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THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN  
BERWICK UPON TWEED  
TO 1902

by  
Janet Denise Cowe.

Volume II

University of Durham

M. Ed. 1969

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## CHAPTER FIVE

## THE WORKHOUSE SCHOOL

Provision for the maintenance and education of the poor in Berwick was made by both the Guild and the Parish, sometimes separately, sometimes jointly, and usually this relief took the form of small weekly payments. The Guild gave money to sick or destitute freemen and to the widows of freemen, whose orphan children were also able to attend the Guild schools free of charge. Guild and Parish together administered the distribution of the proceeds of the poor rate among the needy inhabitants who were not free and who therefore could not benefit from the wealth of the Guild.

The idea of establishing a House of Correction in the town was advanced by Sir Robert Jackson early in the seventeenth century when he left £50 to the Guild for this purpose, but, as with the proposal to build a Free School, this project was delayed owing to lack of funds. (1) Eventually in 1657 the former King's Stables on the west side of Wallace Green were converted into the Correction House, and Samuel Taylor was appointed Master, with a stock of spinning wheels costing the very considerable sum of £109. The training given there to

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1 John Scott, Berwick-upon-Tweed: the History of the Town and Guild (1888), 379-83.

children seems to have been entirely vocational, as at a Guild meeting held on 22nd February 1657/8 the Freemen decided that the town should pay for the upkeep of children in the "Charity House" while they learned to work stockings. Normally the period of a child's stay was to be one year, but they agreed to support a little Dutch girl named Katherine Haddiway there for eighteen months and to provide her with clothing. (1) After only one year, however, Mr. Taylor was dismissed and the Correction House was closed; the Guild tried unsuccessfully to sell it, and eventually in 1681 it was demolished.

No further attempt was made to provide premises in which to house or educate poor children for almost a hundred years, but by the mid eighteenth century the Guild were extremely anxious to attract new industries to the borough, believing that this would bring about a revival of the town's former prosperity. Their attempts met with little success, so on 10th August 1753 they agreed to a proposal advanced by some freemen and the Overseers of the Poor to set up a woollen factory of their own, with about thirty spinning wheels, for spinning worsted; it was to be established in a well-lighted building at the expense of the Parish, and was to employ boys and girls about twelve years old, "who must be taught spinning by a

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1 Guild Minute Book, 1651-9.

Mistress well skilld, which Mistress can be provided here, She to have a weekly Allowance from the parish for that purpose as shall be agreed upon." (1) During the one year period of training the children were to be maintained by the Parish. Unfortunately no evidence survives to show whether this decision was ever implemented.

On 19th October 1757 the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor agreed that a Workhouse must be provided in the parish for the accommodation of the poor, and in 1758 premises in Church Street were acquired. On 21st July this new Workhouse admitted its first paupers, who were set the task of teasing oakum for a local shipbuilder who required it for caulking the seams of his ships. (2)

Although this building served as the Workhouse until 1808 it was clearly inadequate. In 1799 Dr. Fuller described it as "extremely cold in winter" and ill-adapted to its purpose, and it housed only forty-three persons out of the total of three hundred paupers who received relief from Berwick Parish. (3) He also stated that the

1 Guild Minute Book, 1752-60.

2 "Berwick's First Workhouse" by "E.W." in The Berwick Advertiser, 9th June and 21st July 1938. These articles were based on a Poor Law Minute Book, 1755-91, which is now missing.

3 John Fuller, The History of Berwick upon Tweed (1799), 339-41.

children were educated in reading and writing, which is the first mention of any elementary education of pauper children as distinct from training in specific useful skills. Regrettably he does not indicate whether the children were taught within the Workhouse or whether they went out each day to schools in the town.

The minutes of the meetings of the Churchwardens, Overseers of the Poor and parishioners in the latter half of the eighteenth century suggest, however, that the poor children were normally sent out to school each day. (1) In the 1760s and 1770s the Master of the Workhouse was appointed annually and was paid a small per capita sum each week with which to provide light, heating and food for the inmates, but each minute of appointment makes the explicit reservation "that the Churchwardens and Overseers Shall pay the Expence of teaching the poor Children in the House." As there is no record of any schoolmaster being appointed and paid for by them, it may be concluded that this means that the Parish were to pay fees for the children at one or more of the local schools. (2)

1 Vestry Book, 1758-1810; e.g. meetings of 29th March 1763 and 15th April 1772.

2 The mention of "expence" seems to indicate that the Workhouse children did not attend the Charity School, but were sent to private schools.

On 22nd December 1801 the Vestry were informed that Mr. Thomas Cockburn, a sack manufacturer, was willing to sell his premises in High Greens to the Parish for £650. The property was held on a ninety-nine year lease from the Corporation of Berwick, and the members of the Vestry agreed to purchase it and adapt the buildings to their requirements. The sack factory was therefore converted into a Workhouse.

On 7th August 1803 the Churchwardens, Overseers and Trustees for managing the Workhouse ordered "that The Revd. Mr. Jos. Rumney, The Revd. Mr. Andw. Thompson, and Mr. John Thomson Custom House and Mr. Paulin Schoolmaster be desired to Attend at this House on Thursday the 11th Augt. Instant in Order to Examine the Candidates for Schoolmaster for this House." (1) Although their decision is not recorded, it seems probable that the man chosen was Mr. John Easton, who is mentioned as being the schoolmaster in the minutes of their meeting on 2nd September 1804.

Besides his teaching duties Mr. Easton acted as Workhouse Chaplain, and seems most unusually to have been a non-Anglican, with the full approval of the Workhouse Committee. Indeed on 4th August 1805 the

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1 Poor Law Minute Book, 1791-1819.

Churchwardens, Overseers and Trustees actually ordered "that Mr. John Easton Schoolmaster go along with the Poor Children on the Sundays to the High Meeting and not to be allowed to be Clerk for the Low Meeting - And if any further Application is made to this Meeting for liberty to be Clerk then such Application to be considered as his Resignation of the Office of Schoolmaster for this Parish." Apparently he accepted their ruling, for in 1806 he was described as a diligent teacher of about fifty pupils, instructing them in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic and marching them to the High Meeting House every Sunday morning, clad in their brown uniforms. (1) The Committee evidently supervised every aspect of the children's lives, for in the list of orders to be observed in the Workhouse in 1806 they required, "That all the children appear constantly before the overseers and trustees every first Sunday in the month, or whenever they shall be called on, to shew the condition of their clothes, and to be examined in the progress they make in their learning; that the master and scholars may have their due commendations, and the benefactors all the satisfaction they propose to themselves by encouraging the design."

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1 A Directory and Concise History of Berwick-upon-Tweed (1806), Sections XIII and XXIV.

Mr. Easton remained at the Workhouse School until the summer of 1812, combining this post with a visiting mastership at Miss Drysdale's Boarding School for Young Ladies where he instructed her pupils in Writing and Arithmetic. (1) At a meeting of the Churchwardens, Overseers and Trustees on 3rd June 1812 it was announced that he wished to leave his post on 1st July. They resolved to try to fill the post and release him by then, but made the proviso that if they failed to find a successor in time Mr. Easton must remain in their employ for a further six months. They agreed to ask Rev. Joseph Barnes, Rev. Andrew Thompson, Mr. John Thomson and Mr. William Paulin to examine the candidates who responded to the following advertisement in the Berwick Advertiser and the Kelso Mail:

"Parish Schoolmaster

Wanted immediately by the Parish of Berwick upon Tweed  
A person Capable of teaching the Children in the Workhouse  
of the said Parish Reading Writing & Arithmetic and of  
keeping the Accounts of the Workhouse and such other  
Business as may be directed by the Overseers.

The Salary is Fifty Pounds per Annum and the Candidates  
will be required to produce Testimonials of their

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1 A Directory and Concise History of Berwick-upon-Tweed  
(1806), Section XIII.

Religious and moral Characters and attend Personally thereunto at the Workhouse on Monday the 22d. Inst. at Eleven O'Clock in the Forenoon when they will be examined as to their qualifications, and none need apply without such Testimonials of Character."

On 22nd June the eight applicants, Mr. Hogarth from Etal, Mr. Mathison of Ladykirk, Mr. Hogg of Chirnside, Mr. Nisbett of Paxton, Mr. Rutherford of Ford, Mr. Hood of Coldstream, Mr. Turnbull of Galashiels, and Mr. Kirton of Berwick, were examined. The two best qualified were Mr. Turnbull and Mr. Kirton, Mr. Turnbull excelling in Reading, Writing and Spelling, and Mr. Kirton in Figures. The Committee agreed to appoint Mr. Turnbull, to begin on 8th July.

Unfortunately Mr. Turnbull taught at the school for only six months, resigning in February 1813 to become Writing Master at the Academy, so the Committee approached Mr. George Kirton on 9th February and he agreed to accept the post at the salary of £50 per annum, and to begin his duties on 15th February. (1) The hours of teaching were

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1 Mr. Kirton had kept a private school in the Backway, i.e. Ravensdowne, for teaching Reading, Writing, English Grammar, Arithmetic and Book-keeping (A Directory and Concise History of Berwick-upon-Tweed (1806), Section XIII).

laid down at the same time: in Summer 7 - 9 a.m., 10 - 12 a.m., and 2 - 5 p.m.; in Winter 9 - 12 a.m. and 2 - 4 p.m.; and it was also ordered "that such Children as received their Schooling from the Parish and who were at different Schools should be thenceforward taken into the Parish School Excepting those who lived in Tweedmouth or Spittle or at any other greater distance from the Workhouse." Thus the eighteenth century practice of sending all pauper children out to schools in the town was now completely reversed, and from this time both indoor and outdoor pauper children were educated together in the Workhouse School.

At the same meeting, on 9th February 1813, the Committee also approved plans for the erection of several new buildings at the Workhouse, including a new schoolroom. In the detailed specifications, laid before the meeting on 2nd May, the new school was to be built at the north-west corner of the site, a single-storey building with one door and seven windows, and floored with Yorkshire flags.

From 1813 it seems that an annual examination of the pupils was held, on lines similar to those of the Academy and other elementary schools. For example, on 25th August 1814, the Workhouse Committee agreed to ask the Vicar of Berwick, Mr. Barnes, and the Grammar School Master, Mr. Gardiner, to conduct an examination in the presence of

the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor.

Unfortunately no Minute Books have survived for the period 1819-25, but by 1819 Mr. Kirton's salary had been raised from £50 to £60 per annum, and some time after that the practice of paying him an additional £1 ls. for the annual examination was introduced. (1) For this he taught between 100 and 120 children, of whom only about thirty at most were resident in the Workhouse. (2) The subjects taught were elementary, and the provision of books and equipment was by no means lavish, as may be judged from a Committee Meeting held on 19th September 1826 when they agreed to purchase ten quires of foolscap, five hundred quills, twelve ciphering books, twelve copies of "Reading made easy", four of Goldsmith's "History of Greece", and six Brown's

1 Digest of Parochial Returns ... 1818, II (1819), 676; Poor Law Minute Book, 1825-31.

2 In the Digest ... 1818, as above, the numbers attending are given as 95-120; in E. Mackenzie, An Historical ... View of the County of Northumberland ..., 2nd edn., I (1825), 299 and 300, the numbers are given as 100-120, with 30 resident pupils; the Education Enquiry ... 1833, II (1835), 687, states that there were 62 males and 36 females at the school.

Catechisms. From July 1829 the girls were taught sewing by Mrs. Robert Skelly, but no other form of industrial training was offered.

The practice of holding an annual examination continued, the examiners invited each year being the Vicar, assisted usually by Mr. Gardiner, and one or two of the Ministers of other churches in the town; on one occasion in February 1827 the guests were even given a dinner at the expense of the Parish.

No Minutes have survived from 1831 until 1840, a considerable misfortune, for this loss obscures the immediate consequences of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 in Berwick. Prior to that Act the responsibility for supervising the Workhouse, its School and the outdoor paupers of Berwick lay on the Parish, and the administration was conducted by the Churchwardens, the Overseers of the Poor and the Workhouse Trustees, together comprising the Select Vestry. As Berwick was a fairly small and relatively prosperous parish, and as the Guild made provision for destitute Freemen and their families, this system seems in the main to have been both reasonable and adequate. Berwick suffered from neither the depression of agricultural wages which had encouraged the Speenhamland System in the south, nor from the unemployment crises of the manufacturing cities, both of which problems were the chief reasons underlying the

1834 legislation. Nevertheless Berwick was forced by the Act to conform to the new national pattern: a Union was formed comprising the parishes of Ancroft, Berwick, Cornhill, Duddo, Felkington, Grindon, Holy Island, Horncliffe, Kylloe, Loanend, Longridge, Norham, Norham Mains, Ord, Shoreswood, Thornton, Tweedmouth, Spittal and Twizel, supervised by a locally elected Board of Guardians who were responsible to the Poor Law Commissioners in London. The Workhouse in Berwick was thereafter no longer for the parish alone, for it had to serve the much larger area of the new Union. The day-to-day running of the Workhouse School was supervised by a sub-committee of the Guardians, who reported all matters requiring discussion to the full meetings of the Board.

When the Minutes resumed in 1840, (1) the Schoolmaster was Mr. A.S. Smith. In July of that year he wrote to the Guardians to express the view that the children living at the Workhouse were too confined there and to suggest that this was the reason why some of them behaved wildly when allowed out each Sunday, often running away instead of going to church. He felt too

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1 Unless otherwise stated the following information is contained in the Berwick upon Tweed Union Minute Books, which survive as a series from 1840 onwards.

that compulsory church attendance might well arouse in them a distaste for religion, and proposed that one remedy would be to allow them out for perhaps two hours each evening and to permit them to make their own way to and from church, instead of marching them there and back. The Guardians agreed to allow the two hours' freedom each day, but refused to alter the customary manner of attending church.

On 18th August 1840 the Guardians received the report of the annual examination which had followed the tradition established before 1834. Local Ministers acted as guest examiners and they reported that Mr. Smith was teaching English Grammar, Etymology, Arithmetic, Writing and Geography with very successful results. They congratulated the Board on having so fine a teacher. At the same meeting a letter was also considered; it had been written by Sir John Walsham of Tynemouth, an Assistant Poor Law Commissioner, who had inspected the Workhouse and who wished to suggest that the Guardians could improve the school by employing a Schoolmistress to teach the girls and the younger boys. Consideration of Sir John's idea was deferred for a time, then on 29th September the Guardians agreed to it and appointed Mrs. Elizabeth Buglass at £5 4s. per annum, with a room in the Workhouse and all her provisions.

In suggesting that the children might go to church

without supervision Mr. Smith would seem to have been moved less by their interests than by a desire to rid himself of an unpleasant duty, for he took the Guardian's refusal in very bad part. On 1st September they received a letter from him asking to be relieved of this duty and threatening that in the event of another refusal he would apply for the post of teacher at Lowick School. Two weeks later he wrote again offering to find a substitute for this task, but the Guardians again rejected his proposals, and on 13th October they received and accepted his resignation.

At their next meeting, on 18th November 1840, they drew up an advertisement for a new Schoolmaster for the local newspapers, requiring candidates to submit testimonials of their religious and moral character, and "of their experience in teaching the system required (which is that as at present followed in the School and known as the Intellectual System) ...." The applicants would be asked to undergo an examination on 21st December, conducted by local Ministers and the Vicar of Berwick, and it was stipulated "that the person elected will be required to attend the Children on Sundays to and from the Chapel in High Street in connexion with the Church of Scotland and take charge of them when there."

From this condition it is clear that the apparently unusual circumstance noted in 1805 when Mr. Easton was

ordered to take his pupils to the High Meeting, although the Workhouse was then controlled by the Parish, was now being repeated in 1840. The history of religious education for the children at the Workhouse is by no means easy to establish, and on the meagre evidence which does survive it is perhaps only safe to say that the 1805 order, the 1840 advertisement, and the interest taken in the school by both the Vicar and the Nonconformist Ministers, argue a greater variety than might ordinarily be found.

On 4th January 1841 Mr. George Logan of Ayton took up his duties as Schoolmaster, for which he was to receive the usual salary of £60 per annum. He was evidently very interested in his work and eager to improve his teaching, for in the summer holidays he asked leave to give up his responsibility of taking his pupils to church for three weeks in order to visit some of the Normal Schools in Edinburgh and Glasgow. The Guardians readily agreed to this and instructed the Master of the Workhouse to perform this duty in Mr. Logan's absence.

In April 1842 the amount of freedom and exercise to be enjoyed by the pupils was defined in a new rule which stated:

"The Boys to be taken out in charge of the Schoolmaster for two hours on Tuesday and Friday in every week viz. In Winter from 11 o'clock till 1 and in summer from 4 o'clock till 6. The Master[of the Workhouse] is also

to send four boys every morning before breakfast to work in the garden. The Schoolmaster may also at his discretion devote the hours prescribed for exercise to the performance of work in the garden.

The Girls (except the two who are employed to perform household work in the kitchen) are to be taken out at the same hours in the charge of the Schoolmistress who may use her discretion in employing them in the garden or not."

The problem of religious education was again discussed in May 1843, and the Guardians resolved that the children living in the Workhouse should be asked about their denominations in order that they could then be sent to the appropriate church in Berwick. As some of the children had been orphaned when very young the facts were hard to establish: of the thirty-five resident children seventeen did not know, and of the remainder ten were Church of England, two Baptist, two High Meeting, two Low Meeting, one Relief Meeting, and one Methodist. The Guardians agreed that the ten Church of England members and the seventeen who had no fixed denomination should all be sent to the Parish Church, and that the various Ministers should be asked to name members of their congregations who would be willing to escort the others to and from church each Sunday.

Later that year, in the Minutes of 7th November 1843,

a very interesting and important account of the Workhouse School is recorded in the form of a Report of an examination conducted by the chairman, Mr. Alexander Robertson. There were six classes which may be summarised as follows:

	No. of pupils	Average age in years	Subjects	Books & equipment
I	6	4½	Alphabet. Two letter words.	McCulloch's 1st Book.
II	13	5½	Reading. Spelling short words.	McCulloch's 1st Book.
III	13	7	Reading. Simple facts & maxims.	McCulloch's 2nd Book.
IV	15	9	Reading. Writing. Arithmetic. Geography.	McCulloch's 3rd Book. Maps.
V	19	12	Reading on Natural History, Elementary Science, Religion etc. Old Testament. Arithmetic. Geography.	McCulloch's 4th Book. Miss Austin's Selections from the Old Testament.
VI	13	13½	As in Class V with reading from the Bible.	As in Class V.

The children were taught by the Schoolmaster with the help of six monitors, and the average attendance was ninety. Each morning and evening all the pupils were assembled on the gallery for prayers. On the work itself Mr. Robertson felt that the three younger classes needed more individual attention and that more time should be

given to training the monitors; the upper classes were creditable, but spent too much time learning by rote and their success seemed to result more from memory than from understanding. The Report went on to make certain suggestions for improving the School: it recommended the purchase of new slates and copies of the New Testament, and proposed that, as Mr. Logan was not qualified to teach Music, Mr. Allison, Clerk of Berwick Church, who had recently begun teaching the pupils to sing hymns, should be asked to give them a systematic course in Music if the Guardians could offer a small annual fee; it also proposed that the monitors should wear a distinctive dress to encourage their efforts and those of the pupils to emulate them, that maxims, maps and drawings should be hung on the walls, and that a fifteen minute play interval, morning and afternoon, would be desirable. The conduct and attentiveness of the pupils were praised, but of Mr. Logan Mr. Robertson advanced one criticism: "I could not however avoid observing a certain abruptness occasionally in the Master's manner and I think a too frequent exhibition of the Cane."

At the same time as his examination of the Workhouse School, Mr. Robertson had also inquired into the education of forty pupils, aged between five and fourteen years, who attended other schools in the area, including the Corporation Schools, Tweedmouth National School, Spittal British School, the School of Industry and several private

schools. He found that the education they received and the standards attained were very similar to those of the Workhouse School, and proposed that the Guardians should in future pay the school fees for such children as lived too far away to attend the Workhouse School.

This information, that in 1843 there were forty boys and girls over whom the Board of Guardians had some right of supervision in various schools, mostly fee-paying, in the neighbourhood, raises several problems. In 1813 it had been laid down that all Berwick children in receipt of poor relief must attend the Workhouse School, only those from Spittal, Tweedmouth or outlying districts being permitted to attend other schools. Mr. Robertson's list however includes the Corporation School and the School of Industry which were in Berwick, and although an exception might have been made for the first, which offered free tuition, the second certainly did not. (1) It seems clear that the 1813 rule had lapsed in the intervening years. Another problem arising from these facts is that most of the listed schools, both private and voluntary, charged fees of at least 1d. or 2d. per week. As the Guardians did not pay these it can only be assumed that the parishes concerned were continuing to do some

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1 The fees at the School of Industry were 1d. per week (The Penny Cyclopaedia ..., IV (1835), 327).

charitable work of their own.

Following the submission of Mr. Robertson's report the Guardians accepted his proposal that they should assume responsibility for paying fees for children living at a distance from the Workhouse. On 5th December they agreed to write to the Poor Law Commissioners requesting permission to pay up to 2d. per week for the education of children living more than a mile from the Workhouse School, the fees to be paid quarterly to the schoolmasters. Unfortunately the reply contained a firm refusal, and the explanation that it was illegal to use the money raised by the poor rate for such a purpose.

The remainder of the report, relating to the management of the Workhouse School, was discussed with Mr. Logan in January 1844, but the note of warning struck by Mr. Robertson's tentative criticism of his attitude towards his pupils made no deep impression. On 20th May 1845 the Guardians heard of the case of a boy named John Sanderson who was suffering from ulcerated hands, the result, he alleged, of punishment given by the Schoolmaster. The School Committee at once investigated, and presented the Guardians on 3rd June with a collection of evidence, some of it conflicting. John Sanderson stated that Mr. Logan had caned him on the backs of his hands, and corroborative statements from others, including the nurse and the medical officer, were read. Mr. Logan denied this and said that it might have happened accidentally;

two boys supported his claim that he never hit the backs of hands, but another contradicted this evidence and said that in addition he sometimes used the tawse. On 17th June the Guardians agreed that the proof in this case was insufficient, but that Mr. Logan on this and other occasions had clearly shown hasty and intemperate conduct towards the children. They expressed their strongest disapproval and agreed to write to the Poor Law Commissioners urging that they should demand Mr. Logan's resignation immediately.

The letter of resignation was received and accepted at the next meeting on 1st July 1845, and the Board approached the problem of finding a new Schoolmaster with caution. They decided to discuss the matter with Mr. George Adam, Rector of the Corporation Academy, and he proposed that as fifty or sixty young men were qualifying as teachers every six months at the Normal School, Glasgow, the Guardians might well apply there for a suitable master. The School Committee also visited the Academy to see the lessons there conducted on the lines taught in Glasgow and were very much impressed by what they saw, so the Guardians resolved on 15th July to write to Mr. Heslop at the Glasgow Normal School asking him to recommend one of his pupils. In the interval after Mr. Logan left Mr. Mazzonie became interim teacher until a permanent successor could be found.

In his reply Mr. Heslop nominated Mr. Maxwell Gardner, and the Guardians, after interviewing him, offered him the post at the usual salary of £60 and rooms in the Workhouse. At the same time they agreed to replace Mrs. Buglass, the Sewing Mistress, who was growing too old and frail for her work, and instead appointed Miss Margaret Atkinson as Sewing Mistress and Assistant Matron at £15 per annum and her rooms.

Mr. Gardner was Schoolmaster at the Workhouse from 1845 until 1848 and proved extremely satisfactory to the Guardians. In the first examination after his appointment, conducted by the School Committee in June 1846, they expressed their unqualified approval of the children's progress, and of the conduct and appearance "particularly of the indoor female children under the care of Miss Atkinson, indications of character which as they may be present or absent are of much greater importance than is generally imagined."

In April 1847 the Poor Law Commissioners wrote to the Guardians noting that all the children received a literary education and the girls received industrial training in sewing and household tasks, but that no industrial training of any kind was provided for the boys. The problem was adjourned for a time, and on 24th August the Guardians discussed various possible occupations, including gardening, handicrafts such as tailoring or

shoemaking for which occasional teachers would have to be employed, and preliminary sea training using a model deck, with rigging, which a sailor could teach. Consideration of the matter was again adjourned, but on 7th September the Guardians rejected almost all the suggestions as inexpedient and concluded that only gardening might be allowed.

The Guardians were very well satisfied with the state of their school under Mr. Gardner, but perhaps they lacked the knowledge of education in general which was necessary for really accurate assessment, or even, with a touch of patronage, accepted as sufficient for paupers an education which they would have scorned for their own children. Whatever the reason their satisfaction must have been shaken by the curt and uncompromising report of Mr. T.B. Browne, Government Inspector, who made the first official inspection on 17th August 1848: "Several children read tolerably; in other respects little progress has been made. None could write numbers from dictation. Master about to leave. The boys have no industrial training. The girls sew, knit and make their own clothes." (1) In fairness to Mr. Gardner who had

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1 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes of Schools of Parochial Unions, 1847, 1848 and 1849, 182-3.

sent in his resignation in July, before Mr. Browne's inspection had even been announced, he was not self-satisfied about his achievements and had said in his letter to the Guardians that he wished to leave "to attend the Glasgow Normal Seminary for another season ...."

On this occasion the Guardians reverted to their former custom of advertising in the press and inviting the shortlisted candidates to be interviewed by guest examiners; on the results of this Mr. Thomas Heriot Tait of Yetholm was appointed Schoolmaster, to begin on 1st November 1848 at the usual salary of £60 per annum and rooms.

Under Mr. Tait there was progress at first, and after his inspection on 23rd August 1849 Mr. Browne wrote more kindly that the school "has decidedly improved since the last inspection. The schoolmaster appears very anxious to improve himself. I am informed that an infant school has been established here since my visit." (1) In his report to the Guardians, which they received on 3rd September, Mr. Browne further expressed the hope that one of the boys might be appointed as a pupil teacher as the school was too large for one master alone, and that the boys should receive some form of industrial training.

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1 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes of Schools of Parochial Unions, 1848, 1849, 1850, 126-7.

The Guardians were slow to act on his proposals, but by 1851 the school had 92 pupils, (1) and in May of that year they agreed to apprentice William Farrow Braby, an indoor pauper and pupil of the school, as its first pupil teacher. At his next visit, on 5th August 1851, Mr. Browne noted that this had been done, but commented rather coldly on the state of the school, "In the senior-school geography, grammar, and English history are taught; I found the attainments of some children very tolerable, but of the majority imperfect." (2)

Soon after William Braby's appointment the Guardians decided that it would allow them to dispense with the services of Miss Margaret Atkinson and so save money. At this time Miss Atkinson taught sewing to twelve indoor girls, and general subjects to thirty-one indoor and outdoor infants, and she also supervised the lives of all the twenty-three indoor girls. It was felt that Mr. Tait and his pupil teacher might well teach the infants, the sewing could be taught more cheaply by an occasional teacher, and the supervision of the indoor girls could be added to the duties of the Matron. These proposals

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1 Census of Great Britain 1851. Education. England and Wales. Report and Tables ... (1854), 197.

2 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes of Schools of Parochial Unions, 1850, 1851, 1852, 252.

were adopted on 24th November 1851 and sent for approval to the Poor Law Board in London. The Board refused to sanction the changes proposed, and it was therefore agreed on 22nd December that Miss Atkinson's appointment should continue.

In 1852 certain structural changes were ordered to improve conditions for both the pupil teacher and the children: in January William Braby was provided with his own bedroom by partitioning off part of the boys' sleeping room, and in September it was agreed that a new Infant Schoolroom should be provided by altering the building, as the existing room, used for Sewing lessons and the Infants, had defective ventilation which had been criticised on several occasions since 1850.

On 5th July Miss Atkinson's father, who had been Master of the Workhouse since just after his daughter's appointment in 1845, asked the Guardians if she might be relieved of the duty of teaching the Infants, which had been given her in 1849, and revert to the position of Sewing Mistress and Assistant Matron to which she had originally been appointed. This was not quite what the Guardians had wanted in 1851, but they agreed and submitted the proposal to the Poor Law Board. Again their request was refused and so Miss Atkinson resigned in September.

Meanwhile in August Mr. Tait too had resigned, having

been appointed to another post. The Guardians recorded their great satisfaction with his four years' work, an opinion again strikingly at variance with that of Mr. Browne, whose Report for 1852 said, "This school was in a low state, although a pupil-teacher has been appointed. The children were neither thoughtful nor attentive, and deficient in religious knowledge, arithmetic, and spelling. The girls are taught to sew and knit. The master has resigned." (1)

The resignations of both Mr. Tait and Miss Atkinson enabled the Guardians, in October 1852, to appoint a married couple to teach at the Workhouse, Mr. William Nesbit and his wife Isabella, who were paid £60 and £35 per annum respectively. Their appointment was subject to a six months' trial period, and at first their work progressed quietly and well, with minor innovations such as the establishing of a library in March 1853 for which the Guardians agreed to spend £5.

