

1949.

April - Easter. Dad, Mike and I went to London for one or two weeks - first trip out of Ulster - wearing boots and utility raincoat - travelled by Liverpool boat.

Paula was born on the 10th May (Tuesday)

Family went to Portballintrae for July

TRAVELS NOW AND THEN

© Christopher Earls Brennan

LONDON 1949

Easter, 1949.

On Easter, 1949, my father, Wilfred M. Brennan, took my brother, Michael, and I to London, on our first trip outside Ireland. We embarked on a passenger ferry (The "Ulster Prince" or "Ulster Monarch") from Belfast to Liverpool and then caught the boat train from Liverpool Lime Street Station to London Euston. My hazy recollection is that we stayed in a small hotel in South Kensington and travelled around in the "Tube", the London underground (which I loved - it appealed to my sense of order).



On the boat to Liverpool



Liverpool Lime Street Station

I recall that the Burberry raincoats and shoes were bought specially for the trip. The caps were standard issue of the Rainey Endowed School.



London Zoo, Regents Park



London Zoo, Regents Park



Windsor Castle



Along the Embankment



Trafalgar Square



Kew Gardens







From the 1949 Rainey School Magazine

GRAMMAR SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO PUPILS ON THE RESULTS OF THE JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 1947

James S. Armstrong.	Win. Alex. McCready.	Sheila L. Hartley.
Victor Brown.	Raymond V. Moran.	Winifred M. Houston.
Norman M. Graham.	Cecil Stewart.	Millicent A. Irwin.
Eugene B. Guidera.	George Taylor.	Florence McIntyre.
David E. Hyndman.	Doreen Brown.	Martha E. T. Walls.
Hugh J. Bradley.	Sara E. Campbell.	Alice E. Wilson.
Fred J. Kennedy.	Margaret E. Ferguson.	W. J. Gamble.
James H. McClure.	Margaret I. Graham.	M. Menet.

KING'S SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATION.

Mary J. Bleakley.	Margaret Brown.	D. McGillorm.
Joan Evans.	Eileen M. Francey.	T. Frew.
Sheila L. Houston.	S. Anderson.	

DEFERRED ENTRY :

William F. Leslie.	George Crockett.	Norman Downey.
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QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY PRE-REGISTRATION.

Beatrice R. E. Thompson.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN—Entrance Examination.

N. B. E. Stewart.

FORM PRIZES.

Vis, Maths & Science.

D. G. Brown.
D. E. Burnside.

Vis, Arts.

E. M. Sufferin.

VI.

W. R. McLean.
J. R. Marshall.
Beatrice R. E. Thompson
Margaret J. Gilpin.

V Upper.

Robert Hogg.
George Taylor.
F. J. Kennedy.
Margaret R. Ferguson.
David E. Hyndman.

V Lower.

Jean M. Quigley.
Eva Brown.
Edith McNickle.
R. S. Neill.
D. Lynch.
F. Mackle.
H. B. Crockett.
W. J. Sheppard.

IV Upper.

Dorothy F. Badger.
Anna Ferguson.
Evelyn Hazlett.
Helen McGuckin.
Leslie F. Irwin.
F. McLarnon.
R. W. Taylor.
J. Graham.

IV Lower 1.

Roberta Clarke.
F. J. McLarnon.
Wm. Padden.
Violet Collins.
R. Ferguson.

IV Lower 2 and 3.

Ina Gilpin.
Phyllis Quigley.

III.

Anna Gabathuler.
Anne H. S. Fazackerley.
Margaret Sharpe.
J. A. Duff.

KINDERGARTEN.

Form I.

Barbara Badger.
Christopher Brennan.
Graham Lowe.

Form II.

Marjorie Lowe.
Crawford Henderson.

Captain 1st XV—S. Anderson.

Captain 1st XI (Cricket)—

D. McGillorm.

Captain 1st XI (Hockey)—

Anna Taylor.

Victor Ludorum S. Anderson.

House Championship—Calvin House

Girls' Athletic Cup—E. Francey.

Athletic Cup (under 17)—

Mildred Scott and N. Gibson.

