

Basque children; Press Cuttings & Minute Book Extracts

03.5.1937; Courier published report of the J.B.S.Haldane public meeting in the Caird Hall. Other speakers were Monica Whately, a Labour London County Councillor (*and secretary of Save the Children Fund*) just back from Spain and Gordon Davidson, an ambulance driver on leave. It was announced that £280 had already been raised for Dundee's Ambulance, which had been purchased and had been on view around Dundee over the weekend of 1st & 2nd May. It would reach Spain on May 5th. A further £72 was raised on the night. The question of adoption of Basque refugee children by Dundee was first raised (the bombing of Guernica had occurred the week before on April 26th).

11.5.1937; Report in Courier of Dundee Spanish Medical Aid Committee Meeting. Dundee had agreed to adopt 5 Basque children from Bilbao. Collections of medical and food supplies were also instigated. Individual donors were Mr F.S. Tennant, 102 Strathmartine Road and Mr A.D. Daw, 6 Garland Place.

16.5.1937; Departure of Miss May Wilson, 1 Hyndford Place, Dundee, for Southampton where she was to help with the reception of 4,000 Basque refugee children arriving from Bilbao, on behalf of the Dundee Spanish Medical Aid Committee. Her parents were from Paisley and she came to Dundee in 1917. She had worked with the (*protestant*) Spanish Gospel Mission since 1926 and was posted to Alcazarde San Juan, where she was working at the outbreak of the Civil War in July 1936. She moved back to Dundee the following month. The house in Spain she had been staying in had since been bombed by Franco's forces. She spoke fluent Spanish. Reported in the Courier the following day.

17.5.1937; Letter published in the Courier from Dundee Spanish Medical Aid Committee, thanking the people of the city for helping to purchase the ambulance which had been sent to Spain. Donations were now required for the support of the Basque refugee children; 5/- being required per child per week. Letter signed for the Committee by R.C. Buist, A. Whitford and Caroline Chapman.

25.5.1937; Dundee Spanish Medical Aid Committee, reported in the Courier, had received a letter from May Wilson who was helping at the Basque refugee children's camp at Southampton. She reported 'heartrending scenes'.

29.5.1937; Report in Courier of Spanish Aid Committee meeting. Guarantors in Dundee could now support 10 Basque refugee children. Latest contribution was from a consortium of 30 local fish traders. A fund raising concert was planned for Caird Hall on June 16th.

09.6.1937; DT&LC Exec; Report that the Blind Institution would donate 5/- weekly to the Basque Children's Fund.

10.6.1937; Courier carried a report from the Spanish Aid Committee meeting. Following support from Women's Liberal Association, Shop Assistants' Union, Society of Friends and TOC-H, 16 Basque children can now be supported in Dundee.

16.6.1937; Dundee Trades & Labour Council Executive Committee minutes; The Bakers' Union promised by letter to donate 10/- per week to the Basque Children's Fund. A Dundee Dockers vs. Spanish Seamen football match had raised £5.2s.7d at the gate, £1.12s via a collection, plus a donation of £5.6s.11½d from the Spanish crew. Total raised; £12.1s.6½d against expenditure of £1.6s. Treasurer's proposal of adopting 9 Basque children for 6 months was agreed and was to be recommended to the full T&LC meeting. Spanish Relief Fund stands at £33.19s.7d. Comrade

Gow was thanked for his organising of the football match. The secretary was to write to thank the Spanish crew.

17.6.1937; Courier reported 1,500 at special Caird Hall concert by Dundee School of Music. Boys Brigade and Girl Guides sold programmes and acted as stewards. £27.6s.3d was collected for Basque Children following an appeal by Mr David Thompson, northern organiser of the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief.

24.6.1937; Courier; Dundee Aid Committee reported support from Trinity Church and a group of artists allowing 19 refugee children to be supported. 34 groups were now providing funds.

30.6.1937; DT&LC; Letter from Dr Sagar enclosing cheque for £6.10s to maintain one Basque child for 6 months and the offer of a case of medical appliances and drugs for Spain. It was agreed to send a letter of thanks.