A month later, however, the whole future of the Workhouse and its School was thrown into jeopardy by a report written by Mr. Edward Hurst, a Poor Law Inspector, whose duty obliged him to look critically at

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1 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes of Schools of Parochial Unions, 1852-3, 151.

every aspect of the Workhouse. He was concerned with both the buildings and the organisation of the Workhouse, and his inspection therefore overlapped slightly that of Mr. Browne. Among his many criticisms were the unfortunate necessity for girls to cross the Boys' and Men's Yards to reach the schoolroom, a problem which was aggravated by the admission of outdoor paupers, and the overcrowded and ill-ventilated state of the girls' dayroom. He recommended that the Guardians should build a completely new Workhouse, which would cost them approximately £4,000.

His report was carefully examined by a special committee, who, on 18th July, proposed that instead the Guardians should alter the existing buildings, providing among other improvements a new schoolroom and a new entrance for outdoor children, all of which might be done for less than £1,000. The Poor Law Board in September refused their sanction for these plans, and reiterated much of Mr. Hurst's report, strengthening their case by reminding the Guardians that the tenure of the existing site was uncertain, and that in any case the site was too small.

While these arguments raged, Mr. Browne inspected Mr. and Mrs. Nesbit's work for the first time on 26th August 1853 and praised the improvement in the school, but he also echoed Mr. Hurst's criticism of the room used

for the infants. (1)

Affairs between the Guardians and the Poor Law Board had by this time reached deadlock. The Board would not approve the alterations and the Guardians would not build a new Workhouse. For nearly a year little more was done, until in May 1854 the Guardians decided to investigate the possibility of buying the Tithe Barn Yard and the Poundfold as extensions to the existing site. The response of the Poor Law Board was favourable and they indicated that they would be willing to approve the plans if the land should be acquired and if small modifications to the plans were made. On 4th December 1854 the Guardians agreed to spend about £1,000 in the purchase of the Tithe Barn Yard and the Poundfold and of the freehold of the Workhouse site; by October 1858 £1,395 had been spent on building work, but this minute makes no mention of any alterations to the School.

Later in December 1854 Mrs. Nesbit and eleven children unfortunately contracted smallpox and, probably in consequence, the Poor Law Board wrote in January 1855 to say that they had just discovered that outdoor children came in to the Workhouse School, a practice that they deplored on the grounds that it could spread disease and

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1 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes of Schools of Parochial Unions, 1853-4, 136.

undermine discipline, and which they therefore wished the Guardians to discontinue. Such ignorance seems hardly credible, as the practice was of very long standing and had been mentioned in Mr. Browne's reports of 1848 and 1849, and also in Mr. Hurst's report of 1854. The Guardians, however, set to work immediately to amass as much evidence as possible to support the custom, and on 12th February they approved a long report favouring the admission of outdoor children, copies of which they sent to the Board and to the President of the Committee of Council, along with written statements supporting it from the Medical Officer, the Schoolmaster, the Matron, a former Master and the present Master. The Poor Law Board capitulated almost immediately, and on 26th March a letter from them was read in which they agreed that the evidence rebutted the impression that they had held formerly and assured the Guardians that the practice should certainly continue.

During all this controversy the Workhouse School had continued to improve steadily under Mr. and Mrs. Nesbit. In 1854 Mr. Browne found the progress fair, though the infants were in a low state and the industrial training was defective. (1) He recommended that the Guardians

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1 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes of Schools of Parochial Unions, 1854-5, 114.

should allow the boys to be regularly employed in fieldwork, so in the following April they agreed that they should spend part of each day working in the garden. In August 1855 Mr. Browne again criticised the state of the infants, but found that the older children "passed upon the whole a very fair examination ...." (1) Mr. Nesbit had, of course, the assistance of William Braby, who was by this time in the final year of his apprenticeship. He had evidently worked well, for in October 1855 it was announced that he would enter a Training School after Christmas.

In January 1856 the Guardians received from the Poor Law Board the very welcome news that recent legal changes gave permissive powers to local Unions to pay fees for outdoor children to attend ordinary schools. This power, which the Guardians had sought unsuccessfully in 1843, was accepted eagerly, and inquiries were immediately undertaken in the district. The report, read to the Guardians on 10th March 1856, revealed that there were 179 outdoor pauper children of school age, four to fourteen years, in the parishes of Berwick and Tweedmouth; of these sixty-two attended the Workhouse School, eighteen the Corporation Schools, thirty-seven

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1 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes of Schools of Parochial Unions, 1855-6, 118.

the various National Schools, ten the British or Presbyterian Schools, six the Catholic School, twelve the School of Industry, ten at other schools, and twenty-four attended no school at all. After careful consideration the Guardians agreed on 17th November that they would make themselves responsible for the fees of all such children in outside schools, the teachers keeping special registers and submitting them every quarter for payment. The schools had to be judged suitable for the purpose, but the Guardians were clearly not too strict or rigid on this point, as the subsequent lists of payments show that the children attended a wide variety of schools, both voluntary and private.

Important though these changes were, the Workhouse School continued to be the main source of education for pauper children, and its success was therefore of vital concern to the Guardians. In March 1856 Mr. Nesbit reported to them that he had 112 pupils and was finding the teaching very difficult since William Braby's departure. The School Committee looked into the matter and agreed that another pupil teacher was much needed; unfortunately there was no suitable pupil available, so Mr. Nesbit was given leave to take a boy on trial for two months. Whether he took advantage of this permission is not made clear, but Mr. Browne's Reports of 1856 and 1857 show gratifying progress both in the work and in

the tone of the school; never before had he described it as "lively". (1)

The task of finding a suitable pupil teacher continued to be difficult; in September 1857 Henry Crowe was appointed, but a month later the Guardians suspended him for being an accessory to the theft and sale of small pieces of timber belonging to the Union; while his case was being considered he and another boy absconded from the Workhouse. The School Committee could find no suitable boy to replace him, and Mr. Nesbit certainly needed an assistant, so in February 1858 the Guardians agreed to appoint a fourteen year old outdoor pauper girl, named Jane Cockburn Redpath, who was attending the Workhouse School, as a pupil teacher.

On 19th May 1858 the Guardians revived the tradition of holding their own annual examination and they were very satisfied with the children's achievements; to encourage the work they gave small prizes to the best in each class. Their impression was confirmed by Mr. Browne's Report of his visit on 5th August which said, "The boys were more advanced than the girls, but the children generally showed considerable liveliness and

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1 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes of Schools of Parochial Unions, 1856-7, 164, and 1857-8, 175.

intelligence as well as information. Out-door pauper children have been educated for many years at this union school with great success." (1)

Jane Redpath had by this date evidently ceased to be pupil teacher, for Mr. Browne recommended the Guardians to appoint Jane Foreman to the post; this decision was ratified by the Committee of Council and the Poor Law Board and communicated to the Guardians on 4th October. At that meeting the Guardians agreed on her weekly allowance of rations: 4 lb. meat, 8 lb. bread, 7 lb. potatoes, 3½ pt. milk, 2 oz. tea, 12 oz. sugar, 12 oz. barley, and 2 oz. coffee.

The year 1859 was again quietly successful, and both the Guardians' examination and Mr. Browne's visit (2) were very satisfactory, but on 3rd October the problem of religious education was again raised. In 1843 it had been agreed that the children should be brought up in the beliefs of their parents, where these could be ascertained, by attending the appropriate church every Sunday. In the intervening period, under Article 212 No. 3 of the Consolidated Order, the children had begun to attend the Parish Church, for Sunday School and two services, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Nesbit who were

1 Committee of Council Report, 1858-9, 510.

2 Recorded in Union Minute Book, 22nd August 1859.

members of the Church of England. The Poor Law Board now ordered that the principle agreed upon in 1843 should be re-introduced, bringing new arguments to bear upon the problem. On 23rd December the Guardians were told that in the past the indoor children attended the Parish Church regularly, and that nearly fifty outdoor children who were pupils at the Workhouse School there learned the Catechism and to read the Bible, without any complaint from any parent, although some were Presbyterians and some were Catholics. To the new Order Mr. Nesbit had four important objections: first, that it was an unpleasant and often impossible task to discover the religious beliefs of the deceased parents of orphan children; secondly, that if children over the age of twelve were to be allowed to choose a creed they might be objects of strife between various "proselytising religionists" and would in any case be too young to choose wisely; thirdly, that if Ministers of all creeds were to be allowed access to the Workhouse they could cause considerable inconvenience and might interfere with the discipline; and finally, that the three Workhouse children who since the Order had begun to attend the Roman Catholic Church and Sunday School were no longer so amenable to Mr. Nesbit's moral control. The Guardians felt that there could be no harm in bringing up orphans in the Established Church, and so wrote to the Poor Law Board asking them to rescind their

Order. It would seem that the Board agreed, for the Minutes record no refusal and no further discussion.

Mr. Nesbit's third objection, however, was not entirely true. For many years the Dissenting Ministers had held a Sunday evening service at the Workhouse, which the indoor children could and did attend in addition to their visit to Berwick Parish Church. After St. Mary's Church opened it naturally became the Parish Church to which the pupils were taken by Mr. Nesbit, and its evening service unfortunately coincided with that of the Ministers, so they wrote to the Guardians who gave an assurance on 9th July 1860 that the Nonconformist services might certainly continue, and that the children would once again attend. Possibly the rigid attitude expressed by Mr. Nesbit and the Guardians in their letter to the Poor Law Board was aimed at preventing the spokesmen of any and every sect from having a right of access to the children. So long as the teaching in the School was basically Anglican, the Guardians could relax their rule in favour of other Churches whose Ministers they knew and trusted. Rev. Dr. John Cairns, Minister of Golden Square (later Wallace Green) Presbyterian Church, for example, was one of the Ministers who regularly conducted the Workhouse service, and no-one could ever have judged him a "proselytising religionist" or feared his influence on young minds. Nevertheless the rule was

again changed on 12th November 1860, and the children, instead of attending the Dissenters' service, had to be sent outside to the church of the sect to which they belonged.

The Guardians' victory over the Poor Law Board in 1855, when they succeeded in retaining the right of outdoor children to be educated in the Workhouse School, was thoroughly and publicly justified in 1860 when Mr. Browne compiled an unusually long and enthusiastic report on the system for the Committee of Council and included a letter on the subject from the Vicar of Berwick, Rev. G. Hans Hamilton. Mr. Browne wrote, "In the Berwick-upon-Tweed union outdoor pauper children in considerable numbers have attended the workhouse school for a long period. As this experiment, opposed as it is to notions long prevalent respecting the contaminating influence of a workhouse upon children, has been completely successful, and, as far as I know, has been attended by no evil consequences for 13 years at least, it appears to be especially deserving of notice, as many workhouse schools might receive outdoor pauper children in large numbers without any additional staff. The taint of pauperism does not seem to have been communicated in this case, and is probably not to be apprehended elsewhere as long as the demand for labour throughout the country is greater than the supply." Rev. G. Hans Hamilton's letter drew attention

to additional advantages: that by the Berwick system "we thus keep daily under good influence that very class from which our criminal children and adult paupers are perpetually recruited"; that the indoor child was kept in constant touch with ordinary life outside the Workhouse and could enjoy the company and games of the outdoor pupils, who were usually "from the homes of struggling, and most frequently, virtuous widows"; and that the teachers had a much more enjoyable task and could arouse more animation and energy when the seventy outdoor pupils were added to the sixteen indoor children. He also pointed to the success with which the Guardians had for the past four years undertaken responsibility for the fees of children living too far from the Workhouse School; in the past year about 100 children had benefited from this privilege, at a total cost of only £50 16s. 7d., and Mr. Hamilton's own opinion was that this practice should be made obligatory on all Unions. (1)

The year 1861 was again successful. The Guardians' own examination and prizegiving in June passed very pleasantly, and Mr. Browne's report of his Inspection was very satisfactory and praised in particular the success achieved in emancipating children from pauperism. In his

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1 Committee of Council Report, 1860-1, 513-14 and Appendix A, 517-18.

report he included interesting statistics provided by Mr. Nesbit on those children who had left the School between 31st December 1855 and 1st January 1861: (1) in these five years twenty-one indoor boys had left, and of these two had died and the others had gone either to live with relations or to take jobs such as mining, farm work, and craft apprenticeships; twenty-four indoor girls had left, mostly to go into domestic service, and twelve of them had returned to the Workhouse - eight had left again to go to relatives or other jobs, and of the remaining four, one was a permanent cripple living in the Workhouse; twenty-five outdoor boys had left, transferring to other schools or entering trade or farm work, but two became pupil teachers, Charles Dodds at the British School and William Walsh at the Roman Catholic School; Charles Dodds completed his apprenticeship successfully in November 1863, but abandoned teaching for a clerkship with a tradesman in Berwick; (2) forty-seven outdoor girls left in the same period, including Jane Foreman who became the Workhouse pupil teacher, the remainder going to relatives or into domestic service.

Despite the school's success, the Guardians began to show in 1862 a preoccupation with finance which was to lead eventually to its closure. In May they discussed

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1 Committee of Council Report, 1861-2, 469-70, 473-5.

2 Berwick British School Log Book, 1862-95.

methods of reducing costs, and decided that, as out of the total cost of running the school of £145 3s. per annum, £29 11s. 8d. was spent on Jane Foreman, her services could be dispensed with and her duties could be performed by a monitor. If the Committee of Council would agree, they therefore resolved to transfer Jane Foreman's indentures as soon as possible to the Trustees of the Berwick National Schools. While these negotiations were in progress the School was examined both by the Committee and Mr. Browne who wrote, "The Children passed a good Examination, and are making generally creditable progress in both Schools." With such satisfactory results it was unfortunate that the Guardians felt it necessary to disrupt the teaching staff at this time, but they continued with their plan and in September Jane Dalgleish became monitor at £6 10s. per annum. Fortunately she proved a very satisfactory substitute for Jane Foreman, and the examination results in 1863 remained good.

In April 1864 a new Government Inspector, Edmond H. Wodehouse Esq., inspected the School and considered the result "very fair". The Committee's examination was changed in this year from June to December. There were ninety pupils present and the Committee found the work very creditable, giving prizes to the first and second pupils in each subject. In their Report they mentioned that the boys and girls were taught together except in

the afternoons when the girls learned sewing and knitting, "and it is a matter of the highest importance that every child whose parents are in receipt of Outdoor Relief should thus have free access to this school which gives an education equal to other schools in the Town which are intended for the children of working men."

The Government Reports by Mr. Wodehouse in 1865 and 1866 were very satisfactory, and the only change was in March 1866 when Ellen Dalgleish succeeded her sister as monitor. The year 1867, too, was outwardly quiet. Mr. Wodehouse recommended the purchase of new reading books and the Guardians agreed, and the Committee Examination in December was very creditable as always. In August, however, a report outlining the cost of keeping the Workhouse School had been presented to the Guardians. This showed that the average attendance was seventy-five, and that the expenditure incurred was as follows:

Salaries - Mr. Nesbit	£85	(1)	
Mrs. Nesbit	37 10 0	(2)	
Monitor	6 10 0		
	<u>          </u>		£128 10 0
Other expenses of Officers -			
Value of apartments	£7 10 0		
Coals & gas	9 0 0		
	<u>          </u>		16 10 0
Other expenses of School -			
Coals & gas	£3 0 0		
Books & Stationery	5 10 0		
	<u>          </u>		8 10 0
Gross cost of Workhouse School			<u>153 10 0</u>
Sum repaid by H.M. Treasury			<u>77 0 0</u>
Net expense			<u>76 10 0</u>
Average cost of children per head for school year of 45 weeks			£2 0 9½d. gross.
Average cost of children per head for school year of 45 weeks			£1 0 4d. net.
Average cost of children per head per week			11d. gross 5½d. net.

The costs so listed did not include any estimate of the value of the use of the two schoolrooms, of their furniture, or of cleaning expenses. Consideration of the Report was adjourned for several months, and it was not until 23rd March 1868 that its implications were fully

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- 1 His salary on appointment had been £60, and it had risen to £75 in 1857, to £80 in 1859, and to £85 in 1863.
  - 2 This is incorrect. Mrs. Nesbit's salary was £37, so the total is correct.

discussed. The Guardians needed to make room in the Workhouse for lunatics, and they discovered that there were 250 vacancies existing in Town schools, with the expectation of more after the new National School should be built in Tweedmouth. To pay fees for the seventy-five children at such schools would cost the Guardians only about £30 per annum instead of £76 10s. The suggestion of closing the School was therefore made, but after further discussion the decision was deferred.

The respite was short, however, and on 20th April the Guardians resolved to close the School and to seek at once the consent of the Poor Law Board. In May Mr. Wodehouse, H.M.I., reporting on the state of the School, praised warmly the work done there and expressed his regret that the Guardians were contemplating its discontinuance. He felt that this was most undesirable and the Poor Law Board concurred, refusing the Guardians' request on the grounds that it was a good school in which the children could be closely supervised by the Guardians, and that in any case day rooms and supervision would still have to be provided within the Workhouse for the indoor children.

The request for closure and the refusal were repeated in January 1869, the Poor Law Board adding to their list of reasons the concern which they felt for Mr. and Mrs. Nesbit. At a meeting on 8th February the Guardians again

discussed the situation and agreed to tell the Board that the number of indoor children was unlikely to increase and that these pupils could easily be boarded out with respectable families as was the custom in Scotland; so far as Mr. and Mrs. Nesbit were concerned, the Guardians considered that they had been well paid for many years and could easily have provided for their own future. No reply was received for three months, so in May the Guardians wrote again to ask the Board for their decision. On 31st May the Board's letter was read, agreeing that, as the Berwick arrangements were in some respects unusual and since the Guardians felt so strongly, they would consent to the closure of the School.

Mr. and Mrs. Nesbit were most distressed by the decision, and in July they refused the Guardians' offer of compensation of £123, equal to one year's salary, asking instead for retirement allowances of £55 and £25 per annum respectively. Mr. Nesbit pointed out that they had given almost seventeen years of service to the Guardians, that Mrs. Nesbit was unwell, and that they would have great difficulty in finding similar employment in another school because of their age and lack of regular Certificates of Merit.

On Monday 4th October 1869 the 137 outdoor children began as pupils of the various voluntary schools, National, British, Free Church and Catholic, in Berwick and

Tweedmouth. (1) The indoor children at about the same date began to leave the Workhouse as suitable homes were found for them, the Guardians paying the foster parents three shillings per week, and providing the children's clothes, fees and medical expenses. By 1st November only ten children remained at the Workhouse School, and the Poor Law Board were still investigating the legal problems implicit in the Nesbits' refusal to leave. On 7th February 1870 they advised the Guardians that in the opinion of the Attorney General they were competent to remove Mr. and Mrs. Nesbit from their posts; the offer of compensation was therefore renewed and the Nesbits resigned, leaving on 25th March with their £123.

From this date the Guardians exercised general supervision over the children in the town schools and particularly over those who would previously have been inmates of the Workhouse. They had hoped that this would provide a better and more normal life for the children, but this hope was not entirely fulfilled. On 27th March 1874 the Charity School Trustees commented "that the obsolete shape of the dress worn by some of the Workhouse children mark these children whilst at School, in an objectionable manner, and injurious to their future welfare." (2)

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1 This date is to be found for example in the Log Books of Tweedmouth National School and Berwick British School.

2 Trustees' Minute Book, 1872-1900.

Mr. and Mrs. Nesbit seem to have conducted a private school after they left the Workhouse, (1) and in 1873 they were fortunate in being appointed to the new Whitadder Bridge National School, but the salaries offered totalled only £45 per annum, just over a third of their former income. (2)

Perhaps both for the sake of the children and of the teachers, the Guardians would have been wiser to continue the school, particularly as its average attendance was high and it was more successful than it had ever been before. Moreover they pressed for its closure in the face of opposition from the Government Inspector and the Poor Law Board, none of whom would willingly have condoned any waste of public funds and whose judgement, based upon knowledge of national standards, was exceedingly reliable. With the school's closure ended the effort to provide an education specifically designed to free children from pauperism, and given in an environment which could be controlled by the Guardians. Curtailed though it was, the history of the education of the poor in Berwick nevertheless gives a fascinating account of the attitudes adopted towards the destitute in eighteenth and nineteenth century England and of the remedies which appeased the public conscience.

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1 See p. 169.

2 Trustees' Minute Book, 1872-1900.

## CHAPTER SIX

## THE BRITISH AND PRESBYTERIAN SCHOOLS

a) Kirkwood's School

The first proposal to have a Lancasterian School in Berwick was made in Guild on 28th April 1813, when a burgess moved that "Mr. Lancaster's plan for Education be adopted by this Corporation", (1) but the matter was referred to the School Committee and quietly lapsed.

Instead a school was founded by public subscription in 1818, following a lecture given by Mr. Lancaster in Berwick Town Hall, in which he outlined his system. Several benevolent persons "thought it might be very advantageously applied to a numerous school of the poor who were unable to pay for their education ...." In charge of the school they placed Rev. Alexander Kirkwood, at a salary of £25 per annum. (2)

Mr. Kirkwood had come to Berwick from Beverley in May 1809 as pastor to the Scotch Baptist Church, (3) and, finding his stipend inadequate, had opened a private

1 Guild Minute Book, 1805-13.

2 All information concerning Kirkwood's School, unless otherwise stated, is from Memoir of the Rev. Alexander Kirkwood ... (1856), 48-93.

3 He had earlier become well acquainted with Berwick during his service as Congregational Minister at Ford Forge from 1804 to 1806.

school. This was at first very successful, but the rising prices of the Napoleonic War period had by 1812 reduced the number of his scholars from about sixty to less than forty.

In 1813 he therefore tried shopkeeping to earn more money but this venture failed. Fortunately by December of that year his school had recovered a little, and he had forty-five pupils by day, and fifteen attending his evening school. The improvement continued and a year later, in December 1814, Mr. Kirkwood was able to write in his journal: "As a school, we are crowded of day-scholars, upwards of seventy. Of night-scholars, upwards of twenty. My son Walter is beginning to assist me."

Only eight months later, however, his fortunes had changed again, and he wrote sadly: "My school has greatly declined ...." The post-war slump, aggravated by bad harvests throughout the country, lost him many pupils, and by 1816 he was forced to consider abandoning his school altogether. In that year he applied for the post of Reading Master at the Corporation Academy, which offered a salary of £60 per annum, but the Guild had stipulated an upper age limit of thirty-five; as Mr. Kirkwood was nearly forty years old, he was not even considered.

The invitation to him to take charge of the Lancasterian School in 1818 must have come as a great relief. He was

assured of at least £25 per annum, and he was able at the same time to continue his private school during the day. He abandoned his private night school, and held the Lancasterian School on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings each week. It was attended by many of the older boys and girls "who were engaged all day at work, and who could not consequently attend a day-school, even if they could afford to pay the fees."

Mr. Kirkwood's day school continued until 1830, though it did not attract many pupils. His health deteriorated, however, and in the spring of 1830 he therefore proposed, at a meeting of the committee of the Lancasterian School, that he should "give up his day-school, and take in the Lancasterian school during the day, instead of during the evening. The proposal was cheerfully complied with by the committee, and they added £5 to his salary, making it £30, which was afterwards raised to £35. They authorised him also to obtain from the pupils a penny per week each to his own perquisites. Many of the pupils being, however, very poor, he charged some of them only a halfpenny, and others were entirely gratuitous. The attendance at the school was now much more regular, and their progress in education more satisfactory. An annual examination of the school was held before the committee and subscribers, who uniformly expressed themselves highly delighted with the progress of the children. Much interest was felt, in particular, at

several of those examinations, from the specimens of penmanship produced by a boy who had been born without hands: he grasped the pen with his elbow-joint, and acquired such power over it that he was able to make good legible writing."

By 1833 the school had grown to one hundred and twenty pupils, eighty boys and forty girls, (1) and seems to have been situated in Walkergate Lane, though the exact site is not known. (2)

Mr. Kirkwood continued to teach until Midsummer 1843. His wife had died in 1842, and in December of that year he told the school committee that he wished to retire from teaching in six months' time. Instead of appointing a new master, however, "the committee determined to discontinue the school, as the other educational establishments in the town were by this time both extended and improved. The Lancasterian School was thus discontinued, after an existence of twenty five years ...."

At the end of the final term much grief was expressed,

1 Education Enquiry: Abstract of the Answers and Returns made pursuant to an Address of the House of Commons, dated 24th May 1833, II (1835), 687.

2 Pigot & Co., Commercial Directory of Cumberland, Durham, Northumberland, Westmorland and Yorkshire, 1828-9, 118.

The school may perhaps have been held in the Baptist Church, which was at that time in Walkergate Lane.

and the committee, as a token of their gratitude to Mr. Kirkwood, presented him with a sum of money and a handsomely bound copy of "The Pictorial Bible".

b) Spittal British School

In 1839 the first British School in the district opened at Spittal, after several years of effort by local Ministers, private benefactors, and the British and Foreign School Society. (1) The earliest surviving evidence is in the form of a printed notice, signed by Rev. William Ainslie on 17th August 1837, appealing for public support as follows:

"SCHOOL IN SPITTLE

The want of the means of Education for the Poor and Labouring Classes in Spittle has long been a subject of deep regret. A munificent offer from a Gentleman in Berwickshire towards supplying this want having created a fresh interest in the matter, an application was made in November last to the Lords of the Treasury for £75 out of 'the Parliamentary Grant in aid of the erection of Schools', and their Lordships were pleased to include it in the list presented to the House of Commons on 5th June

1 In 1844 Mr. Fletcher, H.M.I., gave the date of the school's establishment as 1833; this is not supported by other sources, and he erred in his statement that the Parliamentary grant for the school's erection was paid on 5th July 1841, for this was in fact the date of the grant to Berwick British Infants' School (Committee of Council Report, Minutes, 1844, II, 483).

last; since which time £20,000 have been voted for that purpose. Before their Lordships can order payment of the amount applied for, an equal sum must be provided in the Neighbourhood, by charitable contributions. These sums are intended solely for providing a School House; but in order to the success of the scheme it is requisite that an efficient Teacher be procured, which cannot be done without securing him a salary of some amount, independent of the moderate school wages which it is proposed to exact from the Children.

In furtherance of these views a Provisional Committee has been formed, whose duty it will be in the course of the ensuing week to solicit Subscriptions; and it is hoped that the importance of the object will strongly recommend it to every benevolent mind.

The Constitution of the School will be hereafter fixed by a General Meeting of the Subscribers, of which notice will be given."

Four days later, on 21st August 1837, Mr. Henry Dunn, Secretary of the British and Foreign School Society, wrote to Mr. Ainslie informing him officially of the grant of £75 which would be paid when the school was satisfactorily completed according to the plans, when the private subscriptions had been received and expended, and when the site had been obtained and conveyed to Trustees; all accounts had to be open to audit, and no debt was to

remain on the building except what would be liquidated on receipt of the grant. (1)

On 5th June 1838 Berwick Town Council conveyed to Mr. John Miller Dickson, Mr. Robert Guthrie and Mr. John Alexander, a site at Spittal for a school "for the Education of the poor and labouring Classes in Spittle and the Vicinity", according to the methods of the British and Foreign School Society, (2) and building began. In 1839 the new school opened (3) and the grant of £75 was paid on 15th April 1839 by the Treasury. (4)

The first official report of the school was made by Mr. Fletcher, H.M.I. for the British Schools, who visited Spittal on 29th July 1844. (5) He noted that it had only one room for a mixed class, and that although "fitted up on the British plan, ... it is organised and

1 The printed notice and the letter from the British Society are both in Berwick Borough Library.

2 Council Minutes, 1835-40, 8th May and 5th June 1838.

3 British and Foreign School Society, 39th Report, 1844, 106, and 40th Report, 1845, 114.

4 P.R.O. Ed. 21/13857; Committee of Council Report, Minutes, 1855-6, 224.

5 Committee of Council Report, Minutes, 1844, II, 428, 457, & 483, and 1846, II, 192, which contains the report of the inspection of 29th July 1844.

conducted more on those of Edinburgh and Glasgow"; he thought that the buildings were not very well arranged, but the site had "the advantage of a wide sandy shore, nearly contiguous, for the gambols of its children." The school was well administered both as a day and Sunday school by an active Management Committee, though there was no separate Ladies' Committee. "The Spital School also has a head designated as patron, from the liberality of his contributions to its erection and income; this is George Buchan, Esq., of Kelloe." (1) There were 165 pupils on the roll, 85 boys and 80 girls, aged from six

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1 As Kelloe is a large estate in Berwickshire, Mr. Buchan was probably the gentleman whose "munificent offer" was referred to by Rev. Ainslie in 1837. Mr. Buchan's generosity to Nonconformist education may date from much earlier as Rev. John Leach, referring to the foundation of the English Presbyterian School at Tweedmouth, c. 1825, said that it was "liberally supported by a Mr. Buchan, a Scotch gentleman ...." (National Society file on Tweedmouth National School, letter dated 5th October 1830).

