

Mark Taha “‘Nigger’ was called ‘objectionable’ by Frank Richards in 1908. Only his nastier characters used it, generally speaking.”



*Short Stories* by EBD

Vicki Langdon “*Short Stories* is just wonderful! A huge volume of EBD stories, mostly new to me - what utter bliss! Thank you so much.”

Anne Lochhead “EBD’s *Short Stories* – it is a real treasure trove. Jam packed full of good reading – both Chalet and non-Chalet. A wonderful collection. I will really treasure this book for many many years to come. (I treasure them all, really, but *Short Stories* is really special – and a bargain for the size of it.)”

was absolutely freezing in winter, unlike in houses where there was a coal or coke boiler. Gas rings were either in the bathroom or the bedrooms. If the bathroom, in larger houses, was too far from the bedrooms, the rings were in the bedrooms, or, at the other end of the scale, in small houses, if the bathroom was very small, they were still in the bedrooms. Jan is right about them being used to boil



kettles for tea, but they had another use, too, and that was making the feed for babies. You did not, and still would not take a young baby from a warm bedroom into a freezing house, and downstairs it would take time to heat up after the fires were lit, so night feeds were seen to in the bedroom. Also, it was the custom for people who could afford to live in gas fired homes to employ a nurse for the first few months of a baby's life, if a nanny was not kept, and she would have demanded the facility. Just realised – I did not say that bottle-feeding babies was 'The Fashion' in the Thirties."

**Mark Taha** "The only school story I can remember mentioning lavatories was the legendary *Eric or Little By Little*."

**Dallas Carter** "Christine Ward asks why the Chalet girls didn't have a rota for proper baths in the morning instead of a quick in-and-out of the cold baths.



Actually, I think they did have a rota for hot baths in the evening. I assumed the cold baths were supposed to be character forming, you know, toughen the girls up so they wouldn't be jellyfish when they left. Mind you, I do wonder if any of them were tempted not to take the baths, instead just swishing their hands round in the water to make a noise for a minute or so or paddle around in the bath for a bit, then go out, leaving the tap running gently for the next one. I remember when I was

at school; we got quite adept at avoiding the compulsory communal shower at the end of PE or games. The suspicious PE teacher once made us undress, shower and dress again about five times at the end of one lesson as a sort of collective punishment. It didn't cure us though; we were back to shower dodging the very next lesson."

**Anne James** “I always thought that an ‘ornament’ of a form at the CS meant a girl of character who stood out from the rest in some way – not necessarily the most beautiful.”

**Mark Taha** “I assumed ‘ornament’ meant ‘member’.”

the roof)!! This is in the late 1950s, and maybe my memory isn't all it should be, but I can't remember any huge cars of this type around that time. I wonder if other members may be able to do so?"

**Mark Taha** "I remember a 1920ish story with a whole cricket team and equipment in a car. Were there really cars that big?"

## Terms of Endearment

**Mark Taha** “I know ‘madam’ is a Northern expression generally used when telling a girl off (for example, ‘little madam’). I once had a supervisor who called us ‘love’ but there was nothing romantic in it - unfortunately! I think EBD meant ‘the baby’ as in “youngest person present”, for example, Hilary Burn describing herself as ‘staff baby’.”

## **Mathematical Ability**

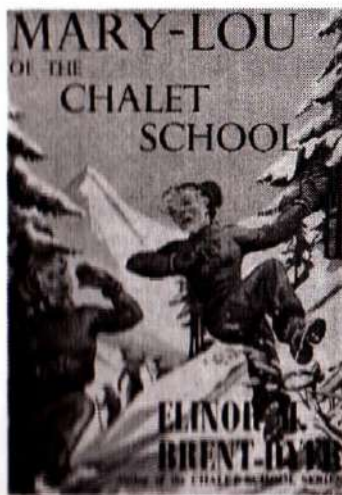
**Mark Taha** “Janet and I have something else in common. Could never see the point of algebra - is there one? And why would you need O-level Maths if you're teaching another, unrelated, subject?”

### **Fate of Gertrud Becker**

**Mark Taha** “Surely all stereotypes are founded in reality. The average German in the 1930s and 1940s did support Hitler; many even claimed that he wouldn’t have allowed the Jews to be treated like that if he’d known! And Lavender Leigh’s attitude to the League wasn’t exactly popular.”

## In Defence of Jessica Wayne

Mark Taha "I remember somebody once defending Annis Lovell's nasty Aunt Margaret. I'd like to be controversial too - I've been rereading *Mary Lou* and would like to defend Jessica Wayne. She and her mother had had a great relationship. Mrs Wayne remarried and moved ten miles out of town. First they made Jessica a weekly boarder on the flimsy excuse that the journey would be too much for her. I assume her stepfather travelled in every day - couldn't he have given her a lift? Jessica concluded they didn't want her and rebelled, so they sent her to a boarding school in Devon. She rightly rebelled there, so they send her to Switzerland. What was the poor girl to think? They should have asked her what she wanted - to be at home - and taken it from there. The parallel with Mary Lou and Verity Anne (has anyone ever come across a real-life 'Verity', by the way?) doesn't hold water. They were away together, so to speak. Jessica was away most of the year while Rosamund was at home all the time. It seems her mother didn't even put her first when she was there. And it



also seems that all of them, parents, Mary Lou, Joey, Miss Annersley, wanted to keep her at boarding school and away from her mother - I'm looking at it from her viewpoint. In fact, EBD missed a trick when she didn't have Jessica find out about Joey's interest. Had she heard Joey and Mary Lou talking about her, imagine the scene that could have followed! As for Mary Lou's 'simply marvellous school' homily - I admire Jessica's self-restraint. I'd likely have, to descend to forbidden slang, belted her one! In fact - I find it unconvincing that no one ever did."



**Chalet Nickname**

**Mark Taha** “Did EBD ever explain why Miss Annersley was known as ‘The Abbess’?”