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## Abstract of a thesis:

The History of Elementary and Secondary Education in Westmorland,  
1870 - 1914

by W.B. Marker

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Westmorland was an agricultural county, with isolated villages and only one town (Kendal). It had a distinctive character and social structure. It was predominantly Conservative and Anglican.

The county had a strong educational tradition. The Schools Inquiry Commission reported that it had more grammar schools per head than any other county. By 1870, most of them had become elementary schools in practice. Their decline had been hastened by changes in the social structure. This still left Westmorland well-provided with grammar schools, but the best secondary education went to boarders, not mainly Westmorland children.

Westmorland was also well-provided with elementary schools in 1870. Few parishes were without a school and attendance was relatively high. Except in East Ward, there were enough school places but the standard of the schools was poor. Few of them were under government inspection. Nearly all were Anglican.

During the period 1870 - 1903, the grammar schools were re-organised by the Endowed School (later Charity) Commissioners. They classified the schools into grades, reformed the governing bodies, widened the curriculum, insisted that the schools charge fees, and tried to introduce a scholarship system. These changes had varied effects on the individual schools. In some cases, they caused controversies, of which the most acute arose from the decision to close the Kendal

Blue Coat School and to amalgamate its endowments with those of Kendal Grammar School. This case has already been discussed by Simon (*Studies in the History of Education, 1780-1870*) and Owen (*English Philanthropy, 1660-1960*), but neither has looked at all the evidence, and both their views need qualification.

The principal immediate effect of the 1870 Act was to stimulate the building of voluntary schools. There were soon enough school places, but the attendance problem was difficult to solve. Improvements in buildings and in staffing were slow to come, and the curriculum remained narrow. Anglican control was as strong as ever. Only a few School Boards were formed, mainly in East Ward where Nonconformity was strong. Kendal had a School Board, but it only concerned itself with enforcing attendance.

As a result of the 1902 Act, Westmorland County Council became a Local Education Authority, with Kendal as a Part III Authority. By 1914 there was an efficient grammar school in every part of the county, and there had been a great extension of secondary education for girls. These changes occasioned little controversy, except at Lowther. The improvements in elementary education were steady rather than dramatic.

In general, throughout the period, the provision for education in Westmorland was among the best in the country.

The History of Elementary and Secondary Education

in Westmorland, 1870 - 1914.

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A thesis

for the degree of Master of Education of Durham University.

by

William B. Marker M.A.

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Contents.

	Page.
List of Maps and Traces	ii
List of Illustrations	iii
Abbreviations used in the footnotes	iv
 <u>Chapter.</u>	
1. Westmorland in the Eighteen-sixties	1.
2. Secondary Education in Westmorland in 1870	17.
3. Elementary Education in Westmorland in 1870	36.
4. The Country Grammar Schools, 1870-1903	69.
5. The Blue Coat School and the Kendal Grammar Schools, 1870-1903	108.
6. Developments in elementary education, 1870-1903	143.
7. The Local Education Authorities, 1903-1914	197.
 Bibliography	 238

School Continuity Chart : Elementary Schools, 1860-1914.

List of Maps and Traces.

Maps. (at the end)

1. Westmorland - Physical Features.
2. Westmorland - Administrative Divisions

Traces. (in the folder attached to the back cover). These are to be superimposed on Map 2.

1. The distribution of schools in Westmorland (excluding Kendal) in 1871.
  2. The distribution of Westmorland School Boards, 1870-1903.
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Notes on Trace 1.

1. This Trace is based on the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission and on the Civil Returns of 1871, except where they are clearly inaccurate, e.g. in the omission of the school at Meal Bank in Scalthwaiterigg.
2. Where no return was made in 1871, the schools have not been included except a) where it has been possible to identify them, e.g. Ravenstonedale Grammar School; and b) at Dillicar, to make it clear that there was a school in the parish.
3. In 1871, Windermere was in the parish of Applethwaite, Bowness in Undermilbeck, and Appleby in Appleby St. Lawrence.

List of Illustrations.

Except for the photograph of the old Kendal Grammar School, these are all reproductions of nineteenth century photographs in the local history collection at Kendal Library, and are reproduced by kind permission of the Librarian, Mr.D.F.James F.L.A. Unfortunately, none of the originals is dated.

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	Facing page.
1. The Old Kendal Grammar School	33
2. Grayrigg School and Church	50
3. The Kendal Blue Coat School	110
4. Blue Coat School boys	112
5. A group of Kendal elementary school boys and their teacher	186

Abbreviations used in the footnotes.

W.G.	Westmorland Gazette
W.C.C.	Westmorland County Council
W.C.E.C.	Westmorland County Education Committee
S.A.C.	School Attendance Committee
S.I.C.	Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission
Rept. C.C. on Ed.	Report of the Committee of Council on Education
Rept. S.C. on E.S. Act.	Report of the Select Committee on the Endowed Schools Acts, 1886-87
P.R.O.	Public Record Office, London.
W.R.O.	Westmorland Record Office, Kendal.
Whellan.	Whellan W. The History and Topography of the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland.

Chapter OneWestmorland in the Eighteen-sixties

Westmorland is the most barren county in England. Everywhere the landscape is dominated by hills : by the Pennines, by the Cumbrian mountains, by the fells which stride across from Tebay over Shap to High Street, and which - even today - make the North and South of the county two distinct regions. However attractive to the tourist, these uplands are of little use to the farmer. In the eighteen-sixties, perhaps 30% of the total area was unfit for any sort of farming, and another 20% was nothing more than rough grazing<sup>(1)</sup> Only in the Eden Valley in the north, and in the valleys of the Lune and Kent in the South, were any large areas of good farming land to be found. In the rest of the county, the narrow valleys, thrust like slim, green fingers, between the dark mountain masses, were the homes of isolated communities, strong in their local loyalties.

This was an environment more favourable to sheep than to men. In fact, in the eighteen-sixties, Westmorland was the most sparsely-populated county in England, for in 1871 its half million acres supported only 65,010 people,<sup>(2)</sup> or 80 to the square mile, compared to the national average of 373.<sup>(3)</sup> Few counties, moreover, can

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1. F.W. Garnett. Westmorland Agriculture 1800-1900 (Kendal 1912). p 73
  2. The 1871 census. The registration county, which included the township of Dalton (Lancs), had a population of 65,310.
  3. W.G. 24 December, 1869. Extracts from "The 2nd General Report of the Commissioners on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture." Report on Cumberland and Westmorland by H.J. Tremenheere. (Cited as Tremenheere's report.) Further extracts appeared in W.G. 1-29 January 1870.

have been less affected by the 'population explosion' of nineteenth century Britain. In 1801, the population of Westmorland was already 40,805; by 1871, it had therefore increased by 24,205, or roughly 60%, during a period in which the population of England and Wales had increased by about 155%. After 1871, while the national population continued to expand rapidly, that of Westmorland remained static and has shown little variation from that day to this.

Why the population expanded so slowly is a question for the demographers to answer. Late marriages may have had something to do with it, for the agricultural labourers, like the peasants of post-famine Ireland, tended to postpone marriage in the hope of obtaining a farm;<sup>(1)</sup> but without detailed analysis, the main reason would seem to be that large numbers were leaving the county. According to the 1861 census, no less than 23,061 people born in Westmorland were living elsewhere in Britain; by 1881 the number had swelled to 30,650. This emigration was not matched by any corresponding movement into the county. Most of the people who lived there had been born there; in 1881 only 27% were "off-comers".

Just as the population had not increased dramatically in number, so there had been no major change in its distribution. The population was scattered, as it always had been, wherever the land was cultivable. In earlier, less-settled times the farms tended to be clustered in villages for greater security, but the pacification of the Border had encouraged the spread of isolated farms. All these villages were small; in 1871 no parish outside Kendal had more than 2,000 people in it and very few had over 1,000. A typical village like Crosby

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1. Westmorland Gazette 8 January 1870. Tremenheere's report. Table VII of the 1881 census shows that men married later in Westmorland than in the neighbouring counties of Cumberland, Northumberland and Durham.

Garrett in the north had a population of 585; Hutton Roof in the south had one of 288. Even the market towns of the county were not very much larger; Kirkby Stephen had only 1871 people, Kirkby Lonsdale 1766 and Appleby 1680.

Life in these little towns could hardly be called urban, not just because the countryside was at everyone's doorstep, but also because they had not developed industries such as would have given their people an urban outlook. Instead, they existed to serve the needs of the surrounding rural area, providing it with the services of doctors, solicitors, auctioneers, shopkeepers, carriers and so on, with the result that their lives were inextricably linked to the rhythms of the countryside. The only distinctively urban community in the county was Kendal, with a population in 1871 of 11,579. Since 1801, the town had been growing slightly faster than the county, but the difference was insignificant, There was no parallel in Westmorland to the massive urbanisation which had taken place in the same period in other parts of the country. In 1801, 16·9% of the people of the county lived in Kendal; by 1871, it was only 17·8%.