Junior Athletic Cup—J. Donnelly.

RAINEY ENDOWED SCHOOL, MAGHERAFELT.

Pupil's Name Brennen, Christopher.

Form: Transition.

Pupil's Age, 7 years 3 months.

Average Age of Form: 8 years.

Report for Term ending Easter

1949.

Attendance

56

days out of

64

Reading	Writing	Arithmetic	Spelling	Dictation	Literature	Poetry	Drawing
$\frac{41}{50}$	$\frac{40}{50}$	$\frac{61}{100}$	$\frac{41}{50}$	$\frac{39}{50}$	$\frac{32}{50}$	$\frac{44}{50}$	$\frac{40}{50}$
6th =	2nd.	5th.	4th.	9th.	3rd.	3rd.	3rd =

Christopher has worked fairly steadily, although all his written work has deteriorated lately in appearance.

I hope that this is only a passing phase, for he is attentive and can concentrate much better now than formerly. He is most considerate with the younger children and is keenly interested in all subjects.

Drawing good.

Music - Aural work may improve. Good sense of rhythm. (M.S. 14)

Examination
Total $\frac{338}{450}$ 4th

J.S. Parakey

RAINEY ENDOWED SCHOOL, MAGHERAFELT.

Pupil's Name Christopher Brennen

Form: Transition.

Pupil's Age, 7.6 yrs.

Average Age of Form: 8.3 yrs.
1949.

Report for Term ending June

Attendance

49

days out of

49

Arithmetic.	Literature.	Reading.	Writing.	Spelling.	Dictation.	Poetry.	Drawing.
$\frac{73}{100}$	$\frac{59}{100}$	$\frac{34}{50}$	$\frac{41}{50}$	$\frac{21}{25}$	$\frac{35}{50}$	$\frac{33}{50}$	$\frac{45}{50}$
2nd.	8th.	6th.	3rd.	2nd =.	3rd.	6th.	2nd y.

Total- $\frac{341}{475}$. Place in Form - 6th.

Christopher's years progress is very satisfactory, he has made good progress in all subjects. He is very painstaking and conscientious, and can concentrate now with visibly improved results. His written work is original and thoughtful and he always is keenly interested in the whole world of school affairs.

Drawing very good

J.S. Parakeeney.

RAINEY ENDOWED SCHOOL, MAGHERAFELT.

Pupil's Name Christopher Brennan.

Form: II

Pupil's Age, 8 yrs.

Average Age of Form: 8 yrs. 5 mths.

Report for Term ending Christmas.

1949.

Attendance

72

days out of

75

Examinations : (6 in Form).

Arithmetic.	Reading.	Writing.	Spelling.	Dictation.	Literature.	Poetry.
$\frac{55}{100}$	$\frac{45}{150}$	$\frac{46}{50}$	$\frac{36}{50}$	$\frac{45}{50}$	$\frac{88}{100}$	$\frac{45}{50}$
5th.	1st.	2nd.=	2nd.=	1st.	1st.	2nd.

Total - 360. Place in Form - First.

On the whole, Christopher has done a good term's work, and his examination results are very satisfactory. His memory work - Poetry, Spelling etc. has improved greatly, and he did an excellent literature paper, taking a keen interest in English. He has become more fluent at Reading, and puts more expression into it. His Handwork has been well-done, and he is very good at helping with odd jobs and clearing up.

Drawing Excellent.

J.S. Fitzgerald.

Mrs Annie Ingram
13, West Gardens
Belfast.



up to it like hundreds of others have to do. Poor W!
 what a thankless time he has had - he has done everything
 to protect me but I won't ^{CRANFORD DRU,} ^{MAGHERAFELT,} ^{CO. DERRY} ^{TELEPHONE 11.} ^{Hope you are keep-}
 myselfish he is. ^{fit & looking} ^{after yourself & looking} ^{forward &}
 bunch to seeing you all soon. ^{Tues-day.}
 R.

