

THE SCHOOL

at

RATHMELL

by

D. W. Barker

FIRST SCHOOL AT RATHBONE

SOURCES -

1. Information regarding early history from the National Society.
2. School log books (from 1866).
3. Minute books of trustees' and managers' meetings.

EDITED BY D. W. BARKER.

- According to the Charity Commission Scheme of 18th June, 1869, which is in effect the Trust Deed, a piece of land consisting of five meadow closes was left under the will of George Clarke dated 24th February 1716, for the purpose of maintaining a schoolmaster in the town of Rathmills.
- Stephen Carr, by will dated 13th April, 1725, bequeathed £70 towards the school at Rathmills, the yearly interest to be paid to the schoolmaster and also £10 to be applied towards repairs for the school. The school was kept in a building belonging to the township. Reading was taught free, but a charge was made for instruction in writing and accounts.
- In 1818 there were 40 week-day and 60 Sunday scholars.
- In 1833 there were 15 on week-days and 50 on Sundays.
- In 1846 the numbers had dropped to 16 and 23 respectively.
- In 1856 H.M.I. reported that the schoolroom had a stone floor and was reported to be very damp in winter and there was an awkward stone quarry in close proximity to the school.
- The school house was built about 1845.
- In 1870 the Vicar of Rathmell (Rev. J.P. Sykes) applied to the National Society for help in re-building the school, which was in a ruinous condition. The Society agreed to help, although the school was technically not a National School. After a protracted delay the school was eventually rebuilt in 1875. The application to the Society was withdrawn as sufficient funds were raised locally.

A balance sheet dated September 1875 shows that subscriptions amounted to £185.12.0., interest £4.19.9, and Government Grant £58.8.9. Total £249.0.6. The contract by J. Mansergh for the actual building was £219.10.0. Other expenses -- surveying, furniture, drains etc., left the balance of £7.14.3, "available for repair, dwelling house or other purposes of school".

Holy Trinity Church was built in 1836 and consecrated in 1842.

There is little available information about the school between 1716 and 1866 as there are no log books before the latter year.

The following extracts from the log books give a good idea of the history of education during the last hundred years.

- 1866      March 5th. Payment for fuel due - 3d each child.  
              March 13th. An oral lesson in Catechism given to the lowest class with good results.  
              March 14th. Today all attend church - day of humiliation for the Cattle Plague.  
              April 26th. Holiday. Settle Fair.  
              May 9th. The girls made samplers.
- 1868      March 19th. Lowest class entered to addition of digits on slates.  
              April 9th. Master unwell and therefore not able to do his work as he would like.
- In these years there are frequent references to "thin attendance" and "ordinary progress".
- May 21st. Ascension Day. All went to Church in the morning. In the afternoon school closed half-an-hour earlier.  
August 12th. School closed a little earlier owing to the children's treat at Cappleaside.  
October 12th. Mr. Williamson retired.
- (There is no record between October 12th, 1868 and August 8th, 1870, as these pages have been removed from the log book).
- 1870      August 8th. Mr. Major became master.  
              August 26th. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd classes had to write a letter on their slates, for their home lesson.  
September 1st. Home lessons very satisfactory, especially verses out of V Psalm.  
November 30th. Gave the 1st division a task to take home - to parse a simple paragraph out of the Grammar book:  
results as favourable as could be expected (:)
- At this period there were many lessons on scripture topics, e.g. The Life of Our Saviour, the Creation, the Life of Joseph, Noah and the Flood, the geography of Palestine, etc.
- 1871      July 31st. Opened school with a very thin attendance indeed, in consequence of the hay harvest being so late this year.

.871 November 13th. Held an evening school for the first time - none under 12 admitted - began with 17 scholars at penny each night for three nights in the week; all found for them for writing except books.

Entries during these years vary little from day to day and week to week. There were frequent tests, with only fair results, in mental arithmetic, reading, dictation, spelling, numeration, etc. There were regular scripture lessons and visits to church. Each year there was a tea party at Cappleside. Attendance was irregular.

