

Fond memories of a teacher and much loved Girl Guides leader

By Dan Shaw



Mrs Elizabeth Tweedy and Flossa at their home in Penn, Wolverhampton

HOW many of our readers will remember the name Dorothy Tweedy?

Over the years she has appeared in our pages several times, as readers have fondly recalled the long-serving and popular teacher.

Recently, John Abbas came across one of these earlier stories on our website at www.blackcountrybugle.co.uk and this prompted him to dig out some pictures from his family photograph albums.

John has emailed the pictures to us. The first shows Dorothy as a Girl Guide Division Commissioner, presenting what looks to be a certificate to a guide with a sleeve-full of badges, alongside a man wearing a mayoral chain of office.

Sadly, that is all we can tell you about this picture. Do you recognise any of the girl guides or the man with the chain? He could be the mayor of Wolverhampton or the mayor of Oldbury.

John writes, "I do not know what where or when the presentation was made."

"What I do know is that my mother



Miss Dorothy Tweedy makes a presentation but can you name any of the girl guides or the civic dignitary?

used to be Mrs Tweedy and Miss Dorothy Tweedy's housekeeper/cleaner and I can remember watching the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 at their house. "The Crest", at the corner of Penn Road and Penhouse Avenue; the house is still there.

Loft

"Adjacent to the house was a garage, with an upstairs loft which I used to go into to look at all the girl guide flags, etc., stored there.

"I also have a photograph of Mrs Elizabeth Tweedy. Dorothy's mother, taken in the garden of the Crest with her collie dog Flossa. "The white wall to the left in the

picture is Penhouse Avenue and the pillar to the right is the very corner to the Penn Road."

Dorothy Tweedy taught PE at Oldbury Grammar School from 1923 to 1965. She ran a guides company connected with the school as well as the 16th Wolverhampton St Barnabas Guides.

For the Oldbury Guides she organised an annual camping holiday at Beer in Devon, for which the girls travelled by coach, usually from Loyds Coaches in Oldbury.

The Tweedy family owned a sports shop in Wolverhampton.

Dorothy taught at Oldbury Grammar School long before it became a grammar school. It was founded in

1904 in Flash Road, Oldbury, & Oldbury Secondary School. In 1924 three years after Dorothy joined the staff, the school relocated to Mox Road, near Barnford Hill Park, and became Oldbury County High School. It became a grammar school in 1944. In 1974 it became a comprehensive and following sequence of mergers and name changes it closed in 2006.

Please share your memories any pictures you may have of Dorothy Tweedy, Oldbury Grammar School or the Girl Guides, contact us at 41 High Street, Cradle Heath, B64 5HL, call 01384 567671 or email dshaw@blackcountrybugle.co.uk

Teacher training

"My grandmother left in 1929, for teacher training college in Portsmouth. On her return in 1931 she ran the Ranger Guide company in Oldbury town centre. She married William Powell (a fellow pupil) in 1938, after a long courtship. As a teacher in those days she had to resign her position on marriage.

"I should also mention that my mother, Kathleen Powell (nee Hatley) was taught by Miss Tweedie from 1953 to 1959. My mum had no interest in hockey, or joining the Guides, however."

Gemma has also provided us with copies of *The Oldburian*, the school's magazine that was published every term. In each there was a report on the guides' activities that term, usually written by one of the patrol leaders.

It seems that the May 1928 edition was the first issue of the magazine, or the first time the guides' report appeared in it, as the report covers the time from the move to Moat Road in 1926 up to May 1928. The report, written by R. Everett, tells of the Oldbury school troop's success in a county competition, their summer camp and the performances they staged to raise money:

Wright, Captain of the 1st Penn Fields Company, Wolverhampton, came for the ceremony.

"During the earlier part of 1926 the Guides had competed for a Shield, which was given to the Company in Worcestershire who gained most marks in examinations of first-aid, Morse signalling, folk dancing, resourcefulness, knot-tying, singing, drill, and neatness. This was the first time the Guides had competed, and therefore the result was most satisfactory, for Oldbury was placed second, with only 1½ marks less than the first.

Determined

"The Company was determined to win the Shield next time, so they commenced work at once. Log Books had to be kept by each patrol, the Poppy, Daffodil, Red Rose, and Scarlet Pimpernel, and recruits had to be instructed in various subjects, such as Morse code, company drill, ambulance work, etc.

"Also those Guides who had secured their second-class badges began to study for various proficiency badges. Several entered for and obtained gym badges, musicians' badges, athletes' badges, and artists' badges, while later on those Guides who had been working for the

Night train

"So, in July the Guides travelled by night train down to South Devon, with their many bundles and haversacks. Though the journey was none too comfortable, and the water was turned off in the morning so that we could not have a wash or a drink; though it rained on our way to the farm, and while we were wearily pitching our tents, yet the happy days of sunshine to follow more than recompensed this unfortunate beginning. Of all the four camps, this camp was by far the best, with its lovely bathing and South Devon scenery. While at Stoke Fleming we gave, by the request of the village inhabitants, a display in the village hall, which was quite a success. Afterwards there was a dance, which we all enjoyed very much. It was with sad hearts that we packed our belongings and took down the tents. We did not relish the thought of returning to Oldbury, yet, after a superb ten days, this was what we were forced to do.

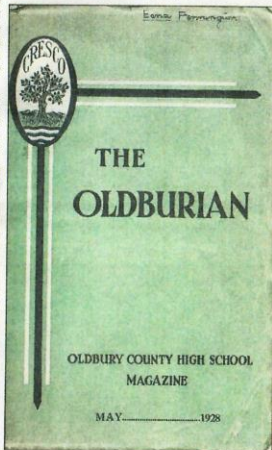
"In November, Miss Beaumont, of Cambridge, came to examine the Company in connection with the Shield which was nearly won by us the previous year. It was not a long examination, but when she had gone, we all gave ourselves up as

and Eastern Dance, a Scarf Dance, and a Greek Dance. One of the plays was a scene from *Pride and Prejudice*, while the other was entitled *X = 0*, or a *Night of the Trojan War*. The display was a great success, and realised in money £17, which will help the Company funds considerably. The Guides repeated the performance in Wolverhampton Theatre Royal, in aid of the Welfare Centre, and in Oldbury in aid of the Parish Church Bazaar Fund."

Do you recognise any of those named or the Oldbury pupils in the pictures? Please share your memories and photographs of the Girl Guides or Boy Scouts. Contact our Cradle Heath office or email dshaw@blackcountrybugle.co.uk



Oldbury County Secondary School at Moat Road in 1928. Miss Tweedie is fourth from the headmaster, Clara Edna Pennington is third row down, ninth from right; William Henry Powell is top row, second from right



The magazine of Oldbury County High School

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