Until the second half of the eighteenth century, these rural communities, and even Kendal itself, had been very isolated. The county had no port, worth the name, no navigable rivers, and no roads fit for wheeled vehicles. So all journeys had to be made on foot or on horse-back, and the commerce of the county was carried on strings of pack-horses, which wound slowly along the rough tracks, traces of which can still be seen on some of the more remote Lakeland passes like the Nan Field. However, in the century since 1763, when the first coach linked Kendal to London, this isolation had been considerably reduced. First had come the turn-pike roads, which linked the main market towns; then, in 1819, the Lancaster-Kendal canal; and finally the railways. Owing to its position astride the

main west coast route to Scotland, the county had early had good railway links with the North and South. By the eighteen-sixties it was also linked to Furness, to the North-east via Darlington, and its last major line, the Settle-Carlisle, was under construction. Even so, travel outside the railway network was still slow and, in bad weather, difficult. Perhaps because of this and of the high proportion of native-born inhabitants, local feeling was still very strong and outside intrusion something to be regarded with suspicion. For instance, a letter in the Westmorland Gazette in March 1870, seriously described the organisers of a meeting of the Friends of Education League as "foreign agitators".<sup>(1)</sup> More plaintively, the parish register of Grayrigg for 1879 records a resolution petitioning the magistrates "that we be left as we are and that no roads in Westmorland be made main roads".<sup>(2)</sup>

This isolation, together with their lack of mineral resources, spared the Westmorland valleys from the industrialisation which took place in those of South Lancashire and the West Riding. Outside Kendal there was very little industry and most of that was "local and miscellaneous",<sup>(3)</sup> like the tanneries at Burton and Kirkby Lonsdale, the breweries at Appleby and the corn and flour, sack and bag manufactory at Milnthorpe. The only exceptions, in the rural areas, were the bobbin mills and the extractive industries - quarrying and mining. Quarrying for slate was carried on at Langdale and at Kentmere, and for granite at Shap. Lead-mining, centred on Murton, Dufton and Patterdale, had been a flourishing industry as recently as the mid eighteen-fifties, but by 1870 the competition of cheap foreign imports coming at a time

1. Westmorland Gazette. 5 March 1870.
2. I am indebted for this information to the Rev. G.W. Brassington of Grayrigg.
3. Kelly's Directory of Cumberland and Westmorland (1873), p. 907, describing the industries of Appleby.



when mining was proving increasingly difficult, had sent the industry into decline; production was only 1,580 tons of lead a year and most of this was coming from the workings at Greenside. By 1881 there were only 164 lead miners in the county.<sup>(1)</sup>

Difficulties of communication, however, had not prevented Kendal from developing into a centre of the cloth industry even in the Middle Ages. Like other old-established textile centres, it had been badly hit by the development of the West Riding. Kendal's response to this challenge was to diversify; and so, although cloth continued to be woven in the town, other industries had become more important. A description of the town written in 1860 outlines some of these changes in the pattern of industry.

"Between three and four hundred weavers are at this day employed at Kendal in the manufacture of linsey-woolseys, all of the old patterns that were preferred hundreds of years ago. Change in abundance may be found side by side with adherence to old custom. Railway rugs - a new article - are in great request, and the manufacture of them is increasing; so is that of trowsering. The great manufacture of Kendal, however, is carpets, which was introduced into Kendal in 1822 by Messrs. Atkinsons.

The collective woollen manufacture employs about a third of the population of Kendal. The town is also celebrated for its breweries, one of which, Messrs. William Whitwell and Co.,

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1. A. Raistrick and B. Jennings. A History of Lead Mining in the Pennines. (London 1965) pp. 281-4 describes the general trends. Production figures for 1870 are taken from Kelly's Directory (1873) p. 901.

situate in Highgate, is very extensive, ..... tobacco and snuff are also manufactured here, ..... and there are four tanneries."<sup>(1)</sup>

Not even the industries of Kendal could compare to agriculture in its importance to the life of the county. Although the 'Industrial Classes' might seem to outnumber the 'Agricultural', no single industrial occupation employed more than a few hundred men.<sup>(2)</sup> In contrast, the number of farmers and of agricultural labourers was very much larger; the 1881 census gives the Agricultural Class as 6099 males and 406 females. This meant that something like 31% of the male working population were directly engaged in agriculture, but even this understates its importance. For it takes no account of the fact that about half the working women of the county were "indoor domestic servants", many of whom presumably worked on farms. Nor does it take account of others who depended on agriculture indirectly. For instance, there were those in obvious ancillary trades such as the millers, the malsters and the blacksmiths who shod the county's 6,800 horses; there were the carriers and the harness-makers; there were those who provided professional services such as auctioneers and surveyors; and there were those employed in the great houses. At Underley Hall in the eighteen-nineties, the staff numbered 162: 28 house staff, 14 stablemen, 26 gardeners, 9 game-keepers, 30 foresters, 8 farm workers, 43 workmen (plumbers, masons etc.) and 4 on the estate agent's staff.<sup>(3)</sup> These people clearly

1. Whellan p. 844.

2. This paragraph is based on Table X, Census of Occupations, of the 1881 census. To arrive at an estimate of the working population, the number in Group 24 (persons without a specified occupation) was deducted from the total population.

3. A. Pearson. The Doings of a Country Solicitor. (Kendal 1947) pp. 74-5.

owed their livelihood directly to the prosperity of the estate's 25,000 acres.

The farms which the people of the county owned, leased or worked on were mainly small. Tremenheere thought that they were exceptionally small<sup>(1)</sup> but the figures do not bear this out.

Table 1 : the size of holdings in Westmorland<sup>(2)</sup>

<u>No. of holdings</u>					
Not above 20 acres	:	20 - 100	:	Over 100	: Total
0 - 5	5 - 20	:	20 - 50	50 - 100	:
406	857		895	823	642 3623

Percentage of holdings

0 - 20	:	20 - 100	:	Over 100 acres
35%		47%		18%

Although three-fifths of the holdings were under 50 acres, the percentage of very small ones (under 20 acres) was the lowest in England. This is not surprising, when so much of the land in Westmorland was not very fertile. According to the Agricultural Returns for 1870, only 23,298 acres were under corn crops (mainly oats) and another 11,729 acres were under green crops (mainly turnips). The rest of the land that was farmed was pasture of all grades; some, as in the Lune and Eden Valleys, of high quality, but much of it very rough. On these pastures, the farmers reared dairy and beef cattle (predominantly the latter) and large numbers of sheep. Had the farms been exceptionally small, given land of this quality, the farmers of Westmorland would have been a poverty-stricken group, something like the crofters of the Western Highlands. In fact, most nineteenth century observers agreed that the Lake Counties enjoyed a modest, but well-spread, prosperity.

1. Westmorland Gazette. 24 December 1869. He writes of "the minute sub-division of landed property."

2. Garnett. Westmorland Agriculture 1800-1900. p. 248.

Even in the late nineteenth century, rural society was distinctly hierarchical. At the base of the pyramid were the agricultural labourers. In most parts of the country, the typical labourer was landless, lived in a tied cottage, and worked for a weekly wage, but the unusual conditions in Westmorland had produced a very different pattern. Until the nineteenth century, the county had been noted for the large number of its 'statesmen', who had usually run their holdings as family concerns. As these were often too small to need outside labour, and too remote to obtain it, cottages for day labourers had never been built. Therefore, as the number of the statesmen declined, the farmers who replaced them and who more often needed outside labour, normally found it by hiring farm servants, men and women, who lived in. Hiring fairs were held at Whitsuntide and Martinmas, when farmers and servants struck a bargain for the ensuing half year.<sup>(1)</sup>

This living in system had its snags - it was one of the factors blamed for the county's high illegitimacy rate - but had very obvious advantages to both sides. For the masters, it meant that the men were under constant supervision, and could be called upon to work as required without extra pay. For the men, it meant good food, as they lived with the family and shared its meals, and good wages. In 1870, an ordinary labourer could expect about £20 a year in addition to his food, washing and lodging. This compared very favourably with the 12/- a week then being paid to day labourers on the Tufton estates. The great advantage of the system, however, was the chance it offered of saving. Though many took their money at the end of the half year and went on a spree

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1. Westmorland Gazette. 8 and 15 January 1870. This paragraph and the following one are based on Tremenheere's report and a letter from the Rev. J. Simpson.

during the week's holiday between hirings, others put it prudently away, in the hope of setting up as farmers themselves. In 1869, the annual report of the Penrith Branch of the Carlisle Savings Bank showed that £9,259 was owing to 260 male farm servants.

Above the farm servants came the statesmen and the tenant farmers. By this time, the statesmen had long been in decline.<sup>(1)</sup> Deprived of secondary trades like carding and spinning, they could no longer make a living from their small holdings, especially if they lacked the will or the capital to improve them. Therefore, large numbers had sold out; between 1829 and 1849, the number in the county dropped from 916 to 563. After that the decline continued, but more slowly. It was most marked near Kendal and in the Lune Valley, where the Underley estate was being built up by purchase from 220 separate owners; least marked in the East Ward, which in 1885 had half the statesmen in the county though only a quarter of the population.<sup>(2)</sup> Probably this was because the statesmen lost the best land first; Tremenheere certainly thought that they were only numerous in the remoter districts. "They exist," he wrote, "in their primitive simplicity only in the mountain dales, where the whole of the work required on the small estate is generally done by the proprietor and his family."<sup>(3)</sup>

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1. G.P. Jones. The Decline of the Yeomanry in the Lake Counties. In Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, New Series, Vol. LXII.
  2. Garnett. Westmorland Agriculture 1800-1900. p. 15.
  3. W.G. 15 January 1870, Tremenheere's report. See also W.G. 2 July 1881, Coleman's report to the Royal Agricultural Commission.

In some ways, the change from statesmen to tenant farmers cannot have made a great deal of difference. Although there was a tendency for farms to become larger, this was only gradual. On the Underley Estate, if this is typical, the substitution of one owner for 220 had led to no drastic changes in the size of farms. In 1888, it was still let in 194 holdings, 81 of them under 50 acres.<sup>(1)</sup> In fact, the tenant farmers must often have lived in the same farmhouse and worked much the same land, having lost independence, but possibly gained in prosperity through the backing of an improving land lord.

Despite these changes, Westmorland had still not entirely lost its character of a county of small proprietors. The proportion of land held in estates of under 300 acres was distinctly above the national average.

Table 2 : Percentage of Land in different sizes of estate (in acres)<sup>(2)</sup>

	Over 10,000	3-10,000	1-3,000	300-1,000	100-300	1-100
Westmorland :	27(13)*	11(38)*	9(32)*	16	18	16
National average :	24	17	12.4	14	12.5	12

\* Position out of 39 English counties.

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1. Garnett. Westmorland Agriculture 1800-1900. p. 248, quoting the evidence of F. Punchard, the Underley Agent, before the Small Holdings Committee of 1888.

2. From figures in F.M.G. Thompson, English Landed Society in the nineteenth century. (London 1963) pp 32,114-5, 117. These refer to a slightly later period, as they are based on the 1883 edition of Bateman, The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland.

The other peculiarity about the distribution of land ownership in Westmorland was the comparatively small number of medium-sized estates. If we accept Thompson's working definition of the gentry as those with estates of 1,000 - 10,000 acres and of the landed aristocracy as those with over 10,000 acres,<sup>(1)</sup> Westmorland emerges as one of the least gentrified but most aristocratic counties in England.