1873 March 1st. Money due for coal from the children. The usual charge until this winter was sixpence on the 1st of November, and threepence on the 1st of March; but owing to coals being raised to double their former price, I have been compelled to charge 1/- and 6d, and then I had to pay 9/9 out of my own pocket.

1880 January 30th. Remarks. There being no officer who attends to the children of this district, and no one to enforce the appeals to the parents made by the teacher that the children should regularly attend school, the scholars are sent very irregularly and kept away for the most trivial causes, thus greatly hindering the teacher's work of preparing them for examinations.

Attendance this afternoon 5 above 7 and 5 under 7.  
Total 10 - 7 boys, 3 girls.

The school was closed for a fortnight in June as all the children had measles.

Here follows a typical summary of an annual Inspector's Report on the school -

Rathmell National School (York).

"Reading, writing and arithmetic are fairly taught. Geography and history are poor; the other class subjects are satisfactory.

The Infants read and write nicely, but should be better instructed in the elements of number.

Alterations in the registers should not be made by means of erasures or obliterations.

The accounts of the Day and Sunday Schools should be entered separately."

Matilda Louisa Parsons  
John P. Sykes.

June 29th, 1880.

Mrs. Parsons (nee Newsome) was Head Teacher for more than twenty-five years (April 1875 - August 1900).

In 1883 there were 42 children on the books. In 1889 there were only 24.

1899 3rd May. It would be a great advantage if a piano were provided for the Drill, Marching and Singing. The old desks should be replaced by those of a modern type.

During Mrs. Parson's headship (and after) object lessons were the rule. The Rev. J.P. Sykes and Mrs. Geldard were frequent visitors to the school, and the annual tea and sports at Cappleside continued.

1900 May 22nd. Presented best children with souvenir of Col. Baden Powell. Holiday on Monday for relief of Mafeking.

Mrs. Parsons retired in August, 1900 and was succeeded by Frederick William Fitznewton, whose wife was the assistant teacher. There were about 34 children at this time.

1901 In May 1901 Mrs. Geldard formed a society of children over eight years of age called The Little Brothers and Sisters; who met at Cappleside.

1902 June 2nd. Holiday all day in commemoration of end of Boer War. Peace was signed in Pretoria at 10.30 a.m. on May 31st. June 6th. All were invited to Cappleside to celebrate the close of the Boer War.

1903 In September 1902 there were 50 children on the books. October 9th. Mrs. Fitznewton was absent on Thursday afternoon on account of being teacher of Rathmell Continuation School for Women and Girls, held in a cottage in the village from 2 to 4 p.m.

1904 September 28th. Cookery class commenced this date for Rathmell and Wiggleworth conjointly. Five girls present from Rathmell. Class held at the Laundry in the village.

March 11th. Mary Jane and Frank Taylor, farmer's children from Black Leach, absented themselves all day on Friday because their father was killing a pig.

- 1904 April 6th. Rathmell was swept by a great gale of wind, which loosened and smashed a window during the night. I sent for James Mansergh to repair it (!!)
- 1905 January 31st. Mr. Fitznewton retired after 4 years 5 months as Head Teacher and was succeeded by Gertrude Pritchard, who relinquished her post after a few months owing to illness.
- On August 7th Mr. Frank G. Greenwood became temporary Head Teacher.
- On September 18th Mr. Mark Hatfield commenced duties as Head Teacher.
- 1906 In 1906 the managers arranged for the building of a shed in the boys' playground (for £8.7.0.) and the placing of a bell of 70 lb. weight on the east end of the roof (for £10.). Mr. William Simpson of Catteral Hall was appointed a school manager.
- 1907 November 6th. Memorial Service for the Rev. John Poulet Sykes, late Vicar. Teachers and children attended. It was a beautiful service and impressive. The lesson from the life of such a man may help to form the character of the children better than reading any biography or a lesson on Citizenship.
- In 1907 the name of the school was changed from Rathmell National School to Rathmell Church of England School.
- The caretaker's weekly wage at this time was 3/- (or £6.10.0. a year).
- Some old desks were sold at 1/6 and 1/- each.
- 1908/1909 In 1908 and 1909 there were frequent outbreaks of scarlet fever and ringworm, resulting in school closures and poor attendance. Sometimes in winter the temperature was below 40°F.
- 1910 Mr. Hatfield retired on 30th August, 1910, at the age of sixty-five, and was succeeded by Ethel Lois Parkinson.
- 1912 Miss Parkinson was greatly dissatisfied with the standards of work. She resigned on March 15th, 1912, in order to be married.

