



EVINGTON SCHOOL

1841-1957

by Jonathan Wilshire

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INTRODUCTION

The diligence of Mrs. Sue Finch, the vicar's wife, in seeking out and opening a locked, keyless cupboard in the Church belfry, resulted in many forgotten Evington archives coming to light on 16 January 1984. These comprised not just Parish Account books dating from 1721, but also Evington school records including the log-book 1874-1902, and the Managers' Minute book 1903-57. As the minute book had not been properly written up in its last years, apart from rough notes by the Rev. C.G. Thorne, vicar 1955-61, it seems reasonable to assume that the cupboard and its contents had remained undisturbed since his time.

School log-books give much information of the day to day school routine and also provide useful details of village events, celebrations, illnesses, extreme weather conditions and the like - very much a chronicle of contemporary village life. This short study is largely based on the two school volumes recovered, although one remains curious to know what became of the later log-book, which must surely have existed. However, even with only one log-book surviving, some idea of the author's task can perhaps be judged when it is remembered that that book contains over 500 pages.

There are a few still living in Evington who attended school under Miss Swinfield's rule, and many more who knew her successors. Written reminiscences from such people would be welcome and could do much to fill the gaps in the coverage of the period after 1902. It might then be possible to produce a rather more complete history of the village school. Meanwhile, this interim production must serve as a stop-gap. There is also a crying need for photographs, particularly of school groups and teachers. If readers have any such items in their possession, they are exhorted to lend them to the author for copying, which would only take a few days; the co-operation of all in this respect would be appreciated.

Evington,
Leicester.
December 1984.

Jonathan Wilshire

Note: The log-book was generally only written up once a week, and therefore some of the dates quoted may be a little confusing.

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EVINGTON SCHOOL 1841 - 1957

(National School no. 18233 became
Church of England School in 1903)

* * * * *

Early Education in Evington.

IT IS KNOWN that there was a Sunday School in existence by 1826 when about 30 children attended, but there must have been access to some sort of day school long before this. The Overseers of the Poor accounts for 1768-70 show the Parish officers paying out 2d. a week in respect of each of two pauper boys, Thomas West and Carter Pegg for schooling. What form their education took is not known; no reference to a local school as early as this has been found and it is unlikely pauper children would have been sent to a Leicester school. It may be that their teacher was either the vicar or perhaps merely the parish clerk. Presumably the overseers thought that pauper children stood a better chance of gaining an apprenticeship if they possessed the rudiments of learning. Over the centuries, the standard of literacy, relatively speaking, seemed good, with most yeomen and husbandmen able to write, yet references to the education of children in the wills of Evingtonians are virtually non-existent.

The first reference to a schoolmaster in Evington appears to be in 1832 when the name William Parkinson is found in the Parish Registers; he would then have been about 23 years old and he was probably in charge of a daily school attended by children of non-conformist families (then known as "Independents") not just from the village but from a wider area too. This school seems to have been later run in connection with Evington chapel, opened on 11 April 1838. The school was said to have been supported by one of the founders of the chapel, presumably Samuel Davenport. Certainly by 1846 that school had become a "British" establishment. Such schools were under the auspices of the British and Foreign School Society, which though basically non-conformist, aimed at teaching religion on non-denominational lines. Thomas Litchfield, then aged 24 years, had succeeded Parkinson by 1846, and in 1849 40 scholars were said to be attending, evidence that its intake net was not confined to Evington parish. (The 1851 Census revealed 43 children described as scholars and most of these would have been attending the "National" school: see below). The last directory reference to Evington British school is not much later - 1854. Unfortunately, the British school archives (at the West London Institute of Higher Education, Borough Road, Isleworth, Middlesex) have yielded no information on this short-lived Evington school.

The National School.

1841 is the date normally ascribed to the founding of a National school in the village and the Burnaby family (of Evington House) were largely instrumental in this; in particular, Miss H.A. Burnaby, who did not die until 1884 at the age of 86, considered it very much "her" school and she visited it once or twice a week until she was well past eighty. Her active interest included giving the children dictation. A "National" school was one under the auspices of The National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church (now known more simply as The National Society for Promoting Religious Education). Its records are housed at Church House, Dean's Yard, London S.W.1., but these have provided little information on the Evington school, other than there was a teacher's house and two classrooms by 1846/7. The actual building seems never to have been vested in the National Society; indeed, it was not until 1870, under the School Sites Act that the Rev. F.G. Burnaby vested the legal title of the school and an area of 1,100 square yards in the Rev. W.B. Moore and his successors, vicars of Evington. In 1870 too came Forster's Act establishing compulsory education for all those aged between 5 and 13 years, the leaving age being raised to 14 in 1947 and subsequently successively to 15 and 16 years. Until 1906 it was usual in Evington for those over the age of 3 years to attend school. The earlier attempt at compulsory education had come with the Factories' Acts Extension, 1867; this required children under the age of 13 years to have at least ten hours' schooling a week.

The first teacher appears to have been William Dye, aged 35 years in 1841; although he was still there in 1851, Samuel John Downs is mentioned as 'National schoolmaster' in directories of 1846 and 1849, so we can only assume Dye had taken an appointment elsewhere but later returned to the school. Nor is the life of the next schoolmaster, Thomas Taylor, very much clearer. He had been born at Willoughby Waterless and was aged about 23 when he came to Evington school in 1852, there he remained until 1876. Later he was a grazier of 30 acres and a threshing machine proprietor! Perhaps his duties as parish clerk interfered with his school-teaching: he held the former postion for 38 years from 1856 to 1894. Most of the early teachers were assisted by their wives. The last school master was Daniel Gilbert (1881-87), the Managers then stating they only wanted a mistress to teach at the school. Details of the outspoken Gilbert and the main later teachers will be found elsewhere in this pamphlet. Those of longest standing were Miss Louisa Atlee (1887-94), Miss Lucy Ellen Swinfield (1896-1925) and Miss Lottie Mary Wilkinson (1925-47). The last two remain well-known in the minds of those still living in the area who were taught by them. The changeover from a National to a Church of England School took place in 1903 with the Managers involved in much form-filling and parents being required to give notice in writing if they did not wish their children to be taught the Anglican faith or to attend the parish church. This increased church-chapel bitterness which had been simmering for years and which had been inflamed by the Rev. Guy Landon's insistence that the school should parade to church at frequent intervals and every day in Holy Week. Fortunately he was Vicar for only two years (1900-02) being better suited to the parishwork in the south of England that he later undertook. The change in School status was perhaps also not helped by the re-formation of the Chapel Sunday school in 1902.

The changeover also necessitated the preparing of an Equipment inventory, the contents of which comprised a Library cupboard, bagatelle board, a harmonium (given by Miss Burnaby in 1881), a box of games, 12 psalters, 24 Sunday school hymn books and 24 Band of Hope hymn books. As far as the pupils were concerned it was recorded that on 1 July 1903 there were 14 boys, 16 girls and 15 infants on the Register, a total of 45 with an average attendance of 37 in a building rebuilt in 1858/9 as a single classroom having accommodation for 73 (not 93 as the Managers later found out was stated). The grant earned was £40.14s. and the special grant of £20 obtained; the school had been open 210 days in the previous year. Although the attendance reached 58 one day in 1886, in 1893 it had fallen as low as 34. Families seemed perpetually on the move with frequent log-book references to families leaving the village, usually for Leicester. The number on the books was therefore of constant concern to the Managers; in 1918 there were complaints that Thurnby was poaching pupils from Evington and on 27 October 1922 William (later Sir William) Brockington, the County Director of Education from 1903-47, visited the school and attempted to alter its future role. He suggested two alternatives -

- (a) the school should become a junior school passing on all pupils of 11½ years (average age) to one of the city schools.
- (b) without taking this course, every endeavour should be made by the Managers to induce parents to send children of 11½ to a City school.