The great aristocratic family of Westmorland were the Lowthers, with an estate inside the county of 39,229 acres.<sup>(2)</sup> Only two other families, the Tuftons (16,024 acres) and the Taylours, Earls of Bective (12,851 acres) had large estates, but neither could rival the Lowther influence which had dominated Westmorland politics since the eighteenth century. Nowhere was the sturdy independence of the English county voter less in evidence. Throughout the whole period from 1800 to 1870, a Lowther held one of the Westmorland county seats, and a Lowther or a Lowther nominee held the other. In 1841, the Lowthers recognised the growing importance of the Underley estate by nominating its owner, Alderman Thompson, to succeed Viscount Lowther, who had just become Earl of Lonsdale, and thereafter the seat went with the Underley estate, passing in 1854 to the Earl of Bective and in 1870 to his son. This Tory and aristocratic predominance, though challenged on several occasions by Brougham, was only once broken - in 1831, when, at the height of the Reform agitation, the Lowthers conceded one seat to the Whig candidate, Alexander Nowell. Since the centre of Whig support had been Kendal, this concession was no longer necessary when Kendal became a separate single-member constituency in 1832. Lowther

1. F.M.L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the nineteenth century*. (London 1963) p. 112.

2. *Westmorland Gazette*. 26 February 1876.

control of the county was then so firmly re-established that the Whig interest led by the Tuftons considered it futile to contest any election before 1880. Kendal, however, became a Whig stronghold. It immediately showed its independence of the Lowthers by electing James Brougham (Henry's brother) as its first M.P.; thereafter Whigs or Liberals were returned unopposed, except in 1843, when a Protectionist candidate stood unsuccessfully against them.<sup>(1)</sup>

That the county was staunchly Tory and Kendal staunchly Liberal suggests that the one was mainly Anglican and the other mainly Non-conformist. In fact, this was not the case. For a clearer picture, one must go back to the Religious Census of 1851, the main nineteenth century attempt to assess the relative strength of the churches and the adequacy of their provision (in terms of buildings and accommodation) for the spiritual life of the nation. Unfortunately this neither gives the comparative numbers of regular church-goers belonging to each denomination nor even the number of individuals who attended on the day of the census. Therefore, the strength of the churches can only be compared either through the accommodation they provided or through attendance figures which are open to various interpretations. Neither of these approaches is very satisfactory, but the fact that they yield very similar results inspires some confidence that the broad outline is realistic, even if the details are not completely accurate.

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1. This paragraph is based on R.S. Ferguson, Cumberland and Westmorland M.Ps, 1660-1867 (London and Carlisle 1871).



Table 3 Relative strength of churches in Westmorland :  
Percentage of population provided with sittings.

	C of E	Other Protestants	R.C.	Total
East Ward	45.4	54.9	--	100.3
West Ward	47.7	10.1	--	57.8
Kendal Ward	40.2	17.6	1.9	59.7

Table 4 Relative strength of churches in Westmorland : (1)  
Minimum numbers attending.

	C of E		Other Protestants		R.C.		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
East Ward	2479	18.2	2362	17.4	--	--	4841	35.6
West Ward	1871	22.9	234	2.6	--	--	2105	25.5
Kendal Ward	6635	18.2	2536	6.9	400	1.0	9571	26.1
Totals	10985		5132		400		16517	

From both these tables, it is clear that in 1851 Non-conformity was weak in both West Ward and Kendal Ward, but that in East Ward it faced the Church of England as an equal rival, matching it place for place, church-member for church-member, and - as was to be expected from its fissiparous nature - outnumbering its 21 churches with 54 chapels, 44 of which belonged to different branches of the Methodist church. <sup>(2)</sup>

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1. These figures for minimum numbers attending are arrived at by adding together the best attendances of the day, whether morning, afternoon or evening, as given in the detailed tables (Census of Great Britain 1851, Religious Worship, England and Wales, Detailed Tables, p.119) They do not tally with those in Table N (Ibid, Report and Tables, p.ccc) as they are arrived at by adding together the best attendances for each Ward, while those in Table N add together the best attendances for each church. This gives the following totals: C.of E. 12,103; Other Protestants 6,770; Roman Catholics 400; Total 19,273.

2. Ibid. Detailed Tables, p.119.

This position could have changed by 1870, but it is not likely that it had done so substantially. One indicator, at least, is that it was still very similar in 1860. An analysis of the Non-conformist chapels mentioned in Whellan shows that out of 58, 31 were in East Ward; a handful of Presbyterians and Congregationalists, a little cluster of Baptists near Brough, and, for the rest, 24 Methodist chapels, strung out along the Eden Valley from Stainmore down to Temple Sowerby.

In Kendal, even more than in East Ward, the Non-conformist churches were well-entrenched. In the eighteenth century, there had been Quaker, Unitarian, Inghamite, Scots Presbyterian, and Independent chapels; and for a time one of the most famous of the Dissenting Academies, that of Caleb Rotherham.<sup>(1)</sup> To this strong nucleus of the 'old denominations' had been added, by the 1860s, both Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists, Christian Brethren, and the Zion Chapel Congregation. As the Annals of Kendal put it: "It is generally considered that there are a greater number of different denominations of professing Christians in Kendal than in almost any other town of equal population."<sup>(2)</sup> Even so, it is doubtful whether the Non-conformists had come to dominate the town. The Church of England had not been idle, for three new churches had been built to rival the chapels - St. Thomas's, St. George's and Allhallows. Failing accurate statistics of church-membership, one cannot be sure how the two rivals balanced. In 1871, the Kendal Green British School committee claimed that "more than half the population of the Borough are Non-conformists",<sup>(3)</sup> on the grounds that the four churches provided

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1. G.F. Nicholson and E. Axon, *The Older Non-conformity in Kendal*. (Kendal 1915) pp. 319-29.
  2. C. Nicholson. *The Annals of Kendal*. (Kendal 1861) p. 161.
  3. Kendal Green British School papers. Letter of W. Thomson to the Education Department, 17 May 1871.

3,200 sittings and the nine chapels 4,000; but in the School Board election of that year, which was fought on strictly denominational grounds, four Anglicans were returned against three Non-conformists, and an Anglican topped the poll.<sup>(1)</sup>

The final picture, therefore, is of a mainly Anglican county, the Church challenged only by the Methodists in the Eden Valley and by a mixture of new and old denominations in Kendal. As Canon Ware<sup>(2)</sup> put it:

"We have to deal with a district which possesses a peculiar and distinctive character. Our difficulties are in many respects different from those which beset the Church's work elsewhere, We have not to contend with the wide spread of open infidelity. Dissent has not a great hold upon our people, nor is it as strongly hostile to the Church as in other parts of England."<sup>(3)</sup>

Perhaps because the rivalry between Church and Chapel was not very intense, the proportion of church-goers in Westmorland does not seem to have been particularly high, even though the churches were not faced with what was elsewhere their major problem, the 'heathen masses' of the industrial towns. Comparing the minimum attendance figures (see Table 4) to the population shows that at least one-third of the total population attended. This was the highest proportion of the four Northern counties, but there were many others which outdid Westmorland in religious zeal, Huntingdon, Wiltshire, Suffolk and Leicester, to name only some. Nor can this be set down to the difficulty of reaching

1. W.G. 21 January 1871.

2. Rev. Henry Ware (1830-1909); ed. Trinity College, Cambridge; B.A. (double 1st) 1853; Fellow of Trinity 1855-62; Vicar of Kirkby Lonsdale 1862-88; Bishop Suffragan of Barrow-in-Furness 1889-1909.

3. W.G. 20 July 1872.

church or chapel in such a sparsely populated county, as higher proportions were recorded for rural Wales.

So, as one might expect from the character of the dalesmen, Westmorland was a county staunchly, rather than fanatically, religious, and one still inclined to hold fast to its ancient ways. This must have been one reason for the peculiarly peaceful and orderly life which it shared with Cumberland. "Cumberland and Westmorland," wrote Tremenheere, "present a remarkable contrast to most other counties in the general prosperity of their inhabitants and they are singularly exempt from crime;"<sup>(1)</sup> and he went on to quote the chief constable's report that "in the returns made to him by his superintendents, there was not a single person or house under the respective designation of 'known thieves and depredators', 'receivers of stolen goods', 'prostitutes', 'suspected persons', 'houses of receivers of stolen goods', 'beer shops of bad character', 'coffee shops of bad character', 'house of ill-fame or other suspected house'." For such an effect, however, no one cause will suffice. The Romantic might look also to the ennobling effects of Nature; the Marxist to the comparative lack of class antagonism; but the very special educational institutions of the two counties are a factor to which great weight must be given.

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1. W.G. 29 January 1870.

Chapter TwoSecondary Education in Westmorland in 1870

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Westmorland was reputed to be "the best educated county in England." Speaking in the House of Commons in 1809, Whitbread claimed that a ninth of the population of Westmorland attended school, whereas the national average was only one fifteenth.<sup>(1)</sup> How accurate such statistics are may be doubtful, but, if 'best-educated' means with the largest number of schools per head, Westmorland's claim to the title was a strong one. Within its boundaries was an unusually large number of endowed schools; at least 60 are mentioned in Parson and White.<sup>(2)</sup> Nor was this all. There were the private schools and academies, and in quite a number of villages, where there is no mention of an endowed school, there was probably a small village school as someone is listed in the directory as 'schoolmaster': John Idle at Temple Sowerby, John Williamson at Yanwath, Richard James at Skelsmergh, and L. Wilkinson at Longsleddale to take only a few examples. Altogether Parson and White lists 149 people as teachers and, as most schools in those days only had one teacher and very few had more than two, the number of schools cannot have been far short of this. In fact, a count in the directory yields the following totals:

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1. E. Halevy. History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century. Vol. 1, p. 533.
  2. W. Parson and W. White. History, Directory and Gazetteer of Westmorland. (Leeds 1829).

Table A: Number of schools in Westmorland in 1829

Endowed schools:	64
Private schools and academies:	21
Village schools:	30
National schools:	2
Schools of industry:	<u>1</u>
Total	<u>118</u>

*All  
Secondary?*

Such a large number of endowed schools was without parallel anywhere in England. When the Schools Inquiry Commission made its report in 1868, there were not quite so many. It only reported on 40 schools, but 18 'endowed non-classical schools' also sent in returns. Even taking this bottom figure of 40 (really 39 as one school was in abeyance),<sup>(1)</sup> it was then only exceeded by Lancashire with 76 and the West Riding with 71, both of them teeming industrial areas, far richer and more thickly populated than Westmorland.

