

The Long Summer

UK TV documentary : 19 : dir. : Channel 4 : ? min
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Narrator: Alan Bennett

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Source: Channel 4 publicity still

Channel 4 publicity still caption:

"Alan Bennett narrates **"The Long Summer"**, and uncovers the forces which shaped Britain between the wars. Channel 4, Sunday 16th May, 8.00pm "

No further information currently available. Possibly of no genuine interest to the archive, the glossy appears to show schoolboys near Croydon in the inter-war years. Period newsreel is always a useful corrective to the way television and cinema "recreate" even the recent past. There is a world of difference between 1940s children as glimpsed in documentary footage such as this, and 1940s children as portrayed in film/TV drama.

More recently, Bennett was to be seen in a series of television monologues, "**Telling Tales**" (BBC2 November 2000) in which he ruminated and anecdotalised about his own wartime boyhood in characteristic tones of weary self-deprecation. But, for Bennett, boyhood was merely a knock-kneed observation platform from which to study the foibles and whimsies of the adults about him. It had no vitality and interest of its own, and hence those monologues were a wasted opportunity from the archive's perspective.

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