The Managers adopted the second course with luke-warm enthusiasm but initially only one (George Smith) out of 12 pupils was agreeable to going to a City school (Avenue road) but by 24 July 1923 four were going to Medway street and one to Moat road. By 1931 seniors could go to Oadby, but 13 (Juniors and infants) were to come to Evington school from Little Stretton. Mrs. Bakewell, the school caretaker, was to supervise their mid-day meal, the L.E.A. contributing five shillings a week. How long this arrangement lasted is not known but Mrs. Bakewell had resigned as school caretaker by October 1933.

When Leicester's boundaries were extended in 1935, Evington village was among the places incorporated and the school came under the City Education Committee. F.P. Armitage, the City's Director of Education, wasted no time in pressing for the school's closure, writing in February 1935: "A small school of 40 children is not only expensive to run but cannot allow sufficient sub-division of classes to enable the best to be done by the individual children concerned." A parents' meeting on 8 March resulted in a letter to the Director stating in no uncertain

terms that closure was not wanted and there was likely to be increased building in the area. Had not World War II intervened, closure would have again been mooted before the next time the threat of closure was aired in July 1946. Again, the move was resisted and in 1953 the school became aided-status. Then seemingly quite out of the blue there appeared on 25 May 1956 a public notice in the local press intimating that closure of the school would become effective at the end of the summer term. There was nothing short of outrage in the village at the lack of prior notification and the way the Education authorities were handling the matter. A public meeting was hastily arranged for 3 June, after which a petition requesting that the school should remain open was sent to the Ministry of Education in London. This meant that there was insufficient time for the petition to be considered before the closure date, and the L.E.A. was faced with no alternative but to permit the school to remain open a further year, yet by February 1957 the Managers considered that closure was "inevitable" and at the school's death in July that year, there were fewer than 20 pupils. And so an era of 116 years came to an end. Those pupils remaining were transferred to Whitehall or Linden schools, which by that time were established. It is interesting to note that when most of the 10 acre site for Whitehall Junior/Infants schools was purchased for £1,573 in 1950, the cost worked out at only 8 old pence per square yard, evidence of the cheap land available that was snatched up for school-building in the area.

The school was demolished in 1964, the site built over with a parade of shops, fairly typical of suburban small shopping developments of the mid-sixties. The architect, whose family had connections with Evington House, was Christopher Sawday. The name School Lane (shown as Blind Lane on the 1897-plan reproduced in this pamphlet) provides the only tangible reminder of the former Victorian school, which was for so long an obvious feature of Main Street.

THE SCHOOL YEAR.

THE high point of the rural year was harvest and the school's summer holidays had to be related to the harvest period, early or late according to the weather of each individual year. There was the slightly farcical position of the official school year ending on 30 June and the new academic year starting without a break the next day with pupils moved up to their new standards. When the school attendance reached an unacceptably low figure, the school immediately broke up, or closed, as the term generally used described. Basically the summer or harvest holidays were of four weeks' duration, but if gleaning was not finished when school was due to recommence, a further week or ten days was given. Even then school attendances in the first week of term were often low; it seemed a plausible excuse that there was still work to be done in the fields, but if it was the time of the October fair in Leicester, the absentees were more likely to be found there. Between 1874 and 1894 the earliest school finished was 12 August and the latest 14 September (1874 and 1888 respectively). Recommencement dates varied from 14 September (1874) to 20 October (1879); in 1880 5½ weeks were given. By 1898, and Miss Swinfield's time, a more set pattern emerged covering more or less the whole of August. A week was given at Christmas and usually a week at Easter and Whitsuntide, but occasionally 10 days or two weeks were given. However, during Daniel Gilbert's time, 1881-7, holidays were curtailed to 2 days at Easter and Whitsun, due to his concern about the low standard of achievement by the pupils. Ash Wednesday saw the school (but not always the infants) parading to church at 11 a.m. There were a large number of holidays and half-holidays given throughout the year, some seemingly at the teacher's discretion; some of these will be mentioned later in this pamphlet.

As far as examinations were concerned, it was the H.M. Inspector's visits, usually in June, that were the high-point. Those who wanted to leave for work or go up a standard had to do well on those occasions. The Diocesan Religious examination in February or March was less feared, and the standard of results consistently high. When Drawing examinations* were introduced for the boys, Major Ingles seemed to know only the word "good".

* 1891

ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE figures at times seemed to overshadow actual teaching and this is why this section is placed before the teaching in the school is considered. The position at Evington was no worse and possibly rather better than at many other schools of the day, but nonetheless teachers were concerned at maintaining a high percentage, with eighty per cent usually regarded as an acceptable level.

In the early days of compulsory education, little or no attempt was made to enforce attendance; even when Attendance Officers made their rounds, there was very little they could do. It was perhaps unfortunate that when Mr. Harrison visited the school in 1879 he chose the date 14 February "and found only 19 in school, others keeping St. Valentine's day." In June 1880 the number on the Register was 52 and the average attendance as high as 48, but in the weeks prior to H.M. Inspector's visit and examination, attendance was usually high, although it fell off noticeably immediately afterwards. In a small school which probably never had more than 60 on its books at any one time, it only needed three or four absent from each of three or four families for the attendance figures to look poor.

When Daniel Gilbert came to the school in 1881 he seemed obsessed with maintaining high attendance, and the log-book provides ample evidence, as is illustrated by the following extracts from his time:

- 1881 11 May Many children absent, parents attending an auction sale of Mrs. Dymock's (the chapel minister's widow) the smallest cause, an excuse for stopping away.
 - 1881 27 Jun 5 or 6 very irregular, come to school when they please, no attendance officer visits.
 - 1881 30 Jun Geo. Ashby attended 1st time this week he is employed minding Baby while his mother goes out working.
 - 1882 5 May 3 families reported to Attendance Officer.
 - 1882 6 Oct Term started with an attendance of 31.7 "some pretending they are away gleaming". (But the counter attraction was Leicester Fair).
 - 1883 27 Jul Many absent. 'Races on New Course, Oadby'.
 - 1883 3 Aug Compulsory education in this Union a complete farce.
 - 1883 10 Aug Sent a very peremptory letter to School Attendance officer who came next day. Says Committee takes no notice of his Report, so children come and go as they please. (Visits again 17 August).
"When attendance officer visits they only laugh after, they won't be summoned, only one case in year."
 - 1883 22 Nov Ceased sending returns to attendance officer. (One child Anne Brewin earlier in the year had been absent 72 ex 75 times).
 - 1884 1 Feb Attendance officer looked over Registers and walked away.
 - 1884 9 May Attendance officer called, cautioned one parent, no effect.
 - 1885 1 May Attendance officer looked over Register, only a matter of form for no action is taken.
 - 1885 29 May School Attendance officer came took names of Middletons and promised to apply for summons.
 - 1885 12 Jun Letter from Attendance officer stating Committee refuses to compel them to attend better.
 - 1885 31 Jul Those who passed St. IV now staying away reported over 3 years.
 - 1885 2 Aug Reported Employers who take children working.
 - 1886 3 Sep Ada Brown left aged 10 - not passed St. IV.
 - 1886 7 Oct Attendance officer only twice in 6 months.
- It is perhaps ironic that Gilbert's last entry should read
1887 25 Feb (55) "Good attendance".

Other teachers before and after Gilbert also had problems over attendances and on 25 Apr 1892 Miss Louisa Atlee introduced a "Prize scheme for Punctuality and Regular Attendance" - "Tickets will be given out on Friday afternoon to those who have attended and been early all the week." 16 tickets were issued in the first week (38 on the Register), 22 in the second, but later on 15 July only 10. The scheme was later altered and in 1910 6 special Progress Prizes were founded "in lieu of prizes for attendance" In that year there were also 6 prizes for conduct/perserverance.

There were plenty of reasons given for non-attendance. Some concerned labouring work of various kinds. Again, many of the examples are from Gilbert's time -

1882 3 May Children at home preparing gardens for planting.
1883 13 Jul "Fruit picking/hay making"; some now at home seaming stockings.
1884 29 Feb many at potato-setting; 4 Apr some at garden work.
1884 13 Jun Cowslip picking; also mentioned 1889 10 and 17 May, 1890 9 May.
1885 24 Jul Some working/ bird scaring (also 1886 27 Aug).
1885 9 Oct 13 Nov; 1886 16 Jul Potato picking.
1888 9 Jul some working for week with permission.
1890 28 Mar several absent gathering foal foot.

