



North Wraxall School courtesy of Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre

## *A School Timeline*

**1818** In 1818 parliament appointed a commission to collect evidence about the state of education among the poor in the country. The report from North Wraxall was that no day school existed in the parish, but on Sundays the Rector (Michael Wyatt) instructed at his own expense about fifty children. Asked to make any remarks, the Rector stated that the “parish being agricultural, and the children employed as soon as they can walk, it is a great doubt whether the parents, if they had further means of education, would relinquish their weekly earnings for the sake of their instruction.”

**1832** A school and school-house were erected on a piece of waste ground, granted by the Lord of the Manor, Mr. Methuen. The “National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the principles of the established Church” contributed £35.

**1850** Mr. Richard Bennett left the sum of £1,000, the income of which was to be spent on the school at the direction of the rector. With this money £927 10s. 5d. consolidated 3 per cent. annuities was bought. In 1888 the interest was reduced to 2¾, and in 1908 to 2½. The annual income is £23 3s. 8d.

**1864** For many years, the school was conducted by Mrs. Mary Pullen, the wife of Job Pullen. This year she retired on a pension, and was succeeded, November 3, by Miss Louisa Gait, a certified mistress, and her sister, Miss Sarah Ann Gait, as assistant. The number of children on the books was forty-seven

**1865** Easter. Miss Sarah Ann Gait left.

**1866, January 15** Miss Elizabeth Gwillim was engaged as assistant mistress.

**1866, April 16** Miss Gait's health failing, April 16, Mrs. Eliza Ann Dowding, born May 31, 1842, took charge of the school.

**1867, July 18** The school visited and inspected by the Rev. Canon Barrow, Rector of West Kington, Diocesan Inspector of Schools. His report -- "Inspected the School, and was much pleased with the reading of the children, their answers in Scripture and in the Catechism, and also with their needle-work."

**1869** The schoolroom was raised, a wooden floor was put down, and another room built, 32½ feet long, 15 feet wide, and 16 feet high, at an expense of £400.

**1869, February 16** The school visited by the Rev. H. K. Boldero, Rector of Grittleton, Diocesan Inspector of Schools. "The school is evidently well taught and cared for. There is a cheerful intelligent manner in the children which many another school may envy." Sixty six children were present at the inspection, of 77 on the register.

**1870, February 9** The school visited by the Rev. K. H. Boldero, Rector of Grittleton, Diocesan Inspector of Schools. "This school is a good specimen of what can be done by an uncertificated mistress, when the clergyman takes practical interest in the work. The cleanliness, manners, and discipline of the children, are very praiseworthy. The mental arithmetic of the first class attracts attention." Forty-seven children were present at the inspection, out of 72 on the register.

**1870, September 12** Elizabeth Newman, born 1856, engaged as teacher. She leaves January 10, 1873, to be a pupil teacher at Stratton St. Margaret. After serving her time, she returns November 7, 1876, as an assistant mistress.

**1870** The governess having passed the qualifying examination under the Educational Department, Whitehall, London, the school became entitled to annual parliamentary grants from January 1st, 1871. Accommodation for 101 children was officially declared.

**1871, June 12** School visited for the first time by a Government Inspector, the Rev. S. J. G. Fraser.

**1871, July 28** The report received -- "The mistress appears to be a careful teacher, and with further experience in the technical methods of school management, will probably bring her scholars well on in their work. To-day the discipline was not satisfactory, and the examination of the lower classes showed that they were very backward. The elder classes passed a fair elementary examination."

The Government grant £14 1s. 8d. for an average attendance of 56 children, for five months ending May 31.

1870-71	RECEIPTS				PAYMENTS			
	£	s.	d.		£	S.	d.	
	14	1	8		37	14	6	
Government Grant				Teachers				
School pence	9	0	0	Repairs	1	5	8	
Interest on £927 10s. 5d.	27	4	4	Fuel	2	7	6	
Lord Methuen	5	0	0	Books	23	2	9	
T. Howell, Esq.	5	0	0	Insuranc	0	4	9	

					e			
	The Rector	4	9	2				
	<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>15</b>

**1871, September 25** Elizabeth Ann Orchard engaged as assistant teacher. She leaves July 31, 1874.

**1871, November 21** Matilda Billett engaged as teacher. She leaves December 10, 1875.

**1872, January 15** Mary Hinton, born January 7, 1858, engaged as teacher. She leaves October 18, 1872.

**1872, February 28** Mr. John Howell died, leaving to the school the interest of £333 6s. 8d.

**1872, June 10** School visited and examined by Mr. H. R. Mines, H.M. Inspector's Assistant.

School Staff:- E. A. Dowding, Mistress; Matilda Billett, Pupil Teacher; Mary Hinton, Pupil Teacher

**1872, June 19** Ann Coles, born 1857, engaged as teacher. She leaves September 12, 1879.

**1872, July 26** The school visited and examined in religious knowledge during morning school time by the Rev. H. C. Powles, Diocesan Inspector of Schools.