The meaning of "head" in this context is obscure, but it may be that Mr. Buchan actually took charge of the school himself in its early years.

to fourteen years, who paid fees of 1d. per week in the lower classes and 2d. per week in the higher; at the time of his visit 111 pupils had been present, learning Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Vocal Music by note, and the average attendance for the previous six months had been 149. The premises had cost £238 6s. 3d. to build, and the Managers made an annual profit of about £11; their income each year was provided by subscriptions and donations of £50 2s. 4d. and school fees of £36, a total of £86 2s. 4d., out of which they paid the Master £66, and spent £5 13s. 4d. on books and stationery, and £3 7s. 2d. on repairs, fuel and lighting, a total of £75 0s. 6d. Mr. Fletcher concluded, "This is a valuable school, organised on a mixed plan, between the British and the Glasgow systems, with the children of both sexes in the same classes, under a judicious master; their attendance is very irregular, but the school is sound throughout ...."

Reports of the progress of the school were included in the British Society Reports of 1844 and 1845; these unfortunately do not confirm the size of the school as described by Mr. Fletcher, the 1844 Report stating that there were 127 pupils on the roll, and the 1845 Report giving the number as 128; the average attendance for the intervening year is given as 135, which seems extraordinarily high, as in most schools the average attendance was normally considerably lower than the

number of pupils on the roll. (1) The 1844 Report, however, is useful in that it gives an account of the public annual examination "in the presence of a respectable number of subscribers and friends. The Rev. Dr. Balmer, Rev. Mr. Murdoch, and Rev. Mr. Grant, who took part in the examination, as well as all present, bore their united testimony to the general good conduct of the scholars, and their proficiency in the various branches in which they had been instructed, evidencing at once the skill and success of the teacher and the diligence of the children."

From this early period of the school's history has survived an interesting set of rules, which may be dated tentatively between 1844 and 1850, (2) and which emphasises the influence of Glasgow and the tremendous importance attached at this time to attendance and punctuality:

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1 British and Foreign School Society, 39th Report, 1844, 106, and 40th Report, 1845, 114.

2 The Rules, which are in Berwick Borough Library, were printed by D. Cameron, High Street, Berwick. Daniel Cameron is said to have emigrated to America in 1850, and, as the fees given are higher than those mentioned by Mr. Fletcher in July 1844, the Rules must have been printed between these two dates.

## "RULES AND REGULATIONS OF SPITAL SCHOOL

'THAT is the best system of Education where nearly all is committed in School, leaving the Evenings of the Children to be spent in reading suitable Books, which exercise both the understanding and memory.' - STOW ON NATIONAL EDUCATION.

RULE FIRST.- Parents to send their Children regularly at half-past Nine o'Clock in the Morning, and at Two in the Afternoon, (Saturday excepted,) with their persons clean, and their hair well combed, and no child shall be admitted into the School with any infectious disease.

RULE SECOND. - On no occasion to keep them away from School without leave of the Master, on pain of dismissal.

RULE THIRD. - To cause them to attend regularly on the Sabbath Day such Places of Worship as they may prefer.

RULE FOURTH. - Each child shall pay in advance to the Teacher every Monday Morning the sums following, viz.:- for the Higher Branches, 3d. per Week, and for the Lower Branches, 1½d. per Week. If any child shall not pay that sum punctually, the case shall be immediately reported to the School-Inspectors, who shall ascertain the cause. If there be no real inability, the child, after a Fortnight's warning to the Parents, shall be dismissed.

RULE FIFTH. - When Pupils are unwell, or from other causes detained, it is particularly requested that a

Note or Message be sent at the hour at which they ought to be present, so as to be a substitute for their response to the calling of the Roll. When this is neglected, the Teacher will instantly forward a printed form of enquiry.

RULE SIXTH. - To prevent all temptation to irregular attendance, Pupils cannot be permitted to leave School before the usual hours of dismissal, except the Teacher receive a written Notice, or personal call, from their Parents or Guardians."

The lack of surviving Managers' Minute Books creates great difficulty in tracing the history of Spittal British School in any detail. Even the names of the Masters are not known with any certainty; Mr. Fletcher in 1844 mentioned Mr. George Buchan as "head", and a Directory of 1847 names the Master as "N. Redpath". (1)

Fifteen years after Mr. Fletcher's visit, Mr. E.H. Brodie came to Berwick to examine all the Nonconformist schools. He inspected Spittal on 4th November 1859, and found there one master teaching 31 boys and 28 girls. He reported to the Committee of Council, "The schoolroom is slightly dark, is not sufficiently warmed (there being a very small stove), and it has only a brick floor. The building is otherwise of a good size, and there are two

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1 Francis White & Co., General Directory (1847), 722.

very fair playgrounds one on each side of the schoolroom. The Rev. W. Porteous, the Presbyterian minister, has promised immediate attention to such points as require alteration. The instruction, considering the master has no help, is pretty good. The attendance was rather below the yearly average. Two-thirds of the children buy their own books, slates, &c., some of the rest buy a part of what they want; to about one-seventh (pauper children) the school managers supply these things. The fees are 2d. and 3d. a week, according to instruction." (1)

From its foundation Spittal British School had received nothing from the Parliamentary Grants except the original £75 paid by the Treasury in 1839, but in 1862 an annual grant of £8 15s. was paid. (2) No grant was made in 1863 or 1864, but in the year ended 31st December 1865 the table of Parliamentary Grants included Spittal, its average attendance 113, its annual inspection in March, and its grant of £56 4s. (3) Subsequent Reports show that the attendance and grant continued at approximately this level for several years.

1 Committee of Council Reports. Tabulated Reports, 1859-60, 10.

2 Committee of Council Reports. Report, 1862-3, 465.

3 Committee of Council Reports. Report, 1865-6, 568.

At some time before 1877, perhaps as early as 1870, (1) the school gained as Master Mr. Charles William Hornby, a certificated teacher who had qualified at the Borough Road Training College, and who devoted his life to teaching in Spittal; he was still Master there at the time of his death in 1907. The school's financial position was at this period very healthy, as was shown in the 1876 Return. The income for the year was £171 9d. 8d., including £29 7s. 8d. in voluntary contributions and £60 13s. in school fees, and the expenditure was £167 1s. 10d., most of which, £146 10s., was for salaries. The official accommodation was at that time 142, and the average attendance was 120; no night school had been established. (2)

Within two years after this Return was made, the school had been enlarged to accommodate 184 pupils, and eight

1 Mr. Hornby entered Borough Road in January 1868, qualifying presumably in December 1869 (British and Foreign School Society, 84th Report, 1889, 68), but is first mentioned at Spittal in 1877 (Slater's ... Royal National Commercial Directory (1877), 33).

2 Return showing ... for each Public Elementary School ... the average Number of Scholars in Attendance ... 1876 (1877), 206-7.

years later in 1886 it was further extended to take 197 pupils. (1) Throughout the period and to the end of the century the average attendance continued to rise gradually; in 1877 it was 110, and by 1893 had increased to 170; in the same period the grant rose from £82 3s. 5d. to £148 15s. (2)

The absence of Log Books for Spittal British School before 1897, precludes any detailed knowledge of the curriculum or methods used, but one subject which was taught successfully for many years was Drawing. The pupils entered the examinations of the Department of Science and Art from 1873 to 1879, in 1883 and 1884, and from 1892 onwards. (3) In the first period the numbers taught varied from 60 to 85, and the most successful year was 1874 when 76 pupils and three pupil teachers were examined, earning a grant of £7 ls. and prizes worth £1 3s. 9d. Usually the grant was more modest, in the region of £3 15s. to £4. From 1892 to 1898 the numbers entered varied from 60 to 70 and the grade gained on

1 Committee of Council Report, 1878-9, 972, and 1886-7, 580.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1877-8, 787, and 1893-4, 928.

3 The Reports of the Department of Science and Art for the years stated.

each occasion was "Good", earning grants of from £4 10s. to just over £5.

From 1897 more detail of the life of the school is available, as the only surviving Log Book begins in that year. Mr. Hornby taught with the help of three assistants and a pupil teacher. The senior assistant was Miss Christina Barton who had taught there for at least ten years, (1) but the remainder of the staff seems to have been chosen from Mr. Hornby's own family. They were S.E. Hornby and A.K. Hornby, both assistants, and Harry Hornby, a second year pupil teacher.

The Government Reports from 1897 to 1902 were in general very satisfactory, but by 1898 both the Mixed School and the Infants' Class were growing too crowded in the accommodation available. The subjects taught included the usual object lessons on common animals, vegetables and minerals, and the girls attended Cookery classes at certain hours each week. Holidays were granted for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, Berwick Fair, the Sabbath School Bazaar, many excursions, and the victories of the Boer War, towards which the girls had contributed twenty-four pairs of socks, knitted from

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1 Miss Barton is first mentioned as a teacher at Spittal in T.F. Bulmer, History, Topography and Directory of Northumberland (1887), 783.

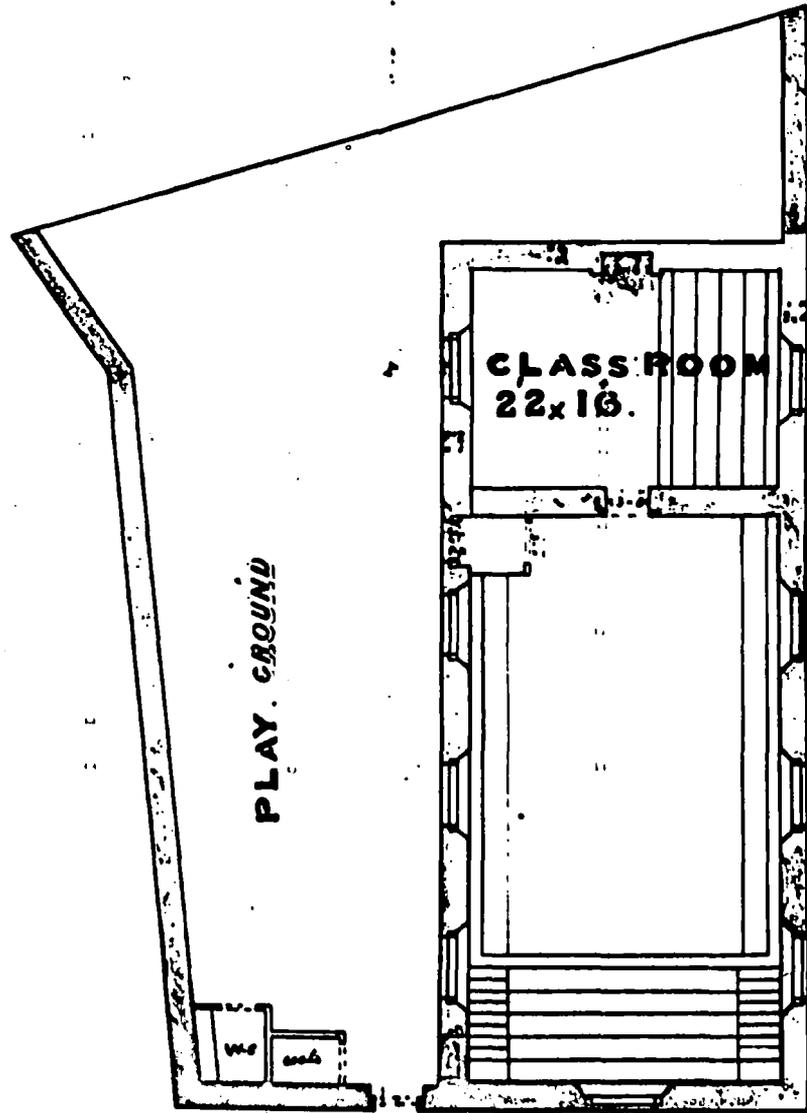
wool given by the Mayoress; other holidays were given for epidemics of measles, scarlet fever and smallpox.

As Spittal in the nineteenth century was only a village, dependent economically on the unstable profits of its fishing industry, the achievements of the British School in that context were considerable. Its standards never reached the excellence of the best schools in the district, but its pupils were not drawn from the best homes. The facts of its having twice to be enlarged, and being overcrowded once again by 1898, are clear proof that it was both necessary and popular.

Unfortunately no history of the school can do more than trace an outline of its progress; had its records survived, especially those from the early years after its foundation, the evolution of its teaching methods from both the British and Glasgow systems might have provided a more fascinating and unorthodox story.

No. 2.

# PLAN.



GROUND PLAN



Scale feet to one inch

c) Berwick British Infants' School

On a pleasant and secluded site next to the Elizabethan Walls, known as College Place, was built in 1840 a small Infants' School, the first British School in Berwick.

The application for a building grant from the Government was sent to the British and Foreign School Society on 12th October 1838, proposing that a school for 140 pupils, and costing approximately £260, should be erected; private subscriptions already totalled £180, so to meet the deficiency of £80 the Committee of Council offered to grant £70 which was gratefully accepted. (1) The Committee of Managers acquired the site on 10th September 1840 and there erected a plain, rectangular, single-storied building. (2) The work was quickly completed and on 5th July 1841 the grant of £70 was paid.

No local records survive of the British Infants' School, and its history must therefore be pieced together from Official Reports and from that useful, though not always reliable, source the local Directory.

The first known Mistress was Miss Mary Ann Rowe, who taught there in 1847, (3) but by 1850 she had been succeeded by a Miss Thompson, (4) probably Miss Jane E.

1 British and Foreign School Society, 35th Report, 1840, 12

2 P.R.O. Ed. 49/5839.

3 Francis White & Co., General Directory (1847), 722.

4 Ward's Northumberland and Durham Directory (1850), 350B.

Thompson who was there in 1852. (1)

The first Report on the school was made by Mr. J.D. Morell, who inspected it on 28th May 1849; he found that the average attendance was 70, and the total accommodation 133, allowing six square feet per pupil. The school had two girl pupil teachers, A. Sample and I. Cowe, whose indentures were signed shortly after his visit in June 1849. His comments, which unfortunately do not identify the teacher, were as follows: "A pleasing little infant school, of about 100 children, well supported by all parties in the town, under a mistress trained at Glasgow, and answering the peculiar objects of infant-school instruction, with a fair degree of efficiency." For the training of the pupil teachers a grant of £29 was allowed for 1850. (2)

A year later, on 17th May 1850, Mr. Morell returned to Berwick and found the school quite satisfactory, with 96 pupils present at his examination. He found there "a teacher of fair qualifications, aided now by two active and improving pupil teachers", for whose training in 1851 £34 was granted. (3) For his next inspection he

1 Slater's ... Royal National Commercial Directory of Scotland and important English Towns (1852), 318-19.

2 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes 1848, 1849 & 1850, I, cxxix, ccxxiii, and II, 492-3.

3 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes, 1850-1, I, clxxv, and II, 646..

unwisely chose to come on 30th May 1851 and found only 60 pupils present; he wrote rather ruefully in his Report, "It being fair day in the town only a part of the children were present, and they were too much preoccupied to enter with much interest into their examination. I have nothing to report favourably on what I then saw; but I have reason to think that under more auspicious circumstances the school would appear much more to advantage." The 1852 grant for the pupil teachers was £39. (1)

At Mr. Morell's next inspection, on 2nd June 1852, he was more fortunate, finding 90 pupils present out of an average attendance of 100. He considered it generally very fair and wrote, "A quiet orderly little school. The children appear to have been taught a good deal of useful information, though they seem to have it rather in their memory than in their understanding. The pupil-teachers have much improved." The grant for 1853 was £44. (2)

The last inspection by Mr. Morell took place on 9th June 1853. He found the school much improved and noted that a new teacher had been appointed since his visit in 1852. The work of the pupil teachers had now "more

1 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes, 1851-2, I, 200, and II, 598.

2 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes, 1852-3, I, 166,

system and energy", and besides the usual elementary subjects, Geography and Natural History had been introduced for the older children. (1) Mr. Morell's successor as Inspector of British Schools was Mr. J.S. Laurie, who also praised the work of this unnamed teacher when he came to Berwick on 15th June 1854, and regretted that she was soon to leave. He found the 120 pupils present in a fair state, despite the loss of the two pupil teachers whose apprenticeship was completed. Two candidates had been appointed, and Mr. Laurie hoped that with the aid of these girls and monitors the new teacher would be able "to introduce a system of activity among the mass of her pupils, even although she may be personally engaged with the instruction of a particular class. As regards singing, she will do well not to allow that element, at present so well sustained, to droop." (2)

The two candidates for pupil teaching, A. Brown and J. Brown were duly indentured, (3) and worked in 1855 under two teachers, Miss Mary Ann Roe and Miss Ann

1 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes, 1853-4, II, 716.

2 Committee of Council Reports. Tabulated Reports, 1853-4, 747.

3 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes, 1854-5, 819.

Sunton. (1) Unfortunately it is not possible to discover the chronology of their appointments, nor whether Miss Roe was the same person as the Miss Mary Ann Rowe who had taught there in 1847.

In 1858 a building grant of £34 3s. 6d. was paid by the Committee of Council to the Managers of the British Infants' School, presumably for the erection of a classroom, and in the same year the first mention is made of Miss Elizabeth McEwan, the best known and most successful of the Mistresses employed there. (2) Two years later, on 23rd July 1860, Mr. E.H. Brodie, H.M.I., visited the school and wrote, "Owing to the Tweedmouth feast and the wetness of the day, the attendance was somewhat below the present numbers. Enough, however, was present to show that the school is as flourishing as ever. Its state does Miss McEwan very great credit indeed. More playground for so large a number is most desirable." (3)

1 Slater's ... Directory of the Northern Counties (1855), I, 17; and William Whellan & Co., History, Topography and Directory of Northumberland (1855), 971.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1858-9, 621; and Kelly's Post Office Directory of Northumberland and Durham (1858), 5.

3 Committee of Council Reports. Tabulated Reports, 1859-60, 13.

The school at this time could accommodate up to 150 pupils, who paid fees of 1d. per week. (1)

Even more praise was bestowed in Mr. Brodie's Report in 1863 when, in listing the most successful teachers in Durham, Northumberland, Yorkshire and South Wales, judging on teaching skill, moral influence, school management and the training of pupil teachers, he named Miss McEwan. Discussing infant method he wrote, "Sometimes the reading and writing are very good, and the children in the very best schools of this kind, as in Miss McEwan's at Berwick, make even an astonishing progress in these subjects." (2)

The last and most brief Reports were made in 1867 and 1869, when Mr. H.E. Oakeley, H.M.I., described Berwick British Infants' School as one of the best in the North. (3) From that time the only available information in the Committee of Council Reports is in the form of attendance and grant figures included in the tables of Parliamentary Grants, but they do at least give a

1 National Society file on Parade School.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1863-4, 200-3. It is also there stated that Miss McEwan had given twelve years' service at Berwick, which would date her appointment from 1851. This is not borne out by the Directories of 1852 and 1855 already quoted.

3 Committee of Council Report, 1867-8, 356, and 1869-70,

general indication of the progress made.

In 1869 the average attendance was 102 and from then until 1882 it remained above 100, reaching a peak of 130 in 1879, thereby earning its highest ever grant of £87 7s. 4d. (1) At this time such a grant must have been most welcome, for the school's financial position, outlined in the 1876 Return, (2) was not very secure. For an average attendance of 119, its income and expenditure were as follows:

Income:	Voluntary contributions	£30 14 0
	School pence	23 7 8
	Grant 1874-5	62 14 1
		<hr/>
		116 15 9
		<hr/>
Expenditure:	Salaries	£98 9 10
	Books & Apparatus	2 13 9
	Miscellaneous	34 12 10
		<hr/>
		135 16 5
		<hr/>

The Managers clearly realised the need to increase the school's income, so in the summer of 1876 it was agreed that the weekly fee should be raised to 2d. (3)

Finance aside, the school was in this period still successful, but of the teachers who made it so, little

1 Committee of Council Reports, 1869 to 1883.

2 Return showing ... for each Public Elementary School ... the average Number of Scholars in Attendance ... 1876 (1877), 202-3.

3 National Schools. Managers' Minute Book, 1872-1900, 12th July 1876.

trace remains. The exact date of Miss McEwan's departure is unknown, although by 1869 she was teaching in Jarrow. (1) In the 1870s there was at least one new Mistress, possibly even three. The only source for this information is the various local Directories, which in 1873 mention a Miss Isabella Lucas, (2) in 1877 and 1879 a Miss Isabella Laws, (3) and again in 1879 a Miss Jane Laws. (4) In view of the similarities in these names they may in fact refer to only one teacher.

After 1883, under Miss Elspeth Gray, (5) the average attendance was always less than 100, except in 1887 when

1 Berwick British School. Managers' Minute Book, 1857-1909, 2nd February 1869.

2 Kelly's Directory of Durham and Northumberland (1873), 468.

3 Slater's ... Royal National Commercial Directory (1877), 33; Slater's Directory of Cumberland, Durham, Northumberland, Westmorland and the Cleveland District (1879), 36.

4 Kelly's Directory of Durham and Northumberland (1879), 522.

5 Slater's Directory of Durham, Northumberland and the Cleveland District (1884), 44; T.F. Bulmer, History, Topography and Directory of Northumberland (1887), 783; Kelly's Directory of Durham and Northumberland (1890), 666-7.

it rose again to 108. From 1890, however, the decline was rapid, and by 1897 the average attendance was only 46, less than one-third of the places available. (1) The staff was changing rapidly at this time: in 1894 Miss Isabella Jeffrey, (2) in 1897 Miss Margaret Gray, (3) and in 1899 Miss Jessie Black (4) taught there.

The reasons for the school's failure and eventual closure in 1899 are difficult to ascertain, but they may lie in the inability suffered by the Managers to secure the services, for reasonably long periods, of well qualified Mistresses, and in the increasing competition created by the growth of so many other schools in the Borough. Probably the chief competitor was Berwick British School itself, which also admitted infants, so

1 Committee of Council Reports, 1883 to 1899.

2 Kelly's Directory of Northumberland (1894), 7. Miss Jeffrey, a former student of Saffron Walden Training College (British Society, 89th Report, 1894) had taught at the school since 1891 (Berwick British School. Managers' Minute Book, 1857-1909, 23rd June 1891).

3 Kelly's Directory of Northumberland (1897).

4 National School. Managers' Minute Book, 1872-1900, 21st February 1899.

to a large extent duplicating the function of the Infants' School. In 1880 the visiting Government Inspector, T. Godolphin Rooper, Esq., had suggested that the Managers of both schools should agree to an arrangement whereby infants under the age of seven should all attend the Infants' School, those over that age transferring to the British School. (1) Unfortunately this proposal was not accepted, and the two schools remained in competition.

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1 Berwick British School, Log Book, 1862-95, April 1880.



Berwick British School  
April 1858

d) Berwick British School

A profound dissatisfaction with "the exclusive & sectarian" character of the Guild and National Schools in Berwick prompted the many Nonconformist Ministers in the 1850s to discuss remedies for the situation. Their grumbles led eventually to a preliminary meeting in the Wesleyan Chapel on 12th March 1857, at which it was resolved that an entirely new school "on liberal principles for the Children of the laboring population" should be built. A provisional committee was formed, which included twelve Ministers, four from the United Presbyterian Church, two English Presbyterians, two Church of Scotland, one Baptist, one Primitive Methodist, one Independent, and one Wesleyan, together with ten members from the various congregations. (1)

The first public meeting was summoned on 21st April at Golden Square Chapel, where it was resolved that Berwick stood in need of an additional school of considerable size, and "That this meeting impressed with the importance of the great principle of religious liberty, - feel it to be a grievance that in the Charity Schools connected with the Church of England and which are in a large measure supported by public taxation, this sacred

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1 Unless otherwise stated the following information is drawn from the British School Managers' Minute Book, 1857-1909.

principle is infringed upon by the enforced teaching of the Church Catechism and by regulations imposing attendance on the service and Sunday Schools of the Established Church - recognise in this infringement an additional reason for a new School for the protection and preservation of their interests whether as Non-Conformists or as friends of religious liberty - and accordingly resolve on erecting and supporting a school for the children of the working classes, wherein they shall receive a sound and useful education accompanied with unsectarian religious instruction and at a cost within their reach." The provisional committee was enlarged to include all the Dissenting Ministers and forty-two others, empowered to implement the resolutions, and a subscription list was opened. Before the meeting ended £92 2s. had been subscribed for the Building Fund, and £15 ls. for the annual support of the school.

Such a large committee was unusual, but the purpose of this arrangement soon became clear: the whole town was divided into districts, which the committee members then canvassed systematically for subscriptions. Gifts from outside Berwick soon began to arrive too, including £10 10s. from Mr. Joseph Hubback of Liverpool, so generous a supporter of the Charity School, and who promised to increase the sum to £20 if the benefits of

the school were to be extended to girls.

A Building Committee, appointed from the main committee, had meanwhile begun to search for a suitable site. In May they approached the Town Council asking if they might purchase a piece of ground known as "the Bull Well" just off Castlegate, (1) but the Council were unwilling to sell the freehold. As the Committee of Council would not agree to the erection of a school on a leasehold site the proposal was rejected. On 24th July it was resolved to approach the Committee of the Berwick School of Industry to see if their site in Palace Green might be made available "without injury to the interests of their School", and by 30th November agreement had been reached for uniting the School of Industry with the proposed British School in the new building.

The Berwick School of Industry had been founded in 1819 by ladies of the town who interested themselves in useful philanthropy. It gave elementary education to girls from poor families and trained them for domestic service, a purpose formerly served by the Charity School. It may not be a coincidence that the last girls left the Charity School in 1818 and the School of Industry was founded in 1819. The number of pupils was usually over 100. In 1833 the Mistress received £30 per annum for

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1 Draft Council Minute Book, 1849-70, 6th May and 3rd June 1857.

teaching 120 girls. (1) In 1835 there were 115 pupils, each contributing 1d. per week towards the annual cost of £75, the balance being met by the donations of the school's subscribers. (2)

Both the provisional British School Committee and the Committee of the School of Industry approved the plans for the new school by April 1858, and it was agreed that a room should be found to house the School of Industry while building was in progress. The new school was to provide places for about 280 pupils, and was in fact to be not one, but two separate schools, one for boys and the other for girls. The boys' schoolroom was to be on the ground floor with the girls' above, and at each end of the new building there was to be a furnished house to accommodate the teachers. The estimates agreed on 8th July 1858 totalled £1,224 10s., but the final cost was much higher, over £1,750, towards which the Committee of Council granted £694. (3) Renewed efforts to attract subscribers succeeded in meeting the costs by 31st January 1860.

1 Education Enquiry: Abstract of the Answers and Returns made pursuant to an Address of the House of Commons, dated 24th May 1833, II (1835), 687.

2 The Penny Cyclopaedia ..., IV (1835), 327.

3 Totals of grant and subscriptions are to be found in P.R.O. Ed. 21/13860.

Meanwhile, early in May 1859, the new schools opened under Mr. J.P. Calvert and Miss Marianne Looney, who had been recommended by the British and Foreign School Society; their salaries were set at £60 and £40 per annum respectively. In October four pupil teachers, two for each school, were appointed. To manage the schools a new and smaller Committee of seven gentlemen and seven ladies was elected, this Committee to be appointed annually at a meeting of the subscribers.

The Managers were at first uncertain of the level at which they should establish the school fees, but after consulting the British Society, they decided that initially the lowest fee should be 2d. per week, although this would be altered if it were found to be excluding the poorest classes. They soon found, however, that the danger of excluding the poor sprang not from the level of the fees, but from the school's unexpected popularity. Gratifying as this was, it rapidly became a source of considerable embarrassment to the Managers. Six months after the opening, in January 1860, they were forced to instruct the teachers to place the names of all children admitted on temporary registers for scrutiny by the Committee; those children whose admission was approved could then be transferred to the permanent roll.

Despite this measure the problem continued to grow, and after the first Public Examination, held at the Corn

Exchange at 6 p.m. on 3rd April 1860, a full report was sent to the British Society, from which the following is extracted: "Since ... the opening the attendance of scholars has increased in a manner which far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the promoters of the school, there being at present nearly 200 of each sex present. A public examination held in the Corn Exchange last April, in presence of a large audience, afforded the public an opportunity of judging of the kind of instruction given, and elicited an almost universal expression of approval from all who witnessed that interesting scene. Indeed, the high character of the tuition which the school presents has been so appreciated, that children of a station in life superior to that for whose benefit it was solely intended, began to resort to it; and the committee experienced no little perplexity as to the method of dealing with such cases. Their intention at first was to reject them altogether, but after communicating with the Privy Council committee, it was resolved, on their recommendation, to admit a limited number of pupils at higher rates of payment; it being distinctly understood, and intimated to the parents by printed circular, that these children must be withdrawn whenever the whole school accommodation shall be required for that class, viz., the labouring population, for whose

benefit the British School was primarily erected." (1)

The new weekly fees, agreed on 17th April 1860, were 2d. for the children of labourers and mechanics, 6d. for the children of the smaller shopkeepers and master tradesmen, and 1s. for the children of still higher class. The registers were subsequently checked in order to classify the children, and it was further agreed that the fees should be reduced if more than two children from one family were attending. Extra desks were bought, and the teachers were given salary increases to compensate for the additional work, Mr. Calvert receiving £60 per annum plus one-third of the fees of the Boys' School, and Miss Looney, who preferred a fixed salary, £60 per annum.

