

CHAPTER 4

A Good Education

Since the birth of our children Charles and I had one aim: to keep them from being spoiled. It wasn't so difficult not to spoil them ourselves, after all, they could never all be attended to at once, they had to wait their turn for everything. We have never had money to spare to buy them a lot of things but it was very hard to keep them from gaining a feeling of their own importance over other children when everywhere we went strangers would come up to them and exclaim, make a great fuss of them and even come to the house and lean over the gate to watch them playing.

Fortunately, having had this attention since they were born it never entered their heads to question it, or to wonder why other children didn't attract the same attention or have so many photographs taken. They have always been treated by us as perfectly ordinary children, which of course they were. Charles and I have never referred to them, in their hearing, as 'quads' although now they know the meaning of the word I have had to explain that why people sometimes stop and speak to them is because it is strange to see four little girls dressed alike, the same size and the same age. They seem to understand and take the information in their stride.

Charles and I were still concerned over the amount of publicity the girls might receive when they started school. I wanted to ensure that the girls' schooling started off on the 'right foot' so to speak, especially conscious of the other children's reactions to any fuss which did not include them. With this in mind we decided to keep the school starting date as quiet as possible.

Luckily we managed to achieve this for three weeks before I received a telephone call warning me that one of the local evening papers knew, so naturally it was not long before reporters were out at Westerleigh wanting to take photographs.

The headmistress and I agreed not to let any be taken but we had to give in for the sake of peace and quiet. We let in a couple of reporters