Dear Dorothy,

must say it was a ghastly shock - I
just felt I wanted to die even though I did
realize that it was self-pity. Now, chiefly
due to Paula's sweetness, I am beginning to see
that a challenge to me it is - to make the
very most of her & keep her as gently happy
as she has always been. I have also
had visits from William Sloan & J. Price
who have known me for a long time & I am so
pleased because they have both told me
that they expected her to die & that only
the peace & all the sleep kept her alive.
Unfortunately as W. told you she is physically
very vulnerable too but I can only do my best
to protect her from any infection.
She is in better health & brighter than she has
ever been & so pathetically sweet - I am
not pretending that I had no idea that she
was not normal but only that I prayed
that her unceasing contentment was
physical & enable. The fact that it is not so
is a great sorrow, but I shall have to face

Rough Notes (in her own hand) by Muriel M. Brennen (1914-2007) on raising her mentally-handicapped daughter Paula (1949-2010) and creating help for such children in the Magherafelt area. The beginnings of Kilronan School.

My husband (he to start the Mid-Ulster Hospital) + I came to Magherafelt in 1945
Colin was born in 1946 + Paula in 1949
- + Christopher + Michael having been
born in Belfast. I will not go into
detail about the shock + trauma of
finding that dear Paula was 'Downer
Syndrome' - suffice is to say that she
was very lethargic + one feeding time
just ran into the other. However
with the help of my wonderful daily help
we managed through the v. early days
She was Mrs Maisie Brown + her
daughter now works for me.

Being so
busy with my husband + the three boys
I began to get very worried about P's
education - She had been certified as
'very low grade' which was terribly
depressing but I did my best to
work with simple toys + counting frames
etc but she got very tired + cross
easily.

Isn't it impossible to
believe that there was nothing for
Mentally Handicapped children in the
whole area. ? After some years I
was introduced to Dr. ^{a very fine} Weir - Medical
Superintendent at Muchamore Abbey +
I arranged to take Paula ~~the~~ to the
School there each day in the car -
the double journeys being over 80
miles ^{per day} - however as the winters
were very snowy + icy I had to give
that up and again became very
worried and exhausted.

Now I come to the very worst days of
my life - my friends had been
keeping at me about how much I had
to do + my tiring health + much against
my better judgment - I agreed with Dr
Weir to let Paula be resident at
M. A. When I tell you that five
days later (they had asked me not to
visit at first) I got an S.O.S. for

Dr. Wein to come for P. My husband & I
rushed there immediately & discovered
P, very ill & dehydrated with bad
weals on her wrists & ankles where
she had obviously been tied into bed.
It transpired that there was a very bad
Matron who was dismissed right
away. Fortunately our good friend
Dr. McConnell Senior physician Hosp.
- drip fed etc etc.

Recover. slowly at least 2 years

Not leave us & slept very badly

Also it had v. bad effect

on me - terrible feelings of guilt at

letting her leave & return home where she

had always been so well looked after

About 1954 the I.H.S.S had
touch ^{Vey Rwy} James Vey dish
Church Hall no facilities

Committee Mr. McCormick
J. O'Byrne

friends E. Wilson A. Clann

Phyllis Walsh - Mrs D. Flack etc
later on help of J O'Byrne ^{who etc} etc
moved to St John's Hall but there
were still no facilities of any kind
though by that time Mrs Jean Clarke
/ now head - - - was head &
made the very best of what there was.

At the same time as well as all
the Parents meetings I attended
endless meetings at Buntys Hall
with Mr. Mac C. & Mrs C & eventually
after much persuasion

we got the school &

we moved into the premises at
Hosp. Road which was mostly
the school

As more & more

children were disc. by S. Services we
were always very overcrowded

In 'due to much work by Mrs
Clarke the marvellous big premises
- Killarney School was built
+ 1st 12. Rd. became the Adult

Centre where Mrs Sally Boyle took
over + made many improvements
but as pupils came from Killarney
there was always over crowding
Sadly Mrs S. B. had to retire
owing to ill health but a young active
~~Head~~ with Head; greatly helped
by Link worker Martina R.

**Postscript: I, Christopher Brennen, tell
Paula's story in my own words at**

<http://dankat.com/autobiography/autopaula.htm>