The first full-scale Government Inspection was made on 18th July 1860 by E.H. Brodie Esq. Of the Boys' School he wrote, "Mr. Calvert is most energetic. This school, which had only been opened three months at my last inspection, has doubled in numbers. The children are very intelligent, and the reading, with which the master takes especial pains, is particularly good." Of the Girls' School he was equally complimentary: "This department also has nearly, if not quite, doubled in numbers. The mistress labours with zeal beyond all

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1 British and Foreign School Society, 56th Report, 1861, 11-12.

praise, and her school is altogether admirably conducted. The reading here, too, is much above the average standard. I know no school in my district which exhibits such results for the short time it has been established." (1)

To help teach the increased numbers two more pupil teachers were appointed in October 1860, bringing the number to three in each school, and the Managers also decided to erect curtains between the Sections in each school to improve conditions. A month later, on 5th November, they agreed to spend £4 Os. 7d. on procuring a selection of Drawing copies from the Department of Science and Art, from which it may be inferred that this subject had been added to the timetable. (2)

In 1861 the schools continued to make excellent progress, and another successful public examination was held in the Corn Exchange. The number of pupils continued to rise, and Miss Looney very sensibly persuaded the Managers to withdraw her salary of £60 per annum and allow her instead £40 plus one-third of the fees of her school. At first the rising number of pupils seemed not to worry the Committee, and communications received on 24th September must have come as a very unpleasant shock. First they read the Inspector's Report, praising the

1 Committee of Council Tabulated Reports, 1859-60, 10.

2 See also Department of Science and Art, Eighth Report, 1860 (1861), 112.

teaching, but criticising the overcrowding, then a letter from the Education Department stating bluntly that until the schools were enlarged or the numbers reduced, the capitation grant would be withheld and permission to employ additional pupil teachers would be refused.

The Committee resolved to build an additional room for each school, but this decision was never implemented. They also made great efforts to reduce the numbers, and in this aim they were sufficiently successful within one month to persuade the Department to pay the capitation grant, but permission to employ extra pupil teachers was again refused. This disagreement may in some measure have influenced the Committee to formulate objections to the Revised Code, and to press these in the form of a Petition to the House of Commons presented by their Member of Parliament, Mr. Marjoribanks, in 1862.

In order to reduce the number of pupils sufficiently to claim their grant, the Managers had had to refuse to admit any new pupils. By 2nd December 1861 this state of affairs had existed for two months, and the Committee discussed the propriety of refusing admission to the children of the labouring class while middle-class pupils who were in the school already kept their places; feeling that such a policy was unjust, they resolved to view the registers and give notice to as many as necessary to leave at Christmas.

Still the problem persisted in 1862. The fees, which had been based on social class, did not deter middle-class families from entering their children, and the Managers decided on 26th May 1862, after comparing their fees with those charged in other schools in North Northumberland and Berwickshire, to adopt an entirely new scale. The younger children in Sections 1 and 2 were to pay 2d. per week, and the older pupils requiring more advanced tuition were to pay 3d. per week in Section 3 and 4d. per week in Section 4, with possible concessions if more than two of one family were attending the school.

As these changes would make the British Schools even more attractive to the wealthier parents, and the Committee of Council were adamant that the numbers in each school must not be permitted to exceed 146, the Managers had at the same time to control admissions more strictly and to try to secure the removal of pupils from a middle-class background. In July 1862 they therefore scrutinised the Registers once again to decide whom they should ask to leave. Their choice included the sons of Rev. Armstrong, but after he protested strongly to the Committee, their decision was reversed, though they saved face a little by informing him that his sons might continue at the school only so long as their places were not required for the children of the labouring poor.

From 1862 even more information is available on the

development of the British Schools, as, following the introduction of the Revised Code, a Log Book had to be kept in an officially approved form. (1) This reveals Mr. Calvert as a conscientious and methodical master, an impression confirmed by the Government Report for 1862 which read, "The methods are sound and carefully developed, and the results are very considerably above the average." Further praise came from Rev. Dr. Cairns after the public examination held in April 1863. His report, a copy of which was sent to the British Society, commended the schools most warmly for their scholastic achievements and their tone. (2)

The benefits of the Boys' School were extended still further from October 1862, when the Managers agreed to permit Mr. Calvert to open a night school for boys above the age of twelve, who were employed during the day. For this he was to receive all the fees, while the Committee would receive any Government grant allowed for the class. This scheme proved a success, and was repeated

1 The Log Books of 1862-95 and 1895-1926 survive, the first being the Log Book of the Boys' School until 1881 when the two schools were mixed; no Girls' School Log Book for the period from 1862 to 1881 has survived. All the following information is taken from the Log Books, or, in the case of decisions of the Committee, from the Managers' Minute Books, unless otherwise stated.

2 British Society, 58th Report, 1863, 45-6.

from October 1863 on the same terms.

Although the main emphasis in the British School was placed upon the elementary subjects, Geography, History and Scripture, the boys continued to study Drawing, and at some time prior to October 1863 Mr. Calvert also introduced Book-keeping; this subject had value both as a practical extension of the Arithmetic already learned, and as a vocational skill, particularly in a market town like Berwick, with its many businesses and banks. Mr. Calvert's approach was practical, the boys being taught to keep a Day Book, Invoice Book, and other books of prime entry from which entries were posted into the Ledger; this he found "better than pursuing the system of Chambers's book which always degenerated into mere copying."

The attitude to the work of the school was serious, and few holidays were recorded at this period, although in both 1862 and 1863 a sports afternoon was held out in the country at the end of the summer term.

Mr. Calvert's Log Book contains very few complaints of low attendance, truancy or badly-prepared work on the part of pupils, the result almost certainly of the great demand for places at his school. It does, however, contain an unusually high number of criticisms of his three pupil teachers; most of these were for lateness and lack of care in preparing their work, but some were more serious. The senior pupil teacher, John Hamilton, in

January 1863 had to be moved to a class of older boys to deter him from striking his pupils, and a week later he excused himself from school because he was ill, claiming that Dr. Maclagan had advised him. Unfortunately for him Mr. Calvert mentioned this to Dr. Maclagan, the Secretary of the Managers, who denied all knowledge of it and "added that the boy could not be ill, as he had met him about two o'clock, outside the town." Six months later, in July 1863, it was discovered that in the evening of 31st March, the night before the public examination, another pupil teacher, Robert Davison, had climbed into school through a window and thrown ink at three school maps, as he explained "in a spirit of reckless fun"; this cost him a £1 fine and a severe reprimand in the presence of the full Committee. Besides the defects of their conduct, Mr. Calvert also found fault with their teaching, saying caustically on 25th September 1863, "Have had occasion to-day to explain to P.T. that order is only valuable when it conduces to work - that it is possible to have admirable order in a section and nothing else, - no attention - no life - no thought."

This critical attitude probably sprang from Mr. Calvert's own very high personal standards and an anxiety to make a success of his school. Certainly Mr. Brodie, the Government Inspector who visited the schools in 1863

found no fault; he wrote, "This School is, as I have always found it, well taught and managed," and he singled out both Mr. Calvert and Miss Looney as among the most outstanding teachers in his area, which included Durham, Northumberland, York and South Wales. (1)

On 7th December 1863 Mr. Calvert informed the Managers of his wish to resign, "with a view of opening a middle class School in Middlesborough", and he left on 1st February 1864 with a glowing testimonial from the Committee and a gift of two books. The Managers meanwhile had written to the British and Foreign School Society asking their Secretary to recommend a successor, and on his suggestion they appointed Mr. Joseph Hayward, master of the British School at Alton, Hampshire, for the past two years. Mr. Hayward's salary was fixed at £75 per annum together with the residue of the capitation grant after paying the regular charges.

Mr. Hayward took up his duties on 3rd February, 1864 and taught in Berwick until July 1869. He proved a worthy successor to Mr. Calvert, the Government Reports praising the school warmly throughout his term as master. For the most part he continued to work within the pattern already established, although in 1865 he began teaching a little

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1 Committee of Council Report, 1863-4, 200-1.

French to the oldest pupils. Drawing continued to be an important and successful subject, and in 1867 the new examination of the Department of Science and Art was entered by 48 pupils and two pupil teachers; only two pupils failed, and sixteen achieved marks of excellent and won prizes; both pupil teachers passed, one gaining a prize, and the total grant earned was £6 lls. (1) A full and glowing report of this success was sent by the Committee to the British Society, stressing their pleasure in the proficiency displayed, and noting with satisfaction that "it does not interfere in the least with the high standards of excellence hitherto maintained in the more solid and essential parts of education."(2) On this occasion the pupils had entered the Freehand section of the examination, so, encouraged by their success, Mr. Hayward began teaching Model Drawing to all those who had passed, and in 1868 the following result was entered in the Log Book:

Model - 14 sat, all passed, 3 satisfactory,  
5 proficient, 6 prizes.

Freehand - 55 sat, 2 failed, 15 satisfactory,  
23 proficient, 15 prizes.

1 Department of Science and Art, Fifteenth Report, 1867 (1868), 91.

2 British and Foreign School Society, 63rd Report, 1868, 52

Both pupil teachers passed in Model Drawing. In 1869 sixty-nine pupils were examined, 5 in Practical Geometry, 25 in Model Drawing, and 39 in Freehand. Sixty-two earned payments, 6 won prizes, and both pupil teachers passed, earning a grant of £6 17s. (1)

At first Mr. Hayward had found, as Mr. Calvert had done, some difficulty in disciplining his pupil teachers. In March 1864, six weeks after his arrival, he received a complaint from his monitor, "that Davison and Henderson had been encouraging boys to black his face with the poker, and Henderson offered any boy a halfpenny who would do so." The Log Book gives no hint of Mr. Hayward's methods, but they were clearly effective. When Davison left in December 1864 Mr. Hayward was able to describe him as "an able and honourable young man", and in January 1868 Henderson entered Borough Road Training College after gaining a First Class Queen's Scholarship. A year later another pupil teacher, John Slight, also entered Borough Road Training College.

In June 1864 another public examination was held, on this occasion in the King's Arms Assembly Rooms, and the Managers agreed to charge an entrance fee of 2d., with reserved seats at 6d. Such examinations, however, were

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1 Department of Science and Art, Seventeenth Report, 1869 (1870), 166.

always costly, and it was decided not to hold one in 1865. In the following year, after considerable discussion, the Committee decided to hold a public examination, but in the schools, to save the cost of hiring a hall. Unfortunately the attendance of subscribers was very small, so the practice was thereafter allowed to lapse.

For two years after he came to Berwick Mr. Hayward continued the successful evening school established by Mr. Calvert, but despite an attendance of over 30 in the 1865-6 session, it was not repeated in the following winter. No reason for this was recorded.

Despite the opening of the new St. Mary's and Tweedmouth National Schools, which drew away a few pupils, the average attendance for the two British Schools continued to be about 240. (1) Mr. Hayward encouraged regular attendance from September 1865 by awarding coloured picture cards for a perfect quarter's attendance and giving one halfpenny for each perfect copybook.

The schools still retained their attraction for middle-class families. In his evidence to Lord Taunton and his Commission the Vicar of Berwick, Rev. George Hans Hamilton, stated unequivocally that the National Schools in Berwick educated the poorest class, while

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1 Committee of Council Reports, 1865-6 to 1870-1 show a range of from 220 to 252 pupils.

the British Schools taught the class above. (1) The Managers found that the costs of administering the schools were gradually rising. in 1866, for example, they agreed to pay Miss Looney an additional £3 per annum for having obtained a certificate of higher class; in March 1867 a chimney fire broke out in the Girls' Schoolroom and the water used to quench the flames flooded through the ceiling into the Boys' School; and later that year, on the recommendation of the Government Inspector, a classroom had to be partitioned off each schoolroom. The Committee therefore resolved in November 1867 to ask middle-class parents to pay a subscription equal to the Government grant for working-class pupils. A list was drawn up and approved, and a circular letter was sent to all such families in March 1868.

The children of both schools seem to have enjoyed a more varied social life at this period. The annual sports day developed into a full-scale picnic for both boys and girls at New Water Haugh, where they ate buns and fruit pies, drank lemonade, and played games; the children walked there from school, and the food was brought up river in a boat to the field. There were also holidays for Sunday School trips, Berwick games, and visits to Panoramas at the Corn Exchange, and concerts

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1 Schools Inquiry Commission, 1865-7 [Taunton Report]  
(1868), V, 85.

by "Dr. Mark and his little Men."

Mr. Hayward seems to have been a popular master, to judge by the Christmas presents which his pupils gave him; even allowing for the unusual prosperity of many of the parents, a telescope and a microscope, as well as gifts for Mrs. Hayward and their child at Christmas 1865, argue exceptional appreciation of his work.

In 1869 the Managers unfortunately lost the services of both Miss Looney and Mr. Hayward. They had been excellent teachers and had achieved results which made their schools among the very best in the North. Beside the complimentary remarks of the Government Inspectors may be set the following table comparing their results with those of the three great classes of schools under Government inspection. It was published in 1866 and appears to be based on the 1865 results: (1)

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1 British and Foreign School Society, 61st Report, 1866,

	Failures in Reading	Failures in Writing	Failures in Arithmetic	Average
Roman Catholic Schools	21	23	33	29
Church of England Schools	13	15	24	17 1/3
British & Foreign Schools	10	12	19	13 2/3
Berwick British Schools	4 1/3	5 1/3	3 1/3	4 1/3

It was with great regret therefore that the Managers learned in January 1869 that Miss Looney wished to leave at Easter, but the British Society quickly found for them a replacement in Miss E. Johnson of South Shields who "had been a P.T. in the Jarrow Chemical Company's School now taught by Miss McEwan late of the Berwick Infant School, and had since passed through the Training College with great credit." The Committee agreed to offer her £70 per annum with free house, and she taught in the Girls' School for over five years until her marriage in 1874. Although no detailed information of her work survives, it was apparently very satisfactory, for the Managers twice raised her salary, to £80 per annum in March 1871 and to £90 in November 1873.

Mr. Hayward left the Boys' School in July 1869, and the Committee appointed Mr. George Turnbull, who, like Miss Johnson, was from the Jarrow Chemical Company's School, on the same terms as Mr. Hayward, £75 per annum plus

the balance of the Government grant; they also purchased a carpet and some furniture for his house.

Mr. Turnbull remained as Master for less than two years, but he succeeded in upholding the standards set by his predecessors. The evening school was re-established, the Government and Drawing Reports continued to be very satisfactory, and soon after his arrival he introduced Drill for all the boys, and Astronomy and Practical Geometry for the older pupils. His school also received an unusual tribute in May 1870: Mr. McLoughlin, head of the Coast Guard and a Roman Catholic, had chosen to send his sons to the British School rather than to the Catholic School, and he called to see Mr. Turnbull to express his pleasure at their progress.

The British School was honoured with a visit in September 1870 of a party which included Lord Bury, Member of Parliament for Berwick, the Mayor, and the Town Clerk, Mr. Douglas. Lord Bury asked the boys searching questions about the Franco-Prussian War being waged at that time, and they answered well, a little to the surprise of Mr. Turnbull who feared that they might not have remembered.

Holidays were granted in 1869 for the Berwick Horticultural Show and for the first Regatta of the newly formed Rowing Club, and in 1870 the annual treat to New Water Haugh was particularly successful, with over 300

present, including several of the ladies of the Committee who travelled to the picnic field by boat. At the children's request the first school photographs were taken in June 1870. Mr. Turnbull liked to make the end of the Christmas term a time for happy celebrations; the boys brought evergreens to decorate the school, and enjoyed an afternoon of games, recitations and music.

In May 1871 the Managers learned with great regret that Mr. Turnbull had been appointed to the Stephenson Memorial School, Willington, near Newcastle upon Tyne. As usual they wrote to the British Society for advice, and at the Society's high recommendation appointed Mr. Henry Woodroffe Willits as Master, at the usual salary of £75 per annum plus the balance of the grant. Mr. Willits' academic background was excellent: he had entered Borough Road Training College in January 1869 with a First Class Scholarship and had been awarded First Class at the end of both the first and second years of his training, gaining in addition a Drawing Certificate and a Science Certificate in Mathematics, Chemistry and Physical Geography. (1) After qualifying in December 1870 he had been teaching at the British School in New Marske, Yorkshire, which post he left to

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1 British and Foreign School Society, 66th Report, 1871,

come to Berwick on Monday 29th May 1871.

In Mr. Willits the Managers found a master who was an excellent teacher, a man willing to devote his life to his work in Berwick. He taught at the Berwick British School for almost 47 years, retiring on 28th March 1918, and during that time he gave to his pupils an outstandingly good education. In many ways Mr. Willits did not conform to the ideal of a late nineteenth century headmaster. He disregarded the production of mere mechanical excellence, so often the consequence of the Revised Code of 1862. Although the school needed to earn Government grants if it was to survive, this was never considered to be the main purpose of the school.

During the first ten years after Mr. Willits came to Berwick the Government Reports varied from "fair" to "very fairly good", but they contain few of the strictures which often appear in reports of other schools in Berwick which gained similar grades. It appears that the Inspectors who visited the school accepted that here the aims were rather different, and they found many features of the school admirable, to the extent that in 1875 Mr. Oakeley, H.M.I., offered Mr. Willits the post of Assistant Inspector, an honour which he declined. In 1873 Mr. D.P. Pennethorne had written, "The Boys passed a very fair Examination on the whole. The School is so orderly and well arranged and conducted with so much life and spirit

that I expected there would be still more passes." The range of subjects taught was particularly impressive, and in Mr. Pennethorne's Report in 1878 he mentioned Reading, Poetry, Dictation, Composition, Handwriting, Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography, History, Literature, Physical Geography and French.

From the moment of his arrival in Berwick Mr. Willits displayed great energy and enthusiasm in his tasks. Sometimes this proved a little too much for his pupils, one boy leaving in November 1871 saying the lessons were too difficult, in the very week that Mr. Willits had taught a new song named "Aldiborontephoscophornio". He was most particularly interested in developing the teaching of Science, and taught in his leisure time in the Science School newly formed in 1871, encouraging his Pupil Teachers, who included his own younger brother William, and the older boys to join. (1) In 1872 the Managers agreed that a Physiology course should be offered to senior pupils for an additional fee of 1d. per week, and 48 boys immediately joined; the Committee further agreed to purchase diagrams to illustrate the new lessons.

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1 See Chapter 9 for a more detailed account of these Science Classes.

In November 1873 the Department of Science and Art approved a proposal that Mr. Willits should take a Mathematics Class every Tuesday, 12 - 1 p.m., and Physical Geography every Thursday, 12 - 1 p.m., for the older pupils of both schools, the Science evening classes being held in the Boys' Schoolroom, 7.30 - 9.30 p.m.

French was introduced into the curriculum in 1874 and was taught with fair success at least until 1882, and Book-keeping was re-introduced in 1874 for several boys who were interested in acquiring some skill in accounts.

The teaching of Drawing also developed well under Mr. Willits, particularly as for several weeks before the examination he opened the school at 8 a.m. for extra Drawing practice lessons. From 1875 the Girls' School also entered this examination, and the combined entry of about 200 pupils earned grants and prizes varying from about £11 to £20 per annum. (1)

Regular attendance and a desire to excel were fostered by monthly examinations for which prizes were awarded, and in order to make this even more effective, Mr. Willits ruled in October 1872 that no boy might win more than one prize every six months, thus encouraging the less able

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1 Department of Science and Art, Nineteenth to Thirtieth Reports, 1872-82.

children to increase their efforts. From 1874 he also offered weekly prizes for homework. The Committee supported his work by awarding prizes for attendance, and by holding public examinations from 1872 to 1874 in the King's Arms Assembly Rooms, and in 1875 and 1876 in the Corn Exchange, for which all pupils rehearsed eagerly. These measures were exceedingly successful, and when a boy played truant in 1875 Mr. Willits commented that it was the first case for over a year.

This high level of attendance and the consequent financial security were well illustrated by the 1876 Return, which showed that the schools had accommodation for 285 pupils and an average attendance of 267. The expenditure for that year was £449 19s. 2d., £331 9s. of that being spent on salaries, and the income was £455 10s. 10d., made up of £38 9s. 6d. voluntary contributions, £201 4s. 1d. school fees, £197 Government grant, and £18 17s. 3d. from other sources. (1) At that time the British School had a higher average attendance than any other school in Berwick, Tweedmouth or Spittal and by far the largest income from fees and grant. This superiority of numbers was not lost until 1899, when both St. Mary's National School and Tweedmouth National

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1 Return showing ... for each Public Elementary School ... the average Number of Scholars in Attendance ... 1876 (1877), 202-3.

School achieved a higher attendance, but even in that year the British School earned the largest grant, as it had done throughout the period. (1)

Despite the school's established success and popularity, Mr. Willits lost no opportunity to make school life more varied and exciting for his pupils. Besides the Christmas celebrations and annual picnics, half-holidays were given on special occasions, such as the opening of Tweedmouth Dock on 4th October 1876. Mr. Willits brought new teaching apparatus for both schools back from London in August 1873, bought a supply of maps at a sale in 1877, and brightened the school with bulbs and pots of ferns. Although no mention is made of the teaching of any team games at this period, a cricket match against Berwick Grammar School was held in July 1875 which the British School won by 31 runs.

The mixture of conscientiousness and flexibility which characterised Mr. Willits' teaching methods was applied with equal success to his training of pupil teachers. Two of them, William Willits in 1874 and Thomas Matthews in 1877, went on to Borough Road with First Class Queen's Scholarships, and William Pearson, after almost completing his apprenticeship, went up to Glasgow University in

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1 Committee of Council Reports, 1876 to 1900, tables of Government grants.

1872. Matthews in particular showed a technical aptitude which interested Mr. Willits; in May 1876 Matthews spent two days drawing copies of the machinery of the Oil Mill, and in September he was allowed leave of absence to attend the Annual Carbine Competition of the Berwick Artillery Volunteers. There were disappointments too: a very promising pupil teacher, Swedish by birth, named Axel Victor Theorin, had to return to Sweden in 1879 after a serious illness which made it impossible for him to continue his career, and another boy named Hall left in 1880, probably to the relief of Mr. Willits, as in his two years at the school he had been found reading a "penny dreadful" while teaching, and had sent a boy to fetch gunpowder into school.

Meanwhile the Girls' School had also continued its successful contribution to education in Berwick, despite changes in staff. Miss Johnson left in October 1874, and was replaced by Miss Margaret Carr, who had trained at Durham Training College and was at the time teaching at Messrs. Pease's Schools, Waterhouses, near Durham. (1) Besides entering girls for the Drawing Examination from 1875, Miss Carr also ably completed the training of two excellent pupil teachers who in the autumn of 1875 came

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1 A school erected and maintained by the local coal company.

first and fifth in the Darlington First Class Queen's Scholarship List.

Unfortunately Miss Carr stayed only until July 1877. Mrs. Willits took charge temporarily until the arrival of Miss E. Lonsdale, who was warmly recommended by the British Society and by Darlington Training College, in January 1878. She resigned in December 1879, and the Committee appointed in her place Mrs. Morris, then first Assistant at St. Mary's School, Gateshead, in February 1880; again their choice was disappointing, as Mrs. Morris resigned after only one year in Berwick.

These staffing problems added considerably to the difficulties of the Managers at this time, for they were already occupied with many administrative changes. A new scale of fees was drawn up in 1875, the weekly charges being 2d. in Class 5, 3d. in Classes 4 and 3, 4d. in Class 2, and 6d. in Class 1, with reductions if more than two of one family were attending. The increase, though it brought in more revenue, did nothing to reduce the numbers, as no parent withdrew his child or complained of the changes; on the contrary, the numbers continued to rise, even after further unspecified increases for the Senior Standards in 1880.

In 1876 and again in 1878 the Government Inspectors had stressed the need for a large new boys' classroom, and this was completed by 10th March 1879, thus increasing

the official accommodation from 285 to 337. (1) An Assistant Master, Mr. Taylor, was appointed in the same month, and by June the extensions were fully occupied. A new classroom was also needed for the girls and Mr. Willits' house required to be enlarged, so this work was undertaken in 1880 at a cost of over £300, raising the accommodation to 377. (2) In this year there were further staff changes: Mr. Taylor left and Mr. Thomas Matthews, the former pupil teacher who had just completed his training at Borough Road, came as Assistant; an Assistant Mistress, Miss Crawford, was added to the staff to teach the Infant and Standard I boys.

The expansion of both schools, the difficult problem of finding a suitable Schoolmistress who would be willing to give a long period of service to the Girls' School, and the successes achieved by Mr. Willits, all prompted the Managers to consider a more far-reaching reorganisation of their schools. They resolved on 10th February 1881 to explore the possibilities of forming a mixed school and wrote accordingly to the Education Department. Official approval was quickly granted and on Monday 4th April Mr. Willits took charge of the entire mixed school.

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1 Committee of Council Report, 1879-80, 668.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1881-2, 714.

A month later the Committee agreed on a completely new salary structure for the staff. Mr. Willits was to receive in future a fixed salary of £220 per annum, and Mr. Matthews, now a certificated assistant, £60 per annum; Mr. George Stewart, a former pupil teacher, who had won a First Class Queen's Scholarship in 1880, stayed on as an assistant at £40 per annum; Miss Crawford was to receive £35 per annum, and Mrs. Willits £20 per annum for teaching Sewing. To assist them, there were four pupil teachers and two monitors.

From 1881 to 1895 the Government Reports continued to grade the result as "very fair" or "very fairly good". In 1896, however, the Report was based not upon examination, but upon inspection, and Mr. W. Northrop, H.M.I., wrote of what he had seen, "The children are well trained in habits of self-control, civility and forbearance, and also of honest work. The organisation is good, the methods of teaching intelligent and well carried out. As regards both methods and results this is an excellent School." From this date until 1902 all the visiting Inspectors praised the school warmly.

The British School also continued to enter each year the Drawing Examination of the Department of Science and Art, an unbroken record achieved by no other school in Berwick, Tweedmouth or Spittal. The results were at all times very satisfactory, and from 1890 onwards the grade

"Excellent" was always gained, earning on average a grant of approximately £15 per annum. (1)

After 1882 French was apparently removed from the curriculum, but by 1895 it had been restored, together with Latin, for the older pupils. To improve the teaching of Geography, Mr. Willits began in 1885 to use the "Illustrated London News" and in 1887 a special raised map was introduced to clarify Geographical terms; in 1891 a special lecture on Spain was given by an acquaintance of one of the members of the Committee. A Museum was begun in 1887, and the children searched the shore and local quarries for suitable specimens.

In January 1888 the School received an unusual and perhaps slightly embarrassing gift, an enormous oil painting measuring 10 ft. 6 in. by 8 ft., of "Alfred the Great dividing the loaf with the pilgrim"; it had been painted by the donor, Alexander Blakely, (2) as a student at the Royal Academy, and was exhibited at the Royal Commission Exhibition at Westminster Hall in 1847 or 1848. Mr. Blakely offered it to the school through his son-in-law, Mr. T. Purves, Treasurer of the Committee.

The School Library was very successful, and in 1899 the Edinburgh Border Counties Association donated books to

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1 Department of Science and Art, Reports, 1883 to 1898.

2 Also given as "Blakley", "Blakily", and "Blackley".

add to the existing collection. A Reading Club was formed for the older boys, subscribing to "Boys' Own Paper" and "Chums", and in 1892 they voted their small profit for the purchase of a football. The strong personal interest in Science already shown by Mr. Willits continued in new forms. In March 1893 an aquarium was placed in the schoolroom, and was presumably used for studying plant and animal life native to the area, for when it froze in February 1895, no mention was made of any harm caused to its contents. In 1894 the Upper Standards received a weekly Chemistry lesson, with experiments. On Monday 28th May 1900 the children prepared smoked glass, through which they watched an eclipse that afternoon.