One factor which had encouraged this proliferation of endowed schools was the distribution of the population. In an area of tiny villages, separated often by wild moorland and linked only by rough tracks, each village had to have its own school or see its children uneducated. This, however, is not a complete explanation for two reasons. One is that similar conditions in neighbouring counties did not have the same effects or not to such a marked degree; for its 205,000 inhabitants, Cumberland had 29 endowed schools, but Northumberland for 343,000 had only 10.<sup>(2)</sup> The other is that such conditions would normally produce large numbers of elementary schools, but many of the endowed schools had been more than this. In fact, they had had a dual purpose: to provide an elementary education for all and a classical

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1. Burton-in-Kendal.
  2. S.I.C. xix. pp. 6-9.

education for the sons of statesmen, tradesmen, and even the local gentry.<sup>(1)</sup> This can be seen very clearly from the printed 'State of Kirkby Lonsdale Grammar School' for 1808,<sup>(2)</sup> which lists about 60 pupils. Those in the lower forms were taught only English grammar and some arithmetic, but those in the higher forms were taught Latin and eventually Greek and Mathematics, though the number studying these was small - eight for Greek and only the two top boys for Euclid and Algebra.

This exceptional demand for classical education partly arose out of the peculiar social structure of Westmorland with its high proportion of statesmen, but it cannot be explained simply in terms of social structure unless we regard the "plain living and high thinking" of the dalesmen as just a Wordsworthian myth. Much of it stemmed from religious conviction, being a product of the Protestant quest for self-improvement; but economic pressures also counted for something. The statesman's holding could normally only support one son. Outlets for the others in commerce were remote, though an exceptional case like William Thompson<sup>(3)</sup> might go from Grayrigg to make a fortune in London on the grand scale and return to become owner of Underley and a county M.P. It was natural, therefore, to look to the learned professions, especially to the church, because the standard for entry

1. Kirkby Lonsdale National School papers. Letter of the Rev. Carus-Wilson of Casterton Hall; 29 January, 1857. He writes of the old grammar school "where for centuries all grades received their education, myself at my outset and my father before me."

2. In the school library, Queen Elizabeth School, Kirkby Lonsdale.

3. W.G. 15 March, 1854; his obituary.

into the ministry was not very rigorous, and the boys could be ordained direct from the local grammar school.<sup>(1)</sup> Hence arose a demand for a sound but cheap classical education, from a group who valued it both for itself and for its economic benefits, but who could not afford to pay the expenses of boarding schools and had no wish for the trappings of gentility they sought to purvey.

The people who created this demand were also instrumental in enabling it to be met. Some of the statesmen's sons taught as a step towards entering the ministry; some taught after entering it; and some, having set out to enter it, remained as schoolmasters instead. This process was described by the Rev. James Simpson<sup>(2)</sup> in his evidence before the Schools Inquiry Commission: "Many of them (i.e. the statesmen's sons) were intended to go into the church and other professions, and they did so, but at the same time they were for three or four years of their life in the habit of teaching in those endowed schools, and meanwhile improving themselves. Some of them did not succeed in getting into the church or any other of the professions and continued to be masters. The consequence was a kind of master at that time which I myself can partly remember, well instructed himself, and able to give a tolerably sound education."<sup>(3)</sup>

If, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the endowed schools could still attract capable staff and offer a sound classical

1. S.I.C. ix. p.903 (Memorandum of D.C. Richmond).
2. Rev. James Simpson (1819-86): ed. Crosthwaite School; master at Shap 1839-41; ordained 1844; vicar of Shap 1857-63 and of Kirkby Stephen 1863-86; first chairman of the School Boards at Kirkby Stephen, and Nateby and Wharton.
3. S.I.C. v. p.563. Minutes of Evidence, Wednesday 7th March 1866. Rev. James Simpson. Q. 14,250.



education, sixty years later this was no longer true.<sup>(1)</sup> Some of the reasons for this decline were those common to the endowed schools; others were peculiar to Westmorland. Like those elsewhere, Westmorland schools might suffer because the local gentry sent their sons away to public school; might go into abeyance because of the incompetence of the trustees, as had Burton in Kendal;<sup>(2)</sup> might be dragged down through quarrels between the vicar and the trustees, as had Bampton,<sup>(3)</sup> or through the long tenure of an incompetent master, as had Selside.<sup>(4)</sup> More fundamental was the sharpening contrast between the classical education they offered and the needs of the increasingly industrialised society which their pupils would enter. Naturally, this contrast was most keenly felt at Kendal, especially as the grammar school there had sunk very low. In 1865 the Town Council appointed a committee to examine the condition of the grammar school, and in the debate on its report the general feeling was that the school was too classical. Instead, Alderman Wakefield argued, the school should provide "a good sound commercial education which he believed was at present much needed for the children of the tradesmen of the town."<sup>(5)</sup>

For this general reason, that an exclusively classical education could be seen to be less and less appropriate, the endowed schools which

1. It is difficult to estimate how many were giving a classical education in the early nineteenth century. Carlisle's 'Endowed Grammar Schools in England and Wales' published in 1818, only mentions 16 Westmorland schools, and at least one of these (Brough) was non-classical. On the other hand, Richmond (S.I.C. ix. p.902) quotes an estimate made by the Commissioners of the Brougham Inquiry in 1822 that over 30 schools were then probably teaching Latin.

2. S.I.C. xix. p.330-1.

3. S.I.C. xix. p.307-9

4. S.I.C. xix. p.394.

5. W.G. 25 March 1865.

clung to it were bound to decline, but this decline was hastened on by changes in the social structure. As the statesmen went down, they dragged the endowed schools down with them. Fewer of them meant fewer younger sons seeking a classical education, especially if it is true that it was the poorer ones who clung on, as they would have the most need to keep their children working on the farms. This trend intensified as other outlets than the learned professions opened. Fewer seeking a classical education meant that the supply of teachers tended to dry up and this too was intensified by general social trends. The endowments of Westmorland schools were small and static, not such as to attract first-rate men at a time when rewards elsewhere were becoming larger. One obvious rival for the sort of talents which the schools needed was the Church, and the wealth and social prestige of the clergy were on the up-grade. A living like Kirkby Lonsdale, which was worth £250 a year in 1835, had more than doubled its value by 1873.<sup>(1)</sup> This sort of change diverted talent from the schools to the Church. The improvement in the value of the smaller livings, along with the decline in absenteeism in the better ones where previously the incumbent had often put in a poorly paid curate who taught because he needed the extra money, deprived the village schools of their clergyman-teachers. By the 1860's they had completely disappeared. "I do not know," said the Rev. Simpson, "at this present moment of a single instance where the parish clergyman teaches the parish school ..... whereas 30 or 40 years ago a great many of them were taught by clergymen."<sup>(2)</sup>

By the 1860's therefore the majority of the endowed schools had ceased to perform their dual role and had declined into purely

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1. C.M.L. Bouch. *Prelates and People of the Lake Counties*. (Kendal 1948), Appendix 13; and Kelly's Directory for 1873.

2. S.I.C. v, p. 563; Q. 14,250.

elementary schools. This is the picture which emerges from the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission. Set to investigate those schools "which were intended to give, or which actually now give, a higher education than that given in the National or British schools, or were intended to educate, or do now educate, that part of the community which usually require such a higher education,<sup>(1)</sup> it had to try to decide which of the endowed schools were giving a secondary education.

To do this, the Schools Inquiry Commission used two criteria. Firstly, judging the schools on their curriculum; it divided them into classical (which taught Latin and Greek), semi-classical (which taught Latin only) and non-classical. Secondly, judging them on the age to which they kept their pupils, it divided them into 1st grade (up to 18 or 19), 2nd grade (up to 16), 3rd grade (up to 14) and purely elementary. By these criteria, of the 39 schools in Westmorland which it investigated, 29 were purely elementary and only 10 had any pretensions to providing a "higher or wider circle of instruction."

Table B: Ten secondary schools in Westmorland as classified by the Schools Inquiry Commission

<u>A. By subjects taught:</u>	<u>Number</u>
(i) Classical: Appleby, Heversham, Kirkby Lonsdale	3
(ii) Semi-classical: Bampton, Bowness, Kendal, Lowther	4
(iii) Non-classical: Ambleside, Crosthwaite, Kirkby Stephen	3

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1. S.I.C. i. pp. 108-9.

<u>B. By Age of Pupils:</u>	<u>Number</u>
(i) 1st grade: Appleby, Heversham	2
(ii) 2nd grade: Bampton, Kirkby Lonsdale, Lewther	3
(iii) 3rd grade: Ambleside, Bowness, Crosthwaite, Kendal, Kirkby Stephen	5

Before examining what type of education these schools were giving, it would be as well to examine the pupils, who largely dictate what type of education is possible. According to the Schools Inquiry Commission report, the ten schools had about 500 pupils, most of them day boys, though there were about 30 girls and 70 boarders. In age they probably ranged from about 7 to 17. The Schools Inquiry Commission did not classify them into age-groups, but it is clear that many were only of elementary school age and only receiving elementary education. At Ambleside, 43 were under 10; at Lewther 12 were described as "very young"; so was the lowest class at Crosthwaite. Both at Heversham and at Bampton the children started at seven. At the other end of the scale, there were few children over 14 even in the second grade schools; those at Kirkby Lonsdale were described as "mainly 10-14" and at Bampton there were only four in the top class. Children over 16 were scarcely to be found outside the top classes of the two first grade schools, which numbered 8 (for Latin) at Appleby and 17 at Heversham.<sup>(1)</sup>

Granted that these ten schools were giving some sort of secondary education, the proportions of children attending them was high by the standards of the time. The Schools Inquiry Commission, accepting the view that secondary education was, with rare

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1. S.I.C. vol. xix, under the schools mentioned.

exceptions, only for the middle and upper classes, worked out a formula according to which places were needed for 12.28 boys aged 8-15 per 1,000 of the population.<sup>(1)</sup> Applying this to England and Wales gave a figure of 255,000 places needed; the number actually attending endowed schools of the first three grades (not all boys nor all within that age range) was only 36,874, or 14.4% of the number who should have been. Whereas in Westmorland the formula gave 737 places needed and about 450 boys were actually attending, 60% of the number who should have been.

