe and goes after Jill. She manages to save Jill who has gone through the ice, and they come to no harm. The incident leads to the friendship of Gerry and Jill, and to Mr Maitland becoming engaged to Margaret Trevennor.

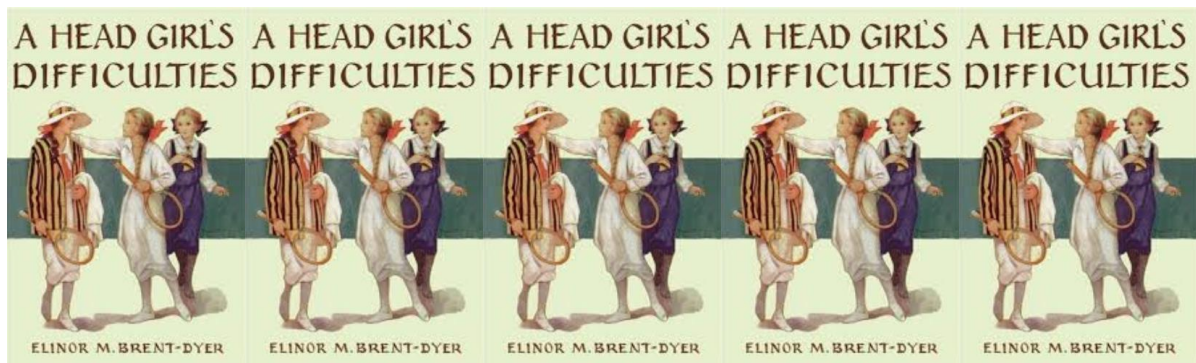
Gerry's happiness is complete when she learns that she is to make her home permanently with the Trevennor family.

Links to the Chalet School

Gerry Challoner becomes friends with ex-Chalet School pupil Grizel Cochrane, when Grizel is studying in Florence. Gerry later visits the Chalet School with Grizel (see RIVALS OF THE CHALET SCHOOL).

Rosamund Atherton marries Nigel Willoughby and becomes the mother of Blossom and Judy who later go to the Chalet School.

Francesca (Cesca) Atherton marries Mr Eltringham (see SEVEN SCAMPS) and becomes the mother of Nita who goes to the Chalet School with Peggy Bettany.



A Head Girl's Difficulties (LR2)

Synopsis

Contributed by Susan Vass, Scotland — working from a hardback edition

Rosamund Atherton is nervously contemplating becoming the youngest ever Head Girl of St Peter's when she learns that the Head, Miss Catcheside, has been seriously injured in a train accident and will not be returning to school that term. The prefects are shaken, but after an encouraging talk from the Senior Mistress, Miss Phillips, they decide to carry on do their best with the coming term. Rosamund urges that St Peter's should beat all of its previous records in all sport, hobby and examination activities.

Rosamund has to deal with misbehaviour from the lower school with which she does successfully but it leads to bad feeling between her and her sister, Allegra but a serious outbreak of illness leads to the school closing early and the bad feeling is forgotten in the events.

When the next term begins in January several of the girls are sent away to recuperate including Con Atherton with her mother and brother Noel. The girls are cheered by a visit from the Head on the first morning.

Shortly into the term there is an outbreak of sentimental behaviour in the lower school coinciding with the arrival of a new girl but Rosamund and the prefects manage to stamp it out before too much damage is done.

Rosamund's entry into a prize essay competition is destroyed in a fire at home but she manages to resubmit an improved version and the term ends with a series of practical jokes by IIIA who are justly punished.

The third term sees the return of Miss Catcheside to the school, and the convalescing members of the Atherton family return home. There is excitement when St Peter's beats The Grange at tennis for the first time in four years, especially since Rosamund, the reserve, has been called up to play. The term ends with good news for the Athertons, for Miss Catcheside and for Rosamund herself.

Key Facts (possible spoilers)

The first of Rosamund's difficulties happens some lower school girls hide in the gym to observe a gymnastics display intended for the fifth form. They are accidentally locked in, and discovered by Rosamund. The culprits are required to apologise to the prefects of the two fifth forms and the mistresses who had given the display.

The next difficulty occurs when the lower school produce a "newspaper" with the declared aim of advertising their wrongs. It is full of cheeky limericks, mottoes and correspondence about the seniors and has appalling grammar and spelling. They are punished by having to forgo all games practise for a fortnight and have spelling and grammar lessons instead.

The term ends with an outbreak of diphtheria. Despite Miss Phillips closing the school at once, the disease spreads through the pupils with some tragic consequences. The epidemic comes to an end with a cold snap but by then term is almost over and only the girls who are sitting exams return to school.

The new term begins with some changes. Several girls including Rosamund's sister, Con, have been sent away to recuperate from the epidemic, and one of the mistresses has left to be married. The girls are cheered by a visit from Miss Catcheside on the first morning, who tells Rosamund privately that she should slacken the reins a bit.

Not far into the term there is an outbreak of sentimentality in the school. The prefects attack the outbreak on two fronts. They invent an imaginary admirer for Adelia, a new girl in the sixth who is the source of the outbreak. They also confiscate the letters from the lower school's secret post box and force the recipients to read them out in front of the school. This shames everyone into abandoning the sentimentality.