The British School also encouraged its pupils to develop out-of-school interests. In November 1896 a boy in Standard VI was asked to play his violin to accompany the Drill lessons, and in the following year in a letter to the Education Department one of the Managers, Dr. Maclagan, mentioned approvingly that in the winter several of the pupils were attending classes in instrumental music and dancing. (1)

In 1885 the Committee had agreed to provide a gas stove

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"for heating Schollars dinners" but it was not until July 1897 that they discussed the question of introducing a formal course of Cookery lessons for the girls; this was adjourned, but in September, learning of an extra £100 grant following the Voluntary Schools Act of 1897, they agreed to establish a Cookery Class and appoint a special teacher. On 15th November 1897 Miss Janet Whyte, who held a Glasgow diploma in Cookery teaching, took up her duties; the lessons were timetabled as follows:

	10 - 12 a.m.	2 - 4 p.m..
Monday	Demonstration	Practice
Tuesday	Practice	Practice
Wednesday	Demonstration	Practice
Thursday	Practice	Practice

At other times Miss Whyte taught general subjects.

For the first year the Cookery classes were held in the Long Room of the Corn Exchange, the school having installed a stove there and purchased utensils. A rent of ten shillings per week had to be paid, however, and if the Long Room were not available, Miss Whyte and her pupils had to hold their lesson in Mrs. Willits' kitchen. In March 1898 the ground floor classroom was therefore enlarged so that it could be used as a Cookery Room, and this proved much more satisfactory, although at times of very high attendance the Cookery Class again had to use Mrs. Willits' kitchen. Four months later, on 20th July an open day was held in the afternoon, and over 200 guests

toured the school and had tea provided in the Headmaster's garden. The Committee afterwards called in Miss Whyte to their meeting to thank her for her efforts. No burns or scalds or other accidents in the Cookery lessons were recorded, but in March 1899 Miss Whyte and two girls were fortunate to escape injury when the Cookery Room ceiling collapsed.

With such a broad curriculum, the standard of work achieved in the British School was admirable. Government Inspectors praised it, and the very high average attendance reflected the opinion held by parents, but if further evidence is required, it may be found in the external successes won by the British School pupils. From 1892 to 1898, nine Northumberland County Council Scholarships were won, and from 1890 to 1900 seven Edinburgh Border Counties Association Bursaries were awarded to pupils, a success which had eluded even Mr. Peacock of Tweedmouth National School. In 1892 a boy passed the Preliminary Examination of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. Both in 1901 and in 1902 a bronze medal was presented to a pupil by the Government of Canada, for an essay on the history and resources of that country.

Mr. Willits was equally successful in the training of his pupil teachers, who included both his daughters, Janet and Annie. Between 1882 and 1902 fifteen First Class Scholarships were gained, almost all the winners

taking up places at Darlington Training College. Another pupil teacher, Robert H. Tait, who had begun his training at the North Shields Presbyterian School, was transferred to Berwick in 1882 for the last two years of his apprenticeship; in 1894 he was appointed Principal of the City Schools of Mystic, Iowa, U.S.A., with the task of supervising three schools; he had a staff of eight assistants, and his appointment was "one much coveted by educationists over a wide region." Unlike many schools, Berwick British School had no difficulty in recruiting suitable candidates for apprenticeship, and in 1892 the Managers were able to impose qualifications without which no candidate would be considered eligible; all had to have passed the 5th and 6th Standards at the British School, and at least one examination in Music and in Drawing.

A most important factor in the success of the British School in educating its pupils and in training its pupil teachers, was Mr. Willits' ability to recruit and retain the services of able teachers. The Managers and subscribers gave him their wholehearted support in providing the money which was needed, and by 1902, with an average attendance of over 300 pupils, they employed a staff of fourteen: besides Mr. Willits, there were three certificated teachers, four teachers qualified by apprenticeship, and six pupil teachers. The staff/pupil ratio was far superior, for example, to St. Mary's

National School which had only eight staff for a similar number of pupils, and must have provided an exceptionally pleasant teaching environment. The personality of the Headmaster, however, is always of paramount importance and Mr. Willits was able to inspire the loyalty of his teachers to their school and to awake in them a desire to extend the depth and scope of their own knowledge. The best example of this is to be found in the career of Mr. Willits' senior assistant, Mr. George Stewart. He was a pupil teacher at the British School from 1876 until 1880 when he won a First Class Queen's Scholarship. Instead of entering Training College, he remained in Berwick as an assistant and in 1884 gained his Certificate by examination. In October 1886 he went to Edinburgh to take a Drawing Examination, and in January 1891 passed his Matriculation Examination in the First Division; later that year, in July, he attended an Agricultural Class in the Durham College of Science, and in November he accompanied Mr. Willits to Technical Classes for teachers, arranged by Northumberland County Council, which were held on Saturdays in Newcastle. The managers were very appreciative of his work, and his salary rose from £40 in 1881 to £120 by 1902, together with occasional bonuses and, after 1899, the use of the former Mistress' house free of rent or other charges; they also permitted him to use the school for evening continuation classes

after 1897.

Besides their routine work on finance, salaries and staffing, the Committee of Managers were responsible for several important changes in the 1890s. Following the Education Act of 1891 they resolved to accept the ten shillings fee grant per child on the average attendance, and agreed upon the following scale of fees:

Infants - free

Standards I - III - 2d. per week

Standards IV - VII - 4d. per week.

On their instructions a Penny Bank was opened at the school in January 1892. In October 1893 they discussed plans for building a new cloakroom for the boys, and the work was completed in 1894 at a cost of just under £60. (1)

From 1881 to 1902 the children received many holidays and treats; besides the annual Sunday School treats, there were many special holidays to mark examination successes, the 1887 Jubilee Celebrations, a Royal Wedding in 1893, the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations in 1897, and Barnum and Bailey's Show in 1899. The events of the Boer War were followed attentively, as they involved many old pupils of the school; in May 1901 a half-holiday was given for the return of the Volunteers from South Africa,

1 Managers' Minute Book; letter sent to Education

Department in January 1894 in P.R.O. Ed. 21/13860.

as seventy five per cent of those who returned had attended the British School. In 1902 the Coronation of King Edward VII was celebrated with "Coronation" cake and sweets.

From the Managers' Minutes and the Log Books can be gained an impression of a happy, successful and flourishing school, but above all, these records are not the story of a school, but the story of a man, Mr. Henry Willits. He was strong-minded, strict and kind, and served in inconspicuous ways: when a severe storm struck in October 1881 he persuaded some children from the country to stay with friends in Berwick, paid the train fares of those who lived near railway stations, and kept two overnight at his own house. In November and December 1892 when a series of new school cleaners were having difficulty in managing their work, Mr. Willits went into school himself at 7 o'clock every morning to light the stoves to have the rooms warm for his pupils. Accidents to any child grieved him, and he and his family had great personal sorrow, when two of his sons died, the first in 1885, the second in 1890. Any help which he could offer was given generously: by April 1890, when the Committee resolved to make him accept a refund, he had given £10 10s. over the years for the school fees of children whose parents were unable to pay.

His kindly interest in his pupils did not end when

they left the British School, and he greatly valued their visits and the many cards which came at Christmas. In 1896 the Managers presented him with an Illuminated Address to celebrate his twenty-five years as Master, but he was particularly touched by the thoughtfulness of his old scholars, some of whom had been among his earliest pupils, who met in their old schoolroom to give him an inscribed gold watch and chain to mark this occasion.

The success of Mr. Willits, and of the men and women who had preceded him, deserved the highest praise; it was their devotion, industry and warmth of character that forged an educational pattern which combined the ideals of the British Society with the needs of the people of Berwick. Nevertheless the plans of the founders and the efforts of the Managers and teachers could not alone guarantee the desired result. Perhaps the real reason for the success of the British School lay in the realms of chance. Its site, its size, the subjects offered, the abilities of its Managers and its teachers, the amount of money available, all played a part in creating and meeting the demand for a liberal, Nonconformist education. The achievement of a perfect balance among so many variable factors cannot be attributed to any specific plan or effort; instead the British School grew with apparent ease, always a success, always fulfilling a need exactly and properly, a fortunate school.

e) The Tweedmouth and Berwick English Presbyterian Schools

The first Presbyterian School to be established in Tweedmouth was begun in about 1825. It was founded by the Congregation of the Church of Scotland there, soon after they saw the success of the teaching provided by the Perpetual Curate of Tweedmouth, Rev. John Leach, from 1824; Mr. Leach's venture attracted the notice of the Diocesan authorities, and so the Presbyterians, "as soon as they saw the Bishop & Archdeacon use their exertions in establishing a school here, also erected a school room in the Parish in which from 50 to 70 children are instructed according to the Presbyterian principles & it is liberally supported by a Mr. Buchan, a Scotch gentleman, & from other Presbyterian Institutions." (1)

A similar small congregational day school was also founded in Berwick by the members of the Low Meeting at some time prior to 1843. In that year part of the congregation of Tweedmouth Presbyterian Church, and the Minister and the majority of the members of Berwick Low Meeting broke away from the remainder as a result of the

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1 Letter from Mr. Leach to the National Society, 5th October 1830 (National Society file on Tweedmouth National School). The Mr. Buchan mentioned is probably the same as the Mr. Buchan who later helped to found Spittal British School.

## Disruption in the Church of Scotland.

In 1846 the new Tweedmouth English Presbyterian Congregation, composed of the seceders from the Church of Scotland, built a chapel in Tweedmouth, below which was a schoolroom. The Berwick Minister and his congregation, after their secession, held the Low Meeting House in Hide Hill during nine years of legal argument, eventually moving in 1852 to Bankhill Church, next to the Corporation Academy. Their school was in no way altered as they had always hired a schoolroom in the town.

No details of the Tweedmouth School at this period have survived, but the Bankhill Session Minutes from 1845 and the Deacons' Court Minutes from 1846 provide considerable information on the Berwick School. (1) It is probable that the two schools resembled one another fairly closely.

In 1846 the teacher at the Berwick School was Mr. John Veitch, very probably the former English Grammar Master of the Academy from 1818 to 1845; his salary was not specified, but he had the assistance for three hours each day of the catechist or "home missionary" who had been appointed in 1846 at £25 per annum. Fees were charged on

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1 The chief source for the Berwick School is K.G. White, Bankhill Church, Berwick upon Tweed, 1835-1960 (1960), 13-14, a brief but scholarly account based upon local manuscript sources.

two scales, and according to the subjects studied; the weekly fees for members of the congregation were 1d., 2d. and 3d. for Reading, Writing and Arithmetic respectively, 2d., 3d. and 4d. for those not belonging to the congregation; later these charges were each raised by 1d. In 1848 there were 95 pupils on the roll, with an average weekly attendance of 85, and the average weekly income from fees was 18s. 3d. The average attendance for the twenty-five weeks preceding February 1850 was 90, 70 boys and 20 girls, of whom 29 belonged to the congregation and 61 did not; an assistant teacher was being employed at 3s. 6d. per week. The Presbytery Committee, considering the attendance figures, "regretted to learn that more of those connected with the congregation have not availed themselves of so excellent an opportunity of having their children educated." The school was at this time in a highly efficient state and the Minister and congregation praised Mr. Veitch warmly for his "zeal and success".

By 1855, however, the good relationship between Mr. Veitch and his employers had deteriorated, and he alleged that the school was his own private school. In August 1855 therefore the Presbytery instructed the Session to dissolve their connection with Mr. Veitch, remove their maps and other property, and establish another school.

This was evidently done, and the new school, under a

certificated teacher, was placed under Government Inspection. The first official mention of it appeared in the Committee of Council Minutes, 1857-8, and this entry revealed that its annual inspection was to be in July and that it had received £3 15s. in grants to certificated teachers and £3 12s. in capitation grants; the teacher was Mr. David Gourlay who possessed a Class 3 Division 3 Certificate. (1) A year later further grants of £15 for a certificated teacher, and £11 9s. capitation grant were made, (2) bringing the total grant for two years to £33 16s.

No further grant was made, nor did Mr. Brodie, H.M.I. for the British and Presbyterian Schools, report on it in 1859, although he visited every other in Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal. (3) After the opening of the undenominational Berwick British Schools in 1859 the need for a separate congregational school in the Borough disappeared, and it seems that the school declined from that time, although the Deacons' Court did not close it finally until 1867.

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1 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes, 1857-8, 154 & 881.

2 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes, 1858-9, 621.

3 Committee of Council Reports. Tabulated Reports, 1859-60,

and Reports, 1860-1 to 1867-8. In the 1867-8 Report beside the name of the school appear the words "school closed".

Of the Tweedmouth English Presbyterian School no detail has survived from this period, apart from the fact of its foundation and the information that a schoolroom was built under the new chapel. It cannot even be proved to have been in continuous existence, and indeed there is a strong probability that the school closed at some time between the Disruption of 1843 and the building of the new schoolroom.

The first official record of its existence after this date was in 1859; Mr. Brodie, H.M.I., inspected the school on 4th November in that year and found there one master teaching a mixed school of 21 boys and 14 girls. He wrote, "This school is built under the Presbyterian chapel. Except that it is somewhat dark, the room is very fairly suitable. The arrangement of the desks should be altered, and more added. There are no offices, but there is room to build some. More playground cannot be had. The present master took charge of the school on 3 Oct. 1859, and has succeeded in raising the attendance from 10 (the number with which he started) to a weekly average of 40. More pupils are daily flocking in, the master cannot, therefore, arrange the classes satisfactorily at present. The discipline is good, and the instruction on the whole pretty fair." (1)

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1 Committee of Council Reports. Tabulated Reports, 1859-60, 10.

Although just across the river from Berwick, Tweedmouth was still at this time very much a distinct community, and in this fact probably lies the chief reason for the school's continued existence in the face of the competition of the Berwick British School. The shortage of places in Berwick, however, must also have contributed to the recognition of the need for an alternative source of education for the Presbyterian communities.

From 1865 a much more detailed account of the school's history can be written, as from that year the Log Books have survived. (1) The master at that time was Mr. Henry Keir; newly qualified and without assistance, he had sole charge of, on average, 76 pupils, (2) in a schoolroom measuring thirty-six feet by nineteen feet and twelve feet high, and a classroom sixteen feet by sixteen feet and eleven feet high. He had evidently been appointed since March 1864, following a teacher who left behind little accurate information, for in the 1865 Report the Inspector wrote, "The master being quite ignorant as to the standards in which the children were (respectively) examined last year, resorted to the plan of asking every

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1 Unless otherwise stated, all the following information is to be found in the Tweedmouth English Presbyterian School Log Books, 1865-84 and 1884-1906.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1865-6, 568.

child. But as probably some children forgot, and some never knew, I believe a comparison of the Examination Schedules will show that there are some errors in the Schedule now filled up. During the last year the Girls have learnt Needlework only during (the last) two or three months." In view of the very moderate discipline, the low attainments, and the failure of the Managers to build proper offices, no grant was awarded in either 1864 or 1865.

Despite the urgent need to improve the elementary work, and Mr. Keir's task also of teaching Biblical History, Psalms, and the Shorter Catechism, for the annual Presbytery Examination, the Managers did not provide any assistance until September 1865; they then appointed a Sewing Mistress, but in October reduced her teaching to eight hours per week.

The children were also allowed rather a high number of holidays for purposes which were far from educational; in May 1865, for example, two half-holidays were given, one for a circus, the other "for the purpose of viewing a sham fight &c. on recommendation of the Mayor of Berwick"; they also were given a whole week's holiday to celebrate Tweedmouth Feast in July.

Mr. Keir evidently tried hard to raise the standard of work, however, setting homework and regular examinations, and in February 1866 introducing medals for Classes 3, 4 and 5, which aroused much eagerness in his pupils. The

Government Report, however, found little improvement and stated, "The Order and Discipline are pretty good, but the attainments of the children are very low, except in Reading. I find from the Teacher that one whole class has been without slates until ten or twelve days ago, when he himself purchased some. It is impossible under such circumstances for the School to be properly worked. The number presented for examination bears a very poor proportion to the average for the year. The Books are not well graduated, being too hard in the lower classes." No offices having been provided, the grant was again withheld, and, in view of the school's general condition, Mr. Keir's certificate could not be issued on this occasion.

Early in May 1866 Mr. Keir left, and in his place came Mr. Samuel Halliday, a probationer from Edinburgh Training College. Apart from strengthening the discipline and substituting detention for corporal punishment, he did little and his Log Book entries often read "Usual Progress" or "Nothing worthy of remark". He stayed at Tweedmouth for only six months.

His successor, in November 1866, was Mr. Henry Renton, again a newly certificated teacher, whose appointment was not made permanent until January 1867. He favoured flogging, and was not a success with the Government Inspector, Mr. Oakeley, who wrote in 1867, "The attainments

of the Children are very low, and the state of the School is most unsatisfactory." Again he criticised the lack of offices, and also the fact that since Mr. Renton's arrival, no Sewing had been taught. Although some of the faults could be attributed to staff changes, he clearly felt grave doubts of Mr. Renton's fitness for his post and wrote, "Before recognising Mr. Renton as Teacher of your school, my Lords direct me to inquire whether the Managers received satisfactory testimonials on his behalf from the Managers of his late school Holy Island." No grant was made and on 8th May Mr. Renton decided to give the Managers a month's notice; to his disgust they ordered him to leave in a fortnight.

The next master, Mr. James Keith, was rather older, being twenty-four years of age, and had a Class 3, Division 3 Certificate from Edinburgh Training College. He stayed for just over a year, from May 1867 to July 1868, but won for his school its first Government grant in 1868. Mr. Oakeley, H.M.I., reported, "The numbers have increased and some improvements have taken place in other respects. The attainments of the children are still however low, and the number of failures was large, especially in Arithmetic." On this result the grant was reduced by one tenth, but still brought the welcome sum of £32 15s. 11d. (1)

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1 Committee of Council Report, 1868-9, 586.

Mr. Keith applied himself to his duties with considerable energy; he increased the attendance steadily, and reorganised the timetable several times. He re-introduced Sewing, first under Miss Hamilton, then Miss Dumble, and secured more time for it by adding an extra hour to each school day from May 1868. He opened an evening class in October 1867. In only one respect did he anger the Managers: he had a careless attitude towards official records, and often his Log Book entries read "O.P.", an abbreviation meaning "Ordinary Progress"; at the foot of a page showing many of these initials was written, "This style of making Entries herein objected to by Geo. Hamilton, Manager." Mr. Keith thereafter was more careful, but often no more informative, and many of his entries read "Ordinary Progress", or "Usual Progress".

His successor, Mr. Clement Hutton, arrived in Tweedmouth in August 1868 and stayed for an unusually long period of more than three years. He was a certificated master, though still in his probationary period, and had taught previously at Falstone British School at Hexham. Fortunately he was married, for Miss Dumble left soon after he arrived; Mrs. Hutton then assisted with the Sewing and the Junior Classes until August 1869 when Miss Dumble returned.

This period saw many changes in the school. When Mr. Hutton arrived he found only 36 pupils present, but by

November 1869 an attendance of 85 was recorded, despite the fact that some pupils had left earlier that year to attend the new Tweedmouth National School. One reason for this progress was undoubtedly Mr. Hutton's enthusiasm for subjects never previously taught there and for new methods, although the wisdom of widening the curriculum while the elementary work was so imperfect may be questioned. In August 1868 he introduced Drawing, and obtained a grant of aid by examples of £1 15s. 5¼d. from the Department of Science and Art; (1) at first the children drew on slates, and only later were allowed to use paper, for, as Mr. Hutton wrote in November 1870, "Lines very good, but made too bright at first, and the paper much ruffled in rubbing out." Soon after his arrival he also introduced marching in time to the singing, and improved the Mental Arithmetic of the juniors by using a ball-frame.

His first Government Report in March 1869 earned a full grant with no reduction, but Mr. Oakeley was critical of both the Arithmetic and the Geography. On an average attendance of 68, this brought a grant of £23 19s., and Mr. Hutton also earned a further £3 11s. 8d. for his evening class which averaged 10 students. (2)

1 Department of Science and Art, Sixteenth Report, 1868 (1869), 261.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1869-70, 629.

Great efforts were made during the year to improve the work, and the 1870 Report was the best so far achieved, stating that "the children passed on the whole fairly ...."

This so encouraged Mr. Hutton that on 13th May 1870 he wrote, "Commenced a class of Practical Geometry and Latin Class." The Latin did not prove a success, nor was Geometry mentioned again after July 1870. Despite these experiments the 1871 Report again recorded an improvement and suggested that some teaching assistance was desirable.

The Managers had meanwhile done all in their power to assist their schoolmaster. During the Christmas holidays of 1868-9 they had ordered alterations to the windows to improve the light, and in 1869 both a clock and a school bell were provided, and a gas stove was installed to heat the classroom. They also hired a harmonium for six months, but it had to be returned in February 1870. In June 1871 they appointed a girl monitor, Isabella Carr, who became the school's first pupil teacher.

Despite the extra work required of them, the children continued to enjoy a reasonable number of holidays and treats. The school closed for circuses, Berwick Fair, Berwick Regatta, and, in 1871, for the marriage of H.R.H. Princess Louisa to the Marquis of Lorne. Visits from Managers were frequent, to supervise both the academic work and the Scripture for the annual Presbytery

Examinations, but sometimes the school had unusual guests; in July 1869, for example, a blind boy demonstrated his ability to read from the Bible and to work sums in Practice and Proportion, and later that year a gentleman brought a Magic-Lantern show to school. In September 1870 they also received two visits from a Mr. McCourt who was described as a "Lecturer on Popery".

In October 1871 Mr. Hutton left Tweedmouth, and in his place the Managers appointed Mr. William Mitchell, from Fosseyway Free Church School, Kinross; he had gained a Third Class Certificate from Edinburgh Training College, and had had three years' teaching experience. He was very critical of his new school, describing his pupils as backward and wild, and grumbling about the parents who, he said, had "a bad habit of shifting about their children from school to school, only remaining a few weeks at each." Despite this, he decided to introduce a new subject, Science, almost immediately after he arrived.

The main fault, however, seems to have lain with Mr. Mitchell, not with the school. Under Mr. Hutton the Government Reports had shown a steady improvement, and Mr. Mitchell, with Miss Carr's help, was expected to sustain this. Instead the 1872 Report brought criticisms of untidiness and a forty-one per cent failure, resulting in a one-tenth reduction of the grant; a year later the

result was worse, with a two-tenths reduction, and the average attendance had fallen from 79 in 1871 to 50 in 1873, which, with the evening school of 12 pupils, brought the meagre grant of £22 4s. 5d. (1)

Mr. Mitchell also had trouble with an evening school held in the winter of 1872-3; he expelled one boy for whistling, and eventually removed all the difficult pupils, but there was continued annoyance which he was powerless to suppress. Much of it seems to have been childish teasing of an unpopular man; in January 1873, for example, he wrote, "Snow having fallen, we were much annoyed at the evening school, until Friday, when a policeman appeared."

After less than two years, Mr. Mitchell left for another appointment far from Berwick, and was replaced in May 1873 by a better qualified, though much less experienced, man, Mr. Daniel McKenzie; he too had trained at the Edinburgh Training College, gaining a Second Class Certificate, but he was only twenty years old and had taught in Halifax for only three months. Finding the school in a miserable condition, he determined to improve it as quickly as possible, and by the Inspection of March 1874 the children were graded as "moderate", an improvement

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1 Committee of Council Reports, 1871-2, 318, and 1873-4, 391.

on the last year.

Perhaps Mr. McKenzie was too much encouraged by this Report, for in May he began classes in both French and Euclid outside school hours and continued them that winter in addition to his usual evening school. He also extended the school day by an hour to make more time for extra Arithmetic. Admirable though this effort was, so much diversification harmed the elementary work and the 1875 Report was bad, the main faults being in the Spelling and Arithmetic; the Inspector also said that two new songs a year were not sufficient. The grant was reduced by one-tenth and the issue of Mr. McKenzie's certificate was deferred.

Disappointed by this result, Mr. McKenzie redoubled his efforts. He taught several new songs, closed the Euclid Class in October, but continued the French Class which was making very satisfactory progress; one of the Managers, Mr. Hamilton, came occasionally to help with the evening class. The children still enjoyed occasional holidays, and for the first time had a Christmas party, but they were made to work as hard as they were able. The reward came in March 1876, when Mr. Hunter reported, "The children passed an examination which was nearly fair. This is a great advance on previous years." The Singing was cheerful and animated, the Order fairly good, and the Needlework very fair. With an increased

average attendance of 74 in the day school and 20 in the evening school, this earned a grant of £51 2s. 4d. (1)

If the English Presbyterian School were to survive, a high attendance to bring in a substantial fee income, and a high grant were absolutely essential, as the accounts quoted in the 1876 Return show clearly: (2)

Income: Voluntary contributions	£14	0	4
School pence	48	12	11
Government grant 1874-5	38	5	11
	<hr/>		
	100	19	2
	<hr/>		
Expenditure: Salaries	£94	8	10
Books & apparatus		9	0
Miscellaneous		7	6 10
	<hr/>		
	102	4	8
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The higher grant of £51 2s. 4d. was encouraging, but this time Mr. McKenzie did not become over-confident. Instead he worked harder than ever, and despite a change of Sewing Mistress when Miss Dumble, now Mrs. Young, retired and was replaced by her sister, Miss Agnes Dumble, the 1877 Report was a great success. The Inspector for that year, Mr. Frederick B. de Sansmarez, H.M.I., was very patient with the children during the examination and brought forth their best efforts; they passed a

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1 Committee of Council Report, 1876-7, 846.

2 Return showing ... for each Public Elementary School ... the average Number of Scholars in Attendance ... 1876 (1877), 206-7.

"very fairly good" examination in the elementary subjects and were fair to good in Poetry, Dictation, Composition, Geography, History, Grammar, Singing and Needlework; the Order was good, and Miss Carr passed her examination to conclude her apprenticeship successfully. The average attendance having risen to 87, this Report brought the school its highest ever grant of £63 14s. 6d. (1)

In June Mr. McKenzie resumed his French Class and also began teaching Drawing to a few boys who were keen to learn. The general work of the school continued smoothly, the only difficulty being in finding a suitable new pupil teacher to replace Miss Carr. The condition of the school when Mr. McKenzie resigned in November 1877 was very satisfactory, but the choice of his successor, Mr. Hugh Rose Rae, was a disastrous mistake. On paper qualifications he seemed very suitable, having gained his certificate at Edinburgh Training College in 1873.

Just as Mr. Hutton's work in 1868-71 had been wasted by Mr. Mitchell, so Mr. McKenzie's work was spoiled by Mr. Rae. His first comments on the school were unpleasant and rather sarcastic: he found the children were "fairly used to work, but not much accustomed to think . Manners are anything but refined." He soon seemed quite happy with

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1 Committee of Council Report, 1877-8, 787.

the progress he was making, but his pleasure was not shared by the Government Inspector in 1878; the children passed "a very bad examination indeed", the Arithmetic was "deplorably bad throughout the school" with ninety per cent failing, the Spelling and Composition were bad, and the Grammar, History, and Geography were all total failures; only the Order, the Singing and Needlework were fair, and both candidates for pupil-teachership failed their examination. The very meagre grant left was reduced by one-tenth, and on an average attendance of 83, only four fewer than in 1877, the grant fell from £63 14s. 6d. to £21 10s. 2d. (1)

Mr. Rae left almost immediately, and in his place the Managers appointed Mr. Joseph Dilworth who possessed a Second Class Certificate. He taught at Tweedmouth for fourteen months, from May 1878 to July 1879, and achieved a very slight improvement. The 1879 Report was "very bad" but added, "These results, bad as they are, show an improvement upon last year. The new Master has had but poor assistance, but has done something." One of the candidates, Isabella Patterson, passed her examination. The Inspector found the ventilation defective, and a leak of gas in the classroom, and these faults together with

the bad results caused a reduction of one-tenth in the grant.

After so many staff changes and the deterioration in the standard of work since 1877, the Managers were fortunate in finding at last a master prepared to give a long period of service to the children of Tweedmouth: he was Mr. David Hobbs, who possessed a Second Class Certificate, and who taught there from August 1879 until just before his death in 1902.

His first Report in 1880 was bad, and criticised particularly a lack of discipline, but by 1881 the school was much improved. From that year onwards the Government Reports were generally very fair and in two years, 1889 and 1895, earned the grade "very fairly good". Although never a very successful school, its results under Mr. Hobbs were sound and consistent, and suggestions made by the Inspectors were adopted whenever possible.

In 1885, for example, the Inspector had commented that the staff was very small, consisting only of Mr. Hobbs and his daughter Ann, then in her first year as a pupil teacher. The various Sewing teachers had only attended for their own lessons, except for one very short period from September 1880 until March 1881 when Miss Margaret Robertson had taught both Sewing and the Infant work, so it was decided in February 1886 to act on the suggestion and appoint Miss Mary Gray of Spittal as full-time

Infant and Sewing Mistress at a salary of £20 per annum.