This proportion was surprisingly high. The Schools Inquiry Commission calculated that there would generally be less demand than average in agricultural districts and more in urban; yet the Westmorland schools almost exclusively served agricultural districts and not particularly rich ones. The explanation must lie partly in the long tradition of local enthusiasm for education, and partly in the fact that the schools were both accessible and cheap. At Ambleside, Bowness and Lowther they were entirely free (except at Ambleside for a few boys from 'out-townships'); at Bampton, the school was free for all the children of the Parish, 36 out of the 51 pupils; at Kirkby Stephen the fees went no higher than £1-8-0d. a year.<sup>(2)</sup> Therefore in an area where the middle and upper classes were probably less numerous and less wealthy than in most others, the proportion of children at secondary schools was swelled to an unusual extent by children of the lower classes. The Schools Inquiry Commission's analysis of the social standing of the pupils suggests that something

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1. S.I.C. i. p.98 and Appendix Two.

2. S.I.C. vol. xix. under the schools mentioned.

like one third came from Category C, the artisans and labourers.<sup>(1)</sup>

Secondary education may have been unusually plentiful, but, to return to our previous question, was it a good secondary education? Clearly, in most cases, it could not have been; the pupils were too young for that to be possible. Other factors too were against it. One was that even the best schools had only primitive buildings, usually a single stone-built class-room. The one at Kirkby Lonsdale was rated 'good' by the Schools Inquiry Commission, but a pupil there in the eighteen eighties described the same building rather differently. It was "a little country grammar school with .... primitive buildings and playground. The school-room, which is now the library, was stone-flagged and white-washed and dreadfully cold, being heated by a small iron stove, but as the master stood in front of it - warming his back - .... with him in his gown as its fire-screen, little heat came to the pupils."<sup>(2)</sup> None of the buildings was much better than this, and several were considerably worse; two that were rated 'bad' were Kirkby Stephen and Kendal where the master's house was dilapidated and the School room "greatly in need of internal re-arrangement."<sup>(3)</sup>

Another adverse factor was the quality of the staff. The ten schools had 18 teachers between them, a staffing ratio of 1:28. Half of them, however, had no stated qualifications, and only six had degrees.<sup>(4)</sup> In short, the number of qualified staff was small and the salaries not such as to attract first-rate men. Those of the headmasters ranged from £60 a year paid to the acting head of Ambleside

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1. See Appendix A.

2. Pearson. The Doings of a Country Solicitor. pp. 21&2.

3. S.I.C. xix. p. 361.

4. This includes the headmaster of Bampton, who had just resigned at the time of the Schools Inquiry Commission's report.

to about £300 a year for the head at Appleby. Except at the three classical schools and at Lowther, they were under £100 a year. This may have been about average<sup>(1)</sup> but, as it was less than could be earned in a large elementary school, the quality of the heads must have suffered, let alone that of their assistants, whose salaries are not recorded.

These general considerations are reinforced by a detailed study of what the schools actually taught. In the lower classes, the curriculum was in no way different from that in the elementary schools; in the upper, it was the well-established round of classics and mathematics. That the schools had not progressed beyond the teaching of classics and mathematics was not a case of rural backwardness, for the Clarendon Commission found the same thing in the '9 Great Schools'. There was therefore nothing unusual in the complete absence of science teaching and the scant attention paid to English, History and Geography. Some of the schools did offer modern languages. Bampton, Heversham and Kirkby Lonsdale claimed to be teaching German, though this claim was not substantiated in any of the Commissioners' reports; and the same three schools, along with Appleby and Kendal, claimed to be teaching French. This appears to have involved about 80 pupils, but to judge from the reports, few reached much of a standard. At Kirkby Lonsdale, French was taught "in the case of 2 or 3 boys with success."<sup>(2)</sup> At Heversham, which alone accounted for 41 of the 80, only a few showed "respectable knowledge."<sup>(3)</sup>

However, the staple of the grammar school course was Latin and Mathematics, and to most people of the time the schools were good if

1. S.I.C. i. p.241 gives the average figures for Lancashire, which are similar to those for Westmorland.
2. S.I.C. xix. p.367.
3. S.I.C. xix. p.349.

they taught these two subjects efficiently. Two out of the ten schools - Ambleside and Crosthwaite - were not teaching them at all. At Kirkby Stephen it was reported that "the two boys at the head are just commencing Latin, and have written out two or three elementary exercises which they do not understand".<sup>(1)</sup> Matters were little better in the semi-classical schools. At Bampton, where there were supposed to be nineteen Latin pupils, the visiting Assistant Commissioner, D.C. Richmond (who was unable to inspect the boarders) found only two day boys doing it, only one of whom had made much progress.<sup>(2)</sup> At Kendal too the standard was very poor. Therefore, only in the three classical schools was Latin being reasonably well taught - to about 90 pupils. The same three were the only schools teaching Greek, except to an odd pupil or two, and only Appleby and Heversham taught it to any standard - to 27 pupils between them.

The number really doing Mathematics was almost as small. Nine of the schools claimed to be teaching it, but most of the claims were worth little. For instance, Crosthwaite put on its returns that there were 6 pupils doing Mathematics, whereas Richmond reported that "algebra and Euclid have been lately introduced on a small scale."<sup>(3)</sup> Only in the top classes of the three classical schools, which together contained about 40 pupils, was serious work being done.

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1. S.I.C. xix. p.371.
  2. S.I.C. xix. p.308.
  3. S.I.C. xix. p.342.



It is clear from this analysis that the number of children receiving a good grounding in Latin and Mathematics was small. At the most generous computation it was about 90, a mere 18% of the pupils in the 10 graded schools. A more stringent definition of secondary education would reduce the proportion receiving it even further; for it could be argued that one unchanging characteristic of the grammar schools is that they prepare pupils for the university. By this criterion, only Appleby and Heversham were genuine grammar schools and only the handful of pupils in their higher forms were receiving a full secondary education.<sup>(1)</sup>

So far it has been assumed that the places in Westmorland grammar schools were for Westmorland children. Was this the case? Was this meagre ration of secondary education readily available to local children? To put the matter in the most favourable light, the less stringent definition may be taken and all three classical schools considered. According to the Schools Inquiry Commission's report, they had 128 pupils, 66 day boys and 62 boarders, but it is impossible to tell from the report exactly what proportion of the boarders came from Westmorland. There is a complete list of the 10 Appleby boarders; 5 came from Westmorland, including 2 sons of the Headmaster. For Kirkby Lonsdale there is a list of 7 out of 13, none of them from Westmorland. For Heversham, 20 out of 39 are listed, 5 from Westmorland. Assuming that there were 10 Westmorland boarders at Heversham, there cannot have been more than 20 in the three schools together.

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1. In 1867 there were ten former pupils of Westmorland schools at universities, 2 from Appleby, 6 from Heversham and 2 from Kirkby Lonsdale. (S.I.C. i. Appendix VII, Tables IV, V and VII) It is clear, however, from the evidence of S.I.C. Vol. XIX that only Appleby and Heversham regularly sent pupils there.

It is important to establish this point because at all three classical schools the boarders were a favoured group. The schools, in fact, were in the position of those described by the Schools Inquiry Commission where, the endowment having proved insufficient to attract an able master, he had been allowed to take boarders. As it was from them that any increase in his income would come, the temptation was to concentrate on them and to neglect the work which he was paid by the foundation to do.<sup>(1)</sup> This had happened to some extent at all three schools. At Heversham, the school was divided into two departments, "the one consisting of about 20 boys being entirely in the hands of the master, and following the usual classical and mathematical course of a grammar school, the other being an English department under the care of a second master and a junior assistant."<sup>(2)</sup> At Kirkby Lonsdale the Headmaster had "no wish to have the sons of townsmen in the school"<sup>(3)</sup> and the bias against day boys at Appleby was equally marked. All the boarders were in the top two classes taught by the Head "but, with the exception of the one day boy in the first class, whose parents were able to give him the advantage of extra tuition from the head master, the day boys were not in a forward state, and the line of demarcation between them and the boarders was very clearly defined."<sup>(4)</sup> Even if no exact figures can be deduced, it is clear enough that few day pupils reached the top classes of the classical schools and that, with less than one third of the boarders coming from

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1. S.I.C. i. p. 152.
  2. S.I.C. xix. p. 348.
  3. S.I.C. xix. p. 366.
  4. S.I.C. xix. p. 300.

Westmorland, the best education in the county was mainly being given to 'off-comers'. Therefore, though the chances of a poor boy receiving some sort of secondary education were probably better in Westmorland than in most areas, his chances of receiving a good secondary education were but slight. The Westmorland grammar schools, like those elsewhere, were not living up to their founders' intention "to put the higher education permanently within the reach of all classes."<sup>(1)</sup>

This favoured treatment for the boarders created some resentment among local people. There is no mention of it at Appleby, where the fees were reasonable and there were still some free places for local boys; but at Heversham it flared up from time to time,<sup>(2)</sup> and at Kirkby Lonsdale, at the time of the Schools Inquiry Commission's report, it was very bitter. So much so, that a petition was presented by the townspeople to the feoffees asking that "six free scholars might be admitted as of old, and that the quarterage might be reduced", and a deputation waited on Richmond when he came to examine the school. Although there may have been other factors complicating this animosity between the townspeople and Darwent, the master, his favoured treatment of the boarders was certainly a major cause of complaint.<sup>(3)</sup>

As well as intending that their schools should teach all classes, the founders had also intended that they should be a

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1. S.I.C. i. p. 144.

2. S.I.C. xix. p. 348. "This arrangement, under which the master attends to the higher branches of study alone, has at times given rise to some expressions of dissatisfaction on the part of the inhabitants of Heversham ..... At present, however, there seems to be no complaint."