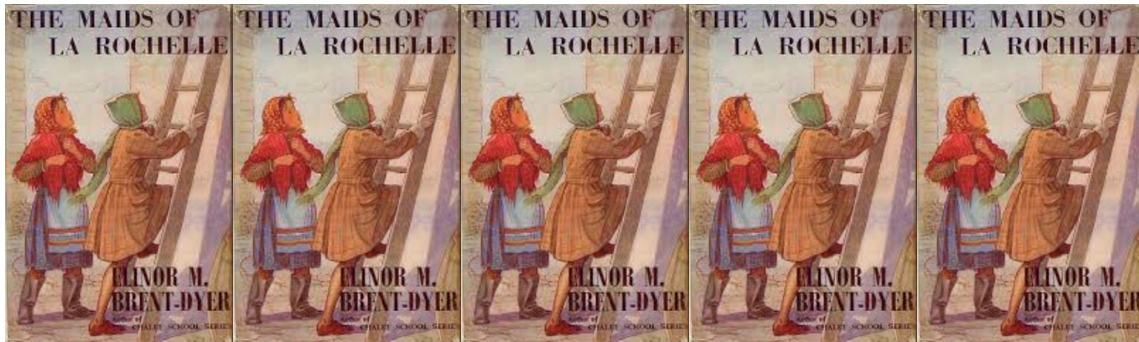
The school year ends with a postponed speech day at which Rosamund wins several prizes, and some good news for the Athertons. Their money worries are over at last after some shares have risen in value.

The news comes that Miss Catcheside is to be married in August and the exam results are read out - Rosamund has won the Verulam Scholarship.

Links to the Chalet School

Rosamund Atherton marries Nigel Willoughby and becomes the mother of Blossom and Judy who later go to the Chalet School.

Francesca (Cesca) Atherton marries Mr Eltringham and becomes the mother of Nita who goes to the Chalet School.



The Maids of La Rochelle (LR3)

Synopsis

Contributed by Angela Woodgates, England

Half-sisters Elizabeth, Anne and Janie Temple have been left orphaned and poor by the death of their father, a Naval Captain, five weeks before the story opens. Elizabeth and Anne are the daughters of Captain Temple's first wife, Giovanna, and Janie is the child of his second marriage.

Following the death of Janie's mother, the three girls go to school together until Elizabeth is eighteen, Anne fourteen, and Janie nine; then when the school closes, as Captain Temple is away at sea (towards the end of 1918), they find a home in France with Madame Ozanne, the mother of his first officer. They remain there for five years, during which time their various talents are carefully nurtured, until they return to England to live with their father, who has now retired from the Navy.

When Captain Temple dies, Elizabeth decides that the three of them should move to Guernsey, where Madame Ozanne's old nurse, Javotte, has a small cottage which they can rent. Their scanty income will go further in Guernsey than in London, and between them they can teach Janie, since school fees are beyond their means. Accordingly, Elizabeth goes over to make the arrangements, and a little later her sisters set out to join her. They take up residence at La Rochelle, Javotte's cottage, and begin getting to know their neighbours.

Elizabeth meets a little girl, Pauline Ozanne, whose brother Paul lives in St. Peter Port. Later, Pauline and Janie do lessons together. They also become acquainted with Doctor Chester, who comes to see their neighbours, the De Garis family. Janie has an encounter with La Sorcière Blanche, a local wise woman. In the summer, they all make friends with the numerous members of the Atherton family who are staying nearby for the holidays.

Despite the melancholy beginning and some hair-raising events, the story ends happily for all three sisters, and features or mentions many characters who appear in the Chalet School stories.

Key Facts (Possible Spoilers) and links with the Chalet School

Pauline's brother, Paul Ozanne, marries Elizabeth Temple. They are the parents of twins Vanna and Nella Ozanne.

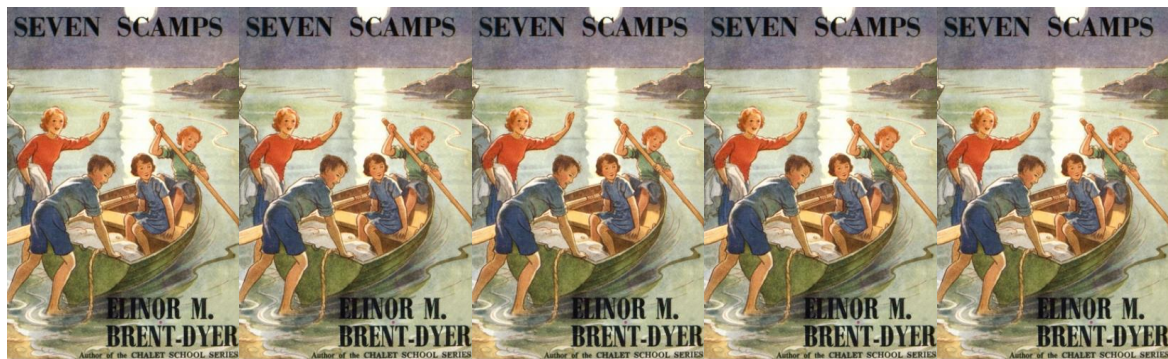
Dr Peter Chester marries Anne Temple. In CHALET SCHOOL IN EXILE Dr. Chester is referred to as "the leading medico of the Island" (i.e. Guernsey) and he delivers Jo Maynard's triplets at the end of EXILE. Anne and Peter's daughters Beth, Nancy, Barbara and Janice all become Chalet pupils eventually.