The next Report, in 1886, suggested that the Infants should receive Object Lessons, and instruction in Form and Colour, so illustrations and equipment were provided within a fortnight. The same Report also pointed out that if the old desks were replaced by light, modern desks, this would lessen the problem of overcrowding; new desks were ordered and the installation was completed during the holidays so that in September the classes could be rearranged. Sometimes the delay was much longer: the desirability of having Kindergarten lessons was advocated first in 1891, and these were not introduced until the school year 1895-6. Other minor alterations in the 1890s included improving the lighting and heating, and the building of new offices in 1894, all at the suggestion of Inspectors. (1)

The only changes in the curriculum not suggested by the Inspectorate, were the introduction of Drawing in 1891 and Cookery in 1898. After 1892 Drawing became the third of the school's annual examinations, but unlike the Government or Presbytery Examinations, involved only the boys; the performance again was very consistent, the 35 to 40 pupils always earning the mark "Good" and a grant of about £2 15s. (2) The Cookery lessons were for

1 P.R.O. Ed. 21/13859.

2 Department of Science and Art, Fortieth to Forty-sixth Reports, 1892-8.

the girls of Standards IV, V and VI on three half-days per week at St. Cuthbert's Hall, Tweedmouth; these courses, each lasting ten to eleven weeks, were provided in 1898, 1899 and 1900.

As Mr. Hobbs became established in Tweedmouth, the number of his pupils grew steadily, although there were no annual prizegivings, parties, school treats, class medals or similar devices favoured in other schools for securing regular attendance. In 1880 the average attendance was 82, in 1887 it was 120; (1) the official accommodation was only 117, so the Managers took immediate steps to enlarge this to 133 by 1888, (2) though the alterations are unfortunately not described or even mentioned in the Log Book. From this date until the end of the century the average attendance was maintained at between 120 and 130 pupils, and the annual Government grant averaged approximately £93. (3)

To teach the increasing number of pupils the staff was strengthened slightly after 1888. In that year Ann Hobbs completed her apprenticeship and joined her father and Miss Gray on the permanent staff. In June 1890 Miss Gray resigned, but by that year the school had a new pupil

1 Committee of Council Reports, 1880-1 to 1887-8.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1888-9, 619.

3 Committee of Council Reports, 1888-9 to 1899-1900.

teacher, Isabella Shiel; she qualified in 1893, and remained at Tweedmouth, gaining her Teaching Certificate in 1901.

The children received the usual holidays during this period, for Berwick Fair, Tweedmouth Feast and Sunday School outings; during the Boer War several additional victory holidays were declared, as in all the other town schools, and in 1901 the pupils crossed to Berwick to hear the proclamation of King Edward VII from the Town Hall. The usual school routine, however, appears from the Log Book, to have been rather dull; unlike Mr. Peacock at Tweedmouth National School, who was always searching for new ways to enliven his teaching, Mr. Hobbs reveals himself as a conscientious, rather plodding teacher. A typical entry in his Log Book, on 7th June 1889, describes his week's work, "Average reduced this week - attendance very irregular - no particular reason. Progress on the whole, fair - work carefully gone over day by day. Officer [i.e. School Attendance Officer] called on Wednesday. School opened and closed at the usual hours."

In 1902 Mr. Hobbs' health deteriorated considerably; the Report for that year remarked a great want of discipline and in July Mr. Hobbs felt so ill that he decided that he must resign. By then he had served for twenty-three years in Tweedmouth, but he did not live long to enjoy

his retirement, dying suddenly only a month later, in August 1902.

The Tweedmouth English Presbyterian School contrasts sharply with, for example, the Tweedmouth National School or the Berwick British School. They were both conventionally organised along lines approved by the two great societies which determined so much of nineteenth century education, although they differed in the degree of their attachment to religious groups; the National School was very closely tied to Tweedmouth Parish Church, while the British School was undenominational. They were uncommon therefore not in organisation, or in the manner of their establishment, but in the extraordinary excellence of their academic work and in the lively spirit engendered in their school communities. The Presbyterian School on the other hand was a conscientiously instructed, mediocre elementary school, but in its organisation may be found several very unusual features. Founded by a Church of Scotland congregation, it survived the 1843 schism, emerging as an English Presbyterian School, the only one, apart from the short-lived Berwick English Presbyterian School, which taught Nonconformist doctrine in Berwick, Tweedmouth or Spittal. Despite its history, from 1865 at least it turned usually to Scotland for its masters, and ignored the advice available from the British and Foreign School Society. Lacking any

record of the meetings of the Management Committee, the attitudes and reasoning which underlay these decisions cannot be determined and thus the oddities can only be noted, not explained.

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The Nonconformist communities of Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal, in the main members of the various Presbyterian Churches, succeeded admirably in the nineteenth century in their intention to create schools suitable for the education of their children. Their dislike of Guild privilege and of Anglican doctrine created first Kirkwood's Lancasterian School, then Spittal British, then the British Infants' School and finally Berwick British School. Those who desired their own religious teaching were free to send their children to Berwick Presbyterian School, while it existed, or to the Tweedmouth School. This pattern of schools, more varied and more individual than the National Schools in the town, succeeded in meeting almost every need, and at its height in 1889-90 Nonconformist education provided 863 places for children and had the very high average attendance of 737. (1) Even after the closure of the Infants' School, there were 694 places available, of which 596 were usually filled. (2) The teaching was generally sound,

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1 Committee of Council Reports, 1878-9 to 1899-1900.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1899-1900, 187.

although it varied with the abilities of individual teachers; in Berwick British School it was touched with brilliance and attracted to the school children of all social backgrounds as well as of all religious denominations. The support of so many congregations also ensured that the three schools remaining in 1900 enjoyed financial security, particularly as each school, sited separately in Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal, was able to draw on a large catchment area in its own vicinity. In Berwick, for example, the congregations of seven churches supported in 1900 one highly successful British School, while the two Anglican congregations supported five schools, of which only one, St. Mary's, enjoyed real popularity. The Nonconformist schools therefore provided a more sensible and economic educational pattern, within which the aspirations of the congregations supporting them might find fulfilment.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## THE BERWICK ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

From the time of the English Reformation in the sixteenth century Roman Catholics in England suffered restrictions of their freedom, varying in severity according to the disposition of the Sovereign and the political climate of each period.

Threats from the Catholic Powers of Europe early in her reign forced Queen Elizabeth to be watchful for treasonable plots among her Catholic subjects while trying not to alienate those who combined religious loyalty to Rome with a strong patriotism towards England. In the seventeenth century religious differences became entangled with opposing concepts of the origins of monarchy. Charles I's ill-fated attempt at benevolent despotism led to the Civil War and the supremacy of Puritanism, at first under Parliament and then under Cromwell. After Cromwell's death Englishmen welcomed the Restoration of the monarchy, but Charles II trod warily, guarding his personal popularity; he allowed the Church of England to grasp new privileges, while trying cautiously to lessen the severity of the new penal laws which excluded all other groups, both Catholic and nonconformist, from local or national influence.

His brother James II was less circumspect, and his

second marriage, to a Catholic, produced an heir to the throne. Fears of a Catholic monarchy outweighed all arguments favouring the legitimate succession, and the throne passed to James' Protestant daughter Mary, and William of Orange. In order to secure the Protestant succession more firmly, their successor, Queen Anne, assented to an Act which named the Hanoverian line her heirs.

A year after her death, however, the followers of Prince James Edward, son of James II, in 1715 brought civil war again to England; thirty years later, Prince Charles Edward his son, led the 1745 Rebellion. Fears of Catholicism, and of a long religious war which it might bring, greatly troubled public opinion in Hanoverian England, and only towards the end of the century did those fears altogether subside.

Thus for over two centuries Roman Catholics were forced to hide their faith, and often were obliged to give a convincing appearance of conformity. They could not build churches or open schools, and the universities and the professions were closed to them. There were, however, certain powerful Catholic families in England particularly in the North, who, entrenched on their estates were able to hold private Mass, and to educate their children abroad in Jesuit Colleges and Convents,

mainly in France, thus avoiding the worst consequences of the penal laws. When fears of rebellion diminished after 1750, little official notice was taken of such families and the enforcement of the laws lessened considerably.

This comfortable arrangement, however, was shattered by the events which followed the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 and the entry of Britain into the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Instead of English Catholics leaving England quietly to obtain an education in France, French emigrés and their priests fled in great numbers to find sanctuary in England. The Englishman's natural distrust of Catholics was overcome by sympathy for their sufferings at the hands of England's enemies. Homes had to be found for them all over the country, and in addition to any private hospitality in North Northumberland, Berwick Barracks housed over a hundred French emigré priests from the mid 1790s until the Peace of Amiens in 1802.

In such circumstances the penal laws inevitably lapsed, and in 1799 a house situated in a yard off Church Street in Berwick was bought for use as a Mass centre. Thirty years later, following the repeal of the penal laws by Parliament, a new church was built in Ravensdowne in 1829; the Church Street house was

then converted into a school named the St.Cuthbert's Catholic School, and its garden into a playground.(1)

The early history of this school is difficult to trace, but the first official mention of it in Committee of Council Minutes was in 1849, when the Inspector's examination was postponed at the Managers' request.(2) A year later, on 18th December 1850, Mr. T.W.M. Marshall, H.M.I., visited it and found only six pupils present for his examination.(3) The master at that date was a Mr. Wren.(4) In 1851 no report was made, but a grant of £1 13s. 4½d. was allowed towards the purchase of books and maps.(5)

1. Information on the foundation of the school was kindly provided by Rev. O. Curry of Berwick and Rev. W. Nicholson of Whittingham.

2 Committee of Council Reports.Minutes, 1848-50, II,532.

3 Committee of Council Reports.Minutes, 1850-1, II,679.

4 Ward's Northumberland and Durham Directory, 1850,350b.

5 Committee of Council Reports.Minutes, 1851-2, I, 162.

By this date the school was considerably larger than Mr. Marshall's visit indicated, and in 1851 had 64 pupils, 36 boys and 28 girls.(1) It had only an uncertificated teacher and no Pupil Teacher in this period, and so earned no further grants until 1858.(2) Evidently its attendance was increasing steadily at this time, for Mr. S.N. Stokes, H.M.I., who visited the school on 23rd.March 1854 found it had an average attendance of 121 pupils; he reported, "The school premises need repair, but the clergyman's means are too limited to meet any additional outlay. The school is conducted by a master of pleasing manner, and attended by a large number of poor children."(3) Possibly he was referring to Mr. James Kelly, who is known to have been teaching there in 1855.(4)

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1 Census of Great Britain. Education. England and Wales. Report and Tables... (1854), 197.

2 Committee of Council Reports. Minutes, 1852-3 to 1857-8.

3 Committee of Council Reports. Tabulated Reports, 1853-4, 801.

4 William Whellan & Co., History, Topography and Directory of Northumberland (1855), 971.

The expansion of St. Cuthbert's School at this time resulted from the growth of the railway system and the building of the Royal Border Bridge, which was opened by Queen Victoria in 1850. Most of the itinerant labour force employed in this work were Irish Catholics, whose families settled temporarily in Berwick, sending their children to the Catholic School.

In 1858, on 11th October, Mr. J.R. Morell, H.M.I., inspected the school; the average attendance had fallen to 63, of whom 43 were present at his examination. He wrote in his report, "The premises and apparatus are moderate. The master appears to do all in his power, in defiance of great difficulties, to bring the children forward; and he has done much in a short time, especially in making them read."(1) A Capitation Grant of £7 lls. was allowed. (2)

The 1859 grant brought St. Cuthbert's £1 6s. 7¼d. towards the purchase of books and maps, and a Capitation Grant of £5 3s. (3) In 1860 the school obtained for the

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1 Committee of Council Reports. Tabulated Reports, 1858-9, 6.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1858-9, 621.

3 Committee of Council Report, 1859-60, 709.

first time, the services of a certificated teacher, earning from that a grant of £8 15s., and the Capitation Grant of £8 3s. (1) The staff continued to improve, and when Mr. Henry J. Lynch, H.M.I., visited Berwick on 19th June 1861 he examined the work of two Pupil Teachers engaged there, and his report on the school earned it a grant totalling £27 9s. 6d. (2) In the following year he examined only one Pupil Teacher, and the total grant earned for 1862 rose to £39 11s. (3)

In or before 1865 the visiting Inspector had evidently suggested that new furniture and equipment should be provided at an estimated cost of £60; this information was included in a letter written by Rev. Denis Buckley of Berwick on 30th November 1865. His letter also mentioned that the school, which was mission property, contained one schoolroom, measuring thirty-five feet by twenty feet and eleven feet high, and that a certificated master was employed there. Mr. Buckley hoped, however, to have a schoolmistress from Training College to replace the master in January. (4)

1 Committee of Council Report, 1860-1, 670.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1861-2, 191 and 572.

3 Committee of Council Report, 1862-3, 133 and 464.

4 Letter in Catholic Diocesan Archives ( copy provided by Rev. W. Nicholson).

Perhaps the reason for this last change was financial. Schoolmistresses commanded smaller salaries than masters, and the Berwick Catholic School had few funds at its disposal with which to refurnish. In 1865, for example, the grant was only £30 14s. 10d., for a day school of 62 and an evening school of 11 pupils, and in the following year, for 60 day pupils and 18 evening students, it fell to £21 17s. 3d.(1)

After that both the attendance and grant rose slightly, and by 1868, in which year Mr. Lynch reported, "The old building at Berwick-on-Tweed has been refitted and improved", the attendance was 72 and the grant £39 3s. 8d. (2) The improvement continued and in 1869 the grant, for 75 pupils, was £55 14s. 8d.,(3) but unfortunately in the following year the grant was refused and the school was removed from inspection until 1874.(4) For part of that period at least the school was taught by Mrs. Rebecca McGuire, who is known to have been there in 1873.(5)

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1 Committee of Council Reports, 1865-6, 568, and 1866-7, 622.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1868-9, 309 and 584.

3 Committee of Council Report, 1869-70, 627.

4 Committee of Council Reports, 1870-1 to 1873-4.

5 Kelly's Directory of Durham and Northumberland, 1873, 468.

Whatever the reasons for the break may have been, the school had not suffered unduly in the interval, for in 1874 it had an average attendance of 94 pupils, and earned a grant of £56 3s. 4d.; (1) a year later, for 97 pupils, the grant rose to £60 7s. 6d. (2) In 1876 it rose again, to £70 6s. 4d., for an average attendance of 98 pupils, (3) a fortunate increase, for the 1876 Return showed clearly that the school was not financially stable; the accounts for the year read as follows: (4)

Income: Voluntary contributions	£33	5	9
School pence	37	0	7
Government grants 1874-5	60	7	6
	<u>130</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>10</u>
Expenditure: Salaries	£92	19	4
Books and apparatus	11	0	5
Miscellaneous	51	17	11
	<u>155</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>8</u>

As no school could survive for long if its expenditure exceeded its income, means had to be found to increase the Government grant which it could earn. This was done

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- 1 Committee of Council Report, 1874-5, 386.
  - 2 Committee of Council Report, 1875-6, 605.
  - 3 Committee of Council Report, 1876-7, 843.
  - 4 Return showing ... for each Public Elementary School ... the average Number of Scholars in Attendance ... 1876 (1877), 202-3.

in two ways, by increasing the average attendance and by raising the number of examination successes each year, and the story of these efforts may be traced more readily from 1876, from which year the Log Books survive.(1)

In 1876 the school had places for 136 children, taught in a schoolroom measuring thirty-nine feet four inches by twenty feet three inches and ten feet nine and a half inches high, and a classroom twenty feet nine inches by fourteen feet three inches and eight feet three and a half inches high. Only the schoolroom had been mentioned by Rev. Buckley in 1865, so possibly the making of a classroom was part of the alterations then proposed.

The teacher was Miss Annie Conway, a Second Class certificated teacher, assisted by two Pupil Teachers, Dorothy Forster and Mary Woods. Under Miss Conway, who stayed until April 1878, the Government Reports were very fair, and by her last year the average attendance had risen to 128 and the grant to £99 17s. 4d.(2) Her Pupil Teachers were able and well trained, and in 1877 Dorothy Forster won a First Class Queen's Scholarship and took up a place at Liverpool Training College.

1 All the following information is to be found in the Log Book, 1876-1907, unless otherwise stated.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1878-9, 970.

Miss Conway received a great deal of assistance too from the Berwick priest, Rev. James Farrell, who called almost daily to supervise progress, and who saw to the provision of some new desks, a clothes rack, supplies of books, inkwells, ink, copybooks, pens, wallmaps and Atlases. In the Log Book he and his successors were always referred to as "the Reverend Manager".

The Catholic authorities exercised considerable supervision over the school, both through the Reverend Manager, the annual Religious Examination by the Diocesan Inspector, and by visits of other clergymen; in particular, in both 1876 and 1877 His Lordship the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle called to see for himself the progress being made at the school.

Prizes were awarded to pupils for attendance and diligence, and this incentive, together with the close supervision by Rev. Farrell, made truancy a very rare problem. The children also had more occasional holidays than did the pupils of other schools, as they enjoyed both the usual school treats and town holidays and also the special religious feast days of their own Church.

Despite her success Miss Conway was dismissed by Mr. Farrell in April 1878 for insubordination, and in her place was appointed Miss Elizabeth Forster, who held a Second Class First Division Certificate.

Although helped by an Assistant Teacher, Miss Winny Forster, from May 1878, Miss Elizabeth Forster taught in Berwick only until January 1879 when her health forced her to resign. During her term of office the older children enjoyed a trip to Norham Castle, the Infants were given a treat, and Mary Woods won a First Class Queen's Scholarship and left for Liverpool Training College. Although most of the Log Book entries were businesslike and ordinary, the poverty of the greater part of the Catholic congregation occasionally is made apparent; one such entry occurs in the week ended 13th September 1878, "Various articles of useful clothing given as prizes to deserving children. A quantity of the clothing made in School by the children".

From January 1879 until May 1880 the school was taught by Miss Elizabeth Langton, a young certificated teacher from Liverpool Training College. The first Inspection after she arrived found the school in a bad state, a result, the Report stated, "easily accounted for by the twofold change of Teachers since the last examination." Unfortunately staffing continued to be a problem: the school had only one first year Pupil Teacher, Mary Cavanagh, at this time, Miss Winny Forster left in May 1879, and Miss Maria Mylod, who succeeded her, was not appointed until July; Miss Mylod was away ill in

November, and on 19th November the following curt entry was made in the Log Book, "Maria Mylod still absent through illness therefore ceases from this date to be assistant. Monitors employed."

The year was enlivened for the pupils by a visit to a panorama of America in October, and in December by a call by Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Jerningham of Longridge Towers, who from this time took a strong and kindly interest in the school; on this occasion Mrs. Jerningham offered a sewing prize for which the girls might compete.

The 1880 Report was again "bad"; no grant was made for the Infants and the grant for the Mixed School was reduced by one tenth. The total remaining was only £44 16s. 5d., (1) and in May Miss Langton resigned.

Under her successor, Miss Agnes Brady, who taught in Berwick from May 1880 to March 1882, the work once again improved and the grant in 1882, on an average attendance of 121, was £73 10s. (2) Her Log Book entries, however, reveal clearly the problems which beset her, problems which arose chiefly from the social circumstances of the children's parents. Many children often paid no

1 Committee of Council Report, 1880-1, 655.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1882-3, 712.

school fees at all, and many of the older children attended irregularly, despite the offer of prizes, whenever their parents were able to get seasonal work; in October 1880, for example, Miss Brady wrote, "The parents absent the children under pretence of attending to the little ones while they are getting in the potatoes, being too poor to pay for a woman to attend to them."

Miss Christina Smith, who followed Miss Brady, had the assistance of two Pupil Teachers, Mary Cavanagh and Catherine Doyle, and the standard of work attained continued to improve; in 1883 it reached "very fairly good", and in 1884, despite the loss of Miss Cavanagh when her apprenticeship ended in the previous year, the result was "good", though the Inspector stressed the need to employ additional staff. Until an assistant could be found two monitors were engaged, then in August 1884 Miss Mary Cavanagh was prevailed upon to return as Assistant Teacher.

By far the most important change in this period was the decision to build an entirely new school. The Church Street premises were only a converted house, used for the school since 1829, and despite the 1865 renovations, were far inferior to the specially designed buildings in which the other town schools were housed.

On 7th February 1883 plans were submitted to the Education Department for approval, (1) and on 7th January 1884 the new school in Walkergate Lane was opened. It comprised a schoolroom fifty one feet by eighteen feet, a classroom seventeen feet by eleven feet, and an Infant room twenty six feet by seventeen feet, all three rooms being thirteen feet high, and it could accommodate 220 pupils.

As always, every effort to encourage attendance had to be made; prizes were awarded for regularity, punctuality and success in the annual Government Examination, the Reverend Manager continued to visit frequently, and in September 1883 the school was again visited by the Bishop. Mr. and Mrs. Jerningham maintained their interest in the children's progress, and in August 1882 invited the whole school to an outing to Longridge Towers.

In September 1884 Miss Smith left, and in her place Miss Mary Teresa Maguire was appointed. She taught in Berwick for almost two years, and achieved fair success. The Government Reports were not quite so good as in previous years, but in 1886, for example, a grade of "very fair", and an average attendance of 120, earned the useful sum of £87 17s. 6d.(2)

1 P.R.O. Ed. 21/13854.

2 Committee of Council Report, 1886-7, 578.

Mr. and Mrs. Jerningham visited the school in March 1885 and gave the children oranges, cakes and money, and in April Major Winter from the Barracks called to see the school; he heard the children sing and left Miss Maguire money with which to buy sweets for them.

Miss Maguire, her staff and all her pupils also enjoyed much help and kindness from the new Reverend Manager, Rev. W. Smythe, who was a long-serving and most popular parish priest in Berwick; in January 1885 he gave the children a tea party, and bought a piano for the school, and in August of that year organised an excursion for the children. Further information about his interest in the school may be found after 1884 in the Church Notice Books; (1) these were small notebooks in which the priest wrote briefly the notices which he planned to read out in church each Sunday evening. They show that Rev. Smythe urged upon all parents the importance of regular attendance if the school were not to close, organised the distribution of clothing to poor children, announced the dates and times of school examinations, and made special collections in aid of school outings.

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1 The Notice Books, 1884-7, 1888-91, 1891-5, 1895-6 and 1896-1900 are preserved in St. Cuthbert's Presbytery, Berwick.

At the back of the first Notice Book, 1884-7, is an "Account for children's dinners", which unfortunately is undated, though presumably contemporary; this account includes "Two dozen spoons 1s. 6d.", "Two doz. basins 3s. Od.", "Milk raisins sugar & meat 2s. 5½d.", "Treacle 2½d.", "Suet 8d.", and "Washing tin & apron 1s. 7d.", from which it would appear that the school or the Church was providing a rudimentary meals service.

In June 1886 the school's only Pupil Teacher, Catherine Doyle, left after completing her apprenticeship satisfactorily, and at the end of term Miss Maguire also departed. After the school reopened Miss Cavanagh took charge temporarily for one week, until the arrival on 23rd August of Miss Jane Wilson the new headmistress.

Miss Wilson's term of office in Berwick was most unsatisfactory. She taught there from August 1886 until March 1888, and although the average attendance in fact rose slightly, the grants were disappointingly low,(1) as both the 1887 and 1888 Government Reports contained many criticisms. In 1887 the Inspector awarded the grade of "fair", but stated that the Handwriting, Spelling, Punctuation and Mental Arithmetic needed to improve, that

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1 Committee of Council Reports, 1887-8, 628, and 1888-9, 616.

the Poetry, Grammar and Geography were all failures, and that the Order and Needlework were both bad; the Standards taught by Miss Cavanagh, however, he found "very fairly good"; the Infants were not sufficiently instructed in the elementary subjects, their Order was bad and their Needlework worthless, and, the Report went on, "None of the other work was satisfactory altho' the Managers had provided apparatus of all kinds for a superior Infants' Class." Miss Cavanagh and the Managers being absolved, responsibility for the school's shortcomings lay squarely upon Miss Wilson.

The next Report was similar, despite the assistance of a new Pupil Teacher, but by the time it arrived Miss Wilson had left Berwick. Her successor, Miss Eliza Carpenter, stayed for only a year, until April 1889. It was a pleasant year for the children: in May 1888 they had a half-holiday for Sanger's Circus; Mrs. Jerningham called on Ascension Day to give each child an orange and a penny, and on 24th of the month it was recorded, "School visited today by the Rev. Fr. Stevenson S.J. and his sister, Mrs. Robertson. The Rev. gentleman brought sweets for the children, and gave twelve pictures for good conduct. He spoke kindly to the children, and during the 10 minutes' recreation taught them how to play Skittles in the playground." In July the children

travelled by train to Velvet Hall, and thence to Longridge Towers to be entertained by Mrs. Jerningham, and at Christmas they were all given sweets and Christmas cards.

Several improvements were made during the year; the staff was strengthened by the appointment of a second Pupil Teacher, a new book cupboard and dumb-bells for Musical Drill were bought, a piano was given to the school and placed in the Infant Room, and the playgrounds, formerly of earth and therefore often muddy, were cemented.

Unfortunately there was no parallel improvement in the academic work. Instead it deteriorated sharply, and the 1889 Report graded the result "bad", criticising almost all the work and also the instruction given to the Pupil Teachers; only Standards I and III which Miss Cavanagh took were found to have been well taught. On an average attendance of 119, the grant earned was only £63 15s. (1)

This Report sadly ended the careers of the two Pupil Teachers; Ellen Finharty, who had completed one year, seems to have left soon after the examination, but Sarah Martin, who had served for two years, left in May, "being informed by the Rev. Manager that she would not be

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1 Committee of Council Report, 1889-90, 624.

required." Meanwhile Miss Carpenter, who was responsible for the school's shortcomings, had resigned in April and left Berwick. In the circumstances it was perhaps wise that no more Pupil Teachers were engaged until 1894, by which year the staff was more stable.

From 1876 to 1889 St. Cuthbert's School had already had eight Headmistresses, and in the year 1889-90 this problem worsened. From April to June 1889 Miss Elizabeth Charlton was in charge, assisted by Miss Cavanagh, and, from May, also by Miss M. Cooper, a certificated assistant, who taught the Infant Class; when Miss Charlton left on 28th June, Miss Cavanagh took over her duties temporarily, then in July Miss Cooper left and Miss Sarah Sutcliffe arrived. After the holidays Miss Cavanagh took charge again until in September Miss A. Galley came as temporary Headmistress. She stayed for almost two months, until on 28th October a permanent Headmistress, Miss Mary T. Eyre, took up her post.

Miss Eyre taught in Berwick from October 1889 until March 1892, and under her guidance the work gradually improved again; the Report of 1892 was "on the whole good", "and, considering their social surroundings, the children presented a neat and tidy appearance." The grant for that year, on an average attendance of 108, was £82 9s. (1)

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1 Committee of Council Report, 1892-3, 774.

To help Miss Eyre in her task, the staff had been increased in January 1890 to three assistants, with the appointment of Miss M.H. Davidson, a certificated teacher. Unfortunately, however, a stable, permanent staff was not yet created; the Infant Class was under Miss Sutcliffe until August 1890, under Miss Kelly from September 1890 until July 1891, and under Miss Brennan from September 1891; the new certificated assistant Miss Davidson stayed only until November 1890 when she left the town without telling anyone of her plans, her successor, Miss Annie S. Drayton, served from January to December 1891, and she was followed by Miss Elizabeth Thornton. The only thoroughly reliable and efficient assistant at this time was Miss Cavanagh.

Despite these staffing difficulties, and holidays for tea parties, lantern slides and outings to Longridge, the work improved steadily. In 1891, for the first time, Drawing was introduced as an additional subject for the boys; thirty-nine were taught, and in the 1892 examination they gained the mark "Good" and a grant of £2 2s. 8d.<sup>(1)</sup> Miss Eyre had help in her final preparations for this examination, as in February the boys were given a special lesson by Mr. Wallace, master of the Berwick School of Art,

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1 Department of Science and Art, Fortieth Report, 1892, Supplement, 181.

who was pleased with what he saw of their work.

Only one major change took place in this period: in September 1891, following the Elementary Education Act, free education was provided for all pupils; unlike other schools in the town, both National and British, the Catholic School abolished all fees in all Standards. This did, of course, mean that the school depended, after that year, for its income, apart from any voluntary contributions, entirely upon the amount of Government grant which it could earn.

Miss Eyre's successor in March 1892 was Miss Elizabeth Thornton, apparently a promotion of the assistant who had come to the school two months earlier. The Elizabeth Thornton who was assistant was not described as certificated, whereas the Elizabeth Thornton who was Headmistress was a certificated teacher. Very possibly Miss Thornton only gained her certificate after arriving in Berwick.