Miss Swinfield often allowed a half-holiday when there was a fashionable wedding in the village but Mr. Gilbert complained on 31 Jan 1884 "Many away to see Mr. Parnell's funeral (Dissenting minister) did not return following day."

Extremes of weather could also cause problems. In the worst of winter weather few infants would attend, and those living at a distance would also be absent. Heavy rain or thunderstorms at lunch-time might also mean those that had got wet often did not return in the afternoon.

Heavy or deep snow is mentioned in the log-book on many occasions, including the following: 1877 26 February; 1878 28-29 February, 30 October; 1879 24 February; 1881 19-20 January; 1884 1 December; 1886 1 March; 1889 10 February (28 present); 1890 28 November; 1891 13 March; 1901 27 March.

Very hot summer weather meant that concentration in an ill-ventilated stuffy classroom often suffered. Often the girls were "unable to sew" as on 27 July 1878; on 7 June 1899 it was "Too hot for drill!"; attendances understandably were less affected than in winter.

The customary seasonal "events" could also result in a certain amount of unauthorised absenteeism: the three main days involved were "Plough Monday" in January; St. Valentine's day (14 February) and May day. It was the boys who were attracted to Plough Monday traditions, and four log-book entries read:

1888 9 January 4 boys have been absent all day & one $\frac{1}{2}$ day because Plough Monday custom to go round villages dressed up.

1889 18 January 4 boys absent plough-boying.

1891 16 January 13 boys absent Monday - "plough-boying."

1894 8 January 8 boys absent this afternoon Plough boying.

Apart from the 1879 entry already quoted about St. Valentine's day, the 1881 log book entry for the day reads "Several absent St. Valentining."

May day celebrations could cause trouble. On 2 May 1881 we read that the vicar "reprimanded children absent yesterday going round with a Maypole contrary to Order of Managers," but in Miss Atlee's time Managers and teacher had come to terms with the problem; although the timing was altered a little from year to year in the late 1880s and early 90s, the Registers were closed at 9.30 a.m. two hours secular work was then done and the school dismissed at 11.30 "so that the girls are able to go Maypoling then instead of being absent from school." in late. The Maybush is referred to in 1893. In some years, the girls were allowed to come Other festive days such as Shrove Tuesday and Bonfire night were half-holidays and Evington Feast week in October usually meant 1 or 2 days' holiday (although a week may have been given in Mr. Taylor's time). Daniel Gilbert in some years in the 1880s seems to have restricted the holiday to half a day.

Illness: Serious epidemics could play havoc with attendance figures and affect the overall percentage figure for the year. It is only on rare occasions that the School was closed. Although a Doctor's Certificate was usually requested after an infectious illness, few parents seem to have complied. In the log-book period (1874-1902) the following epidemics are mentioned. Subsequent to this, the Managers' Minute Book (1903-57) makes occasion mention.

Measles: 1878 April (17 away by 18th.); 1882 23 June to 7 July among Infants; 1885 January; 1896 September; 1898 February; 1899 August; 1902 March (extended Easter holiday); 1910 October Closed six weeks (with chickenpox).

Whooping Cough: 1883 March; 1893 December - 1894 January - 8 ex 13 Infants absent; 1896 December; 1900 May; 1908 April closed four weeks; 1930 July.

Chickenpox: 1889 January (five in one family); 1910 October Closed six weeks (with Measles).

Scarlatina: 1880 October; 1881 12 ill at beginning of term on 14 October; 1883 December; 1886 October School fumigated with sulphur.

Mumps: 1893 May 15 in 5 families, only 11 came on 29th. so closed for a week: "It is most unfortunate that they should have to be absent as it only wants another month to finish the school year. Reopened with 33 (ex 40) present."

Influenza: 1898 February Closed 9th (only 27 present) to 21st.

Diphtheria: 1899 June one case known and others suspected.

Poliomyelitis: 1888 September - 1889 January Ernest Smalley away 15 weeks.

During epidemics, some parents doubtless kept their children away from school, for fear of infection; conversely, where brothers and sisters had the disease, the other members of the family concerned were sent home if they came to school.

TEACHERS

A full list of teachers appears in the Appendix, but short notes follow on the five main teachers, who between them spent 88 years at the School.

Thomas TAYLOR, the son of a Willoughby Waterless framework-knitter, taught for 24 years, 1852-76, at the school. His teaching seemed sound - at a fairly rudimentary level and he was well-respected in the village. Whether he found the financial reward insufficient is not known, but he embarked on a second career as a grazier and threshing machine proprietor, as well as holding the office of Parish Clerk for 38 years. He supplied the Rev. S. Skeels with knowledge of the village's inhabitants, past and present, and details of burial and other fees customary in the parish. All this information the clergyman faithfully noted down in his little books. Originally a "free" school, "fees" were certainly payable (by Taylor's time.

Daniel GILBERT, born in Ireland, came to Evington after teaching appointments in Somerset and Wiltshire, and he was past 40 when he came in 1881. Although he maintained but did little to improve standards, his potential was probably limited. He was haunted by the fear of low attendance figures and was obsessed by the poor standard of arithmetic and dictation. At the start of 1887 the Managers told him they would in future have a mistress as teacher in the school; this may have been a polite way of getting rid of him, as he was a man scarcely noted for his tact. He was therefore the last schoolmaster at Evington.

Louisa ATLEE (1887-94) strove hard to improve standards, but she too was over-concerned about attendance figures and introduced her own system of tickets for full attenders each week. She re-introduced monthly exams. (which had been held in Taylor's time). She could not abide lateness and regularly punished offenders. She left Evington for Challock, Kent.

Lucy Ellen SWINFIELD (1896-1925) had the longest reign of any at Evington. She was regarded as a martinet but was a very good teacher and during her time the school attained new heights. She was generous in giving holidays, and each success in the Boer War meant an extra day off. (Relief of Mafeking, Pretoria, Peace Proclamation). Her leaving present was a £10 carpet with numerous small gifts from the Managers.

Lottie Mary WILKINSON (1925-47) succeeded Miss Swinfield and is well remembered by many still living in the area. Another good teacher, she lacked the fearsome authority of her predecessor. She saw the school through the changes brought about by the 1944 Education Act. Before coming to Evington, she had been head of Frisby school and had held a similar position in Nottinghamshire.

TEACHING

Basically there was morning school 9 a.m. to noon and afternoon school from 2 p.m. to 4. Between November and mid-February, it was usual to begin the afternoon earlier and to finish earlier so that the infants and those living at a distance could get home in the light. The actual times fluctuated, but the earlier starts were usually made at 1.30 or 1.40 p.m. with school finishing two hours later. In some years, the infants were allowed to go at 3.30 p.m. even in summer. After the timing of Religious instruction was altered from 11.10 to 12 to 9.10 to 10 a.m. in 1874, it was usual for the vicar to open the school with prayers and to stay on for the first lesson. Secular teaching, as it was then called, continued for the rest of the day. Reading, writing, arithmetic and scripture were the main subjects taught, but a lot of attention was given to dictation. Occasionally, there was a little geography/history and a minimal amount of English grammar. The girls spent an inordinate amount of time on needlework, particularly when they were attempting to finish garments. The boys later took drawing. Physical exercise was virtually non-existent until Miss Swinfield's time when there was drill (often indoors it seems) and an occasional run. The earliest recorded 'educational visit' was on 27 February 1891 when Standards IV to VI went to the Museum on a half holiday. There is frequent reference to Standards I and II being very backward and the infants were unduly neglected until the late 1880s.

After Daniel Gilbert's arrival in 1881, there was increased attention to arithmetic, the standard of which he found so poor that he dispensed with Scripture 'for a time' and had the vicar teaching the subject to the first Standard for several months! The Rev. W.B. Moore took a very full part in teaching in the school, correcting 'home lessons' and teaching a little geography and other subjects. He also showed him-self capable of keeping the school open in the absence of the teacher for up to a week; many later vicars immediately closed the school if no temporary teacher was available.