Julian Lucy is a local schoolboy who befriends Janie in MAIDS OF LA ROCHELLE. They later marry and become the parents of Julie, Betsy, Vi and Kitten Lucy.

Rosamund Atherton is the retiring Head Girl of her High School, going on to Somerville in the new term. Gerry (Geraldine) Challoner mentions her to Grizel Cochrane in RIVALS OF THE CHALET SCHOOL.

When the Chalet School evacuates to Guernsey because of the Anschluss (CHALET SCHOOL IN EXILE), the Ozanne, Chester and Lucy families send their children to the Chalet School and in THE CHALET SCHOOL GOES TO IT / THE CHALET SCHOOL AT WAR, the three families move to the Armiford area when the School relocates, and the children continue as pupils.

Timing: The action takes place a year after that of A HEAD GIRL'S DIFFICULTIES.



Seven Scamps (LR4)

Synopsis

Contributed by Angela Woodgates, England

Sir Piers Willoughby, squire of Steyne Winting Manor, is a widower with seven children, but since his wife's death some three or four years before the story begins, he has taken to travelling all over the world and is rarely at home.

His only near relation is his brother Nigel, eighteen years his junior, and so the children are left to the care of the housekeeper at the manor. All of them are educated at home. Maidie, the eldest, has been mistress of the house since her mother's death.

Madelaine (Maidie), Reginald (Rex), Marjolaine, Peter, David, Bernadine (Dina) and Tim are known to their neighbours as "those imps" or "them brats o' squire's", and are rarely out of mischief. One night the children plan an escapade which sets the household in an uproar, and the curate, Mr. Eltringham, decides that someone must take a firm line.

Sir Piers is summoned home and arrives a few weeks later, bringing with him a lady. He introduces her as his new wife, Sigrid - and with her is Britta, her daughter from her first marriage.

Sigrid tries hard to make friends with her stepchildren, but they are slow to respond. Then Dina undergoes a serious operation and is very ill and is sent to Guernsey to convalesce, the entire family accompanying her on Nigel Willoughby's yacht Sea Dweller. In their concern for Dina, the Willoughby children begin to accept their new mother and sister.

On the island they all make new friends, first Janie Temple and Pauline Ozanne, then the Atherton family and Julian Lucy, and later the Ozannes and the Chesters.

The arrival of Mr. Eltringham (the object of intense dislike by all the young Willoughbys) prompts the youngsters to all kinds of mischief. Finally, the rescue of eleven-year-old David from an accident on the cliffs brings the book to a happy conclusion.

Links with the Chalet School (Possible Spoilers) :

Nigel Willoughby appears in THE CHALET SCHOOL GOES TO IT / CHALET SCHOOL AT WAR, where he conveys Jo Maynard and the baby Triplets, Frieda von Ahlen (nee Mensch) and Miss Wilson from Guernsey to the British mainland in his steam yacht Sea Witch. By this time he has married Rosamund Atherton and has become the father of Blossom (and later Judy) Willoughby.

The eldest of the five Atherton girls, Francesca (Cesca), becomes engaged to Mr. Eltringham, the curate. They become the parents of Nita Eltringham.

The elder Temple sisters, Elizabeth and Anne, have been married a year. Elizabeth Ozanne has a baby son, Michael, and Anne Chester has a baby daughter two weeks younger, Elizabeth (Beth).

The Willoughby family lives quite near Dawley, the site of St. Peter's High School, which Rosamund Atherton and Geraldine (Gerry) Challoner have attended in GERRY GOES TO SCHOOL and A HEAD GIRL'S DIFFICULTIES.

Gerry appears as a friend of Grizel Cochrane in RIVALS OF THE CHALET SCHOOL, and mentions Rosamund Atherton as a great friend.

Timing: The events of this story take place about a year after those of "Maids of La Rochelle"



Heather Leaves School (LR5)

Synopsis

Contributed by Heather Webb, England.

Heather Raphael is fourteen and attends Ripley Collegiate School for Girls which she very much enjoys but her father is concerned about standards at the school and about the effect it is having on his daughter, while her mother is afraid that Heather is forgetting that she is 'supposed to be a gentlewoman'. So Major Raphael decrees that Heather shall leave at the end of term and come home to have lessons from a governess, Miss Christopher, who will also teach her two sisters and the four daughters of the local Vicar.

Heather is not happy about this and sulks for quite a time, not believing that her parents are taking this action because it is best for her. Several of her friends are also being taken away from Ripley (oddly they all seem to get letters from home about this on the same day!) and this forces the Head to make changes although not quickly enough to stop these girls leaving.

After a bad tempered journey home, Heather's mood improves when her sisters, Hazel and Honey, are so pleased to see her. The next day the family departs for a long summer holiday in Guernsey. On the boat Heather meets Janie Temple and Pauline Ozanne and they quickly make friends. The families become close over the summer. Janie helps Heather to see that her attitude will not help change her father's mind and she becomes resigned to not going back to Ripley.

Back at home the Raphaels are joined by the Shakespeare girls for lessons. Heather and Cressida, the eldest, do not get along. Cressie is inclined to be a prig and look down on Heather. She also acts older than her age as she has effectively been the mother of the family for many years.

