

Garfield House School



Garfield House was clearly being run by Miss Benwell-Nalder (*Robin Penna and Henry Symons always referred to her simply as 'Miss Nalder'*) in autumn 1939 and in summer 1941, as she signed both of Robin's reports (see below) as headmistress. However, several people recall Miss Stenson-Stenson looking after Garfield House School, but it is not clear when. Since 1935 at least, the Reverend Stenson-Stenson was the Vicar in Charge of St Peter's. In November 1942 he moved to become the vicar at Marazion, when the Reverend W T Martyn took over St Peter's.

GARFIELD HOUSE PORT ISAAC CORNWALL

PREPARATORY SCHOOL For Girls and Small Boys

Principal: MISS BENWELL-NALDER

Regulations.

- Each pupil should have:—
 - Pair canvas shoes with rubber or crepe soles.
 - Gymnasium tunic (blue serge with white blouse).
 - Navy blue serge long coat.
 - School cap, for winter; Panama with School band, for summer.
- Pupils from a distance may bring their lunch.

School Fees.

Under 10 years, £2 2s. 0d. Over 10, £3 3s. 0d. per Term.
Weekly Boarders, £10 10s. 0d. Termly, £12 12s. 0d.

Tuition Fees are payable in advance.

A Term's notice, in writing, is necessary to the removal of a pupil, or payment of a Term's Fee will be required.

Attendance and Terms.

Daily (except Saturdays) 9.45 a.m. to 12.15 p.m.
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The Year is divided into three Terms with mid-term break.

Regular and punctual attendance is expected and is absolutely necessary in the interests of the pupil and of the School. A letter from parent explaining absence or asking permission for absence, is asked for.

The School Course includes Scripture, Reading, Writing, Algebra, Arithmetic, French, English Composition, Literature, History, Geography, Class Singing, Drawing, Needlework and Drill.

EXTRAS.

Latin	...	...	...	...	£1 1 0 per Term.
Pianoforte	...	...	...	...	£1 1 0 "
Mandoline	...	...	...	...	£1 1 0 "
Guitar	...	...	...	...	£1 1 0 "
Painting—Oils or Water Colours	...	...	...	...	£1 1 0 "
Elocution	...	...	...	...	£3 3 0 "
Hockey or Tennis	...	...	...	...	10/- the Season.

Pupils prepared for Associated Board, Trinity College, Royal Academy.



The best photograph we have of Robin Penna and his elder brother Dick

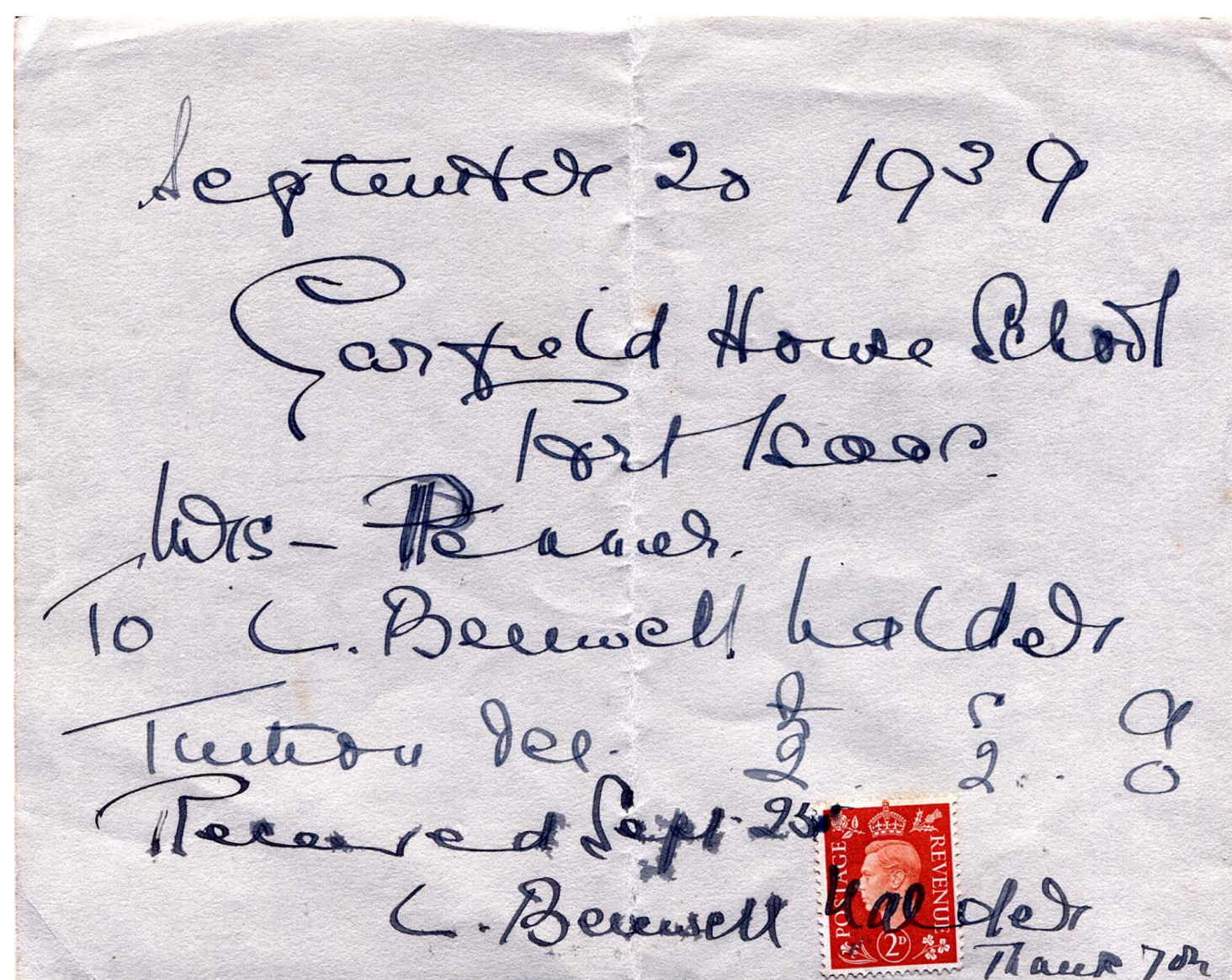
In Daidie Penna's wartime Mass Observation diary, she mentioned getting Robin into Garfield House, which was next door to Westward Ho, where Robin, his mum Daide, and his elder brother Dick, were living at that time. The notes in square brackets are explanatory additions by Robin to his mother's diary -