Miss Thornton remained as Headmistress only until July 1893, but proved a worthy successor to Miss Eyre. The 1893 Report was very fair, and described the Order and general arrangement as "excellently good". Despite two changes of Infant Mistress, in August 1892 when Miss Brennan resigned, and in September when Miss Jane McIlvaney left Berwick without warning, the new teacher, Miss Eleanor Greene, had the Infant classes in a very fair

state. The total grant for the year was £93 11s. 6d.,(1) and a further sum of £3 8s. was earned by the mark of "Excellent" in the 1893 Drawing Examination.(2)

In March and April 1892 the school work was disrupted to some extent by alterations to the building; the wall between the two classrooms was demolished to make a good sized room for Standards II and III, and the centre window of the main schoolroom was altered so as to admit more light.

The Log Book in Miss Thornton's time also includes the timetables which she drew up for both the Mixed School and the Infants, as follows:

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1 Committee of Council Report, 1893-4, 928.

2 Department of Science and Art, Forty First Report, 1893, Supplement, 199.

Mixed School

	Standards V, VI, VII	Standard IV	Standard III	Standard II	Standard I
9.30			School opens		
9.30- 9.45		Home lessons corrected			
9.45- 9.50		Prayers			
9.50- 9.55		Registration			
9.55-10.10	Mental Arithmetic	Mental Arithmetic	Mental Arithmetic	Mental Arithmetic	Recitation or Mental Arithmetic
10.10-10.50	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Reading
10.50-11.00		Playtime			
11.00-11.30	Reading & Recitation	Prepare Dictation or Recitation.	Reading	Dictation	Arithmetic
11.30-12.00	Composition	Reading & Recitation	Dictation	Reading	Transcription
12.00-12.25		Catechism			

cont'd

2.00- 2.20			Scripture			
2.20- 2.25			Registration			
2.25- 3.20	Monday, Wednesday, Friday:	all girls have Sewing,		all boys Drawing		
	Tuesday, Thursday:	History and Geography				
3.20- 3.25			Playtime			
3.25- 4.00	Dictation or Recitation	Dictation	Writing	Writing		Reading
4.00- 4.25	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday:					
	Writing	Writing	Recitation or Arithmetic	Reading & Recitation		Writing
	Wednesday & Friday:					
4.25			Drill or Singing for all Prayers & dismissal			

Infant Classes

	Class I	Class II	Class III
9.30-10.00		Catechism	
10.00-10.15		Singing or Recitation	
10.15-10.25		Class Rolls	
10.25-10.40		Playtime or, if wet, Singing and Marching	
10.40-11.05	Sums	Figures	Letters or Counting
11.05-11.30	Reading	Reading	Writing
11.30-12.00		Object lesson. Form or Colour	
12.00		Dismissal	
2.00- 2.20		Prayers	
2.20- 2.30		Class Rolls	
2.30- 3.00	Mon., Wed., Fri: Tues., Thurs:	Sewing & Drawing Kindergarten	Drill
3.00- 3.15		Play	
3.15- 3.30	Writing	Writing	Letters or Counting
3.30- 4.00	Mon., Wed., Fri: Tues., Thurs:	Reading, Singing or Recitation Musical Drill	
4.00		Dismissal	

As usual the children enjoyed holidays and their annual trip, and Mrs. Jerningham and the Reverend Manager maintained a close interest in the school's progress. The life was varied and the children worked hard, so that when Miss Thornton left the new Headmistress, Miss Anne Power, found the school in a very satisfactory state.

This she maintained very well, with the assistance of Miss Cavanagh and Miss Greene, and the 1894 Report was generally fairly good; with an average attendance of 129, the grant for the first time was over £100, to be exact, £101 15s. (1) The Drawing Report was "Good", earning a grant of £2 17s. (2)

Rev. Smythe continued to take a very close personal interest in the school, and, as the Church Notice Books show, to report on the progress made there to his congregation; at the same time he exhorted parents to send their children regularly and to support in every way the efforts of the schoolteachers. He often examined the children's work himself, and after a particularly thorough test in October 1893 sent prizes in the form

1 Committee of Council Report, 1894-5, 958.

2 Department of Science and Art, Forty Second Report, 1894, Supplement, 340.

of sweets for the Infants and older girls and footballs for the boys.

Rev. Stevenson S.J. also maintained his contact with the school and in January 1894 sent Miss Power a box of story books and pictures for the children, which were given as prizes.

Two new Pupil Teachers were appointed in 1894, and in April Miss Greene, the Infant Mistress, left. In her place came Miss Lilian Jay, a certificated teacher, and when after an illness in November Miss Power died, Miss Jay became Headmistress.

Miss Jay was the fourteenth headmistress since 1876, and the only one to stay in Berwick for more than three years. She had charge of the school from November 1894 until after 1902, and the consistency and quality of the work therefore improved steadily. The Mixed School was taught by Miss Jay and Miss Cavanagh, the Infants by a succession of teachers, Miss M.E. Jay, Miss A. Hagan, Miss E. Rooney and Miss L. McNemara.

The 1895 Report was "fair", but from that date Inspectors praised the work more warmly; in 1902, for example, the Inspector wrote of the Mixed School, "This school continues to be well disciplined and well taught", and he went on, "The Infants are taught in a cheerful, kind and vigorous manner. They are thoroughly

interested in their lessons and have made very good progress."

The 1895 Drawing Report was "Good", and in 1896, 1897 and 1898 it reached "Excellent" earning an average grant of £3 10s. (1) Drawing was taught only to the boys at St. Cuthbert's. For the girls it might have been expected that Cookery classes would be provided in this period, as in other schools in the town but this was not done. The only important change in the subjects offered came in 1900 when Elementary Science was introduced, though in a limited form; most of the work seems to have been learned from Science Readers, not from experiments. The kind of Drill taught varied slightly, and in 1902 Sergeant Major McKay came to demonstrate Military Drill.

Like all her predecessors Miss Jay had to face the problems of irregular attendance and unpunctuality. Parents sometimes kept children at home to help with errands and housework, sometimes simply failed to wake them in time to go to school. Miss Jay's solution to the latter problem, recorded in October 1895, was simple, "A P.T. goes round almost every morning to enquire after absentees and the invariable reason is

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1 Department of Science and Art, Forty Third to Forty Sixth Reports, 1895-8, Supplements, 338, 346, 346, 221.

that they are in bed - rewards and punishments alike seem useless and it is very unsatisfactory." She also deplored the early leaving of pupils, and in September 1899, when many older children failed to return after the holidays, she wrote, "It is very disappointing, but no inducements seem to be strong enough to balance the desire to be earning money."

Every effort was made by the Reverend Manager and by Miss Jay to give the children variety and pleasure in their schooldays. In December 1894 the Reverend Manager took them to see an Art Exhibition in the Drill Hall, in April 1895 he gave each child an Easter egg and an orange, and in 1898 he bought the school a stereoscope and fifty views to make the Object Lessons more interesting. Every year the children were invited to Longridge Towers for their annual outing, and the owners, now Sir Hubert and Lady Jerningham, continued to visit the school, bringing small gifts of sweets or money. Almost every year a half-holiday was given for the visit of a circus, in November 1896 the school was closed for a day while a partition was erected in the schoolroom, and in 1897 the Queen's Diamond Jubilee was celebrated with a half-holiday and a magic lantern entertainment showing the principal events of her reign. On St. Patrick's Day 1899 the school closed in the afternoon, and a magic lantern show of historical scenes and views of cathedrals was given in the evening.

The victories of the South African War also provided several holidays in 1900, and in 1901 a half-holiday was given for the proclamation of King Edward VII, followed in June 1902 by a whole week's holiday for his Coronation.

Although St. Cuthbert's School was not outstanding in any respect, neither attempting nor achieving academic honours, it was nevertheless a fairly satisfactory small elementary school. The Catholic community in Berwick was always small and always poor, and the teachers therefore very wisely contented themselves with trying to impart basic skills. The practice of employing a Headmistress rather than a Headmaster probably arose from motives of economy, for women commanded lower salaries than men; the reason for the shortness of their stay in Berwick, however, is less clear. No doubt some teachers were ambitious to find better posts elsewhere, but perhaps it was made clear to them that in Berwick the School Managers could not afford to award the salary increases which an established teacher would expect. Whatever the reason may have been, the frequent changes greatly hindered the school's progress, and much of the credit for what was achieved must therefore be due to Miss Cavanagh who served so faithfully as the senior assistant.

Discipline was never a problem at St. Cuthbert's

despite the relative physical weakness of the teachers. No doubt any difficulty with older boys would be solved by the Reverend Manager, not by the Headmistress. The rôle of the Reverend Manager was very different from that of the Vicar of Berwick, for example; while the Vicar would call at the National Schools once or twice a week and take an occasional Scripture lesson, the Reverend Manager usually called at St. Cuthbert's every day, teaching if a mistress was ill, examining the pupils' work, helping with the religious teaching, and bringing the sweets he had bought for the children.

While St. Cuthbert's adequately served the needs of those parents who desired only an elementary education for their children, those who required more advanced tuition for their sons and daughters had to seek it elsewhere. Indeed throughout the nineteenth century, many middle-class English Catholic parents returned to the practice of former centuries and sent their children abroad to Jesuit or convent schools, often in France. For boys this had to continue, but in 1889, at the instigation of Rev. W. Smythe of Berwick, Ursuline Nuns from Edinburgh opened in Tweed Street a small convent school for girls, known as St. Mary's Convent. This was a private school, open both to Catholics and to other denominations, for day girls or boarders, and it

succeeded so well that in 1899 application was made to the Town Council, who owned the site, for permission to build extensions. (1) Consent was given to the plans, and the school continued to prosper. Built high above the River Tweed, with large gardens and lovely views, it was an attractive school, and proved a very successful extension of Catholic education in Berwick.

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1 Council Minute Book, 1895-1900, 4th and 19th April 1899.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN BERWICK, TWEEDMOUTH AND SPITTAL

The history of private education from the late mediaeval period is both difficult and obscure. Little documentary evidence has survived from before the nineteenth century, although glimpses are to be found in the Guild Books, and the existence of many schools can only be presumed not proved.

Aristotle Knowsley and John Parke taught in Berwick in the last years of the sixteenth century and the early part of the seventeenth, along with others who obtained, or neglected to obtain, licences from the Mayor of Berwick.(1) The Guild had power to control the sale of everything in Berwick, even the sale of knowledge, but in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries if a respectable gentleman, such as William Howlitt in 1649,(2) wished to establish a school, he was generally permitted to do so; the Freemen guarded very jealously their monopoly of trade and industry, but were less interested in the profits of education.

Most of the teachers employed by the Guild to teach burgesses' children in the seventeenth and eighteenth

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1 See Chapter 1.

2 Guild Book, 1643-51, 3rd September 1649.

centuries were also able to keep private schools, and this had for the Guild one important advantage, namely that it secured for the Freemen abler masters than they could afford to employ exclusively for their own children. The presence of private schools also gave the Freemen the opportunity of judging a teacher's ability without risk to themselves, and provided them with a choice of masters already resident in Berwick when they wished to make an appointment; this seems to have been the situation in 1651 when four masters, "William Bancks, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Powell & one Mr. Tappin" were approached by the Guild as possible teachers of reading, writing and cyphering to burgesses' children, (1) and again on 13th January 1762 when Mr. John Ellison, "a Writing Master in this Town", was appointed by the Guild. (2)

Unfortunately no estimate can be made of what proportion of teachers was ever mentioned by name at Guild meetings, and almost certainly many schoolmasters' names have never been recorded. One of these unknown men fortunately is named elsewhere:

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1 Guild Book, 1643-51, 9th May 1651.

2 Guild Book, 1760-70, 13th January 1762.

on 18th September 1680 the following case was laid before the Berwick Court, "John Williams Complained Agt. Thomas Scott in an Accion of Assault and Battery upon the Case to his damage of Twenty Pounds, For that this Complt. being A true and faithfull subject of our Soveraigne Lord the Kings Maiestye that now is over England Etc. and being by Calling A teacher of Schollars to write Learne Arithmitick and To keepe Merchants books and being in the peace of our said Soveraigne Lord the king in the house of one William Wilson of this Borough yeoman, he this defendant the Twentyeth Day of Julye Ano Domini 1680 in the Thirty Second yeare of his said Maties Raigne by force and Armes violently in and upon this Complant did make an Affray and with this Complainants Cane did Assault and Beatt him the plte. tore of his neckcloath from him, his hand sleeves & Ribbins and Beatt him severall times & threw the plte. on the Ground and other Inormityes then and there did to the plte. Contrary to his Maties peace and the Laws All which is to this Compls. damage of Twenty Pounds as Aforesaid and for Remedy herein he is forced to bring this suite and prays the Iudgement of this worll Court."(1)

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1 Court Book, 1675-81, Fo.375.

Judgement was given for Mr. Williams on 26th October 1680, but the defendant was ordered to pay only 20s. damages and the costs of the court.(1)

Although the Guild's attitude towards the growth of education in Berwick was generally favourable and encouraging their prohibitive powers were used on one occasion; on 28th June 1687, "This day ordered that Mr. James Armstrong may have Liberty to stay in Towne, but if he keepe schooll after Lammas day next he shall be fined five pounds per month." The reason for this prohibition was made clear on 26th July 1687 when it was explained that Mr. Armstrong kept a private Latin School; Mr. Armstrong's petition to the Guild to withdraw their order was deferred and no further mention made. (2)

From the eighteenth century, a small but valuable source of information survives in "The Berwick Museum", a monthly literary magazine published from 1785 to 1787. Its first issue, published in February 1785 recorded the death of Mr. James Hoops, schoolmaster, at the age of seventy eight.(3) Fourteen years previously, on 13th July 1771, Mr. Hoops had been an unsuccessful

1 Court Book, 1675-81, Fo.415.

2 Guild Book, 1681-97, 28th June & 26th July 1687.

3 The Berwick Museum, I, 111.

applicant for the post of Corporation Reading Master,(1) and he apparently conducted a flourishing private school in Berwick both before and after that date. Certainly he was a sufficiently eminent local figure for his work to be commemorated with two special poems, published in February 1785 in "The Berwick Museum", which are worthy of being quoted in full:

"To the Memory of Mr. Hoops, Teacher of the English Language, Berwick.

If vicious greatness quit this mortal frame,  
 Heralds aloud with venal voice proclaim,  
 Lo! here the noble and puissant lies,  
 And sable pomp the tear of grief supplies.  
 But worthy Hoops, when he no more is here,  
 Nor plume nor pageant marks his humble bier;  
 To Fortune's smiles, and Fortune's favour lost,  
 His name and years is all that it can boast.  
 Ah, Fortune, Fortune, why deny thy smile  
 To honest aims, and grant it to the vile?  
 Too oft thy favour ranks the base on high,  
 While generous souls neglected live and die.-  
 If Fame's foundation, rightly understood,  
 Consist in acting for the general good,

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1 Guild Book 1770-80, 13th June 1771.

How truly great and noble is his fame?  
 Sons yet unborn shall hear his honoured name!  
 Say, Berwick, say, how much you truly owe  
 To his attention, and instructive flow?  
 If e'er your children by just spelling pleas'd,  
 Or by just reading your attention seiz'd,  
 Give him the praise;- before him none did teach,  
 The genuine charms of syllabbling to reach;\*  
 Born to the talk, he nobly spurned the rules  
 And drowsy forms observ'd in drawling schools,  
 Devoid of beauty and devoid of strength,  
 To hum and ha, and spell the words at length.  
 Pope's noble maxim bearing still in mind,  
 'Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclin'd ',  
 How great his care and how complete his art,  
 To store the mind and meliorate the heart.-  
 But what need we his ev'ry virtue scan,  
 He taught, he liv'd, and died an honest man:  
 May all who teach pursue the path he trode,  
 'An honest man's the noblest work of God.'

\* Mr. Hoops was the first proper teacher of syllabbling in Berwick."

"On the Death of Mr. Hoops.

Come hither youths attend my humble lays,  
 A pupil sings his worthy master's praise;

Who taught these little lessons? tell me pray,  
 'Twas master Hoops,' the lisping babe doth say:  
 Shall infants then, alone be heard to name  
 The praise, which he from all doth justly claim;  
 How oft o'er youth with fond attention hung,  
 How oft I've wish'd to gain the cake he flung,\*  
 But now 'tis o'r!- for all thy care these lines  
 Would say, a thousand thanks, a thousand times.

\* Mr. Hoops used to give small cakes of gingerbread to those scholars who performed their spelling best." (1)  
 As well as teaching, Mr. Hoops found time to produce a textbook, now very rare, the title page of which reads, "A New Vocabulary for the Instruction of Youth, by James Hoops, A.M., Schoolmaster in Berwick, Edinburgh, printed by Alexander Robertson, for the author, 1774, price 2s." The first part of the book is devoted to rules extracted from Brightland's Grammar, but the second consists of a dictionary compiled by the author. In explaining his purpose, Mr. Hoops commented that it is characteristic of civilized nations that they give due importance to the study of letters and so compile dictionaries, and continued, "However, Dictionaries are too Voluminous, and of too high Value, to be put into the Hands of Children while at an English School: Notwithstanding,

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1 The Berwick Museum, I, 88-9.

it must be allowed, that if Youth were made to Understand the true meaning of such Words, as may be given as Spelling Exercises, it would be a Matter of the greatest Advantage to them: for which Reason, I have Composed the following Collections, hoping they (if properly Taught) will supply (in some Measure) the Place of a Dictionary, at least to such Words whose Definitions are here Inserted."

Although designed for the use of children, Mr. Hoops' choice of material was extensive and often peculiar: it included the following words, and many more of equal difficulty:- abstersive, cosmodolyte, dapatical, Ezekiel's Reed, fraciol, gnathonical, hausible, irriguous, limbeck, meacock, Omer, phlebotomist, Rambooze, Squimancy, vafrous, and Zigostates.

"The Berwick Museum" in an issue published in March 1785 described a successful public examination held in the Town Hall by the scholars of a Mr. Landells, at which they had acquitted themselves very well and had been warmly applauded.(1) Eight months later the Editor received a letter from a man who had visited many schools, apparently describing Mr. Landells' school, and decided to print the following extract:

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1 The Berwick Museum, I, 167.

"Being recommended by a very respectable Professor, in Edinburgh college, I next called at Mr. L——lls', in Berwick, who has had a regular college education, and whose pupils are making a very rapid progress, both in the Latin and their native language. What excited my admiration most, was to hear boys of seven or eight years old read Latin, and construe it with great ease. I expressed my surprise to Mr. L——lls, and asked him when they learned to read English? as I thought it very absurd (in this enlightened age) to be labouring a boy with a foreign dead language, who knew nothing of his own; but I was soon convinced of my mistake; one of the youngest was called, and read with great propriety a lesson out of the Spectator; after which, I was presented with a specimen of his writing, and his abilities in arithmetic - Such a rapid progress in learning reflects honour on the teacher, and bids fair to make future generations more intelligent, better and more useful members of society than the present." (1)

A month later, in December 1785, there appeared a report on another school, as follows: "In the Town-Hall, Mr. Sawers and his Pupils, read and recited.

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1 The Berwick Museum, I, 596.

select pieces from the best English authors, with great propriety, paying the strictest regard to cadence and emphasis; his manner of teaching his scholars to speak in proper tune gave great satisfaction." (1)

In the eighteenth century there must have been ample opportunity for such schools in Berwick, and probably many others, which have not been recorded, achieved equal success. The only schools provided in Berwick at the time were the Grammar School and other Corporation Schools, and the Charity School, and many parents who were neither Freemen nor deserving poor, and who did not desire a classical education for their sons, willingly bought for their sons and daughters a good general education. Female education developed considerably in this period, as the following description, written by Dr. Fuller in 1799, shows: "Two or three attempts have been made by different persons to establish a boarding-school here for young ladies, but hitherto without success.

About 11 years ago, a Mrs. Davidson opened a school here, and has met with good encouragement. The following is the account which we have received of this school

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1 The Berwick Museum, I, 676.

from herself.

'Mrs. Davidson teaches reading, spelling, and plain needle-work, at five shillings per quarter, and two shillings and sixpence entrance. She likewise teaches flowering; when that is included, she charges seven shillings and sixpence per quarter.

Mrs. D. takes young ladies to board and educate at twenty pounds per annum.

Mr. Davidson teaches writing at five shillings per quarter, and two shillings and sixpence entrance.'

Mrs. Rudd, in the high-street, has taught reading and spelling with approbation, for some years past. Fees five shillings per quarter, and two shillings and sixpence at entry. There are several other female teachers of reading.

Within these few years three schools have been opened for teaching various branches of needle-work, which consist of white-seam, coloured-work, Drysden, filigree, and childbed linen, also the fashionable kinds of leather, paper, cloth and grotesque works." (1)

Evidence of education on the south side of the river at this period is slight, but a tombstone in Tweedmouth churchyard recorded the death on 7th March 1807, at the

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1 John Fuller, The History of Berwick upon Tweed...

(1799), 350-1.

age of fifty eight, of Thomas Jobson, schoolmaster of Tweedmouth.

The importance of good private schools for both boys and girls continued well into the nineteenth century, when for the first time some idea of the number of establishments can be gained, both from Government Reports and from Directories.

The earliest and one of the most valuable sources for the nineteenth century is a Directory, published in 1806, which gives details of the most important schools, as well as listing all of them. There were approximately eleven private schools in Berwick, including Mr. Davidson's boarding school described by Dr. Fuller, but the most important were as follows: (1)

"Mr. Dickinson, Teacher of Languages, at the Association School, which was instituted in 1802.

It is called the Association-school on account of a select association of Gentlemen, who made an agreement to hire him on contract as an able Teacher, to take their children under his care, and teach them for a reasonable salary, which he executes faithfully: This school is only 4 doors from the Scotch-Gate.

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1 A Directory and Concise History of Berwick-upon-Tweed,  
(1806), Section VIII.

Mr. Irvine, Teaches the Latin, Greek, French, and Italian Languages, at his Association-school in Church-street.

Mr. Moscrip, Teaches Reading, Orthography, Writing, English Grammar, Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Mensuration, Navigation, Algebra, &c. at his school in Shaws-lane.

Mr. Muir, Teaches Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, and Book-keeping, &c. at his School in the Golden-square.

Mr. Kirton, Teaches Reading, Writing, English Grammar, Arithmetic, and Book-keeping, at his School in the Backway.

Mr. Graham, Teaches Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, English Grammar, &c. at his School in Church-street."

The chief school for girls was Miss Drysdale's Boarding School for Young Ladies in High Street, where they learned English and plain needlework, all kinds of ornamental needlework, instrumental and vocal music, Drawing, Geography, Writing, Arithmetic and French; Miss Drysdale engaged three visiting Masters, Mr. Irvine for French, and Mr. Easton and Mr. Tait for Writing and Arithmetic. (1)

In 1819 the Parochial Return showed that the Parish of Berwick had, in addition to the established schools,

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1 A Directory and Concise History of Berwick-upon-Tweed, (1806), Section XIII.

twelve private schools educating 551 children, and four dame schools with 89 pupils. (1) The figures for the whole country, however, showed a grave shortage of places for the education of the poor, and in 1820 Lord Brougham introduced a very controversial Education Bill; inter alia, he proposed that in the new schools, to be provided by taxing manufacturers and gentry, the masters must be members of the Church of England. The opposition of the nonconformists was exceedingly strong, and in their efforts to defeat the Bill, they re-surveyed many counties, hoping to demonstrate that the 1819 Return was inaccurate. In Northumberland the survey was done by the Sunday School Union of Newcastle upon Tyne, and from the Berwick Sabbath Evening School Union they received the following particulars relating to the year 1822: (2)

	<u>Number of Schools</u>		
	Common & Dame schools	Gratuitous Schools	Total
Parish of Berwick	38	11	49
Chapelry of Tweedmouth	<u>17</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17</u>
	55	11	66

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1 A Digest of Parochial Returns...1818, II (1819), 676.

2 E. Mackenzie, An Historical, Topographical and Descriptive View of the County of Northumberland..., 2nd edn., I (1825), 324n.

	<u>Number of Children</u>				Total
	Common & Dame schools		Gratuitous Schools		
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
Parish of Berwick	500	528	300	345	1673
Chapelry of Tweedmouth	<u>325</u>	<u>318</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>643</u>
	825	846	300	345	2316

In 1821 there were in Berwick 2,018 boys and girls aged 5 to 15 years, and in Tweedmouth 1,188, a total of 3,206; 2,316 were receiving education. The compilers of the survey considered that had the Returns included only those aged 6 to 12 years, almost all would have been shown to have received some schooling.

These statistics certainly differ very widely from those of the 1819 Return, and unfortunately neither source is sufficiently detailed to make any explanation certain; in view of the extraordinarily high number of schools in Berwick in the 1822 figures, and the aims of the nonconformists, however, it is possible that the Berwick Sabbath Evening School Union included in their total specialists, such as teachers of music, languages, etc., who would not normally be regarded as schoolteachers. Some later sources certainly accepted the 1822 figures of the number of boys and girls being

educated in the various categories of schools; (1) but this does not necessarily prove their accuracy.

The Directories of this period tend on the whole to confirm the number of schools, sixteen, given in the 1819 Return: In 1828-9, for example, there were seventeen private schools in Berwick, including five boarding schools, while in Spittal and Tweedmouth there were one and five respectively. (2) More official confirmation too is given by the 1833 Education Enquiry, which states that there were seventeen private schools in Berwick, together with five or six Sewing Schools; in Tweedmouth there were ten schools, all fee paying, but as the Tweedmouth National and Presbyterian Schools were not mentioned separately and both charged fees, this may mean that only eight were private schools. (3)

- 1 e.g. The Penny Cyclopaedia..., IV (1835), 327; Report upon the Proposed Municipal Boundary and Division into Wards of the Borough of Berwick-upon-Tweed (1835), Section 3; Frederick Sheldon, History of Berwick-upon-Tweed... (1849), 310-11.
- 2 Pigot & Co., Commercial Directory of Cumberland, Durham, Northumberland, Westmoreland and Yorkshire, 1828-9, 118.
- 3 Education Enquiry... 1833 (1835), I, 260 (Tweedmouth), II, 687 (Berwick).

As the nineteenth century progressed and more and more efficient and well-equipped voluntary schools were founded in Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal, the number of private schools gradually dwindled. In 1834 and 1847 there were thirteen private schools, in 1852 twelve, in 1855 ten, in 1858 six, in 1877 and 1879 five, in 1884 seven, in 1887 six, in 1890 five, in 1894 four, and in 1897 and 1902 only three. (1) Although the

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1 Pigot & Co. Ltd., Northumberland Directory, 1834;  
 Francis White & Co., General Directory, 1847, 722;  
Slater's (late Pigot & Co.) Royal National Commercial  
 Directory of Scotland and important English Towns,  
 1852, 318-9; Slater's ... Royal National Commercial  
 Directory of the Northern Counties, 1855, I, 17; William  
 Whellan & Co., History, Topography and Directory of  
 Northumberland (1855), 971; Kelly's Post Office  
 Directory of Northumberland and Durham, 1858, 3-6;  
Slater's ... Royal National Commercial Directory, 1877,  
 33-4; Kelly's Directory of Durham and Northumberland,  
1879, 523-6; Slater's Directory of Durham, Northumber-  
land and the Cleveland District, 1884, 44; T.F. Bulmer,  
History, Topography and Directory of Northumberland  
 (1887), 783; Kelly's Directory of Durham and Northum-  
berland, 1890, 666-7; Kelly's Directory of Durham and  
Northumberland, 1894, 8-13; Kelly's Directory of North-  
umberland, 1897; Kelly's Directory of Durham and North-  
umberland, 1902, 9-15.

Directories give no details, some of the earlier schools were clearly the small, inefficient and even squalid dame schools whose pupils, when transferred by their parents to the National or British Schools, caused such difficulty to their new teachers; several Log Book entries record with regret the admission of children aged eight or nine who knew no letters or numbers at all. Others were clearly very different, and their appearance in Directories over long periods indicates that they were good schools, able to withstand the competition of the endowed or voluntary schools.

One such school belonged to Miss Ann Forrest, who in 1827 kept a ladies' boarding school in the High Street; by 1834 she had moved to Woolmarket, but by 1847 seems to have given up her teaching. In 1852, however, she and Miss Margaret Forrest were keeping a school at 3 Palace Green, then from about 1855 until at least 1858 she taught in Church Street, at first with her sister, then

alone. (1)

In the 1877 Directory the schools include three boarding schools, one in Ravensdowne kept by Mr. T. Rees Evans, who often was engaged as visiting music master at the National Schools in Berwick, another on Quay Walls taught by Miss Margaret Batters, and the third in Sandgate, taught by the Misses Miller. (2)

1 William Parson and William White, History, Directory and Gazetteer of the Counties of Durham and Northumberland, I, 1827; Pigot & Co., Commercial Directory of Cumberland, Durham, Northumberland, Westmoreland and Yorkshire, 1828-9, 118; Pigot & Co. Northumberland Directory, 1834; Francis White & Co., General Directory, 1847, (no mention) ; Slater's... Royal National Commercial Directory of Scotland...1852, 318; Slater's ... Directory of the Northern Counties, 1855, I, 17; William Whellan & Co., History, Topography and Directory of Northumberland (1855), 971; Kelly's Post Office Directory of Northumberland and Durham, 1858, 4.