After adventures involving secret passages, mummings plays, villains and a visit from Janie and Pauline, Heather becomes the type of girl her parents want her to be, makes friends with Cressie and finds that in the next year her life will change yet again - but this time in a way she is much happier about.

Spoilers

The Reverend William Shakespeare wanted all his daughters to have names of heroines from Shakespeare plays. He allowed his wife to choose the names and she went for uncommon ones - the girls are called Cressida Imogen, Hero Miranda. Portia Valeria and Cleopatra Ophelia (thankfully shortened to Pat).

Honey's full name is Honeysuckle. She was a delicate baby and Mrs Raphael was too ill to have anything to do with her christening which it was felt should take place immediately. The family friend who was in charge had once joked that 'Honeysuckle' would round off the family names nicely and, when asked by the Vicar what the baby's name was to be, could not think of any others on the spur of the moment.

In Guernsey the Raphaels find that their holiday cottage is next door to the cottage that the Ozannes have rented. Elizabeth Ozanne's baby Michael is having trouble with teething (much as Joey Maynard's children always did). Mrs Raphael is able to dispense the benefit of her experience.

The description of the girls beginning their lessons with Miss Christopher is reminiscent of the first day of the Chalet School - after all seven is nearly as many as the Chalet School had when it started. They find that Major Raphael has fitted out an old barn as a gymnasium for them. They also discover that Miss Christopher is a Guide and eventually she starts a Guide company in the village. Miss Christopher writes to a friend that she has found the ideal position and is not treated like a servant.

Honey and Hazel disappear and are found trapped in a secret passage leading from the drawing room.

Janie and Pauline come to stay for Christmas.. The Reverend Shakespeare has to go to Switzerland for his health and leaves his daughters living with the Raphael's for six months.

The secret passage provides an entrance to the house for burglars. They are foiled by Janie, Heather and Cressie among others. Heather is injured and faces a long recovery during which she and Cressie resolve their differences.

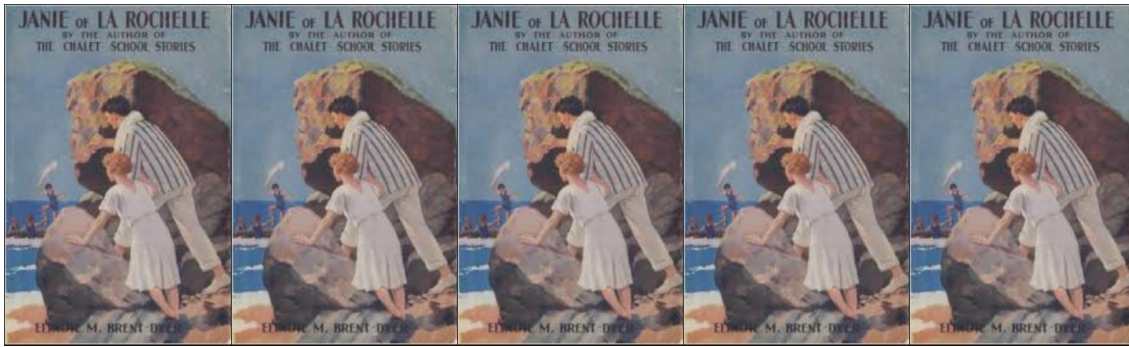
Links with the Chalet School and other La Rochelle books

Janie Temple (who is 19 at the time) becomes engaged to Julian Lucy towards the end of this story. Their daughters, and those of Janie's sisters Elizabeth Ozanne and Anne Chester go on to attend the Chalet School, firstly when it transfers to Guernsey, and afterwards.

Janie made friends with Pauline Ozanne in MAIDS OF LA ROCHELLE. Pauline's brother Paul married Janie's sister Elizabeth.

Baby Beth Chester, whose measles cause Janie and Pauline to spend Christmas with the Raphaels, becomes great friends with Daisy Venables and Gwensi Howell in THE CHALET SCHOOL GOES TO IT / CHALET SCHOOL AT WAR.

Rosamund Atherton, heroine of A HEADGIRL'S DIFFICULTIES, is mentioned as spending the summer in Switzerland with the rest of her family, while the Willoughby's, who feature most in SEVEN SCAMPS, have gone to Bergen to see Lady Willoughby's family.



Janie of La Rochelle (LR6)

Synopsis

Contributed by Helen Bradley, Scotland — working from a hardback edition.

This book covers the period from the last few days before Janie's wedding and through the first year-and-a-bit of her marriage. Janie is set to marry Julian Lucy, to whom she has been engaged for five years.

Julian delights Janie when he buys La Rochelle as their first married home. Janie, determined to recapture the happy times spent in the cottage with her sisters, Elizabeth and Anne, furnishes the cottage with much of the original furniture.

Janie settles down to be a housewife, with much success and a few disasters. She is troubled by the unwelcome attentions of a neighbour, Miss la Touche, who nevertheless proves to be helpful to Janie in a time of crisis.

More than content with her own marriage, Janie takes great interest in the love lives of her friends. As well as attending the wedding of Rosemary Atherton to Nigel Willoughby, she gently helps Cuthbert Clitheroe, a nephew of Miss La Touche, to meet Maidie Willoughby, which eventually results in another engagement. She also helps Allegra Atherton when she turns to Janie with a crisis in her relationship with a fellow actor.