**1872, September 11** Report received -- "The school is in good order and the children are being carefully taught. At present the weak points are the handwriting of the children (especially of those in the first standard), the spelling of the third standard, and the sums of the first, second and third standards."

The grant of £39 11s., on an average attendance of 58 children, the school having been open 454 times.

1871-72	RECEIPTS				PAYMENTS			
	£	s.	d.		£	S.	d.	
	Government Grant	39	11	0	Teachers	78	8	9
	School pence	10	8	9	Repairs	7	8	9
	Interest on £927 10s. 5d.	26	19	0	Fuel	2	15	0
	Lord Methuen	5	0	0	Books	13	4	9
	J. Howell, Esq.	7	10	0	Insurance	0	4	9
	The Rector	7	16	0½				
	<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9½</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9½</b>

**1872, September 12** Report received -- "In some respects this is an unusually good school. The discipline and order are excellent, though the mode of answering in the upper classes is rather noisy. The children have the advantage of the very frequent superintendence and instruction of the Rector, and whilst all the children were in proportion to their ages fairly informed on the subject of simple religious truths, the elder ones could give a good account of much Bible history and the contents of the Book of Common Prayer. I was particularly struck by the whole school being able to repeat well and intelligently the Nicene as well as the Apostles' creed. The school as at present should be doing much good work in the neighbourhood.

**1872, November 4** Mercy Kidd takes charge of the infants. She leaves March 8, 1878, as Mercy Bennett.

**1873, January 10** Elizabeth Newman, teacher since September 12, 1870, leaves to be articled as pupil teacher at Stratton St. Margaret's. After serving her time, she returns as assistant mistress, November 7, 1876, receives a certificate in the third division, February, 1878 and leaves the school to take charge of the infants at Marshfield.

**1873, June 18** School visited and examined by Mr. H. R. Mines, H. m. Inspector's Assistant.

**1873, June 18** M. E. Drewitt engaged as teacher. She leaves October 12, 1879.

**1873, August 18** Report received -- "The mistress has a good control over the children and has been very successful in their instruction.

Grant received from the Education Office, London, £44 3s. on average attendance of 60 children, the school having been open 439 times.

1872-73	RECEIPTS				PAYMENTS			
		£	s.	d.		£	S.	d.
	Government Grant	44	3	0	Teachers	87	13	3
	School pence	11	14	9	Repairs	2	19	1½
	*Interest on £927 10s. 5d.	12	12	10	Fuel	3	5	0
	Lord Methuen	5	0	0	Books	24	8	1
	J. Howell, Esq.	7	10	0	Insurance	0	4	9
	The Rector	37	9	7½				
	<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2½</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2½</b>

\* A new trust was made costing more than £12

**1873, September 18** Elizabeth McLewin West, born September 26, 1858, engaged as teacher. She left June 11, 1886, as E. McL. Farmilo.

**1874, January 22** E. A. Stephens, born June 25, 1857, teaches in the school until April 10.

The school year closes April 30, instead of May 31.

**1874, May 1** Naomi Hulbert Billett, born April 6, 1861, engaged as teacher. After serving as pupil teacher and receiving a certificate, she left the school to go to New Zealand, November 24, 1882.

**1874, May 15** The school visited and examined by the Rev. S. J. G. Fraser, H. M. Inspector of Schools.

**1874, June 23** Report received --- "The children are very well behaved, and on the whole very accurate in the elementary subjects."

School Staff:- E. A. Dowding, Mistress; N. H. Billett, Pupil Teacher

Grant from the council of education, London £50 8s. 4d., on an average attendance of 74 children, the school having been open 471 times.

1873-74	RECEIPTS			PAYMENTS				
	£	s.	d.	£	S.	d.		
	Government Grant	50	8	4	Teachers	96	19	0
	School pence	12	1	10½	Repairs		3	4
	Interest on £927 10s. 5d.	27	6	8	Fuel	3	0	0
	Lord Methuen	5	0	0	Books	19	2	8
	The Rector	24	12	10½	Insurance	0	4	9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2½</b>

**1873, October 23** Visited and examined in religious knowledge by the Rev. H. C. Powles, Diocesan Inspector.

**1873, December 26** Report received "The infant class passed fairly, but had not been taught as much religious knowledge as the average of good schools. The school taken as a whole is well taught ordinary Scripture subjects, the written work was poorly done. The children seem to be under excellent discipline.

**1874, July 31** E. A. Orchard, teacher since September 25, 1871 leaves the school.

**1874, August 24** Mary Ann Farmilo, born March 16, 1862, engaged as teacher. After serving as pupil teacher and receiving a certificate, she left to take charge of the school of West Kington September 18, 1881

**1874, August 31** Ada Emily Dawson, born October 10, 1861, engaged as teacher. After serving as pupil teacher and receiving a certificate, she became assistant mistress a Purton School.

**1874, September 28** Alice Emma Sidwell, born May 1, 1860, engaged as teacher. After serving as pupil teacher, she left the school January 2, 1880, to enter the Home and Colonial Training College, Graysinn Road, London.