



# Harthill with Woodall

## The Village Schools

### The Last Years of the Old Church School



It is interesting across the span of a century to read the log book of the old School and pick out some of the personal comments made by successive Masters during the last fifteen years. Examples are:

#### 1863

- Several boys absent this afternoon. There is a cricket match. This may account for their absence Mrs. Storey brought her son to school and requested that he might be punished for playing truant
- Nov. 15th. As there are so many children absent this afternoon (it being the Statutes) the school will be closed
- Dec. 6. Mr. Clayton came to school to complain of the boys throwing stones on his premises
- Dec. 7th, punished several boys for the above offence

#### 1865

- Feb. 15 W. Barker playing truant today
- Feb. 16th, punished W. Barker for the offence
- Mar. 7, W. Barker got seriously injured by explosion of powder - Kate Child the first who finished a copy book without a blot - learning a song, 'Be kind to thy Father' - Astronomical Lesson
- Dec. 21, St. Thomas Day, children away in the morning to receive charities

#### 1866

- March 7, a very thin school, this being the Day of Humiliation in the Diocese of York - Had to punish three boys for smoking

**1867**

- Punished four boys for being in the girls' lobby

**1869**

- April 27, some children absent gathering cowslips

**1870**

- Very small school today, a tea in the village for children connected with the chapel.

**1873**

- (New Master) Experienced some difficulty in subduing the noise.
- May 27, Visited by the Duchess of Leeds.

Thus we see human nature does not change very much. The main burden of the observations in that Log Book are more serious. They make moving reading. Some of those entries will have been made at the end of some hard days. The internal dimensions of the little school building are still about 30 by 15 feet. You have to imagine this filled with anything up to 90 children attending school, whose ages ranged from 5 to 14, with a majority of boys. There was only one qualified Master whose wage was £1/6s/8d (£1.33p) per week. He was assisted by a Sewing Mistress who was probably only part-time as her weekly wage was three shillings (£0.15p). There were also the diligent and regular visits and teaching by Rector G.T. Hudson and curates who sometimes assisted with the teaching of other subjects as well as their own Scripture and Catechism. The only other help came from a pupil teacher. For example, George Kirkby attained Standard V11 at the age of 13 and at 14 became a pupil teacher for the next five years.

There was no state compulsion to attend, pressure could be exercised only by the parents. Children paid their pence either weekly or quarterly and some were assisted by a charity, and attendance was often hindered by the need for children to assist in haymaking and other seasonal rush hours on the farms. Stock sales, village weddings or a feast interrupted regularity. Bad winter weather presented problems for children coming from outlying farms and "cloakroom" facilities must have been limited! The summer holiday was called the harvest holiday. If the harvest was late the four or five weeks were postponed and it was some time before all the children were harvested back. Yet through all the record there is a patient application to duty with no complaints except the unpunctuality of an earlier sempstress (sewing mistress).

The great annual educational event was the visit of Her Majesty's Inspector who examined such children as were presented and graduated according to the seven standards. This was followed by annual reports. These generally recorded "creditable" performances by the children and appreciation of the Master's endeavour. Increasingly towards the end there was severe criticism of the conditions of the buildings and the final withdrawal of the £25 annual grant from the government. I suppose the managers could do nothing from voluntary funds to do anything significant with the limitations of the building. From the 1870 Education Act the writing must have been on the wall and they could only wait until the burden was finally lifted from their shoulders. The new school would have been mooted and in the course of construction long before 1878. The existence of a Dames' School at the Firvale Methodist Church made little difference to their problem of numbers. It is a little wonder that there were no fewer than nine successive Masters during the last 15 years. Pupil teacher George Kirkby qualified and left in January 1877 and no satisfactory successor could be found.

I pay special tribute to the memory of George Kirkby who saw four masters come and go. Education owes a lot to pupil teachers. The faithful sewing mistress through most of those years was Mary Unwin, who at the end was seriously ill. It is sad that after all those centuries the little school should have been so overwhelmed. Yet it was good for Harthill that we were provided with the fine new Board School to meet the improved demands of the day.

The "subjects" taught, in the old terminology, included; reading, oral spelling, transcription, dictation, grammar, parsing, notation, mensuration (geometry) , numeration, mental arithmetic, printing, history on such subjects as the Execution of King Charles 1, Recapitulation of geographical knowledge such as the imports and manufactures of England, the capitals of Europe, zones of the earth, capes and bays, mountains and rivers, towns and counties of England, together with art, needlework, music and drill. All these are mentioned in the log book together with "much attention" and "much practice" of some subjects especially arithmetic. which from the reports appears to be the weakest-subject in the school. In addition of course will have been Church teaching and preparation for Confirmation. As I say, this final record makes moving reading. I only wish there were records of earlier and happier days. I have no doubt any modern teacher will have great sympathy for the Masters who no doubt had their own personal and family problems when they went home, wherever that was. Rector Hudson would be pleased to know there is now a happy Sunday School in the little old school, with a new floor and five teachers!