2 Slater's (late Pigot & Co.'s) Royal National Commercial Directory, 1877, 33.

Mr. Evans' school, later continued by his wife, was still in existence in 1894. Miss Batters' School by 1884 had moved from Quay Walls to 6 Palace Street East, and continued there until about 1900, when it was taken over by the Misses Macdonald who enlarged it, renamed it St. Duthus, equipped the stables as a gymnasium, taught their pupils Greek, Latin, French and German, and eventually in 1914 moved their school to Hertford Lodge, Church End, Finchley in London. The Misses Miller were equally successful, and in 1902 their school was bought by the Misses Fisher, who continued it in Berwick for many years as St. Ronan's.

Predictably the demand for a private and genteel education was greater for girls than for boys, and was sufficient to support schools such as those of the Misses Macdonald and the Misses Miller, together with the new St. Mary's Convent in Tweed Street. The parents of boys, however, preferred usually to send their sons to such excellent teachers as Mr. Willits at Berwick British or Mr. Peacock at Tweedmouth National, or to pay for a classical education at Berwick Grammar School. One private boys' school alone flourished in Berwick in 1902, that taught by Mr. William Patterson. Mr. Patterson had come to Berwick from Edinburgh to teach English at the Corporation Academy in 1870, but in 1886 the Academy staff was reorganised so as to save money, and highly-paid

men teachers were no longer required; Mr. Patterson resigned, and immediately established a private school in a house on the Parade, later moving to larger premises in the Avenue. His school, known affectionately as "Pat's Academy", provided an excellent education for boys, and was to some extent responsible for the Grammar School's difficulties in attracting pupils in this period; although the Grammar School suffered from defects of staff and buildings, Mr. Patterson's competition undoubtedly contributed to its problems by providing an alternative for parents who wished to buy an academic education for their sons. (1)

Although details and accurate statistics of the private schools cannot be procured, the evidence which does survive gives grounds for some tentative conclusions. It seems that the proliferation of private establishments began in the mid or late eighteenth century and continued until about 1850. These schools provided education of many kinds and qualities, or even of no quality whatsoever, for many hundreds of children at very varying fees; they ranged from expensive boarding schools where young ladies could acquire accomplishments, to

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1 See A.F. Leach's Report on Berwick Grammar School, 16th June 1890, in P.R.O. Ed. 27/3738.

cheap day schools where uneducated women were little more than child-minders. By about 1850, with the opening in Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal of so many voluntary schools, parents, however rich or poor, had a much wider choice open to them, and although some private schools continued to flourish the majority closed and were never replaced. In spite of the wide variation in standards and the smallness of the schools, private establishments nevertheless played an important rôle, both negative and positive, in the development of education in Berwick. In their negative rôle good schools created envy among those who could not afford their fees, bad schools created disgust and a desire for a remedy, but above all, the existence of so many schools proved conclusively that there was a demand for sound elementary teaching; this was the demand which the congregations of the churches determined to meet with the aid of the National and British Societies. More positively, the good private school continued throughout the nineteenth century to provide that which no technique of mass-teaching could match, an individual approach to the needs of the child.

## CHAPTER NINE

## THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT, EVENING SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES

For those inhabitants who had never received a formal education, for those who felt that they had not benefited as much as they would have wished from their schooling, and for those who wanted merely to develop an interesting hobby, many opportunities were provided by which deficiencies might be remedied and new studies pursued.

Perhaps the most important of these opportunities were provided by the many Churches in the town. Sunday Schools provided a secular as well as a religious education for both children and adults in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; if an illiterate were to read the Bible he had first to be taught to read. As more voluntary schools were established the need for such secular instruction grew less, but until at least the middle of the nineteenth century the Sunday Schools were an important source of general education.

The first Sunday School in Berwick was founded in or before 1787 at the High Meeting, a Church of Scotland congregation, (1) and other churches soon followed.

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1 The Berwick Museum, III (1787), 336.

Eventually Sunday Schools seem to have been provided by every church in Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal, to judge from the 1824 Sunday School Union Report, which stated that Berwick had 35 Sunday Schools, with 129 teachers, and 2,208 scholars; the movement had expanded greatly in Berwick, and "little room is now left for its further extension." (1) Far from extending, the number of Sunday Schools was reduced considerably in the next decade; in 1833 there were 19 Sunday Schools, 17 in Berwick educating 415 males and 497 females, "supported solely by the teachers", and 2 in Tweedmouth and Spittal, where free education was given to 99 males and 114 females. (2)

Specific evidence of four Sunday Schools has survived from the nineteenth century, though unfortunately with few details of the times or subjects of the classes, or of the scholars. On 18th January 1827, the Select Vestry ordered "that Mr. John Young & Mr. Wm. Ainslie be allowed the use of the Parish School, for keeping a Sabbath School from four till six o'Clock evening, provided the Books are secured under a Lock & Key in a box attached to each Table." This school continued until after 1855,

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1 The Annual Report of the Sunday School Union ...  
1824 ..., 16 & 44.

2 Education Enquiry ... 1833 (1835), I, 260, II, 687.

when it was held from 4.15 to 5.30 p.m., but had closed before 1863. (1) In 1830 the Primitive Methodists, newly established in Berwick in 1829, built a chapel, schoolroom and manse in College Place, (2) and a little later, in the 1840s, Bankhill Church, formerly part of the Low Meeting, was conducting a Sunday School for both adults and children as well as the day school. (3) The most important information, however, concerns the very active Presbyterian Congregation which met in Golden Square Church from 1771 to 1859, and then in the new Wallace Green Church from 1859 to the present day.

This congregation was always fortunate in its ministers, and it was the second incumbent, Rev. John Blackhall (1780-9), who founded its Sunday School. The movement

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- 1 Berwick Poor Law Minute Books, 1825-31, 18th January 1827, and 1854-6, 26th February and 12th March 1855; Berwick Union Minute Book, 1863-6, 9th November 1863.
  - 2 Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society, XXXIII (1962), 166.
  - 3 K.G. White, Bankhill Church, Berwick-upon-Tweed, 1835-1960 (1960), 14.

grew under Rev. Dr. Robert Balmer (1814-44), who also founded a Congregational Library, and under Rev. Dr. John Cairns (1844-76), and by the end of the century Wallace Green Church was conducting three separate Sunday Schools, the Congregational, which met in Wallace Green Hall, built in 1873 and enlarged in 1891, Kiln Hill Sunday School at the Mitchell Memorial Hall, Tweedmouth, and the third at the Town Mission, Coxon's Lane. Dr. Cairns at one time also conducted a Ragged School, which was in existence at least between 1852 and 1856, (1) but no information on this survives. Rev. Dr. John Smith, who succeeded Dr. Cairns, took an active interest in the Presbyterian Young Men's Literary Society of the time. (2)

For many people who wished to further their general education, the evening classes offered by most schools at some time in the latter part of the nineteenth

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- 1 Berwick Poor Law Union Minute Book, 1854-6, 10th March 1856; Alexander R. MacEwen, Life and Letters of John Cairns D.D., LL.D., 4th edn. (1898), 329.
  - 2 The Jubilee Book of Wallace Green Church...1859-1909;  
A Post-Jubilee Link. Wallace Green Church...1909-1934;  
and Wallace Green Presbyterian Church. A Century for  
Christ in Berwick, 1859-1959.

century, provided an excellent opportunity. Berwick had many able teachers, and their evening schools for the most part prospered. The school premises, too, were used for other, more vocational, studies. The Berwick National School Managers, for example, in 1889 let the Girls' School and in 1890 the Boys' School for a Science evening class, and in 1891 agreed to allow Mr. James Gray, Secretary of the Berwick District of the Technical Education Committee, to arrange a Plumbing Class at the Boys' School during the winter, at a charge of £1 ls. plus the costs of fuel, light and cleaning; this Plumbing Class proved popular, and was organised again from 1892 to 1896, under Mr. George McAdam, a Berwick master plumber. In 1892 the Berwick Choral Union also met in the National Schools, and a Mr. Brown conducted a Shorthand Class twice weekly from 1893 to 1897. From 1895 the Berwick Debating Society also met in the Boys' School. (1)

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1 Berwick National Schools Managers' Minute Book, 1872-1900, 10th September 1890, 27th October 1891, 31st October 1892, 26th September 1893, 25th September and 9th October 1894, 9th September and 15th October 1895, 18th August 1896 and 17th November 1897.

Although some of these courses were clearly very seriously educational, others can perhaps best be called intellectually interesting. The dividing line between the two, always difficult to discern in adult education, is particularly hard to find in Berwick; the town developed flourishing courses in Science and Art, attracting such high numbers that membership was clearly very enjoyable. The first evidence of this interest was shown in 1800, when a Mr. Alexander Davidson was allowed by the Guild to use the Town Hall for "a set of about thirty Lectures on the philosophy of Chemistry and natural History...." (1) A Mechanics' Institute was later founded, at an unknown date, a few years before 1835, but failed to establish itself. (2) On 22nd September 1831, however, the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club was instituted by Dr. George Johnston of Berwick, six other doctors and two ministers; the Club met five times each year, the members organising outings and hearing papers, and, although small at first, it achieved enduring success. (3) In 1841 Dr. Johnston and several

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1 Guild Minute Book, 1798-1805, 28th February and 21st March 1800.

2 The Penny Cyclopaedia..., IV (1835), 327.

3 History of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club, Centenary Volume (1933), 1-15.

members tried to establish a museum in Berwick, but encountered much difficulty. (1)

Interest in Science grew, and it was resolved at a public meeting in Berwick on 15th April 1851 to found another Mechanics' Institute. (2) This time it proved a success, mainly, it would seem, from the efforts of Dr. Johnston; in the spring of 1851 he gave a lecture to the Institute on "Our Wild Flowers in their relations to our Pastoral Life", (3) and later that year agreed to take most of the lecturing in the winter programme, as follows:

"Berwick Mechanics' Institute. Public Lectures. Dr. Johnston, LL.D., and R. Ingham, Esq., Q.C., Recorder of the Borough, will deliver a Course of Lectures in the King's Arms Assembly Room, on the following subjects, viz.: Dr. Johnston, Tuesday 25th November; Subject, 'The Changes in the Physical Appearances of our District since its first being peopled.' R. Ingham, Esq., Tuesday 30th December; Subject, 'Etymology and Proverbs, or the Evidences afforded by Popular

1 James Hardy ed., Selections from the Correspondence of Dr. George Johnston (1892), 177-8.

2 John Latimer, Local Records... 1832-1857 (1857), 293.

3 George Johnston, The Natural History of the Eastern Borders, I (1853), 221-46.

Language to 'the History of Manners.' Dr. Johnston,  
 Tuesday 27th January 1852; Subject, 'The Star Fishes,  
 Sea Urchins, and Sea Jellies of Berwick Bay.'

Dr. Johnston, Tuesday 23rd February; Subject, 'Our  
 Wild Flowers in Relation to our Pastoral Poetry.'  
 Tickets of admission may be had from the booksellers.  
 For the course, 1s.; single lecture, 4d.; front  
 seats, 2s.; single lecture, 8d. Members will receive  
 Tickets from the Librarian of the Institute at half  
 price. Doors open at half-past 7, and to commence  
 each evening at 8 o'clock.

Committee Room	C. Drummond	Secretaries.
Exchange Buildings, November 1851	W. Wilson	"(1)

In 1856 the Mechanics' Institute was still strong,  
 and Mr. D.C. Marjoribanks in that year requisitioned  
 aid by examples, to the value of £7 Os. 4d., from the  
 Department of Science and Art; (2) in 1858, on 14th  
 September, the Berwick Institute sent a Mr. Ramsay as  
 their representative to the annual conference of the  
 Northern Union of Mechanics' Institutes, held at Alnwick. (3)

1 James Hardy ed., Selections from the Correspondence  
of Dr. George Johnston (1892), 453-5.

2 Department of Science and Art, Fourth Report, 1856, 227.

3 T. Fordyce, Local Records ... (1867), 347.

More formal teaching of Science was begun in 1871, with the formation of a Berwick Museum and Science School; the Chairman was the Vicar of Berwick, Rev. J.G. Rowe, the Secretary Mr. J. Gray, and the teachers Mr. Henry W. Willits and Mr. J.C. Brown; in the first year there were thirty-three students, twenty-three for Mathematics and ten for Physical Geography. (1) By the following year the classes had been renamed the Literary and Scientific Institute, and Mr. Brown had ceased to teach there; in 1872 there were thirty-eight students, each paying fees of 2s. 6d. per subject, and their examination successes won seven prizes and a grant of £25; in January 1873 Mr. Willits had forty students, twenty for Mathematics and twenty-five for Physical Geography. (2) The 1873 results brought a grant of £23, and in January 1874 the numbers were much higher, seventy-five students, of whom thirty studied Mathematics and fifty-two Physical Geography. (3) Unfortunately the grant for that year was only £14, and the number of students for 1875 fell to only forty, so by May 1875 the Literary and Scientific Institute had closed. (4)

1 Department of Science and Art, Nineteenth Report, 1871, 61 & 141.

2 Idem, Twentieth Report, 1872, 56, 167 & 211.

3 Idem, Twenty First Report, 1873, 49, 73 & 126.

4 Idem, Twenty Second Report, 1874, 24, 51 & 105, and Twenty Third Report, 1875, 157.

If interest in Science was waning, at least temporarily, interest in Art was growing at this period. The first mention of an Art class was in November 1843, when the Corporation School Committee permitted Mr. J.T. Bell to use a room in the Academy for teaching Drawing, and asked the Masters to recommend it to their pupils. (1) Whether it succeeded or failed is not recorded, but by 1873 there was sufficient demand in Berwick for instruction in Art to encourage Mr. James Wallace to found the Berwick School of Art in Sandgate. He came to Berwick from Blyth in that year to teach at the Corporation Academy, and may have had assistance at the Art School, for both morning and evening classes were offered. In its first year the School had 90 students, 27 in the mornings at 5s. per month, and 63 in the evenings at 1s. 6d. per month, and of those 67 submitted work for examination, 51 earning grants; the Department of Science and Art also awarded a prize of £10 to Mr. Wallace. An exhibition of students' work was held, which attracted four hundred visitors. (2)

In the second year Mr. Wallace had 26 day and 57 evening students, bringing an income of £158 16s.;

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1 School Committee Minute Book, 1833-65, 21st November 1843.

2 Department of Science and Art, Twenty Second Report, 1874, 280.

65 students sent 1,038 works to the annual examination at South Kensington, earning a grant of £134 10s. 7d., including a £20 prize for Mr. Wallace. Again their own exhibition was held with success. (1)

This pattern continued for several years, (2) until in 1878 a Science School was added to the Art School in Sandgate. Mr. Willits had tried once again to hold a Science Class at the British School in 1877, but it attracted only eight students and earned a grant of only £4. (3) The extension to the work of the Art School began modestly in 1878 with five students for Building Construction, (4) but the Science teaching seems to have lapsed from 1879 until 1881 when there were again five students. (5)

The Art School, however, continued to hold very successful day and evening classes, which attracted

1 Department of Science and Art, Twenty Third Report, 1875, 303.

2 Idem, Twenty Fourth Report, 1876, 382, and Twenty Fifth Report, 1877, 319, and 473.

3 Idem, Twenty Fifth Report, 1877, 61 and 165.

4 Idem, Twenty Sixth Report, 1878, 220.

5 Idem, Twenty Ninth Report, 1881, 96.

about 70 to 80 students each year; work was submitted annually for examinations, and earned grants of about £90 per annum, and Mr. Wallace borrowed several paintings and drawings every year from South Kensington for his students to study and copy. (1)

In 1883 Mr. Wallace and his school, now called the Berwick School of Science and Art, moved from Sandgate to High Street, with six Science students and eighty Art students. Mr. Wallace, who held an Art Certificate, third grade in Elementary Drawing and Colouring, was assisted by that date by another similarly qualified man, Mr. Frank W. Wood. (2) In its new premises the School continued to prosper, particularly after 1886. when Mr. Wallace resigned his teaching at the Academy. (3) By 1893 he had 63 students for Science and 108 for Art, bringing a fee income of £137 9s. and grants of £104 7s. (4)

1 Department of Science and Art, Twenty Sixth to Thirtieth Reports, 1878-1882.

2 Idem, Thirty First Report, 1883, 106 and 205-6.

3 Idem, Thirty Second to Fortieth Reports, 1884-92.

4 Idem, Forty First Report, 1893, 102.

In 1893 Mr. Peacock of Tweedmouth Boys' National School formed an evening Science Class, which in its first year enrolled 37 students, (1) and this undoubtedly drew some students away from Mr. Wallace in later years. (2) By 1900 Mr. Peacock had 32 Science students and Mr. Wallace only 18, but the Art School attracted 18 day and 86 evening students. (3)

Clearly, from its attendances, the Art School provided for many townspeople an absorbingly interesting hobby. For those with no aptitude for drawing, however, there were other opportunities available for filling their leisure time. Even in the eighteenth century dancing classes had proved popular, (4) and the nineteenth.

1 Department of Science and Art, Forty Second Report, 1894, 141.

2 Idem, Forty Third to Forty Sixth Reports, 1895-8, and Board of Education Report, 1899-1900, II, 115 & 117.

3 Board of Education Report, 1900-1, II, 601 & 602.

4 David McGill, dancing master of Berwick, is mentioned on 16th January 1756 ( Guild Book, 1752-60), and Mr. Charles Banks was given permission on 23rd and 30th November 1798 to hold dancing classes in the Town Hall ( Guild Book, 1798-1805).

century Directories list many teachers of dancing, languages and music.

For many people, however, the greatest pleasure lay in reading, both for entertainment and for instruction. Books and papers were costly, and few private homes possessed extensive collections, and so public libraries came gradually into being to meet the demands of an increasingly literate population. Early in the eighteenth century the Guild had subscribed to certain newspapers, but on 1st February 1722/3 they decided to discontinue the practice as one of the Freemen, Mr. Edward Neelson junior, intended to open a Coffee House and provide newspapers there. (1) The first library open to the public appears to have been founded in about 1752, and was housed at the Grammar School. On 24th April 1752 the Guild ordered "that a Deal Floor be laid in the Stoody of the Latin School and that proper Shelves with folding Doors be erected, whereon the New Library of Books in Town are to be placed and kept for the time to Come."(2) Percival Stockdale, writing of his life at that period, confirms the existence of this library, and adds the information that it was a "publick library". (3)

1 Guild Book, 1716-27, 1st February 1722/3.

2 Draft Guild Book, 1738-55, 24th April 1752.

3 The Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Percival Stockdale (1809), 131-2.

Shortly after this, in 1754, a Berwick accountant named Thomas Wise, published a book which was almost a self-educator; besides an English grammar and spelling dictionary it contained all types of letters, forms of indentures, bonds, wills and other legal documents, all branches of Arithmetic, an easy method of book-keeping, a compendium of Geography, and sections on oil-painting, water-colouring, gilding with gold or silver, and the art of making artificial fireworks, and "The whole calculated to qualify Persons for Business, without a Master, and illustrated with a Map of the World." The book cost 2s. 6d., and by 1778 its publisher, R. Taylor of Berwick, had produced eleven editions. (1)

In 1812 a Public Subscription Library was formed. (2) By 1825 it had 135 subscribers, each paying £1 ls. on entrance, and £1 ls. thereafter; alternatively they could pay £12 12s. for life membership, or £21 for life membership which could be transferred or descend to their heirs in perpetuity; the library was in Bridge Street next to the shop of the librarian, Mr. John

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1 R.C. Alston, A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, IV (1967), 92-3, nos. 615-21, Plate LX.

2 T. Johnstone, The History of Berwick-upon-Tweed ... (1817), 158.

Reid, a bookseller. (1) Ten years later, in 1835, the library possessed over 4,000 volumes, and had an annual income of about £150; (2) a similar description also was written in 1849. (3) By 1855 the Library in Bridge Street contained about 6,000 volumes, was supported by 100 subscribers and was open from 12 to 4 p.m. each day, except Sunday; (4) there were also Subscription Reading Rooms or News Rooms beside the Billiard Room and Bowling Green at Palace Green. (5) In 1867 the Committee of the Subscription Library in Bridge Street offered it to the Town Council, but their offer was reluctantly declined. (6)

The annual subscription of one guinea inevitably debarred many who might otherwise have wished to use the

1 E. Mackenzie, An Historical, Topographical and Descriptive View of the County of Northumberland ..., 2nd edn., I (1825), 302; and William Parson and William White, History, Directory and Gazetteer of the Counties of Durham and Northumberland, II (1828), 368.

2 The Penny Cyclopaedia ..., IV (1835), 327.

3 Frederick Sheldon, History of Berwick-upon-Tweed ... (1849), 317.

4 William Whellan & Co., History, Topography and Directory of Northumberland (1855), 961.

5 Ibid. and Sheldon, 320.

6 Draft Council Minute Book, 1849-70, 30th October and 9th November 1867 and 5th February 1868.

Subscription Library. For such people, however, the Wallace Green Congregational Library, founded by Dr. Balmer, provided a cheaper alternative. In 1851 it had 112 annual members, 92 male and 20 female, at an annual fee of 2s. to members of the Congregation and 5s. to others; there were 2,240 volumes in the library at that date. (1) In 1909 it had 4,000 books, and was still adding to its collection each year. (2)

The High Street premises of the Science and Art School also provided space for a Museum and Reading Room, (3) and by 1894, if not earlier, both Tweedmouth and Spittal possessed Reading Rooms and Libraries. (4)

With the growth of universal elementary education, the need for supplementary or alternative sources, in the form of Sunday Schools or evening classes lessened; yet as the imparting of basic skills was transferred to the day

1 Census of Great Britain. Education. England and Wales. Report and Tables ... (1854), 255.

2 The Jubilee Book of Wallace Green Church ... 1859-1909, 21.

3 Kelly's Directory of Northumberland (1897).

4 Kelly's Directory of Northumberland (1894), 15 and 16.

schools, so the demand grew for new courses and new interests to fill the evenings. The churches therefore developed further their meetings and discussions, the evening classes became more vocational or more specialised, and Art courses, the Debating Society, the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club, and the Libraries continued to attract more members. Although the period of formal education was still often short by modern standards, a very wide range of further courses was open to the children and adults of Victorian Berwick.

## CONCLUSION

By 1902 Berwick had possessed at some time in its history, almost every type and kind of school. Small mediaeval and Tudor schools, Guild schools, a Charity School, industrial schools, a Workhouse School, a Ragged School, Lancasterian, Presbyterian, British, Roman Catholic and National Schools, and private schools of every size and sort had grown from private initiative and from the rivalries of Guild and religious groupings. Of these, there remained in 1902 the Grammar School and Academy, seven National Schools, one Presbyterian School, two British Schools, one Roman Catholic School, and several private establishments, all in fairly prosperous condition.

Under the provisions of the 1902 Act, however, the administrative structure of education was radically revised nationally, and brought great changes in Berwick. Formerly the Town Council had been responsible for the old Guild Schools, indirectly for the Grammar School which was administered by Governors, but directly for the Academy, while the voluntary schools were administered by their own Committees of Management. A School Board had been formed only in 1900, to arrange for the building of the Bell Tower Infants' School.

From 1902 Northumberland County Council became responsible for secondary education in Berwick, that is to say, for Berwick Grammar School, while the Town Council became a

Part III authority, responsible for elementary education and therefore for all the other schools in the borough.

In the administration of the Grammar School changes came very slowly. A Board of Education Inspector in March 1903 again recommended amalgamation with the Corporation Academy, but this was not done. Instead the Grammar School expanded by increasing its free places from ten per cent to twenty-five per cent after 1907, and by adding a Pupil Teacher Centre from the autumn of 1906. The annual grant from the County Council was £150 in 1906, and had risen to £300 by 1911, administered by a Board of Governors, as before 1902. The endowments remained in their hands, and were not transferred to the County Council until a new Scheme had been sealed on 14th May 1915. (1) The Scheme also continued to uphold the rights of freemen, and provided that their sons must have priority of entry and the remission of one-third of the fees. (2)

The main work of the County Council in Berwick was in the provision of secondary education for girls. In January 1905 the Board of Education recognised the Bell Tower Infants' School as a temporary Pupil Teacher Centre for girls, and three years later, in January 1908, the

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1 P.R.O. Ed. 35/1994.

2 P.R.O. Ed. 35/1996.

County provided an iron building on the Magdalene Fields for the centre. Soon afterwards, in September 1908, the County Council asked the Board of Education to recognise this establishment as a secondary school, and the Board agreed. (1) The school was thereafter known as the Berwick High School for Girls, and in 1939 the High School and the Boys' Grammar School amalgamated in new buildings.

The Corporation Academy continued to be administered by Berwick Town Council until 1921, when the school was closed. The once fine building had been criticised by the Education Department in 1889, when they refused to recognise it as an efficient elementary school, and the Town Council were responsible only for maintaining it, not for providing a new site and a larger building. In the absence of any amalgamation with the Grammar School, closure was eventually inevitable.

So far as the responsibility for elementary education was concerned, Berwick Town Council encountered considerable difficulty. There was only one new school under the School Board, namely the Bell Tower Infants' School, which had cost £4,300 to build and equip. (2) The other, non-provided,

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1 P.R.O. Ed. 35/1997.

2 Borough of Berwick upon Tweed. Abstracts of the Accounts of the Town Council as the Education Authority. For the Year ending 31st March 1913.

elementary schools varied widely in the age and condition of their buildings and equipment. The Berwick National Schools, including Whitadder Bridge, St. Mary's and Tweedmouth National Schools, Berwick British School, and the Roman Catholic School were reasonably adequate for their purpose; both Spittal British and National Schools, and the Tweedmouth Presbyterian School, however, were urgently in need of replacement.

The Town Council began by building a new school in Tweedmouth, which cost £4,237, (1) and which opened on 11th June 1906. (2) The year 1908 was particularly busy, as Berwick British School was enlarged, (3) and the new Spittal Council School, costing £5,150, was opened, (4) to replace both the British and National Schools there. (5) Two years later, in 1910, the Spittal Council School was enlarged at a further cost of £1,037. (6) In 1913 extensions to Tweedmouth National Schools were agreed. (7) On 30th April 1913 Whitadder Bridge National School was closed, as by that time it had only two pupils. (8)

1 Abstract of the Accounts ... 1913.

2 P.R.O. Ed. 21/13859.                      3 P.R.O. Ed. 21/13860.

4 Abstract of the Accounts ... 1913.

5 P.R.O. Ed. 21/13856 and Ed. 21/13857.

6 Abstracts of the Accounts ... 1913, and P.R.O. Ed. 21/13857.

7 P.R.O. Ed. 21/13858.

8 P.R.O. Ed. 21/460.

Consideration was also given in this period to the possibility of converting the old British Infants' School, College Place, into, for example, an evening school room. The Town Council went so far as to ask the Board of Education in November 1911 to approve plans for this, but in 1912 the Council decided not to continue the project as the costs would be unjustifiably high; the premises were eventually sold in 1916 for £120. (1)

Despite their considerable expenditure after 1902, Berwick Town Council still had not succeeded in their aim of bringing every school building in the borough up to the required standards. In 1915 all five National Schools, Berwick Boys', Girls' and Infants', St. Mary's and Tweedmouth, together with Berwick British and St. Cuthbert's, required improvement, in the main to their lighting and ventilation. In that year the Town Council therefore admitted defeat, and proposed to relinquish to the County Council their powers in respect of elementary education; financially this would be a disadvantage to the County, as their expenditure would outweigh the Borough's rate contribution, but the County Council agreed in principle to the proposal, feeling it to be educationally and administratively desirable. (2)

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1 P.R.O. Ed. 49/5839.

2 Northumberland County Council, Minutes, XXVI, 4th February 1915.

Possibly the centralization which the twentieth century brought might have created better schools than the private and local endeavours of the nineteenth century. Certainly a single authority, drawing upon public money, could better and more economically build and maintain the fabric and equipment of its schools, and in many parts of the country this was the case. In Berwick, however, the advantages are less clear; since Spittal Council School was completed in 1908, the only new school buildings erected from public funds in Berwick, Spittal or Tweedmouth have been secondary schools. From the rich variety of the nineteenth century has grown a slightly more comfortably housed conformity, and perhaps educationally less has been gained than the supporters of Mr. A.J. Balfour intended in 1902. Berwick was unusually well provided with the means of education in the nineteenth century and in this context the words of the Bryce Report ring ironically, "Freedom, variety, elasticity are, and have been, the merits which go far to redeem the defects in English education, and they must at all hazards be preserved."

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