It is interesting to note that the Head Teacher's salary from April 1st, 1912, was \$90 per annum, whilst the caretaker's wage had been raised to \$10.10.0. per annum.

The assistant teacher received \$33 per annum!

1912 May 6th. Jane Scott Parsons commenced duties as Head Teacher. She found the school in an untidy state and there were no scholars' arithmetic books, all sums being copied from the blackboard. May 24th. Empire Day. The boys sketched the Union Jack. September 19th. Miss Parker (the assistant teacher) cycled over to Wigglesworth School at playtime this afternoon, at my request, to borrow blotting-paper and drawing-pins, of which I am in immediate need.

The reports suggest that Miss Parsons effected great improvements in the school. From 1st April, 1914, she was assisted by Miss Gladys Parsons, her sister, who taught the Lower Division (i.e. the Infants, St. I and St. II).

1914 In May of that year, Miss Janet Parsons became ill, and on 1st September a new Head Teacher, Phoebe Elizabeth King, commenced duties. There were 35 children on roll.

There are good reports of the work done during the war years. The Diocesan Inspector (Mr. Shipman) was particularly pleased with the Religious Instruction and the general tone of the school.

1921 Miss King relinquished her post on 8th July, 1921, in order to be married. The Vicar (The Rev. T. G. Wheeler) made a presentation on behalf of the children. (Miss King died in 1933).

1921 1st September. Dorothy Marion Brookes commenced duties as Head Teacher and was to remain in this post for thirty-three years.

1923 In 1923 there were 50 children on roll.

Each August Mrs. Geldard was still inviting the children to tea and sports at Cappleside. On August 10th, 1923, Alice Sutcliffe received a silver medal for three years' perfect attendance. (In 1925 she received a watch as a reward for five years' perfect attendance. On March 31st the following year she completed six years without absence).

There are frequent reports about the extreme shyness of the children at this time. It appears that they were almost inarticulate when strangers were present.

The Rev. T.D. Wheeler left the parish in 1925 and Canon Barker was inducted as the new vicar on December 17th.

1925 By October, 1930, the number on roll had fallen to 24.

1930 February 7th. At a gathering of the older residents in the Reading Room, particulars of some old local Folk Dances were obtained. The dances were - Black Joke, Butter and Peas, Turn Off, Swinging Six, Darsoviana, Brass Nut and Steal My Lady. (Miss Douglas, the P.T. adviser, was trying to re-introduce English Folk Dances).

The school was re-graded as Grade O (i.e. under 40 children) on July 3rd of this year and has remained so ever since.

1933 August 29th. Mrs. Geldard brought Dr. Vaughan, late Headmaster of Rugby, to see the school work and to talk to the children.

1934 8th January. Mrs. Brennan began work as caretaker. 11th December. The new W.R.C.C. Piano was delivered this morning. Mrs. Geldard invited the children to a Christmas tree and party at Cappleside on January 3rd. 18th December. Miss Haskell brought sweets for the children and on behalf of the managers, presented the Gardening Prizes.

1935 January 7th. Only 17 children on roll. Each child May 6th. Silver Jubilee of King George V. Each child received a pen or propelling pencil and 1/- bank deposit. On May 3rd the school represented the Settle area at Wakefield (the best attendance for the year) and Miss Brooke was accompanied by Clarice Garnett, who had the best marks in the examinations.