3. S.I.C. xix. p. 366.

ladder up to the universities. For this purpose, they had founded exhibitions with which Westmorland, having eleven to the annual value of £322-13-4d., was comparatively well endowed. In practice, not all of these were available, either because their value was so small that they had become useless, or because the schools they were attached to could no longer teach to a high enough standard. In 1867, there was no-one at all at a university from Bowness, Kirkby Stephen or Kendal. The Kendal exhibition had not been taken up for five years nor the Kirkby Lonsdale ones for ten. Only the two first-grade schools were in a position to make regular use of their exhibitions; so that the number really available was three, one at Appleby and two at Heversham, though pupils of both were entitled to compete for the Hastings.<sup>(1)</sup> This meant that the chance of a poor boy going from grammar school to university was very remote. At Appleby, because of the predominance of the boarders, it was practically nil. At Heversham there was a chance, but with only a few sons of 'artisans and labourers' at the school, the chance was very faint. The odds were rather that the exhibitions would go to boarders from outside the county and, as the total number from Westmorland schools at all universities in 1867 was ~~ten~~<sup>ten</sup>, the number of Westmorland children reaching them via the grammar schools was very small.

So far this discussion of secondary education has been confined to the endowed schools reported on by the Schools Inquiry Commission, but there was also the Friends' School in Stramongate,

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1. The Hastings scholarships to Queen's College, Oxford, restricted to pupils from certain schools in Cumberland, Westmorland and Yorkshire.

The Old Kendal Grammar School.



possibly the most flourishing secondary school in the county, with its five staff for 80 pupils and a curriculum which took in Latin, Greek, French, algebra, trigonometry, and "for a few boys the higher branches of mathematics."<sup>(1)</sup> This may have been useful to some Non-conformists in providing the only breach in the Anglican monopoly of secondary education, but its usefulness was limited by its cost; for both day boys and boarders it was about twice as expensive as any of the endowed grammar schools. It must also have been useful to the wealthier Kendal parents as an alternative to the decaying grammar school. But, as it was mainly a boarding school and there is no information about where the boarders came from, it is difficult to tell how great an asset the school was to the children of the county.

Although the preceding picture of the grammar schools has been drawn from the information given in the Schools Inquiry Commission's Report, which refers to the years 1864-67, it is unlikely that many changes had occurred before 1870; but in one case, at least, that of Kendal Grammar School, action had been taken. As has been seen, the school had sunk so low - the Schools Inquiry Commission described it as 'the most conspicuous failure' in the county<sup>(2)</sup> - that the Town Council had appointed an investigating committee in 1865.<sup>(3)</sup> The uncertainty thus created about the future of the school made matters temporarily worse. While the Town Council negotiated with the Head Master, the Rev. J. Black, about the terms on which he would give up the headship and with the Charity

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1. S.I.C. xix. pp. 361-2.

2. S.I.C. xix. p. 360.

3. W.G. 25 March 1865.

Commissioners about a new scheme of management, the townsfolk simply stopped sending their children to the school. In May 1868, the Mayor reported that "the Kendal Free School was completely shut up."<sup>(1)</sup> Eventually, however, a new scheme was approved and the school re-opened in January 1869 under Joseph Brown.<sup>(2)</sup> To begin with there were only sixteen boys, but by the end of the year, the number had increased to fifty. So the school was saved from extinction and began to flourish in a modest way, though lack of funds continued to stunt its development.

With this qualification about Kendal, the verdict of the Schools Inquiry Commission may be taken to hold for 1870. It is that the schools were too small and too poor to do their work properly; that few, even of the better ones, were offering much more than elementary education; that even the best of them went little beyond the traditional round of Latin and Mathematics; and that their old glory as the poor boys' path to the university had largely been lost. Such were the faults, general to the whole country, which the Endowed Schools Act of 1869 sought to correct, but before studying its impact of Westmorland, we must first look at the elementary schools to complete our picture of the educational scene in 1870.

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1. W.G. 9 May 1868.
  2. W.G. 23 January 1869.



II Appendix A. : Social Standing of pupils in endowed schools, 1868.

The Schools Inquiry Commission divided the pupils into three social categories :

- A - Independent, Professional and Mercantile.
- B - Farmers and Shop-keepers.
- C - Artisans and Labourers.

Taking as a sample the ten highest and the ten lowest in each school, it then worked out the percentage in each category. From these figures, it is possible to make the following approximate calculations.

	<u>Social Category</u>		
	A	B	C
Number of pupils (all schools)	80	243	173
Percentage of pupils (all schools)	16%	48%	36%
Percentage of pupils (3 classical schools)	46%	48%	6%

It is noticeable that the pupils in the three classical schools were of a higher social standing and that there were very few from Category C.

Chapter ThreeElementary Education in Westmorland in 1870

On the whole, the elementary schools in 1870 were in a healthier state than the endowed grammar schools. Whereas the demand for the old style of secondary education had for decades been declining, the demand for elementary education had been increasing, and a great effort had been made to meet it. Some of the endowed schools had already recognised that conditions were changing and had obtained schemes from the Charity Commissioners, which turned them into elementary schools and opened them to government inspection.<sup>(1)</sup> Moreover, between 1830 and 1870, 32 completely new schools were founded, and another 22 schools had been built to replace existing ones.<sup>(2)</sup> If the figure of 97 schools (excluding private ones) is correct for 1829, this would mean that the number of schools had increased by a third - and the number of children attending them had certainly increased by a greater proportion. For, not only were the schools rebuilt larger than the ones they replaced, but the new schools were often large and well-attended. The average attendance at Kirkby Lonsdale National School in the 1870's was over 200;<sup>(3)</sup> Kendal National School for Boys had nearly 200 pupils in 1868;<sup>(4)</sup> and the Kendal British School over 250 in 1867.<sup>(5)</sup> Meanwhile the population of the county had only risen from 55,041 (1831) to

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1. See Appendix A.
  2. See Appendix B.
  3. Kirkby Lonsdale National School papers: Diocesan Inspectors' reports.
  4. W.G. 2 January 1869; the report of the National School Committee to the Town Council.
  5. W.G. 21 June 1867; the H.M.I.'s report.

65,010 (1871), an increase of 18%. This suggests that the provision of elementary education at least had substantially improved, and this is borne out by the decline in illiteracy.<sup>(1)</sup>

This great educational effort came mainly from local people, though outside institutions did help. The North West Railway Company built schools at Tebay and Dillicar, mainly for its employees. The National Schools, of course, received help from the National Society, and other schools accepted grants from the Committee of Council on Education. But even where these outside grants were received, they had to be matched by local subscriptions. The sponsors of Kirkby Lonsdale National School, for instance, matched the £455 from the Education Department with £609 raised in local subscriptions.<sup>(2)</sup> In most cases, however, no outside help was forthcoming. Then - and this was the most common case - all the money had to be raised by subscriptions. Often this was a community effort, but it was still possible to find benefactors who would bear the brunt of the cost. For instance, at Great Strickland in 1841 the school was rebuilt by Mrs. Plummer at a cost of £500;<sup>(3)</sup> at Sleagill in 1858, Miss Braithwaite built a school and afterwards paid the cost of school materials;<sup>(4)</sup> at Barbon, Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth gave the site and £150 to the building fund;<sup>(5)</sup> and at Shap in 1838 the Earl of Lonsdale built

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1. See Appendix C.
  2. Kirkby Lonsdale National School papers: The 'Minute Book of the Kirkby Lonsdale Subscription School and National School' contains a summary of its early history by R. Roper, the secretary of the original managers.
  3. Whellan, p. 804.
  4. Whellan, p. 803.
  5. W.G. 14 April 1866.

a new school, endowed it with £500 and paid £20 a year for the free education of 25 poor children.<sup>(1)</sup> The most munificent benefactor of Westmorland schools during the period was John Braithwaite of Orrest Head, who gave £2,000 to Bowness School to found an exhibition to St. John's College, Cambridge, another £1,200 "the interest to be divided between the master of the School (Bowness) and the schoolmistress who keeps a girls and infants school in the building built by Mr. Bolton", and £1,000 each to four other schools in the district.<sup>(2)</sup> Altogether, these subscriptions make this a period of charitable giving on the grand scale, comparable in scope and intensity with that other period of educational upsurge in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which had seen the foundation of many of the ancient grammar schools.

As a result, in his pastoral letter of 1870, the Bishop of Carlisle<sup>(3)</sup> could write: "I apprehend that if this diocese had been an average sample of England, the Elementary Education Act would not have been passed. I do not mean to assert that the condition throughout the diocese is all that can be wished; far from it; but still so much has been done, and there is good will in the diocese to do more, that it would have been possible to bring up, in the course of a few years, educational appliances to educational needs."<sup>(4)</sup> The Bishop was too optimistic. Even if he realised how much improvement the schools needed to bring

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1. Whellan, p. 808.
  2. S.I.C. xix p. 319. The four schools were Langdale, Hugill, Troutbeck and St. Mary's, Windermere.
  3. Harvey Godwin, Bishop of Carlisle 1869-91.
  4. Bouch. Prelates and People of the Lake Counties. p. 408.

Them up to the Education Department's minimum standards, he did not foresee that this improvement in its turn would generate a 'need' for something better, which the Church had not the resources to provide. Nevertheless, he was right in thinking that Westmorland was well supplied with schools by the standards of the time.

Any discussion about the adequacy of this supply must start with the Civil Returns of 1871.<sup>(1)</sup> The policy of the 1870 Act was to fill the gaps left by voluntary effort; so the essential first step was to discover where the gaps were and what their size was. Under the Act, therefore, all Civil Parishes in England and Wales, except those in Municipal Boroughs or the district of the London School Boards, were required to make a return of "the number of schools in which the ordinary fee does not exceed 9d. a week, distinguishing Public from Private and Adventure Schools;<sup>(2)</sup> the number of scholars for whom Accommodation is provided at the rate of 10 square feet per scholar; the number of scholars in attendance on the day when the return was made; and the religious connection (if any) of the schools."

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1. Returns of Elementary Education H.C. 201 (1871) lv.
  2. The types of school were defined as follows:
    - (a) A Public School is one held in premises secured by Deed (or prescription) for Education, with managers who control and appoint the Teacher.
    - (b) A Private School is one governed by Private Managers, or a Committee not set up under any Deed.
    - (c) An Adventure School is one conducted by the Teacher at his (or her) own risk and on his (or her) own responsibility.