Gilbert criticised the lack of interest by parents in their children's work; in 1881 he was complaining that parents were not encouraging the Teacher "rather the reverse" "parents unwilling to procure slates and books" ... "Home lessons - the usual tale No time, mother wanted me". The lack of books and other materials impeded teaching in school; basic items were inadequate and worn out. Many of the teaching aids were supplied through the vicar, and it is more than likely that both the Rev. W.B. Moore and his successor, the Rev. S.C. Skeels, paid for some items out of their own pockets, since Managers' funds were never large and probably barely sufficient for day to day needs. A list of some of the items provided follows this section. On 28 October 1881 Gilbert mentioned "No text-books for geography, very poor maps" and on 27 January 1882 "St. I new reading books" not before they were needed." 1882 28 April Grammar - no book; "24 August 1883 Arithmetic, dictation grammar. Latter taken to very well but more progress will be made when suitable book... supplied." "1886 9 Jul Cannot select poetry of Standard (III) no books."

As far as actual work was concerned, here are a few items from Gilbert's time:

1881 March. St. III v. backward - only two could work compound addition.

1882 21 April Needlework mistress to take infants ½ hour before sewing.

1882 27 October Writing lesson to all school, formation of letters r, s, g, q & f.

1882 17 October/24 November St. V History (pre-Conquest) substituted for grammar.

1883 2 February Boys take to geography better than girls.

1883 13 April St. V. Cause of Day and Night & the Seasons as required by Code of 1882.

1883 10 October St. I completely ignorant of the least things; 9 November scarcely know letters.

1884 29 February Dictation still v. weak. St. I, II, & III. although taught twice a day.

1884 8 August. Girls kept to 3 subjects with English & sewing. Boys Geography and English grammar.

1885 22 May. Extra ½ hour a day until after inspection.

1885 25 Sep. Children v. backward on a/c of their month's idleness.
Standard II Tables must be mastered before going on with Arithmetic.

1886 8 January St. V backward in Unity Method of Proportion; 5 February take to vulgar fractions.

1886 11 Jun St. IV girls better at dictation than boys.

1886 9 Jul St.III Long division great puzzle.

1886 13 Aug. Poetry cards received; 3 Sep Reading books; IV V & VI. St.III on Tom Brown's Schooldays.

Miss Atlee started monthly examinations: on 10 January 1888 "Merit lists of monthly exam. put up on wall. Some of her other entries -

1887 21 Apr Geography for all boys, except St.II every afternoon. Not enough apparatus for boys.

1887 14 Jun Infants playtime to 10.30 so can be taught singing while older ones are out.

1887 30 Sep 17 girls started knitting.

1888 2 Jul Infants writing v.poor. Reading/number better.

1888 25 Jul H.M.Inspection. 2 failures in reading. Overall 85.4%

1889 19 Jul H.M.Inspection. Passed 87% but St.IV 100%.

The early years of Miss Swinfield's reign included the following sample log-book entries:

1896 23 Sep Did not take drill this a.m. Was examining infants 11-12 Reading Writing and Arithmetic.

1897 1 Feb Hilda Wilson down from St.II to St.I - not a strong child, worried over work.

1897 26 Oct Leonard Smalley, Alfred and Ernest Smith and the whole of the 5 year olds seem to make hardly any progress.

1899 27 Oct 52.2 (96% highest attendance for several years).

1899 14 Dec At morning playtime took all children of standards for a run on Leicester Road owing to the weather being severely cold.

1900 16 Mar 42.3 (98% attendance); 5 Nov 45.6 (99%) attendance.

1900 6 Jul Miss Swinfield introduced "Highest marks prizes at monthly exams."

1900 14 Sep Afternoon school 1.30 to 3.30. Induction (of Rev.G.Landon) at 4 p.m.

1901 30 Apr Charles Wade admitted aged 9 last Dec. being taught with Infants. Lived at Lodges too far to go to school by himself.

1901 19 Jul No drill, so very hot. 18 Sep Drill out of doors in playground.

1901 7 Oct Drill Mon/Fri morning 9.45 to 10.

1902 21 Mar Singing for last lesson after infants dismissed.

1902 30 May Games out of doors for infants instead of kindergarten work in school.

1902 18 Jun Drill out of doors for 1st time this year.

Infants: The gallery erected c.1874 was first considered for removal in 1909 and in 1912 plans were approved for an infants' classroom, erected in 1913 at a cost of £300. Little attempt was made to teach the infants properly until the mid-1880s, and even then in was 1899 before a proper assistant teacher was appointed. Successive Inspection reports commented unfavourably on the infants, as we shall see later. The lack of a monitor did not assist the teacher. Those appointed as monitresses were little more than passing ships; Clara Ellis in 1876 lasts only three weeks. Often it was left to Upper Standard girls to provide tuition (1878); in 1880 it was suggested that one rather than three such girls might be a more satisfactory arrangement. Even those monitors aiming at being pupil teachers were less than adequate, often away ill and showing little enthusiasm for their work.

As with the rest of the school, materials for the infants were sadly inadequate but object lessons were laid down by the Inspectors annually from the 1880s for the succeeding year. In 1885/6 there were:

Natural History: Cat, Cow, Robin, Daisy, Turnip, Apple.

Domestic Economy: Oatmeal Porridge, Candle, Ruins of a House, Things for Washing with, Tea Table, Cooking the Potato.

Common Things: Table, Letter, Pin, House Clock, Thimble, Lead Pencil.

Industry: Baker's Shop, Carpenter's Shop, Post Office, Market, Factory, Blacksmith's Shop.

Physical Appearance: Sky, Sun, Clouds, Winter, Mist, Setting Sun.

The Rev. Skeels attempted to teach poetry to the infants in two 20 minute lessons on Thursday afternoons, probably the most ambitious teaching they received before 1900!

A model clock face "for teaching time" was supplied in 1897.

- School supplies: Some of the new items mentioned in the log-book included:
- 1877 2 dozen exercise books for dictation.
 - 1878 New reading sheets for Infants; Map of Geographic Definition for St.II; Marking frames for children to sketch upon; Picture Roll and 3 books on Old and New Testament. The pegs requested by the Inspector "to hang clothes on" appear to have been fixed by the vicar himself in January 1879.
 - 1879 Geography book, 3 dozen Copy books & pencils; 2 dozen slates; New Arithmetic cards; Map of illustrations on the Acts of the Apostles; Natural History Roll.
 - 1880 2 dozen slates, 3 dozen Copy books, 1 box of pens, 1 box of pencils.
 - 1882 Histories, Geographies, Goldsmith's "Deserted Village".
 - 1884 New Geographies/Histories.
 - 1885 Grammar tree; 12 New Testaments and Scriptural Text book.
 - 1888 New blackboard & easel.
 - 1890 2 new sets of reading books; 2 dozen Prayer books.
 - 1891 New map of World.
 - 1894 Dozen new slates.
 - 1895 New set Arithmetic cards and "A Teacher's Manual of Elementary Science"; Drawing Boards, cards, chalks & crayons for various occupations for St.I to III and infants & new copy books for all; 6 more St.III Reading Books. (Cassell's Readable Readers) and a dozen each 1st/2nd class/Infants. Infants also received one dozen drawing sheets and 2 dozen balls and nine boxes of bricks (Froebel's 3rd gift).
 - 1896 7 pictures for school; 1 dozen New Readers (St.IV,V,VI); New reading books for all; New Blackboard/stand; Maps B.Isles/India; Cupboard.
 - 1897 Paper basket, New Drawing Copiers & rulers; 12 new books for library, new prayer books for school use.
 - 1898 3 Natural History pictures; Swing blackboard; 3 new maps; attendance board; infants sheets; new reading books for infants and standards; 2 blackboard re-blackened.
 - 1900 New desk, nine new dual desks for infants; new Teachers' Desks - the only reference found to major replacement of furniture.