JANIE OF LA ROCHELLE deals with love, marriage and motherhood among the La Rochelle regulars, and seems to be aimed at a slightly older audience than most EBD books.

Links with the Chalet School

Janie and Julian (Lucy) have their first daughter, Julie, a school friend of Bride Bettany's, who almost dies of appendicitis in BRIDE LEADS THE CHALET SCHOOL and is the first Head Girl of the school in Switzerland (THE CHALET SCHOOL AND BARBARA).

Cesca Eltringham, nee Atherton, cannot attend her sister Rosamund's wedding because of the early arrival of her daughter, Nita, later a Chalet School girl, and contemporary of Peggy Bettany.

Elizabeth Ozanne, nee Temple, gives birth to twin girls, Nella and Vanna, later Chalet School pupils.

Beth Chester, Anne Temple's eldest daughter and later member of the Chalet School Triumvirate with Daisy Venables and Gwensi Howell, is four years old. She creates a sensation at Janie's wedding when bored and decides she would rather play "horsie-gee" than be a flower girl.

Rosamund Atherton marries Nigel Willoughby - they are the parents of the Chalet School's Blossom and Judy.

Spoilers.

Con Atherton and Rex Willoughby become engaged at Rosamund's wedding, though everyone considers them to be too young. They agree not to marry until Rex finishes university.

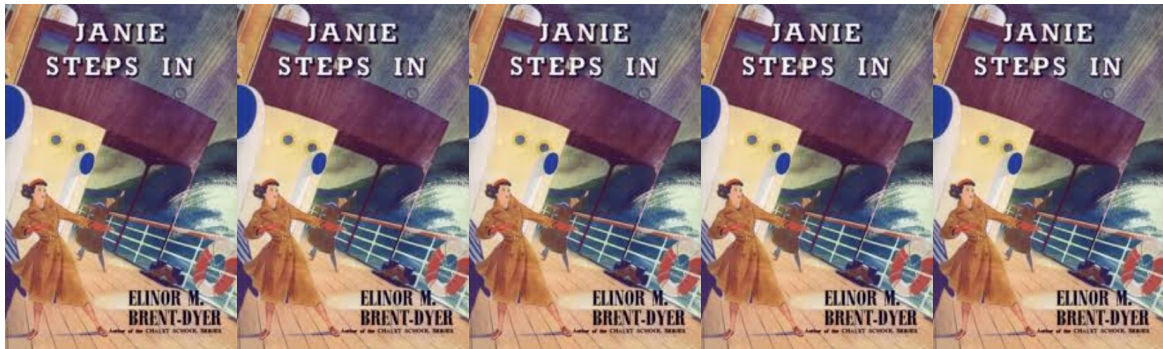
Elizabeth's sons, Michael and Bill, disappear from Janie's house, where they are staying before the twins are born and Miss La Touche helps to find them.

Julian's grandmother, Mrs. Orange, dies after a short illness, but before she dies,, she passes on much of her wisdom about life, love and marriage to Janie.

Anne and Peter Chester return to stay in Guernsey when Peter takes over the local doctor's practice.

Janie has a cooking disaster when she uses whitening instead of sugar in a particularly elaborate cake.

Janie and Julian's relationship and conversation could be directly substituted for Joey and Jack Maynard's - although in some places the language in the book is typically EBD syrupy sentimental.



Janie Steps In (LR7)

Synopsis

Contributed by Susan Vass, Scotland – working from a hardback edition

After her mother is killed in a horrific car accident, and her father seriously injured, Nan Blakeney is sent to stay with her cousin Rosamund Willoughby. After 6 months it is apparent the Nan is no better than when she arrived and Rosamund decides to send her to her friend Janie Lucy in Guernsey, who she believes will be able to help Nan in a way that she is unable to do. Nan is reluctant to leave Rosamund seeing in her a resemblance to her mother, but is eventually persuaded.

Janie and her family welcome Nan with open arms. She also meets the Ozannes, the family of Janie's sister Elizabeth, and Janie's brother-in-law Peter Chester. Janie has a letter from her sister Anne Chester announcing that she is returning from her holiday.

She and Nan go to Anne's home, Pierres Gris, to make sure that it is ready for their return, and while they are there Janie reveals how Anne and Peter had lost all their money through no fault of their own. She explains that while the Ozannes educate Paul and the Lucy's educate Nancy, the Chesters are too proud to allow anyone to pay for Beth's education. Because of this, and the demands invalid Barbara puts on her mother, Beth feels second best and unloved.

Following Anne's return Anne, Elizabeth, Janie, Nan and the children arrange a picnic at La Rochelle. In conversation with Beth, Nan realises that Janie's worries about Beth are valid. At the picnic Nan meets David Willoughby, a brother of her cousin Con's husband, and David is very taken with her.

Key Facts (Possible Spoilers) and links with the Chalet School

Relationships

- Janie Lucy, Elizabeth Ozanne and Anne Chester are sisters - first met in MAIDS OF LA ROCHELLE.
- Julian and Janie Lucy are the parents of Julie, Betsy, Vi and Kitten.
- Paul and Elizabeth Ozanne are the parents of twins Vanna and Nella Ozanne.

- Peter and Anne Chester are the parents of Beth, Nancy, Barbara and Janice. The Lucy, Ozanne and Chester girls all go to the Chalet School when it begins in Guernsey. Nigel and Rosamund Willoughby are the parents of Blossom and Judy, who also go to the Chalet School when it is on the British mainland.

