

Diplomats' Children At School

By Kay Rex

Canadian Press Staff Writer

A stucco mansion in the heart of Ottawa's fashionable Rockcliffe area is where the daughters of diplomats learn their readin', writin', and 'rithmetic.

In any other city Elmwood would be just another girls' private school, but in the Capital where foreign diplomats come and go, it is the place for the children of this nomadic government group to continue their studies—until the time comes to move to another country.

"I think diplomats' children are astonishing the way they absorb everything, and it's amazing the way they adjust themselves," said Mrs. C. H. Buck, headmistress. "Travel seems to make them more alert and observant."

Canadians Too

Children from Canadian homes also attend the residential and day school, but it's the youngsters from France, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, China—practically every country in the world—who give Elmwood its international flavor.

They're all ages, from three-year-olds who attend nursery school classes to the 'teen-agers studying for matriculation.

And in the children Mrs. Buck has come to recognize the traits of their native country.

It's in the art classes that the students from the southern coun-

tries show their skill.

"At present we have four girls from Trinidad, and all are gifted in art and in the feeling for color," she said. "You find their subtropical heritage coming out in all that they do."

Bold brilliant colors were favored by the Swedish children in their painting, and this was typical of the "free use of primary colors," seen in most Swedish handicraft.

Here Is A Record

Europeans usually headed the language classes, Mrs. Buck found. She recalled how some years ago the 13-year-old daughter of an Italian consul came to Elmwood. At the beginning of the term the child could speak only two words in English. At the end of the year she came first in the English composition class.

"In Europe a person must be able to converse in at least two or three languages and probably that is why a new language comes so easily to the European child," said Mrs. Buck.

All in all these youngsters, who at 10 have travelled more than the average person does in a lifetime, fit into new situations easily. While moving around naturally upsets their education, Mrs. Buck found that early in life it did them no harm. However, once they had entered their 'teens it was more important that they stay in one place if they wanted a complete education. That was why more than one diplomat left his daughter to finish her term at Elmwood when he received his marching papers elsewhere.