In Feb. 1878 the average attendance was 81. The last entry was on May 10th. "Gave the children the usual weekly examination. The new Board school will be opened on Monday morning (14th). The School will therefore be closed after today."

Author C.R.

## **School Centenary**

In the May magazine I made reference to entries in the old Church School log book covering the last fifteen years of 1878. An interesting sequel is to read the log books of the present Harthill School for a similar period nearly a century ago. The Headmaster kindly allowed me to do this. There were three such books for there were that number of departments, each with a qualified teacher and a pupil teacher. The infants were located between the boys and girls. In general there were new problems when attendance was compulsory. Constantly checking this were a

Mr. Stringfellow, Clerk to the Board of Managers and the School Attendance Officer:

“There was the extra discipline needed for those who otherwise would not have been present at all. A child could be rounded up at the age of nine who did not know his letters. In 1883 the managers made the enlightened resolution to abolish the use of the cane or corporal punishment for a trial period of 3 months, but at the end this had to be rescinded. The girls were as bad as the boys if all entries for punishment were made. They were punished for fighting, disobedience, stubbornness, rudeness, impudence, purposely inking one another's books, taking an India rubber ring or shuffling feet while spoken to by a teacher. One day a boy entered the school, locked all the doors and windows and told the rest that there was a holiday!”

The new School brought little respite for the teachers. The numbers in each department were anything up to 90. Each had only one certified teacher and a pupil teacher who might be only in the first of her four years. Various unreliable monitors were appointed. One of the pupil teachers was Mary Wainscoat who lived opposite the school at South Farm. She was reported for being late on a number of occasions but finally passed her apprenticeship in 1890 and became a teacher herself. She is

Copied from various documents – original authors recognised where known remembered by present relatives and people in the parish as a delightful person, not practical but loving books. She eventually married a Headmaster and brought up an intelligent family. Many old village names appear in the books as I expect some saw during the excellent exhibition held at the school to mark the Centenary.

The link with the Church continued. Rectors were Chairmen of the Managers and together with other priests regularly visited the school. It is interesting to note that from 1878 one such visitor was the Reverend B. Darley who must have been a curate at the time. The Rector was the Reverend G. T. Hudson. He died in 1884. The School was closed for his funeral and each child carried a bunch of flowers or cross. He had been Rector 36 years. The Reverend B. Darley then moved and became chaplain to St. Catherine's Hospital in London. The new Rector was just as diligent as chairman of the Managers until his death at Torquay in 1891. Mr. Darley then succeeded him and the School was closed in order to provide a tea after his Induction. He continued as Rector till 1923 and thus his fine influence covered 45 years. The School was visited every year by the Diocesan Inspector who always gave a good report after his examination in scripture, hymn singing, catechism and collects.

Entries made in the books provide good weather reports as bad weather seriously affected attendance, Dark afternoons made it impossible to sew and very hot days prevented sewing as there was no water to wash their hands on one occasion. Attendance was also affected by illness for long periods for there were epidemics such as small pox in Firvale, scarlet fever, measles and typhoid fever. These entries make interesting comments on social history.

A great feature of teaching in the infants department appears to be the "object lesson" such as: the potato, stone, the bee, ostrich, whale, lion, elephant, goat, a china teacup, the cuckoo, tails of animals, periwinkle, birds nests, shape and colour, pig, a pin, bread, sheep, giraffe as well as subjects such as obedience, truthfulness or honesty when no doubt some incident was the object of the lesson. In the other departments the subjects were more formal as noted for the old School and included such wonders as the noun, the verb and the cases of nouns and pronouns. It was the new age of the attendance register and the time-table. There were schemes of work. The annual visitation by Her Majesty's Inspector was important as the extent of the school grant depended on the results. The weakest subject in Harthill still appears to have been arithmetic.

The main holidays were limited to a week each at Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide and four for the summer harvest. Nevertheless there were many holidays and half-holidays for unspecified reasons. Attendances were decreased for haymaking, gleaning, cleaning down for the Feast and elections. In July 1888 we read "Holiday all day for the Church Sunday School trip to Cleethorpes. Over 50 children left Harthill in wagons and traps kindly lent by Mr. G. Clarke of Woodall and Mr. William Clarke of Harthill". A long day! On the other hand the Methodists did better with attendance at gathering at Harthill, Firvale and Kiveton. Or did they? One entry is "The children attending the Wesleyan Sunday School, a half holiday for annual tea and sermons". There were evening entertainments such as concerts given by the Temperance Association and seeing a Magic Lantern.

I suppose then as ever there were always two worlds in a school., represented by the staff room and the playground. There is always the world and responsible worry of the staff. There is also the contemporary world of the children as they grow up together. It does not take much imagination when you look at old fashioned photographs (so different in quality from those of today), to guess at the secret world of those children. We have all shared those days.

May 13th 1878. I. John Henry Kilburn. took charge of the Harthill-with-Woodall Boys School. These schools were opened this, morning. The managers were present and there were in 51 boys. So begins the Log Book of the new village school. for the boys. attendance The Log Book for the Girls Department for tells us that 43 girls were present on the first day. the So begins the Log Boys The Department were present and there were in attendance on the first day, and the Log Book for the Infants notes that 55 children were present.