06.7.1937; Courier reported the announcement that Dundee Spanish Aid Committee were actively looking for premises to house 20 to 30 Basque children in Dundee. The Committee reported receiving a large quantity of bandages from the Mutual Service Club, £8.6s.3d from St Fillan's Church, Newport with additional collections from Chalmers Church and Ward Chapel.

10.7.1937; Courier reported the establishment of a Basque Children's Committee, set up to find suitable accommodation. One possible site was the Church of Scotland Boy's Home in South Ellen Street. The minutes of the Dundee Industrial Schools Society on 11th August record a letter from the Dundee Basque Children's Committee asking for the use of the Home, which is refused, with the same response to a subsequent letter from the Duchess of Atholl making further representations, minuted on 8th September.

13.8.1937; Courier reported that the Basque Children's Committee have still not been able to identify suitable accommodation. The most recent offer had fallen through at the last minute.

01.9.1937; Courier reported that a Flag Day application from Rev Helen Woods, Secretary of St Andrews Committee for the Care of Basque Children, was turned down by St Andrews Town Council. Baillie McGregor commented that everyone knew of the trouble which Basque children had caused in other parts of the country and did not see why they should be encouraged.

11.09.1937; Letter in the Courier from the Duchess of Atholl at Eastwood, Dunkeld, appealed for accommodation in Dundee for 25 Basque children. A response two days later by a William Reid suggested 'they might find more suitable accommodation in Dunkeld under her own friendly eye'.

13.9.1937; Advert in the Courier; the 'Left Book Club Fund for Basque Children Relief' announced an exhibition of sound films; 'They Shall Not Pass', 'Hey-Rup' and 'Durruti' to be shown at Cinerama on Sunday 19th September. Tickets at 6d and 1/- were available from Cinerama Bookshop, 34 Hawkhill.

14.9.1937; Article in the Courier announced; "Basque Children Find Home in Montrose - 25 Arrive This Week." 14 girls and 11 boys had been found accommodation at Mall Park House in Montrose, courtesy of an offer by Mr A. Inglis-Shepherd, President of the Dundee Free Breakfast Mission.

17.9.1937; Basque Children at Montrose. 14 girls and 10 boys arrived by train at Montrose Station from Eastleigh, Hampshire. A banner reading 'Viva Espana Salud' (long live Spain) was unfurled along the road leading to the station. Reported in the Courier the following day.

18.9.1937; Letter in the Courier from Caroline Chapman on behalf of Dundee Basque Children's Committee, answered a number of recent, sometimes critical letters on the refugee children.

25.9.1937; Beginning of two weeks of regular correspondence in the Courier on the subject of Spain and the Basque children inspired by the arrival of the children at Mall Park. A number from 'W.J.S.' are particularly critical, as is one from 'Catholic Layman' who asked if the children were attending Mass on Sundays.

21.10.1937; Photograph in Courier of Dorothy Foot, the wife of Dundee Liberal MP Dingle Foot, distributing sweets to the Basque children at Mall Park House.

05.11.1937; Advert on front page of Courier; 'Dundee Basque Children, Caird Hall, 7.45pm, Sunday November 14th, Duchess of Atholl MP, Commander Pursey RN. Arrangements meeting on above; YMCA, tonight, 7pm'. (Advert repeated on Saturday 13th Nov).

15.11.1937; Courier reported 3,000 at a rally in Caird Hall to support the Basque refugee children. The audience were entertained by 30 Basque children, then staying at Mall Park House, Montrose. £ 35.14s was raised through a collection, plus a cheque for £ 37.3s from Glasgow sympathisers.

27.11.1937; Courier reported an Exhibition of 100 drawings by Spanish children from Montrose, Cambridge and Valencia at Dundee Training College, organised by the Artists International Association.

5.2.1938; Courier letter; "Basque Children at Montrose" responding to 'certain reports that have been current'. It states that: 1) Mr C.T. Darling, who recently became warden, declares he found the food arrangements at Mall Park superior to any he had seen. 2) Dr Fuhrman, an American graduate of St Andrews, who has just returned from a year at the Madrid front, this week spoke to the children at Mall Park and found them all happy and contented. 3) Our treasurer, Rev A. Whitford, has funds for a short period only and appeals for renewed energy in contributions. We are not on the rocks but should be freed from anxiety. Letter signed by R.C.Buist, 16 Airlie Place.