As Kendal was the only Municipal Borough in Westmorland, the Civil Returns covered a very large proportion of the county's schools, and included most of the endowed schools, as few of them charged more than 9d. a week. The number of schools they list is given in Table A.

Table A : No. of elementary schools in Westmorland (excluding Kendal) in 1870

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Public Schools.....	85
Private Schools.....	27
Adventure Schools.....	17
Schools making no return .....	<u>14</u>
Total	<u>143</u>

These 143 schools were well-distributed round the county. Though 23 parishes were without a school,<sup>(1)</sup> only 6 - Brougham, Nether Staveley, Nateby, Yanwath, Skelsmergh and Lupton - were of any size. Of the rest, 9 had less than 100 people and the other 9 less than 200. As a result, most children were within reach of a school of some sort, a great achievement when the population was so scattered. Inevitably though, as the children had to walk to school, this left quite a number who lived too far away to attend regularly or even at all. In 1870 Crosby Ravensworth had four schools, and yet 17 of the 162 children at school lived more than two miles away from any of them.<sup>(2)</sup> Conditions were certainly much worse in other places. In the more remote valleys like

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1. See Appendix D, and Trace One in the folder attached to the back cover.
  2. Crosby Ravensworth parish papers. Return made to the Bishop of Carlisle; 31 March, 1870.

Bannisdale and Wet Sleddale, the children were completely cut off from schools, and even in a comparatively accessible area like the Kent estuary, the parishes of Meathop and Ulpha on the west and Haverbrack on the east were both without schools. The people of Haverbrack were seen to be found trying to raise money for a school at Storth, "much needed by many poor children who have not hitherto been within easy access of a public school."<sup>(1)</sup>

How many children were attending the schools cannot be precisely stated. The Civil Returns do indeed give detailed attendance figures, but these are only for the day on which the return was made. They neither show how many children were 'on the books', nor how many were attending regularly. For any one school, therefore, they may well be misleading, as the one certain thing about attendances is their irregularity. But for the county as a whole, or even for one Ward, those schools with an unusually good attendance on the day of the Returns will tend to be counter-balanced by those where it was unusually bad; so that, for a sufficiently large group, the Returns may be taken as giving a typical picture of the numbers attending.

Table B : Numbers attending different types of school in Westmorland (excluding Kendal) according to the Civil Returns:

<u>Ward</u>	<u>Public</u>		<u>Private</u>		<u>Adventure</u>		<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Population</u>
	B	G	B	G	B	G		
East	625	417	192	183	46	101	1,564	9.3
West	525	323	92	112	18	62	1,132	13.4
Kendal	<u>1,506</u>	<u>1,045</u>	<u>234</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>3,133</u>	11.8
Total	<u>2,656</u>	<u>1,785</u>	<u>518</u>	<u>538</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>239</u>	<u>5,829</u>	

1. W.G. 4 April, 1874.

Although the Borough of Kendal was not included in the Civil Returns, the first major task undertaken by its School Board was to answer a questionnaire from the Education Department about the number of schools charging less than 9d. a week. According to its reply,<sup>(1)</sup> there were 14 such schools in Kendal,<sup>(2)</sup> which meant that the great problem of the rural areas - accessibility - did not arise there. Not surprisingly, therefore, the proportion of children attending in Kendal was higher than in any of the three Wards. When a count was made by the census enumerators in 1871, the number attending was 1,897, 14.1% of the population.<sup>(3)</sup>

Taking the figures for Kendal and the rest of the county together gives a total of 159 elementary schools, with 7,708 children attending. This, of course, is an under-estimate. It excludes the children at the 14 schools which made no return, and those at the five grammar schools not included in the Civil Returns,<sup>(4)</sup> many of whose pupils were only receiving elementary education. Finally, it excludes the private schools charging more than 9d. a week. How numerous they were can only be guessed at. Probably there were few in the rural areas which, with their scattered population and large numbers of cheap schools, did not offer a favourable environment; but there were several in Kendal. These unknown quantities would presumably bring the total number

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1. Kendal School Board Minute Book 1871-85, pp. 8-13.
  2. Counting the three departments of Kendal National School as one school.
  3. Kendal School Board Minute Book 1871-85, p. 15.
  4. Kendal, Heversham, Appleby, Kirkby Lonsdale and Kirkby Stephen.



of children attending elementary schools in the county up to between 8,000 and 8,500.<sup>7</sup>

By the standards of the time, this was a good proportion, but this high average conceals differences among the different parts of the county and between the sexes. School attendance was noticeably lower in East Ward, the figures from which are complicated by two factors. One was the exceptional proportion of schools (9 out of 36) making no return; the other was the distorted pattern of the population, for the Carlisle to Settle Railway was still being built and so the navvies swelled the adult male population of several parishes.<sup>(1)</sup> Both these factors make the figures seem worse than they were. Even so, the attendance was lower in East Ward, where school places were fewer and where the bleak moorland expanses of Stainmore and the Pennines offered greater obstacles than in most parts of the county.<sup>(2)</sup> In all three Wards, however, boys attended in larger numbers than girls, outnumbering them altogether by 3,267 to 2,562; but this male

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1. According to the 1871 census, there were at least twice as many males as females in the following parishes: Ormside, Mallerstang, Smardale, Waitby and Crosby Garrett.

2. S.I.C. xix. p. 397; the report on Stainmore School. "The master attributes the ignorance and slovenliness of the scholars to their irregular attendance, which is caused in great measure by the distances at which many of them live, and by the frequent storms which occur in this district, and make the school inaccessible. In this high moorland, and amid a population so scattered, a school is certainly carried on under some disadvantages."

preponderance was only to be found in the public schools, for in the private schools numbers were about equal and in the adventure schools there were far more girls than boys - probably because the latter were little dames' schools, like the one at Hilton, run primarily for infants but allowing the girls to finish their schooling.

Even if attendance in Westmorland was relatively high, the question remains - what proportion of the children were the schools failing to reach in any way? This cannot be answered until the group who ought to be at school has been defined and its size estimated. The Education Department's definition was one-sixth of the population, which in Westmorland in 1871 would have meant 10,855 children. This was not a generous estimate. If one assumes that education should have been provided for the eight year span from the fifth to the thirteenth birthday, this group would certainly have been larger, probably about 12,000.<sup>(1)</sup> At this rate, only about two-thirds of the children were attending school, but this is not to say that the schools had failed completely to reach the others. Most of them would have had some period of schooling, however short and sporadic.

Had all these 12,000 children wanted to go to school, would there have been enough school places for them? The Education Department then defined a place as 8 square feet of floor space

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1. The 1871 census does not analyse the population into age groups, but that of 1881, when the population was almost the same size, gives an analysis by five-year age groups. In 1881, the number of children aged 5 to 9 was 7,825, and from 10 to 14 was 7,312. Adding three-fifths of 7,312 to 7,825 gives a total of 12,211.

and by this narrow standard there were enough in the county as a whole (though not in East Ward) according to the Civil Returns.

Table C : Number of school places at 8 square feet per child in 1871

	<u>Places</u>	<u>1/6th of population</u>
East Ward	2,520	2,823
West Ward	1,730	1,375
Kendal Ward	5,250	4,417
Kendal Borough	<u>2,886</u>	<u>2,241</u>
Total	<u>12,386</u>	<u>10,856</u>

The Civil Returns, however, took no account of the standard of the schools. So it was not until the Education Department sent round its inspectors of returns in 1871 to report whether the schools were efficient or not, that it became known where the gaps really were. Unfortunately, not all the returns have survived, but the sample is big enough to make the general picture clear. In addition to the 23 parishes without any school, at least another 16 were without efficient schools and 7 without enough accommodation in efficient schools.

Table D : Number of Parishes known to be without sufficient schools in 1871 (1)

Parishes:	Population	No sch.		No efficient schools		Not enough efficient schs.	
		No.	Pop	No.	Pop	No.	Pop
West Ward	8,243	4	650	4	1179	2	2179
East Ward	16,937	8	1035	10	7072	3	3748
Kendal Ward	26,499	11	1680	2	934	2	1402

1. See Appendix D.

The significant figure here is the number of parishes without efficient schools. As most of those without schools were so small, their children could often go to a school in a neighbouring parish, as the children of Smardale went to Waitby and those of Farleton to Preston Patrick. On the other hand in the parishes with not enough schools, the deficiency was often relatively small. In the large parish of Orton all that was needed was a school for 30 at Longdale;<sup>(1)</sup> in Appleby St. Michael, the re-building of the school at Murton.<sup>(2)</sup> But in parishes with inefficient schools, there were normally no other ones available. From this it follows that Kendal Ward was well provided for, except in the Kent estuary and the wild country north-west of Kendal along the Shap and Appleby roads. In West Ward, there were several large gaps; at Bampton, Clifton and in the Shap area. The gaps, however, were largest and most numerous in East Ward, where nearly half the population was not within reach of an efficient school. In this backward area, it was doubtful whether voluntary effort could have made good the deficiencies, if left to itself.

The evidence of the inspectors of returns suggests that, though there might have been almost enough schools and school places, the quality of the education they offered was not very high. This is a difficult matter to pass judgement on, as the evidence from which to reconstruct the personal relationships which are the essence of education, largely eludes the historian. The most he can do is to discover whether helpful material conditions existed, never forgetting that good teaching may be done by unqualified people in unsuitable buildings.

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1. P.R.O. Ed 2/458.
  2. P.R.O. Ed 2/456.

Therefore, although money alone cannot guarantee a good education, the discussion about quality must begin with the question, had the schools sufficient resources to do their job properly? The first resource of many Westmorland schools was their endowments. Just how many of the schools had endowments is difficult to determine, but there were at least 57 - the 39 reported on by the S.I.C. and the 18 other endowed non-classical schools it listed - and in addition there were some of the more recently founded schools such as Shap. The value of these endowments varied widely. At Brough for 100 pupils it was £6-18-11d. a year,<sup>(1)</sup> but at Bampton (Measand) for 16 pupils it was £82 a year.<sup>(2)</sup> In 1867, the Rev. Simpson estimated the cost of educating a child for a year at elementary school as 30/- a year,<sup>(3)</sup> of which one third might be expected to come from the government grant, one third from the parents in fees, and one third from subscriptions. Even this lowly estimate was higher than the national average expenditure of £1-5-5d. a year per head.<sup>(4)</sup> Therefore, it might be thought that where the endowment was more than 10/- a head, as it was in over half the non-graded schools reported on by the S.I.C., it would be a considerable source of strength to the schools. (See Appendix E) However, neither for these schools, nor for those with less, were the endowments an unmixed blessing. To some people they even seemed a curse.