Spoilers

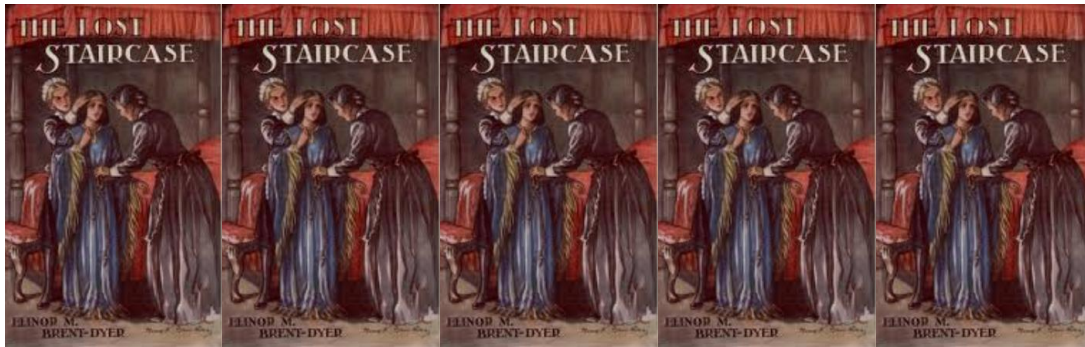
Soon after Anne Chester's return to Guernsey, Julie and Nancy spoil Beth's treasured paintbox and at first Anne is annoyed at Beth's outburst, but after a talking to from Janie realises that relations between Beth and herself are not what they should be. Unfortunately Barbara becomes ill shortly after this, and Anne is distracted from her concerns.

Julian and Julie go on a business trip to Alderney and Nan is left in charge, While they are away the children come down with mumps and they all go to Les Arbres to spare Barbara the illness. Beth is very upset while she is there and convinced that her mother does not love her, but Nan manages to make her see that this is not the case.

Six months later, Nan's father has passed away. Meanwhile Rosamund has given birth to Juliana Jane (Judy). A cousin of Peter Chester has died leaving him all his money. Beth and her sister and cousins are to begin at the Chalet School in the autumn and Beth is reconciled with her mother. Janie gives birth to Nan's godson, Barnabas Julian.

Nan asks Janie whether she should become engaged to David Willoughby, and Janie advises not to until he is back in England. However, a cable arrives from David saying that he will be returning early and Janie is ready to step in again if needs be.

Timing: The story takes place in the year preceding the Chalet School's move to Guernsey in THE CHALET SCHOOL IN EXILE.



The Lost Staircase

Synopsis

Contributed by Angela Woodgates, England — working from a hardback edition

The action centres on the Dragon House. This was built by Master Balthazar Gellibrand late in Henry VII's reign. Some years later, a younger son, Nicholas, declared for Parliament in the Civil War and was disowned by his father. However, the family retained its property despite following the Royalist cause, because Nicholas had won Cromwell's favour. Nicholas was the direct ancestor of Jesanne, the heroine of the present-day story.

The story itself is set in the twentieth century. Sir Ambrose, present owner of the Dragon House, has lost sisters, son and grandchildren in various tragic circumstances during and after the Great War (1914-18), and is the last of his line.

He is obliged to trace the descendants of Nicholas the Roundhead, and summons fourteen-year-old Jesanne (an orphan and the only other surviving Gellibrand) from New Zealand to be brought up on the estate she will one day inherit. At first relations between the distant cousins are uneasy, but as Jesanne proves herself to be a true Gellibrand, a considerable affection develops between them.

Sir Ambrose tells Jesanne that she is now mistress of the Dragon House, and from the very start he treats her accordingly. She occupies the Dame's Suite and has her own personal maid. He teaches her the family traditions, including the Dragon House Ritual at Christmas, shows her the great *Journal* begun by her ancestor in 1531, and tells her of the mysterious Lost Staircase.

The house has stairs, of course, but they are not the original ones. This, and other matters of which Sir Ambrose tells Jesanne, belong to the private history of the family, and are part of the heir's training.

Sir Ambrose also makes arrangements for Jesanne's formal education. A governess, Miss Mercier, comes to live at the Dragon House. She and her pupil have some tussles over the curriculum, but at Christmas Jesanne acquires a companion in Lois Bennett, the niece of Sir Ambrose's agent. The two girls become friends, and later Lois shares Jesanne's lessons. Together they try to solve the puzzle of the lost staircase.

A closer inspection of the *Journall* reveals a clue to the mystery, but the actual discovery comes about through an accident in which Jesanne is concussed and fractures a wrist. She recovers quickly, however, and the story concludes with pleasant surprises for her and for Lois.

Key Facts : links with the Chalet School

In LAVENDER LAUGHS IN THE CHALET SCHOOL (h/b) or LAVENDER LEIGH AT THE CHALET SCHOOL (p/b), Jesanne and Lois appear and are the main focus of Chapter VII, "The New Seniors". They enter the Sixth Form following the death of Sir Ambrose, and it is stated that they were last at school (separately) "before the war". The two girls tell their story to Jo Maynard, who promises to make it into a book when she has time (this is not long before the birth of her first son).