Westward Ho, Port Isaac, Cornwall. Sunday September 17th 1939

During the period that has elapsed since my last entry here I have made a trip up to London and back again. For some days we went on as usual with our holiday, my mind not quite being made up as to whether I should stay down here or return to Tadworth [Surrey]. At length however, as my husband [Ernest William Penna] was likely to be evacuated and furnished houses seemed to be letting rather readily at home, I thought that it would be better to stay on down here, where there was little sign of war and try to let the children carry on their lives with as little interruption as possible. So accordingly on Tuesday September 5th. I sent a wire to my husband telling him that I should be returning home without the children on the next day.

Back in Cornwall I was struck by the disappearance of what signs of war there had been when I left. People had given up congregating about the cottage doors to hear the news and the young men who had been called up had gone away to barracks in Plymouth and other more distant places. The party left in the house where I am staying had been reduced by one woman going to join her husband and another was going in a day or two. In the end there will be only two families left here, presumably for 'duration' [till the end of the war].

As soon as I returned I set about getting my eldest boy started at Camelford Grammar School. Here I was met with a great helpfulness on the part of the headmaster, who though labouring under difficult conditions with a largely increased number of children gave my boy a kind welcome. Then after arranging for my youngest boy [Robin, 5 years old] to go to a small kindergarden next door [Garfield House School] and I am trying to settle myself down as philosophically as possible to a totally strange existence, consoled entirely by my writing and M.O. [Mass Observation] activities.



GARFIELD HOUSE SCHOOL PORT ISAAC

REPORT FOR THE Winter TERM, 1939.

Name Robin Penna.

FORM.	AVERAGE AGE OF FORM.	AGE.	HOUSE.
Kindergarten	5-6 years.	5 years.	
SCRIPTURE	Gaining knowledge [Not taken by me.]		
ENGLISH	Good.		
HISTORY	Not taken.		
GEOGRAPHY	"		
FRENCH	Robin must take great care with his writing.		
MATHEMATICS	Fairly good, but must try to concentrate harder.		
DRAWING	Good.		
MANUAL WORK	Not taken.		
SINGING	Fairly good.		
MUSIC	Not taken.		
CONDUCT			

*He is a sweet little boy
who is progressing favourably
with his studies*
L. Benwell-Nalder
HEAD MISTRESS.

N.B.—Next Term begins January 10th at 9.30 a.m.
Boarders may return on the evening of the day before.

GARFIELD HOUSE SCHOOL PORT ISAAC

REPORT FOR THE Summer TERM, 1941

Name Robin Penna

FORM.	AVERAGE AGE OF FORM.	AGE.	HOUSE.
I	7 7	6 3	
SCRIPTURE	Gaining knowledge		
ENGLISH	Good, improving in his spelling		
HISTORY	Gaining knowledge		
GEOGRAPHY	" </td		
FRENCH	Fair start		
MATHEMATICS	Fair work, must memorise his tables		
DRAWING	Improving, not too good		
MANUAL WORK	His written work is improving and he must try to form his letters		
SINGING	Tuneful		
MUSIC	Not taken		
CONDUCT	Good		

Robin is doing very satisfactory work, he is a very conscientious little student
J. Benwell-Nalder
HEAD MISTRESS.

N.B.—Next Term begins September 22nd at 9.30 a.m.
Boarders may return on the evening of the day before.

Daidie Penna also included in her diary this lovely story she heard about Olive Stenson-Stenson a few weeks after she temporarily returned back to Tadworth -

St Valery, Epsom Lane South, Tadworth, Surrey. Wednesday July 31st 1940

I have heard of an air-raid warning in Cornwall. The village possesses no siren. The vicar's sister [Olive Stenson-Stenson] is Air Raid Warden and the other day she received the 'red' signal. Instantly she donned her tin hat and trousers and started to run down the village street blowing her whistle like mad. The village had always thought she was half mad and thought she had gone completely so and took no notice of her when she tried to push the people into their houses.

another mention of Olive Stenson-Stenson -

Blue Haze, Port Isaac, Cornwall. Monday April 7th 1941 - Weather: Sunshiny and spring like.

February 16th - the date of my last entry! I hadn't realised that I had allowed so long a time to elapse. Well, diary written in retrospect is not very interesting so I had better start off from the present time. The gap being accounted for by (1) an attack of measles for Dick, (2) a period of sick leave for E. [Ernest] and a removal from the tall gloomy quarters of Hillside to a smaller and artistically furnished cottage. [Blue Haze, officially called Sunnyside but had apparently been used as a cafe with the Blue Haze name. The house belonged to a Mrs. Olive Stenson-Stenson who had a passion for the colour blue.] Now I'm settled in I can start off again. Oh, and the fiction factory also had been working overtime and still is - in between other things!