When Mr. John Faire, a great benefactor to the village, was chairman of the Managers from 1904 till his death aged 86 years in 1929, he made several notable contributions to school equipment. In 1905 he gave 5 guineas towards the cost of a new piano (£10-2-6) with the balance paid by the Education Committee; in 1920 he gave £5 towards the formation (or re-formation) of the school library. In 1928 he paid £6.10s for an H.M.V. gramophone. He also gave two pictures and had two others cleaned, re-glazed and hung with wire. He contributed generously to the cost of annual prizes, the Managers having to pay the excess over the Education Committee grant (6d. per head of average attendance of those over 5 years old) which in 1904 did not exceed £1 in grant. Mr. Faire also sent one of his employees to assist with odd job repairs about the school. Later post-World War II equipment (probably paid for by the Managers) included a wireless set (1950), Christmas tree (1951), a Puppet show "to be made", and a new Sandpit (£10) in 1952.

DISCIPLINE

The surviving log-book shows that teachers were occasionally subjected to the wrath of parents, sometimes over quite trivial matters as one or two of the following extracts show.

- 1877 12 Jan William Leatherland expelled for using bad language, encouraged by parents.
1877 13 Apr Punished 2 children for playing truant.
1879 18 Aug Elizabeth Highton sent home to have head cleaned - not fit to be in school.
1879 11 Nov William Ashby turned out of school - wilful disobedience. (He then went to St. John, but was later re-admitted at Evington).
1880 10 Aug Sent Clara Walton and Elizabeth Highton home to have their heads cleaned as they were alive with vermin. Punished them before whole school.
1881 2 Mar Mrs. Howard will not allow Louisa to attend school because she was caned on Monday.
1881 16 Mar Mrs. Brewin came demanding her daughter, who was kept in with others after 12 o'clock to correct v. careless dictation. She was very saucy.
1881 27 May Mrs. Howkins v. abusive because her child was placed in a corner for disobedience. Stopped playtime from several children for being late. If kept in after 12 o'clock the mothers are after them & freely use their tongue, they want their services at home.
1881 7 Jul Emma Toone very saucy & disobedient.
1883 2 Mar Discharged Arthur Walton, left school without permission. Reported to Managers.
1885 23 Jan Alice Brewin fell against stove and burned her face v. much (pushed on small stove by Henry Williams).
1885 6 Feb Fanny Howkins kept in at playtime - 18 errors in dictation.
1887 7 Mar Annie Hopkins, teacher for a month, "Found children disorderly & undisciplined yet when Louisa Atlee took over on 18 Apr she recorded "Fairly good order."
1889 10 May Sam Howkins v. defiant because he was detained to learn four lines of poetry.
1888 6 Jan Whole school deprived of play for inattention to Repetitions before prayers.
1895 8 Jul Punished Hilda Willson for insubordination.
1898 5 May Punished Arthur Smith and Samuel Jackson severely for truanting in order to see the cavalry at Stoughton.
1901 8 Mar Punished Leonard Smalley for coming very late - he had been after the hounds.

For the period after 1902, miscellaneous papers and the Manager's Minute book make occasional references to aspects of discipline.

On 9 Nov 1906 Miss Swinfield in a letter (copy sent to Managers) wrote to Mr. Wagstaff in these terms: "You encouraged your child in being deliberately adverse to my rule. Why should you tell her to run home if she were punished?". She stated she would bring the matter before the managers, if there was any recurrence.

In 1929 and 1930 the Managers received complaints that the children were unruly in the street and the policeman was alerted. Miss Wilkinson said the children were well-behaved in school and her assistant Miss Bates was a good disciplinarian. On 13 June 1932 the Furness case came before the Managers. Miss Wilkinson said the boy Furness was found crying in the school yard at the end of playtime one day. A boy Smith owned to hitting him, there had been a dispute playing cricket the previous evening. Mr. and Mrs. Furness had entered school (strictly against the rules) and addressed the scholars unauthorised and Mrs. Furness came again in the afternoon; 11 owned to interfering with her boy. The Managers attempted to play the matter down regarding the incident as just one or those things that were likely to happen from time to time, but they did consider Miss Wilkinson had made "an error of judgment" in letting parents speak to the children.

INSPECTORS' REPORTS

The Government examination usually took place in late May or early June: it could take over 3 hours if only one Inspector attended, or if two Inspectors were extremely thorough, but in 1892 when three Inspectors came, it was all over in an hour and a half. In the early part of the log-book period, inspections seemed to have been in the hands of Mr. J.R. Blakiston (a staunch Victorian, ungenerous in his remarks) and his assistant, Mr.Worley. Later, the regular inspectors were Messrs.J.B. Haslam, S.Ellicock and Mr.Dennis. In the 1890s, Mr.Ellicock often came alone. An inspector usually made an unannounced check on the school on one other occasion in the year.

A summary of some of the Inspectors' Reports follows:

- 1873 "Children are in fair order, should be supplied with suitable pictures for object lessons" (Average attendance 38.5,30 presented, 28 passed reading,27 writing and 20 arithmetic).
- 1874 "The children are in nice order and have been carefully taught."
- 1875 "The children are in good order and taught with fair success in reading and writing and moderate result in arithmetic. The Infants require more lessons on common things and the needlework is creditable."
- 1876 "The attainment of the children are modest. An undue amount of time (6 hours) still given to needlework without corresponding results. Systematic teaching for 4 hours should produce better results. An Industry book should be supplied by the Managers and the garments made by each girl with particulars of time."
- 1877 "The older children have been carefully taught and their attainments show considerable improvement. No arrangements to secure due instruction for infants, who can neither read, write and count and whose intelligence has not been developed by lessons on common things."
- 1878 "The children are very carefully taught.....The room should be cleaned coloured and made cheerful; pegs supplied to hang clothes on."
- 1879 "The attainments & general efficiency fall short of the standard reached last year. A girl is required to instruct infants whose attainments are below a proper standard."
- 1880 "The master is evidently working well to restore the school to a state of efficiency, but as yet he has not had time to undo the effects of the long illness of the last mistress. The infants require greatly increased attention. Their attainments are now at a very low ebb."
- 1881 "The attainments of the children are below a fair level. Infants & first Standard especially weak. Teacher required... 10% of grant reduced re attainments of infants."
- 1882 "The attainments of the children though still short of a fair average, are better than they were last year."
- 1883 "Reading Spelling Geography fairly done, rest of the work is deficient in accuracy & intelligence & the writing should be neater. Some additional teacher should be employed to take charge of the Infants who are at present in a very unsatisfactory condition."
- 1884 "Some little improvement is apparent in the upper Standards work, that of lower Standards seriously declined. Arithmetic v. defective, both as regards Notation & computation. Infants fall much below a fair average. Geography for St.III to be partly taught from Geography Readers & History Readers."
- 1885 "Considerable improvement in the condition of the school since the last inspection. It has now passed a fairly good exam. in Elementary subjects. More training needed in Mental Arithmetic. Boys had a poor knowledge of Geography. Girls backward in knitting. Infants have been carefully taught. A.Marriott (Monitress) must improve. (Grant more by £10 than on any other occasion.)"
- 1886 "The school is in a very fair general condition but the recommendation of the higher grant for sewing was barely obtained. A Marriott - Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography, History, Notes of Lesson, and Needlework at exam."
- 1887 "The children are in good order and their work is fairly done. The Needlework has much improved."
- 1888 "The children are in v.good order and though the upper standards are still rather weak in spelling and arithmetic, the elementary work shows a satisfactory improvement & the grammar is pretty good."
- 1889 "The children are in good order & have been carefully taught."