No mention is made in THE LOST STAIRCASE of any characters or locations mentioned in Chalet stories of the period around World War Two, but apart from the name "Wyesford" for (presumably) Armiford/Hereford, nothing in the story is incompatible with the details given later in LAVENDER LAUGHS / LAVENDER LEIGH.

Timing

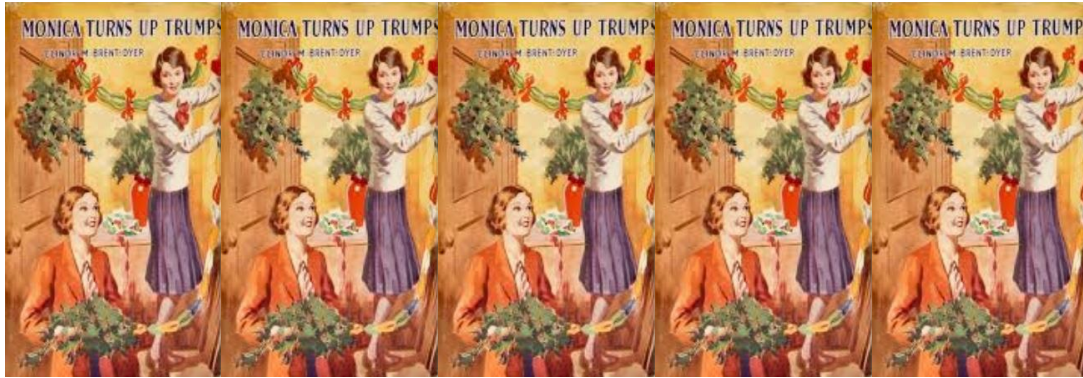
Jesanne is fourteen when she arrives in England; this must be before the outbreak of World War Two, as she is able to travel from New Zealand, and there is no hint of wartime conditions in the big house, well-staffed with servants, or of rationing.

When Jesanne and Lois join the Chalet School, they are seventeen, and we read that Lois' uncle has ploughed up all available land for crops at the start of the war. This puts the action of this book very close to the outbreak of World War Two, although there is no hint anywhere in the narrative of any such threat, or indeed of outside events.

Location

The Dragon House is situated in the Welsh Marches, in the plain eastward of the Welsh hills. It looks "eastwards to the Malvern Hills; north to the Black Mountains; west and south to Gloucestershire and the Cotswolds". The river Ddwyvyl flows round three sides of the estate, joining a lesser tributary of the Wye.

The house is fourteen miles' drive from the railway station at Wyesford, which puts it conveniently within reach of the Chalet School, certainly for boarding. In LAVENDER LAUGHS / LAVENDER LEIGH, we are told that the Dragon House is not far from the school as the crow flies, but that the route between them consists of "cross-country lanes".



Monica Turns Up Trumps

Synopsis

Contributed by Sandra Fitzgerald, Australia — working from a hardback edition

Dr. Frank Marilliar is a widower after his wife, Christine's, death 3 years previously, with a son, Barney (aged 18 at a great public school), and daughter, Monica, aged 14. His sister-in-law, Peggy Primrose, aged 24, is now his housekeeper and surrogate mother for the children. After reading Monica's last school report from 'The Gables' (a boarding school in a South-West town), he removes her due to her poor behavior and schoolwork and sends her to 'Braemar House', a day school with a very good reputation located in their town, Medbury.

Monica is good at games and gymnastics (she wishes to study at Chelsea or Bedford after her school-days are over), but will not do either because Braemar House does not have a gymnasium. She does not know many of the other students at the school because of their having moved to Medbury after her mother's death, though she knows the Rector's two girls, Dilys and Myfannwy Tudor, slightly. Monica has many problems settling to the school's standards and teaching methods.

Her father receives a letter from his sister Lucia, living in Kenya with her husband Colin MacNab, asking if he can take their two eldest children to live while attending school in England. Monica resents their coming whilst she is still 'in disgrace', especially after her father refuses to allow her to attend private gym and hockey classes until her schoolwork improves.

Vicki and Alixe arrive, with Monica becoming friendly with Alixe (aged 13) and finding Vicki (aged 15, nearly 16) somewhat of a trial. Vicki causes problems for herself by disobeying Peggy by visiting with Alixe when she was sick in bed, and later by not listening to Monica to remove a valuable table from in front of the fire and then breaking a prized firescreen. Later Vicki and Monica have a serious quarrel, and Vicki ignores Monica's apology.

Vicki covets some Venetian beads of Monica's, and this leads to later problems when she 'borrows' them for a party and loses them. Vicki loses her self-respect and the respect of Peggy by her deception. Monica blames Vicki for the loss of her precious beads, but later with the drawing closer of Christmas, decides to forgive her.

Monica's schoolwork and behaviour improves immensely with her moving up a form in most subjects, and thus receiving her father's praise. He also agrees to allow her to commence hockey and gym classes in the coming term.

The beads are found in a surprising spot by Vicki just prior to Christmas, and Monica decides to give them to Vicki as a Christmas present. Monica thus 'turns up trumps' by achieving greater maturity and learning to live with others.

Key Facts (Possible Spoilers) and links with the Chalet School.

Monica, Vicki and Alixe go to the Chalet School as weekly borders after Miss Cundell retires. This occurs in THE CHALET SCHOOL GOES TO IT / CHALET SCHOOL AT WAR. Vicki is by now 17 entering 6th form and planning to become a doctor; Monica now almost 16 entering 5th form and planning on becoming a gym teacher, and Alixe almost 15 (there is no reference in the pb version).

