

RUSH TO ENROL WAS A FORETASTE OF BUSY YEARS

IT took a long time to persuade the Chartered Company that there really was a large number of would-be pupils waiting to be enrolled in a Government school, but finally Sir William Milton and his advisers decided that the estimated number was sufficient to justify not only one school but two, and the scheme went ahead.

In July 1910, however, there must have been many people waiting anxiously to discover how many children would turn up when the great day came—and then they were astonished.

After the opening ceremony 207 children presented themselves at Eveline alone for enrolment, 77 of them (boys and girls) being in the Infants' Department.

For most of July Miss Langdon, the headmistress, spent six hours daily at the school, waiting to meet parents and to note the number of prospective pupils.

Parents were told the curriculum to be followed would include all subjects of the High School Code, including university matriculation.

Fees would be: Infant Department, 15s. per term. Standards I and II, 20s. per term. Standards III and IV, 25s. per term. Above Standard IV, 30s. per term.

Boarding fees were to be £10 a term extra.

All books and other school

requisites would be supplied free.

Staff would consist of "trained certificated teachers", and there would be spacious playing fields and organised, supervised games.

Roomy as the classrooms were, some of them were immediately fully taxed and the new pupils were sternly warned that any damage to the furniture and fittings would have to be efficiently repaired and paid for by their parents.

Within days the enrolment rose to 240, with a promise of several more. The capacity of the school was 400.

TOO SMALL

On August 8, Miss Langdon noted in her log book: "The buildings are now too small, and additions are urgently needed."

Because of measles and chickenpox, however, the children did not all come in at once, and in mid-August measles broke out in the boarding house.

Mr. L. M. Foggin (who became Director of Education) remarked with satisfaction, after inspecting the school, that work was going on systematically as if it had been done for years.

Sickness marred the first quarter, but trials were forgotten when November brought the Duke and Duchess of Connaught and their daughter, Princess Patricia, to visit the school. All three signed the log book, and also a sheet of paper which was to be framed.

In December, 1910, Elie Campbell-Rodger became the first Eveline girl to write the Junior Certificate examination. She was the only candidate. However, 11 sat for the Beit Scholarship exam.

BAD WEATHER

Attendance at the school in those days was very much influenced by the weather, although the day which was especially noted because "about 50 per cent of the children were absent owing to the rain" was an unusual time of year for wet weather—May 8, 1911.

On May 15 another entry



MISS G. M. LANGDON

stated: "Very bad attendance during the whole week owing to the bad weather."

Eveline staged its first concert on April 29, 1912, with a performance of "The Japanese Girl".

It was a great success and the money raised (£22) was given to the "Titanic Orphan Fund". It was the first step in the school's fine record of social work.

During its first two years Eveline catered for boy pupils in Standard I as well as the infants' department, until in July, 1912, 32 boys in Standard I were sent over to Milton.

Holidays were frequent at that time. There was one to celebrate a visit by a Plumtree boys' hockey team; another when the school won the inter-school hockey cup.

SPORTS DAY

The first annual sports were held in May, 1914.

By then both the new schools were playing a notable part in the town's cultural life, and in June, 1914, the girls and boys together gave three performances of "The Gondoliers".

Epidemics were dreaded by every school in the first quarter of the century, but Eveline (and Milton) seem to have been quite lucky as regards health. In 1918, however, Eveline was closed on September 2 because of scarlet fever. The number of day girls who

caught it is not recorded, but in the boarding house there were 39 cases.

This was followed in October by the so-called Spanish Influenza, and as many boarders as possible were sent home, but not before a number of them—and some teachers—were stricken.

Fortunately there were no deaths from either epidemic. School reopened on November 20 but, wrote Miss Langdon, "it was an absolute farce," so it closed again on November 30.

After these troubled months, the year 1919 began with the hostel and the five "cottages" in Borrow Street all quite full. The cottages, incidentally, were dismal structures of wood and corrugated iron, heartily disliked by the unfortunate junior boarders who were forced to inhabit them.

They were vacated, with a general sigh of relief, when Northward House was built.

TRAINING

In addition to its infants-to-matric classes, by 1919 Eveline boasted a pupil teachers' training division, classes having started the previous year with Miss M. A. Brown in charge.

The influenza epidemic left one harrowing mark on the school, which Miss Langdon, always so proud of her girls' scholastic prowess, mournfully recorded thus:

"May 14th, 1919: The Beit Scholarship examination of December, 1918, was postponed until April, 1919, owing to the influenza epidemic. The results are just out and we have no passes—the first time in the history of the school this has happened, but as we had both scarlet fever and influenza no other result could be expected."

ROYAL VISIT

By its tenth anniversary, Eveline had 453 pupils, and again the original number of 77 were in infants.

In June, 1925, the holidays began earlier than usual, and were cut to three weeks so that all pupils might be back at school when the Prince of Wales visited the town. The Eveline girls joined the rest of Bulawayo's schoolchildren in the Park to meet the Prince.

The following month Miss Langdon laid the foundation stone of the Allan Welsh Hall at a ceremony which included the placing of a newspaper under the stone by Major R. J. Hudson, Acting Minister of

Pioneer colours

THE Eveline School colours have a tradition as old as Rhodesia itself.

Known as the Pioneer colours, they were chosen by Miss Langdon to match as well as possible the original maroon and brown of a faded puggaree that had adorned the hat of a pioneer.

According to tradition, the brown represents the soil, and the red the blood of sacrifice that all patriots are prepared to shed for their country.

The well-known peppercorn badge signified the pepper a feature of the school grounds. They formerly lined many streets in the town itself, as they were hardy, drought-resistant and attractive.

Some early residents maintained that they also repelled mosquitoes, others that they attracted them.