- 1890 "The children are in v. good order & show a creditable degree of general proficiency. (St.VI 100% but St.II only 77.8) More grant than ever previously.
- 1891 "The children are v.well conducted. The rest of their work is very fairly done but there is a good deal of weakness about the spelling & arithmetic of some standards. M.E.King (Monitress) passed fairly but should attend to Grammar Geography History & Needlework at Examinations. A Pupil Teacher must not be allowed to serve in school for more than 25 hours a week.
- 1892 "The children are under very good influence and have been carefully taught. Their work is very fair in regard both of accuracy and intelligence. In needlework of the upper standards a hole should be cut in the material before beginning to put in the patch. M.A.King, Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography, History, Knowledge of Method, Needlework at examination.
- 1893 "The children are well behaved and much interested in their work which (except in regard to the spelling) was fairly well done. No cloakroom accommodation. It should be provided at once.
- 1894 "The children are very well conducted. Their attainments are at present fair; but I anticipate improvement.
- 1895 "The children are in good order and the work shows a very fair degree both of accuracy and intelligence. The registers must be tested by the Managers at least once a quarter, at irregular intervals.
- 1896 "The children are in good order and their work, though showing some weakness in spelling generally - in History and in some of the Arithmetic, seems likely to improve under Miss Swinfield's care.
- 1897 "The school is in very good order and has been carefully taught with very fairly good result. Reading & arithmetic in first standard weak.
- 1898 "The school is in good order. The instruction is generally satisfactory but comparatively less so in Object lessons & geography.
- 1899 "The school is taught in a kindly & pleasant way and with fairly good results. The staff must be strengthened if a grant is to be claimed next year. The children seem to be bright & intelligent. They answered my questions v. nicely.
- 1900 "The school is in very good order & efficiently taught. Much of the work is distinctly praiseworthy.
- 1901 "The children are v.well trained in orderly habits. They are efficiently & intelligently taught.
- 1902 Not recorded.
- 1903 "The children are under good control & the work generally does Miss Swinfield much credit.

The Manager's Minute book after this date rarely provides much detail as to the Inspectors' Reports, but in 1927 5 passes out of 5 and 2 scholarships out of the scholarship exam. are mentioned. In 1932 William Sowman, though under age, won a 1st.class scholarship.

The annual Diocesan examination, held early in the year, usually lasted 2 or 2½ hours. There never appears a bad report, suggesting a high level of religious instruction, the strongest subject in the school. The Rev F.Bell was succeeded by the Rev.S.W. Wigg in 1895. The school seems to have been split into three divisions for the examination, which embraced Scripture, Catechism and Prayer Book. Sample reports:

- 1884 "The upper children showed good knowledge of Catechism & prayer book & did fairly well in Scripture. The 2nd. showed interest & did well & the infants showed improvement.
- 1893 "The children are carefully taught & with good results. The infant division & some of the upper children were very satisfactory.
- 1895 "The school is thoroughly good and much of the work excellent.
- 1898 "The school now takes a good place among the best county schools in the Archdeaconry.
- 1901 "The religious teaching in this school is very carefully given and the children take an intelligent interest in their lessons. I was very pleased to hear a Psalm v.nicely chanted by the older children.

Both Diocesan and Government examinations meant a half-holiday once each was over.

SCHOOL MANAGERS

The School Managers' Minute book survives from 1903 after the surviving log-book closes, but is not intended to deal with the day to day running of the school. Nonetheless, its contents are of more than passing interest and have been quoted elsewhere in this pamphlet.

On 28 August 1903 the Managers comprised the Rev. E. Berridge (vicar and correspondent), the Rev. J. Ashworth (Chapel Minister), Mr. J. Dearden (Evington House), Mr. John Faire (Evington Hall), Mr. E. Gilbert and Mr. C. W. Rogers. The Managers normally met on the 2nd Fridays of the months of October, January, April and July at 5.30 p.m. (later put back to 6 p.m.) Special meetings were called when interviewing applicants for teaching posts. Two managers each quarter were responsible for interviewing parents who kept children away from school, and they took it in turn to make "spot" checks on the school and its register. The presence of the Rev. J. Ashworth as a manager is a reminder that children of chapel as well as church families went to what was the village school, despite its Church of England basis. Ashworth was required to give a week's notice of any chapel function which would interfere with school attendance (e.g. Sunday School annual outing). He always seems to have been out on his own when voting on resolutions since he habitually opposed the motion. Yet he was always a willing contributor to the Managers' Prize Fund! Despite frequent changes of its members, it was Faire, who missed only the occasional meeting, who was the guiding light of the Managers; he was chairman of the Managers from 1904-29, attending his last meeting only weeks before his death at the age of 86. Although occasionally Miss Swinfield was invited to attend a Managers' meeting, it was not until Miss Wilkinson's time that Managers received first-hand reports on the school. Although successive vicars showed interest in the school, none had the standing of some of their predecessors, notably the Rev. W. B. Moore, the Rev. S. C. Skeels and the Rev. E. Berridge. Indeed, during the school's last years, minutes of meetings were inadequately recorded, with the closure not covered at all, except in some loose notes!

Of the vicars, it was the Rev. William Burton Moore (1821-93), vicar 1846-93, whose service to parish and school was outstanding. The son of a Leicester hosier, he graduated M.A. from St. John's, Cambridge and served a curacy in Yorkshire, where he met his wife. The rest of his life was spent at Evington. His family comprised 4 sons (1 died in infancy) and 4 daughters, only one of whom married. Two of his sons were solicitors in the firm of Ingram and Moore (the present successors are Harvey Ingram). His three daughters still at the Vicarage at his death later lived at The Cedars. His wife was the school's needlework mistress, dying at the age of 56 in 1882. Mr. Moore clearly loved children, and was also much interested in orphanages, supporting the Infants Orphans' Society at Wanstead, holding an annual fund-raising event for that cause. He gave annual Magic Lantern treats to the school, usually early in January, showing views, Biblical pictures and the like. He also delivered a lecture "Africa and the Slave Trade." With the aid of his wife and one or more of his daughters he was quite able to keep the school open, in the absence of a teacher; in addition, he undertook occasional teaching of subjects other than scripture. He suffered a fatal collapse whilst walking in the Vicarage garden. The funeral service was a big affair with Bishop Creighton present. The organist was Charles Hancock who brought some of his choir from St. Martin's, Leicester. Canon J. N. Bennie, Rector of Glenfield, referred to his friend in a newspaper obituary as "quiet and obtrusive", much concerned with parish affairs, and the school log-book refers to "great grief in the village caused by the death of our vicar." His estate was worth about £14,500.

The Rev. Serocold K. Skeels (1840-1916) was an M.A. of Emmanuel College, Cambridge and came to Evington from Abthorpe, Northants., later becoming Rector of Foston. He gives very much the impression of being a "village man" and was much concerned with the school, although he was only vicar from 1893-1900. He had a great interest in reading and English generally, especially poetry and much improved the school's supplies of books and other materials. As with his predecessor, there is a strong likelihood that much of the cost was met from his own pocket. These two men were probably the only two vicars who could teach subjects other than Scripture to the children, but for the record the full list of vicars during the life of the school reads: 1819 Jemson Davies, B.A.; 1843 Thomas Bradley Paget, M.A.; 1846 William Burton Moore, M.A.; 1893 Serocold K. Skeels, M.A.; 1900 Guy Landon, M.A.; 1902 Edward Berridge, M.A.; 1914 Edward Lloyd Simpson, M.A.; 1934 Arthur Richardson; 1948 William Oliver Chantler, M.A., 1955(-61) Cecil George Thorne, M.A.

SCHOOL BENEFACTORS:

Since the school was set up as part of the Burnaby Charity, which also supported the Sunday school, as well as a Parish Coal Charity, it is not surprising that it was the Burnaby family who were directly concerned with it for the best part of its first 50 years. It was Miss Henry Anne Burnaby who had the greatest personal interest in the school, often visiting once or twice a week until she was well past 80. Occasionally other members of the family came with her and any visitor to Evington House was certainly brought along. It was very much "her" school and the log-book records on 29 May 1886 "Miss Burnaby (aged 86) the founder and supporter of these schools breathed her last. She was interred in Evington churchyard on Ascension Day, June 3. The schoolchildren followed her remains." Sometimes she gave dictation at the school or heard the children read or add numbers. Often they would sing for her, and she had the happy knack of saying the right thing, as did members of Mr. Moore's family, "thought they had improved," "expressed herself well pleased" etc. However the children probably remembered her best for her masterminding of the school treat most years in July at Evington House. This was sometimes termed a "tea-drinking", and the number of children attending often seemed in excess of the number on the school register - 69 one year. On the practical side, not only did she help out with fuel supplies, but also sent material for sewing, as did members of the Moore family. When it was not possible to have the treat (a half-holiday) at Evington house, the vicarage grounds was the usual alternative venue, but on 28 June 1899 Mrs Gilbert gave a Hay Party after a School tea.