In LAVENDER LAUGHS AT THE CHALET SCHOOL / LAVENDER LEIGH AT THE CHALET SCHOOL, Dr. Marilliar is the doctor who examines Lavender and recommends her to attend the Chalet School. At this time, Monica is Games Prefect and nearly 18, Alixe is almost 16, and Mollie ('Molly' in TRUMPS - another EBDism!) is 12 and in Lower 4th (having obviously sent to England like her siblings).

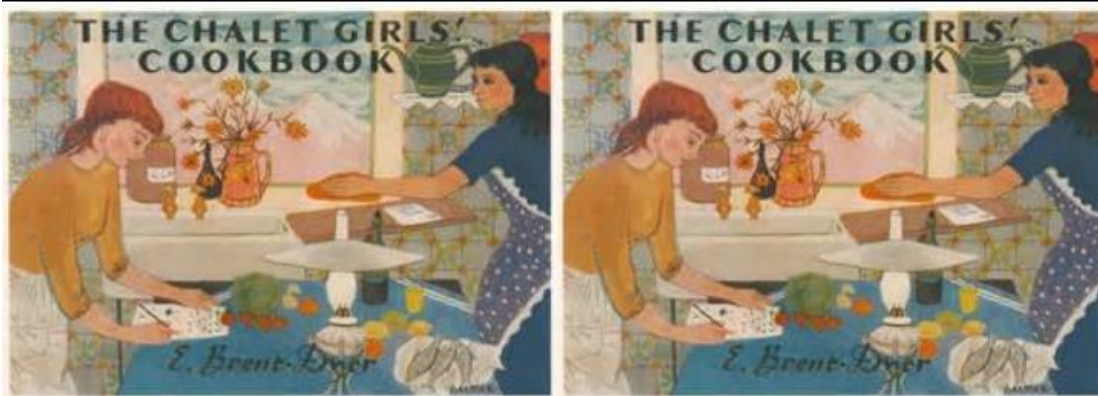
Others from 'Braemar House' go to the Chalet School after Miss Cundell's retirement, namely Myfanwy Tudor, Clare Danvers, Gwladys Evans, Jocelyn Redford and Ernestine Benedict.

'The Gables' - Monica's previous school - is also mentioned in Chalet School books with pupils coming from there.

Medbury, the location of TRUMPS, is approx. 14-18 miles from Howells Village, on the border of Wales (18 miles in CHALET SCHOOL GOES TO IT / CHALET SCHOOL AT WAR, 14 miles in LAVENDER - another EBDism!). The Chalet School has just left Guernsey at the time of this story.

The Marilliar's home is called 'Many Bushes' - the same name as Phoebe (Wychote) Peters' home when she met Joey and co. in JO TO THE RESCUE.

Of interest to EJO fans, a book mentioned in TRUMPS is "The Crisis in Camp Keema".



The Chalet Girls' Cookbook

Synopsis

Contributed by Christina Erskine, England, who borrowed a copy of this hard-to-find and unusual cookery book to review it for the NCC website.

On holiday the summer after they leave the Chalet School, Jo Bettany, Simone Lecoutier, Frieda Mensch and Marie von Eschenau are quarantined for mumps after their landlady's son goes down with it. Kept indoors by poor weather, the girls decide to compile a cookbook from their favourite recipes.

The girls divide the book into conventional chapters: soups, fish, meat and so on, with plenty of room left for cakes and sweets at the end. Each contributes a dish in turn and there are around 100 recipes in the book in total.

Anyone expecting delicious little savouries of which Marie, Frieda, or whoever, knew the secret, will be surprised to find that local Tyrolean dishes are ignored in favour of more stereotypical fare: Simone the Frenchwoman provides the cooking theory and stock recipes, and Jo appears to know a remarkable number of traditional English dishes off by heart. This is ironic, as Jo's own cooking is famously hit-and-miss and there are a number of references to her culinary disasters throughout.

Published in 1953, the book is fascinating as a piece of culinary history. Dishes are generally heavier and more filling - who today would make a tomato soup by pouring pulped tomatoes over a white sauce base, or choose to serve lobster in cutlets, stuffed and rolled in breadcrumbs? And how many domestic cooks would push all those vegetables through sieves to achieve *Maman's Cauliflower Soup*?

The Chalet girls are thrifty, with many recipes specifying leftovers, and generally using common ingredients. However, Marie is keen to include Corney Flower's recipe for Chop Suey, which requires soy sauce, a condiment unfamiliar to Simone. Judging by Frieda's explanation, it was unfamiliar to EBD as well: soy sauce is hardly a version of béchamel made with soya bean flour.

Initially the cookbook is intended as a present for Marie, who is engaged to be married, although as Jo points out, she is unlikely to be doing much of her own

cooking once she becomes the Countess von und zu Wertheimer. Jo believes they may be able to get the book published and so it is written in English.

And it seems that Jo did indeed manage to find a publisher: there are references to the cookbook written by the quartet in both A CHALET GIRL FROM KENYA and EXCITEMENTS FOR THE CHALET SCHOOL.

EBD-ism (well, there had to be at least one, didn't there?): the girls' landlady changes her name from Annich to Winkelstein between the vegetable course and the puddings.

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