Mrs. Hinsley took charge of the school that day.

May 6th and 7th. Holiday.

May 6th. The village jubilee celebrations were as follows -  
2.30 p.m. Meet at school and a few patriotic songs.  
3.00 p.m. Service in church.

4.00 p.m. Presentation of mugs to children by Miss Geldard.  
4.30 Free tea for all villagers. The children had tea  
7.00 First, then games, etc. in Mr. F. Cornthwaite's  
field, Gooselands.

6.30 Children's country dancing.  
6.00 Cricket match - Gentlemen (handicapped) v Ladies.  
7.00 Broadcast of the King's speech.

8.00 p.m. Entertainment in the Reading Room.

9.30 p.m. Entertaining of beacon in Mr. Towler's field (opposite  
10.0 p.m. Lighting of beacon in Mr. Towler's field (opposite  
the school). Then fireworks,  
Penyghent and Ingleborough.

At this time all standards and infants were taken in  
one group (19 on roll).

Each year on Armistice Day (November 11th) it was still  
the custom for the children to walk down to the War Memorial  
where the two minutes silence was observed.

1936

21st January. Death of King George V.  
4th June. Took nature lesson at 1 p.m. instead of 2.30 p.m.  
to allow time for the examination of a wren's nest (forsaken).  
We found about 163 hairs, 275 bits of moss, 1252 bits of grass,  
79 feathers, 1 bit of wool, 2 bits of cotton and 1 bit of  
stick, giving a total of 1773. This was with the idea of  
helping the children to understand the labour put into the  
making of a single nest. (It also, together with the  
regular nature walks up Wesley Lane to identify flowers,  
etc., illustrates Miss Brooke's great love of nature and  
the Craven countryside).

It was customary in June to have a whole day holiday  
for the Village Sports.  
14th December. Very heavy rain - road to village flooded -  
about 1 ft. deep.

Much more was made of attendance records and the keeping  
of registers than is the case now. Each week the average  
attendance had to be worked out and registers were frequent-  
ly examined.

Dental treatment was given at the Reading Room.

1937 7th May. Coronation Souvenir Spoons from the W.R.C.S. were  
presented to the children by Canon Barker. There were four  
days' holiday and celebrations in the village.

1937 Towards the end of October a kitchen range, bath and hot water system were put in the School House.

1938 January. Milk provided in schools for the first time. September 14th. Miss Brooke attended the funeral of the Vicar, Canon Barker, who died after a short illness, on Saturday, September 10th.

Each year Miss Haskell presented Gardening Prizes on behalf of the managers and prizes from herself for poetry or chosen quotations, or flowers found by the children.

1939 Miss Brooke attended A.R.P. classes in Settle when possible, but she was in sole charge most of the time. In August billeting in case of emergency was arranged. August 31st. School was closed for one week so that billeting arrangements for Bradford children could be completed.

There were ten evacuee children, nine of them between 4 and 7 years of age.

By January 1940 there were 23 children on roll, consisting of 18 from Rathmell and 5 evacuees.

1941 June 24th. A great tit has successfully hatched out nine little ones from eleven eggs, in half of an old locker desk standing in the Infants' yard. The ink-well hole was the entrance. Most of the birds have now flown. The nest fills all the bottom of the desk section.

October 15th. Miss Brooke attended the funeral of Mrs. Geldard, of Cappleside, a School Manager. December 22nd. On behalf of Miss Haskell, late of the Vicarage, the Barker Prize, in memory of Canon and Mrs. Barker, was given to Edith Helsden. Edith was chosen as the one who, in the opinion of both the teachers and children, best showed the qualities of kindness, truthfulness, honour, helpfulness and so on. Miss Haskell proposes to give the prize each year. (This prize became known as the "Henry" prize in memory of Henry Barker, son of Canon and Mrs. Barker). Renee Charnley was the second recipient in 1942 and Gladys Goldsworthy, a Kent evacuee, the third in 1943.