It was only after Miss Burnaby's death, that the Powys-Keck family of Stoughton Grange showed much generous feeling toward the people of Evington. The first Tuesday of August 1891 was a half-holiday as a tea was given to all the inhabitants of Evington "it being the wedding day of Mr. Powys-Keck" On 12 July 1894 school finished at 11 a.m. as several children were invited to a Fancy Dress Ball given by Sir Thomas Wright of Leicester.

We have already seen the contribution made by Mr. John Faire as a manager and benefactor, but Mr. J.H. Cooper who lived at Evington Hall before him was always willing to invite the children to any special event he was concerned with and on 8 June 1898 school finished at 11, as Mr. Cooper treated the children to the famous Barnum's show, which was visiting Leicester, although the spelling is also given as "Barnham".

SCHOOL AS VILLAGE HALL.

The lack of a public hall in Evington until the village hall was opened in 1912 meant that the school was used for many events, some of a recurring annual nature - Managers' Tea-meetings, Missionary meetings, Orphanage meetings, Temperance lectures. Sunday school of course met weekly and in 1883/4 the school was used for divine service on Sundays whilst restoration of the church proceeded. After 1904, political meetings were allowed at a nightly charge of 15 shillings. Elections meant the use of the school as a Polling station. (e.g. 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. in 1885). When the school was used for "outside functions" it was necessary to move the desks into the yard; sometimes school had to close early on such days to allow the room to be cleared. If there was rain, frost or dew overnight, the desks were unusable next morning; this usually resulted in an extra half or whole day holiday, much to the chagrin of the teacher of the time. Even after the advent of a proper village hall, it was sometimes necessary to use the school as an overflow. For example, many parish festivities, such as royal occasions, involved refreshments for the village in the village hall, for the children in the school. Use of the school as an "Evening School" was considered in 1904, but it was impracticable as the village was too small to produce 20 attenders; Evington youths were however welcome at Thurnby Evening School when it opened the next year. The County Rural Library enquired about the availability of the school in 1926, and use as a Youth Centre was also considered in 1944.

THE BUILDINGS AND SERVICES

GAS was introduced on 14 January 1902 and the town's water was connected to the school at a cost of £2-10s. on 11 March 1914. By 20 July there was a complaint that the general public was using the school offices and water tap. It was thought prudent for the fence to be enclosed and a door put in to enclose the new services. The insurance on the buildings was increased from a sum insured of £500 to £1100 near the start of World War I. Electric light was installed in School house on 1 July 1925 and probably in the school around the same time. The school was to be linked to the sewerage system on 2 September 1925 but the cost was so high that a loan from the P.C.C. for two years at $\frac{1}{2}\%$ above Bank deposit rate had to be obtained. It was not possible to instal a bath in School House until 1929, due to shortage of funds; Miss Wilkinson's rent then went up from £18 to £22-10s. a year. The school first had a telephone between 1935 and 1940, and although a heating system had been installed by then, the question of providing hot tap water was raised after World War II, but the matter was continually deferred due to the ever present threat of school closure.

Originally heating was by open coal fires, but stoves were installed in the 1880s, mainly to avert the "smoke" problem. "Fires" were normally lit between mid-October and late April, but in 1883 the lighting date was as late as 14 Nov and in 1879 fires did not cease until 13 May. The obtaining of fuel was a constant problem, and the school often relied on its benefactors for wood, coke and coal, (e.g. in December 1880 Mr. Moore sent 100 bundles of firewood and Miss Burnaby 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of coal. The cost of coal was 14s.6d. a ton in 1903, but by 1912 this had risen to 16s. a ton, coke 21s. a ton.

The school suffered from frequent changes of caretaker, although there was usually someone who could help out in an emergency; in 1920 it was said £1-11s-8d was not a sufficient monthly wage. In 1927 it was said the caretaker had ruined the gas heater and in March next year the floor and light shades were dirty, and the walls, ceilings and pictures were to be well swept and dusted before Easter.

The furnishings and linen of School house were the property of the Managers and every time Miss Swinfield wanted items replaced or repairs carried out, she had to ask the Managers (e.g. 1906 - new armchair 30s., 1909 new carpets, 1910 2 table cloths, 3 bath towels, 6 chamber towels, 4 small table knives) - an unsatisfactory arrangement which resulted in her being told in 1922 that items needing replacement should be struck off the inventory.. Her request for a lightning conductor was refused. Part of her salary was payable to the Managers as rent, originally £20 out of an annual salary of £90, but as the L.E.A. were ungenerous in granting salary increases, the rent came down to £18 in 1905 and £16 in 1916. Eventually, after 16 years, Miss Swinfield got a salary increase of £3 a year, although the Managers had asked for £10. Unfortunately, the small size of the school could not justify realistic salaries.

It seems to have been usual (as in 1891) to fix the annual Income and Expenditure statement to the school door.

The school had a Bank until 1899 when on 6 March that year the log book says "The depositors of the School bank now put money in POBS as it can be paid in village.

APPENDIX:

LIST OF TEACHERS : HEADS and ASSISTANTS.

SCHOOLMASTER/MISTRESS (excluding Temporary teachers)

1841 - 1851 William DYE but Samuel John DOWNS is mentioned in 1846 and 1849.
1852 - 1876 Thomas TAYLOR
1876 - 1878 Sarah Ann COLLETTE
1878 - 1880 Mrs Sarah Lydia MADDOX (ill from Nov 1879)
1880 Mr. F.A. SPRIGGS
1881 James COPE
1881 - 1887 Daniel GILBERT
1887 (March) Annie HOPKINS (? temporary),
1887 - 1894 Louisa ATLEE
1894 Mary BRUCE
1894 - 1896 Harriet Alice NOKES (left on account of her approaching marriage)
1896 - 1925 Lucy Ellen SWINFIELD
1925 - 1947 Lottie Mary WILKINSON (appointed from 13 applicants)
1947 - 1952 Freda LETTS (previously Assistant Teacher)
1952 - 1957 Mrs. Joan Mary C. PALMER

ASSISTANT TEACHERS

Nov-Dec 1899 Jessie BIRCH "not a satisfactory teacher"
1900 Margaret Helen ANDERSON
1901 - 1903 Miss de LANEY
1904 - 1906 Catherine A CARTWRIGHT
Aug-Nov 1906 Edith SMITH
1906 - 1909 Ruth INWOOD
Mar-Sep 1909 Miss D PENTELOW (Salary £35 p.a.)
1909 - 1911 Ivy Primrose CHAMBERLAIN
1911 - 1912 Norah Louisa PAGE (Salary £45 p.a.) goes to Canada but re-appointed
1912 - 1913 Eleanor BEEBY, resigns ill-health, Miss Page already temporary.
Dec 1913-1914 Miss Page re-appointed on a permanent basis.
1914 - 1916 Mary Louisa COOKE (Salary £60 p.a.), called up for VAD service
1916 - 1918 Miss GUTTERIDGE - moves to Thurnby
1918 - 1919 Miss POCKINGTON
1919 - 1923 Henrietta THOMPSON
1923 - 1928 Frances Marjorie LAMB (from 10 applicants)
1928 - 1935 Eva BATES
1935 - 1941 Eveline COX (temporary) permanent from March 1936 till death.
1941 - 1943 Mrs BROUGHTON
1944 - 1947 Freda LETTS (Head teacher from 1947)
1947 - 1948 Miss FAITH
1948 - 1951 Miss M.N. THOMPSON
1951 - 1952 Mrs Joan Mary PALMER (Head teacher from 1952)
Later Assistants include Mrs GREEN and Mrs.YORK

PUPIL TEACHERS/MONITRESSES

1876 Clara Ellis (3 weeks), 1877 Emily Rushton.
1884 Amelia Marriott (from Sutton Cheney passed St.4) was not satisfactory despite spending 2 years at the school. She was dismissed without notice in November 1886 for "gross misconduct & inattention to lessons". She was forgiven for the same offence on three previous occasions.
1887-1889 Phoebe Mayes "hardly enough energy"
1889-1893 Ellen King - left when parents moved from village.
1893-1896 Edith Middleton (St.VII)
1896-1898 Agnes Clarke
1898-1899 Edith Sleath; Winnie Ashby. Left when Assistant Teacher appointed.