The Log Books of the school (which are complete through to the present day) make fascinating reading and provide a window into a world which, although in many respects are very different from ours, was in some ways quite surprisingly similar. For example. on May 2nd 1883: "The master lectured the boys on the evil practice of writing on walls and doors. both in the public streets and about the school premises" - who says that graffiti and vandalism is just a modern phenomenon? Differences from modern times are, for example, emphasised by the repeated mention of diseases in the village—"June 25th 1878 - Received notice from one of the schoolboys that John Platts has received the fever. Warned the children very much to keep off those dwellings where the fever was raging. "Incidentally. we read on the next day that -Dr. Robertson has kept his two sons away from school until the fever has abated."

Much of the contents of the Log Books is obviously very routine, being concerned with results of tests and inspections and recording finances: ever now and then, however, personal details and incidents are recorded which bring everything to life. Just one final example from November 5th 1888: "Percy Hadfield (a youth of the village) got into school and fastened the doors and windows . . . many of the boys finding the doors fast, went home and gave it out that there was no school for the afternoon. The consequence was only 63 present. Punished several boys for going back and spreading the report of holiday."

The photographs which follow all show some aspect of the schools in the past. We haven't attempted to supply individual captions to these pictures, but we would be very grateful if anybody could give us any more information about any of the photographs and the occasion of their taking.

Below- *The girls of Class 2. photographed in the late 1880's.*



Below: More girls, this time Cass 3, also photographed in the late 1880's



Below: Boys Class 2 circa 1880's



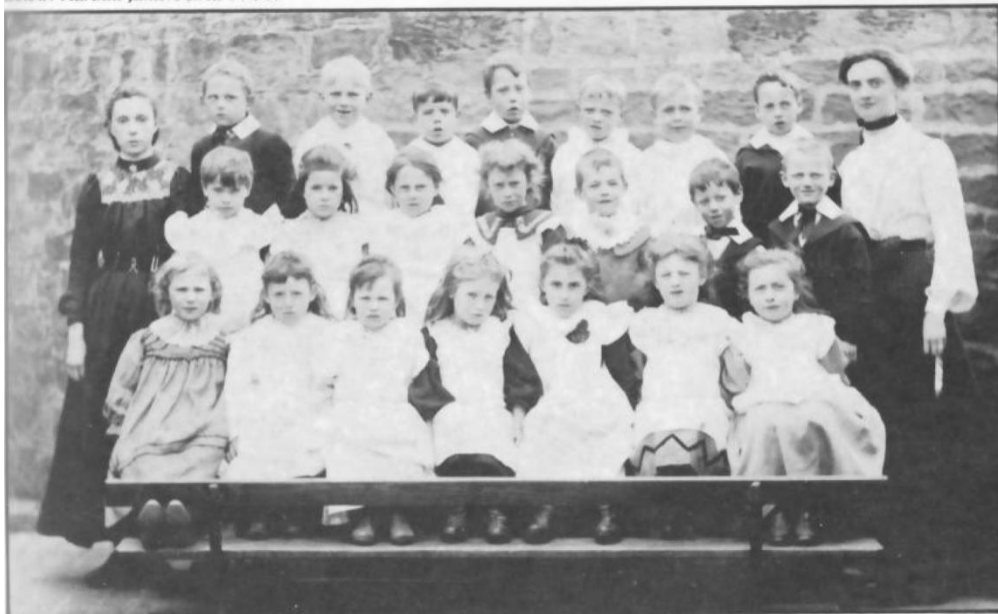
Below: A mixed class, photographed in the early 1900's



*Above: A mixed class, photographed in the early 1900's.*

Below: Harthill Juniors circa 1900

*Below: Harthill Juniors circa 1900.*





Below: Harthill Infants, circa 1900



Above: Harthill Infants circa 1900.

Below Harthill Infants 1909

Below: Harthill Infants 1909.





Below: Harthill Infants 1910



Above: Harthill Infants 1910.

Below: Harthill schoolchildren *early* 1900.



Below Harthill Schoolgirls circa 1912



Above: Harthill schoolgirls circa 1912.

Below The next six pictures were taken at the Harthill children's concert in 1912.  
No 1 shows "The Birthday Party





Above: No. 2 "Milk Maids".

Below: No. 3 "Fan-Drill".



**Below: No.4 Group 1**



*Above: No. 4 "Group 1".*

**Below No.5 Group 2**



*Below: No. 5 "Group 2".*



Above: No. 6 "Nursery Rhymes".

Below: Harthill School Infants, date unknown.



Below *Harthill School Infants. 1919*



Above: *Harthill Infants. 1919.*

Below: *Harthill schoolchildren at the turn of the century.*





*Above: Mug presentation outside the school to celebrate King George V's jubilee.*

*Below: Headmaster Harry Garbett addressing the children of lire school. with South Farm in the background*







*Above: More mugs being presented outside the school by Mr. Jimmy Taylor.*

*Below: The headmaster Harry Garbett and others photographed outside the school at the time of George Vs Jubilee*