1942

At the end of August, 1942, Miss D. Somers of Bradford (now Mrs. E. Lamb) arrived to help Miss Brooke. She was recalled to Bradford two years later.

- 1944 December 31st. Mrs. Eliza Brennand retired after 10 years of very good service as caretaker. The teachers and children collected, and bought a flower bowl and a lace table centre as tokens of appreciation.
- Mr. and Mrs. Brennand had to continue as Part-time caretakers, however, with the help of the teachers, as no-one could be found to do the work.
- Walter Pye received the Henry Barker prize for 1944, and Robert Charnley for 1945.
- 1945 May 8th and 9th. Holiday for V.O.E. Day. Cessation of hostilities in Europe August 15th and 16th. Capitulation of Japan. V.J. holidays.
- 1946 June 3rd. Miss Haskell presented the Barker Memorial Prize to Betty Cowking.  
November 1st. Mrs. Hinsley commenced as assistant teacher.
- The winter of 1947 was most severe and the village was cut off for a time in February and March. Also, there was a fuel shortage and some Church services had to be held in school.
- 1948 September 27th. Miss Haskell presented the Barker Memorial Prize to Marjorie Frankland.
- Gardening prizes had been awarded by the Managers each year since 1912 (total value 10/-)
- 1949 January 10th. 30 on roll. All children over 11 had been transferred to Hellifield.
- Eva Charnley won the Barker Prize for 1949. June Clifton in 1950.
- July 10th. Sunday. Sudden death of the Vicar (Rev.A. Page).
- 1951 Olive Shepherd won the Barker Prize.
- 1952 February 6th. Death of King George VI.
- The Bradford Diocesan Syllabus for denominational instruction was introduced in September 1949, but material was also to be taken from the W.R.C.C. "Agreed" Syllabus. These syllabuses are still operative (1966) but both are being revised in the light of recent findings with regard to Religious Education.

1952

June 26th. School outing to Ingleton. 24 children and 2 teachers. Visit to Giggleswick Church on the way. Coach to Ingleton. The younger children went straight to White Scar Cave with Mrs. Hinsley, while 17 older children were taken round the waterfalls. Tea, then visit to the cave.

In September of this year there were interesting visits to Little Bank (to see the gardens and old buildings, and the sites of prehistoric dwellings and barrows on Coney Garth), and to Town Head Museum, Settle; to see relics from Victoria Cave, etc. (The visit to Little Bank was repeated in 1965).

1953

February 2nd. The children brought candles to light for prayer time, it being Candlemas.

The cost of school dinners was increased by 2d to make 9d per child from March 1st. (1966 - it has been 1/- per child since 1963).

Mr. Grimoldby, the present Enquiry Officer (1966) began his duties in 1953 and Mrs. Easto (formerly Miss Greenwood) has been P.E. adviser since 1950.

As a result of the 1944 Act, the school was granted Aided Status in 1953. This means that the Church has to find the money for any repairs to the building and for any alterations or improvements which the Education Authority deem necessary to bring it to the required standard. In return, the 'aided' school is allowed to give denominational religious instruction and education, and to conduct denominational worship, whenever the managers of the school wish. The managers of an 'aided' school are also able to appoint the staff of the school as they wish, subject to certain provisions.

1954

Jean Charnley won the Barker prize for 1954. There is no record of the recipient in 1952 or 1953 and no further record of the Barker Prize after 1954 (thirteen years after its inception).

July 23rd. Miss Brooke retired after thirty-three years as Head Teacher and was succeeded by Mrs. Hinsley on August 31st. The number of children on roll was 18 (9 Infants and 9 Juniors).