Teacher

2

Thomas Taylor
certificated teacher of the
3rd class William B. Moore

- 1874
- June 5 Examined Standard I. and found it not up in Arithmetic T.T.
- 10 Began Secular instruction at 1.10 in the afternoon, and closed at 3. T.T.
- 12 Examined Standard II and found it very backward. T.T.
- 14 John Stanhope's Parents have left the village T.T.
- 26 Examined Standard I it had somewhat improved T.T.
- July 2 Did not attend School this afternoon. I went to my father's funeral T.T.
- " 9 Began Secular instruction at 1.40 closed at 3.30. T.T.
- Monday 20 July 1874 visit J.R. McKiston

Sample log book page from Thomas Taylor's time, 1874

99 ¹⁸⁸¹
March 21st

The attendance very good this morning though some absent.

The Diocesan Inspector came to the School at 10 A.M. & inspected in Religious, finished at 12.30. Here were present, Rev W. B. Moore, Mr. Moore, Miss Burnaby & Miss Moore.

" 22 Commenced with secular work the 1st lesson in the morning. Children so backward - desirable to dispense for a time to teach Scripture. Mr. Moore visited and inspected the Needlework. Miss Burnaby also visited in afternoon.

" 23rd Small attendance, weather very cold, many Children absent through Colds &c. - the usual School work done. Miss Burnaby visited in afternoon.

" 24 Renewed attention given to dictation and Arithmetic, with fair results, but still very backward.

" 25 Rev W. B. Moore taught the Arithmetic lesson to Standard I. all the week with the exception of Thursday.

Average 43.8.

Jan^y 20th 1888 The Infants have been rather restless this week, owing most probably to the Mistress's absence the week before. The Mistress took the children in Scripture this week, owing to the absence of Rev. W. B. Moore. Average attendance 42.7.

Jan^y 24th The Managers had a tea in school room, so we had to have a half holiday.

Jan^y 25th School was cleared sufficiently to begin school in the morning.

Jan^y 27th The work has been fairly done this week. Dictation and Reading in Standard IV is still weak, and Geography is rather poor. Rev. W. B. Moore opened school twice and taught Scripture 3 times.

Average attendance 42.4.

Jan^y 30th The Mistress was unable to lead singing so took Geography in Upper Standard and Spelling in Lower.

Feb^y 3rd The attendance this week has been better with the exception of Tuesday afternoon when a heavy fall of snow prevented those at a distance from attending. The Reading and Spelling is still very poor.

1897

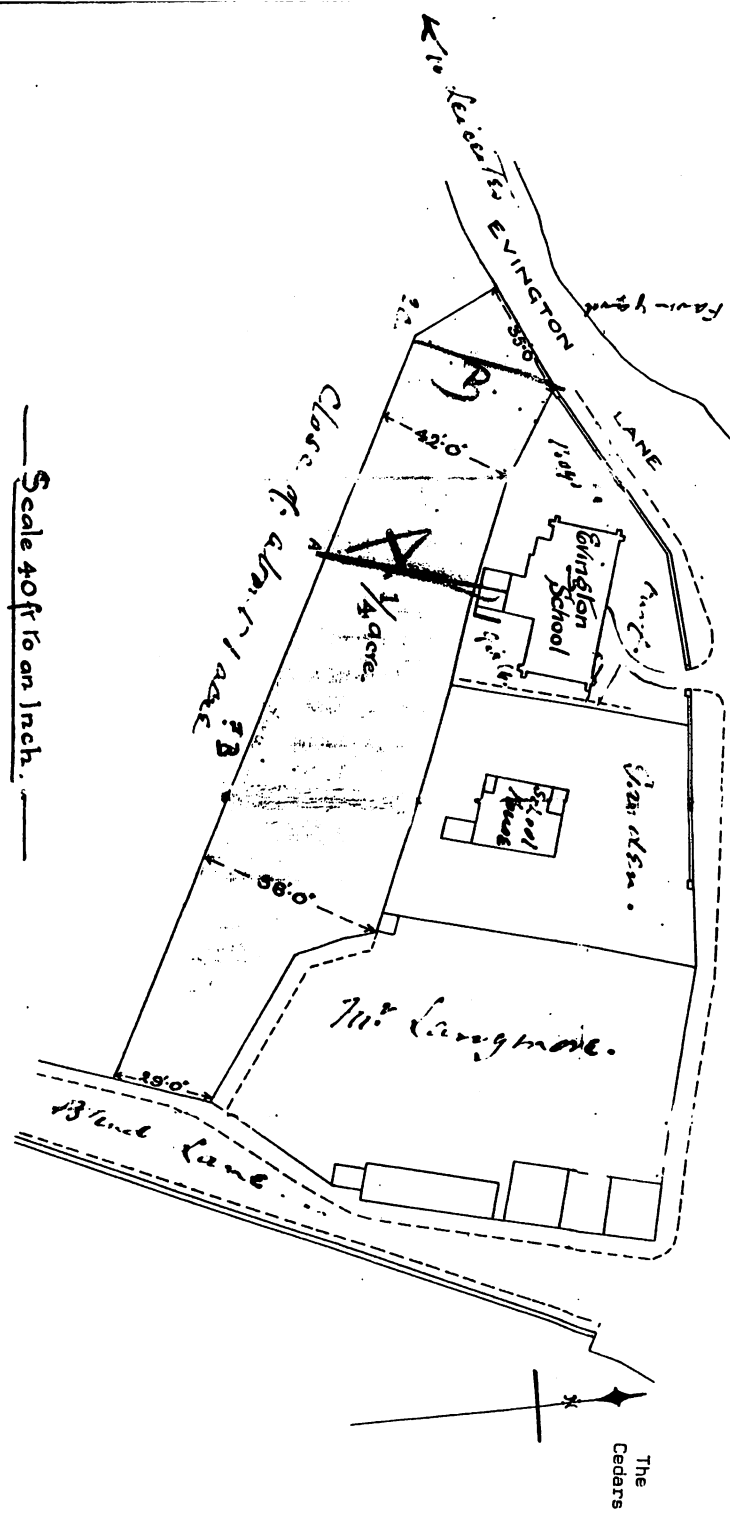
- March 23rd The Rev. S. Skulls checked the registers.
- " 24th Received a cupboard for school use.
- " 25th Closed registers at 2.20 owing to a wedding in the village.
- " 26th Letty Lowman absent from school owing to her father being ill.
- April 2nd Rev. S. C. Skulls took Scripture with the upper group.
- " " Finished examining the Infants.
- " " Fair progress is being made.
- " " In the Standards, Std. III Arithmetic and Std. II Spelling appear now to be the worst subjects.
- " " Have now began to take paper.
- " " work twice a week with Stds. III - IV. The three Yorkes have left the school as their parents are moving to Leicester.
- " 7th Several children absent through illness.
- " 9th Rev. S. Skulls took Scripture with the upper group.
- " " Average this week 37.6.

THE COMMON STREET.

PLAN OF EVINGTON SCHOOL
1897

MAIN STREET.

The Cedars



Scale 40 ft to an Inch.

NOTE re AUTHOR

Jonathan Wilshire, well-known as a writer on a wide range of local and family history topics, has been a part-time Adult Education lecturer for over 15 years.

His previous extensive study of a village school log-books related to Glenfield.

Some of his findings were included in a talk to the Glenfield St. Peter's Church of England Men's Society in 1969, extracts appearing in "Glenfield: A Considerable Village" (1971, 2nd. edition 1984).

The author was a very minor contributor to "Rugby since Arnold, a History of Rugby School from 1842" (edited by J.B. Hope Simpson) published by Macmillan in 1967.

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