

Every Picture Tells a Story

Can you help give a name and a story to a real-life Bristol orphan?

Click [here](#) for the George Müller story

Key Stage 2/3 (age 7-14)

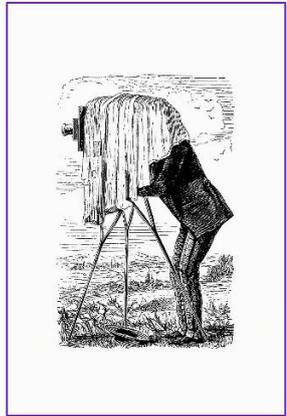
By Kate Brooks*

The children in these pictures were orphans in George Müller's Orphan Homes on Ashley Down, Bristol in Victorian times. You can read all about the story of how these homes were set up [here](#) and explore our Kids Extra page to find out more.

We know what these children wore (identical uniforms), what they ate (a lot of porridge!) and what they learned in school, as well as where they were sent after their time at the Orphan Homes. But what we **don't** know, are the **names of the children** in these pictures or much about their individual **stories**.



Although very careful records have been kept of all the children who lived in the Homes, the photographs were not labelled. This is typical of these kinds of photographs at that time - their purpose was not to focus on individual children, but probably to show Bristolians what was going on at the Orphan Homes.



When you go out with your brothers and sisters or friends, you all wear different clothes and have different hairstyles.

The orphans looked almost identical because they all had the same uniforms, haircuts and hats! This was how it had to be - after all, imagine trying to find 2,000 different outfits and giving 2,000 different haircuts to 2,000 fussy, wriggly, children!



Local newspapers at the time wrote about how fascinated local people were to see this long 'snake' of identically dressed children marching to Chapel!

Nowadays, we value each child for their own individual personality, gifts and style. We also know that it is important that **every child knows and understands their own life story.**

MISSION: POSSIBLE

Can you help us give a Müllers orphan a name and a story?

Here's what we want you to do...

- Research Victorian children's names on the internet names - pick one you like!
- Imagine you are one of these children: What do you like doing? What do you want to do when you grow up? What makes you sad, and what makes you happy? How would your friends describe you: funny, kind, noisy, loud?
- Find some useful websites which tell you about being a child in the Victorian times, especially 'working children' and children from poorer families. Find out about the jobs the Müller orphans might go on to do when they left the Homes. You could investigate what sort of apprenticeships* were available to boys in the Victorian era, and what sort of jobs were seen as 'girls' jobs' then.
- Draw us a picture of your child doing something that they might do during the day, or what they dream of, or design a new uniform! You could write their life story and let us know what you think happened next. You are welcome to send us stories and poems too - be as creative as you like!

*an apprenticeship is a chance to learn how to do a job e.g. a carpenter - the boys would have received a small wage as they learnt but then, if they passed, be able to take on a fully paid job

Please post your questionnaires and your pictures/writing/artwork to:

Kate Brooks, 53 Grove Road, Fishponds, Bristol, UK BS16 2BW or email to:
K.Brooks@Bathspa.ac.uk

We cannot return any you post, but we'd love to display them at The George Müller Museum. Please add your name and age if you are happy for us to do that, and watch this space for news on the exhibition, when we are open again.

***Every Picture Tells a Story** is part of a PhD Research project on Müller's Homes by Kate Brooks, a doctorate researcher and lecturer at Bath Spa University, who is researching the lives of the children in the Homes. For more information on this research email
K.Brooks@Bathspa.ac.uk

Müllers Orphan Profile

Which child am I? (please describe your location in the photo e.g.: top left, back row, or include a picture with the child circled)

Name

Age

Hair colour

Eye colour

How would my friends/teachers describe me? _____

Favourite food

Least favourite food

Favourite colour

Favourite toy

What I like about living here _____

What I don't like about living here _____

What I like playing _____

What I dream about _____

What I can remember of my family & life before the Orphanage

What I hope to do when I grow up

Please feel free to write anything else including stories and poems, and/or draw a picture! Don't forget to include your name and age if you're happy for us to display your creations at The George Müller Museum.