There had been a general inspection of the school on 23rd June, 1954, and the ensuing report states that the premises offered few amenities or facilities, but there was a glowing report of the work of the teachers. The last paragraph is worth quoting in full :-

"On her retirement, the Head Mistress will be able to look back with satisfaction and pleasure upon 33 years' service to this school and to the village of Rathmell. Several generations of children have had cause to remember her sympathetic kindness and to respect her influence and example; many of them will have been grateful all their lives for the enthusiastic interest in their lovely "countryside which they developed under her guidance and inspiration".

1954 November 26th. The school once again became a one-teacher school, with about 17 children on roll, and remained so until 1956, when an assistant teacher was appointed, as there were now 21 children on roll.

1961 The present Vicar, Rev. Russell Clegg, M.A., came to Rathmell in 1961.

In February 1961, the school moved to Wiggleworth whilst the improvements and extensions to the school building at Rathmell were being carried out.

The new building was officially opened on October 26th, there being 29 children on roll, including 6 from Wiggleworth, where the school was now closed. The new School was blessed by the Bishop and opened by Lt. Col. N. Geldard, D.S.O., J.P. The cost of the new building was in the region of £10,000.

1964 Mrs. Hinsley retired in July, 1964, and was succeeded by the present Head Teacher, Mr. D.W.Barker, from Bradford. Mrs. Graham has been assistant teacher since August, 1960, and on going to press (March 1966) there are 36 children on roll. After Easter there should be 40. Mr. H. Garnett has been School Caretaker since 1957.

When Mrs. Hinsley retired a subscription list, in appreciation of her services to the school, was opened, and almost £50 was raised. The money has been invested and will provide annual 'Hinsley' prizes for children who have made most progress in their work.

1966 In January, 1966 Miss Addison, H.M.I. and Mr. Roberts, H.M.I. visited the school and expressed great satisfaction with the work of the school and its 'delightful atmosphere, so we go to press with thankfulness to God for His many blessings during two hundred and fifty years.

We trust that Rathmell C.E. (Aided) J.M.& I. School will continue to give good service to the parish of Rathmell-with-Wiggleworth, in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

VICARS OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH SINCE 1842

1842 - 1843	Rowland Ingram (also Vicar of Giggleswick)
1843 - 1845	Christopher Thompson
1845 - 1848	Robert Martin Smith, B.A.
1848 - 1851	John Howson
1851 - 1853	Richard Hathorn Thwaite, B.A.
1853 - 1855	Edward Male
1855 - 1857	Matthew Smythe, B.A.
1857 - 1866	Abel Chapman, M.A.
1866 - 1907	John Powlett Sykes (41 years ! )
1907 - 1908	W.A. Badger
1908 - 1925	Tom Davison Wheeler
1925 - 1938	(Canon) Aislabie Denham Barker, M.A.
1939 - 1945	Wilfred Norton Hull
1946 - 1949	Arthur Page
1949 - 1957	John Savage
1957 - 1960	Edgar Smithies
1961 -----	Russell Clegg, M.A.

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HEAD TEACHERS OF RATHMELL SCHOOL SINCE 1865

?	to Oct. 1868	John Williamson	
Oct., 1868	to Aug. 1870	No record - pages missing	
Aug. 1870	to Dec. 1873	Henry Warner Major	
Mar. 1874	to Nov. 1874	?	
Apr. 1875	to Aug. 1900	Matilda Louisa Newsome (Mrs. Parsons)	
Sept. 1900	to July 1905	Frederick William Fitznewton	
Feb. 1905	to May 1905	Gertrude Pritchard	
Sept. 1905	to Aug. 1910	Mark Hatfield	
Sept. 1910	to March 1912	Ethel Lois Parkinson	
May 1912	to Aug. 1914	Jane Scott Parsons	
Sept. 1914	to July 1921	Phoebe Elizabeth King	
Sept. 1921	to July 1954	Dorothy Marion Brooke	
Aug. 1954	to July 1964	Mrs. Mary Hinsley	
Sept. 1964	-----	Mr. D.W. Barker	
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