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1. S.I.C. xix p. 326.

2. S.I.C. xix p. 314.

3. N.G. 13 April 1867.

4. M. Cruikshank, Church and State in English Education. (London 1963) Appendix C.

"There can be no manner of doubt", wrote Roby, "that in many cases the endowment is a source of unqualified evil; it introduces a body of trustees who, if the clergyman is not one of them, are altogether unfitted for their duties; it acts as a retainer for the incompetent master who without it would probably be provided for at the workhouse; and it takes away the main inducement ..... to invite government inspection, viz. the chance of obtaining substantial pecuniary aid."<sup>(1)</sup>

If many of the smaller endowed schools did not qualify for the government grant, this was not altogether due to their inability or unwillingness to raise their standards. The policy of the Education Department trapped them in a vicious circle. As part of the economy drive initiated by the Revised Code of 1862, the government grant was to be paid only after deducting from it the value of the endowment. This was particularly hard on the small schools. If the average attendance was under 30 and the endowment between £15 and £20 a year, the school would lose practically all of any grant it might earn. Nor were such schools uncommon in Westmorland.

"I took 14 Schools", said the Rev. Simpson, "which I had inspected myself and found that the average endowment ..... was £17 - 7 - Od. and that the number of children in attendance at the time when I inspected them was 35. Of course, the average attendance at these schools would be

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1. W.G. 29 January 1870; Tremenheere's report. Roby was one of the assistant commissioners to the S.I.C. and these remarks refer to both Cumberland and Westmorland.

about 27 perhaps, and the consequence would be that they would be given a very small grant if they were inspected."<sup>(1)</sup>

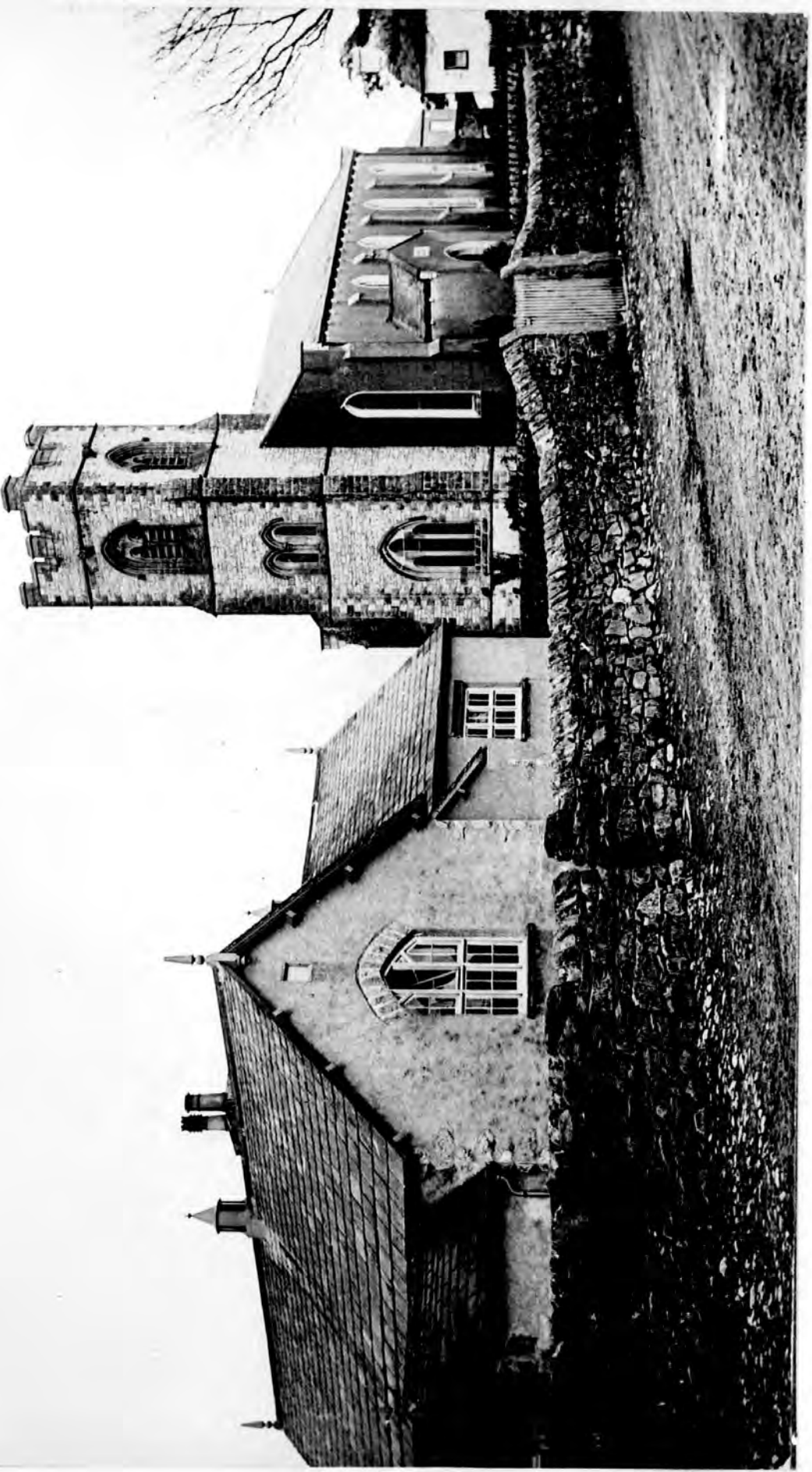
Quite apart from this discouraging aspect of government policy, it was difficult enough for rural schools to qualify for the grant; difficult to pay the salary of a certificated teacher; difficult to persuade the children to attend often enough to be entered for the examinations. Not surprisingly, therefore, the number of schools under government inspection and receiving a grant was small - only 37 in 1870.<sup>(2)</sup>

Of course, the schools had other resources. Few of the 'free schools' were in fact free to the majority of their pupils, and there was often a group of local people subscribing annually. Taken together, these could make a weighty contribution; for Kirkby Lonsdale National School in the 1880's, the average annual income from school fees was £143 - 13 - 9d. and from subscriptions £56 - 17 - 6d.<sup>(3)</sup> But with an average attendance of over 250, the Kirkby Lonsdale School was a salmon among minnows. The smaller schools were in a much weaker position. Inevitably, their income from fees was low, and they were unlikely to have sufficient income from subscriptions to compensate, especially if these were discouraged by the existence of an endowment. The only other help they could hope for was from the Carlisle Diocesan Education Society, but this never had the funds to meet their needs.

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1. W.G. 9 February 1867.
  2. See Appendix A.
  3. Kirkby Lonsdale National School papers. MS extracts from the Minute Book.

Grayrigg School and Church.





The crucial questions, to which this discussion of the schools' resources has been leading up, are whether they had sufficient income to provide satisfactory buildings or to employ qualified staff. The answer to the first clearly hangs on the definition of 'satisfactory'. Contemporary standards naturally reflected the fact that most of the labouring poor lived with large families in tiny cottages, without running water or sanitation. Even so, it comes as something of a shock to read the description of the opening of Kirkby Lonsdale National School - "The building ..... has been erected from designs furnished by Miles Thompson Esq. .... He seems to have left nothing to be desired in the way of accommodation and comfort. The rooms are well-lighted and the ventilation excellent."<sup>(1)</sup> - and then to discover that this school was without the most elementary amenities: no running water, no lavatories, no artificial lighting (except perhaps oil lamps), and no cloak-rooms. On a wet Westmorland day, when the close-packed children were slowly drying off, all the excellence of the ventilation must have been tested. And close-packed they were, unless the rain had thinned the attendance; for the accommodation 'left nothing to be desired' only by the narrow standards of the Code. On the back cover of the original Minute Book of the School is a table giving its size.

	Length	Breadth	Height	No. at 8 sq. ft.
Boys	45	18	18	101
Boys' classroom	18	13	17	29 = 130 boys
Girls	45	18	19	101
Girls' classroom	16	13	19	26 = 127 girls
Infants	35	17	14	<u>74</u>
			Total	<u>321</u>

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1. Kirkby Lonsdale National School papers. MS account in 'Papers relating to the Foundation.'

Fortunately, the average attendance was always lower than the maximum number the school was supposed to accommodate, but it was often uncomfortably close.

If this was a good school, the poor ones must have been primitive. "In Westmorland", the Schools Inquiry Commission reported, "there is often no master's house and only one school-room of the rudest description."<sup>(1)</sup> This grim picture is not entirely confirmed by its own evidence. In the rough classification of the Tabular Digest,<sup>(2)</sup> over half the school buildings reported on are described as 'good'. Some of the rest passed muster, being described as 'moderately good' (Bampton) or 'fair' (Old Hutton); but the remainder must have been very bad. Waitby was "a small and inconvenient school-room, ill ventilated and insecurely roofed;"<sup>(3)</sup> and those pupils who struggled to school across the wilds of Stainmore found a school equally bleak, "small and dark and ill-furnished" and "in want of internal repair."<sup>(4)</sup>

Turning to the question of how well the staff were qualified, those in the schools reported on by the Schools Inquiry Commission, may be taken as a representative sample. Leaving aside the 10 graded schools, the Schools Inquiry Commission report gives information about 47 others, 29 non-graded and 18 endowed non-classical. As this group includes several schools with substantial endowments and a fair share (11 out of 37) of the schools

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1. S.I.C. i. p. 279.
  2. S.I.C. xix. pp. 413 - 453.
  3. S.I.C. xix. p. 409.
  4. S.I.C. xix. p. 397.

receiving a government grant, its teachers should have been at least as well qualified as those in the other elementary schools in the county. Altogether, there were 54 of them, helped by 6 pupil teachers; but only 8 had certificates, one (at New Hutton) a degree, and the other 45 were unqualified.

One has only to look at the salaries they were offered to see why. At the top end of the scale, three of the headmasters - at Brough, Burneside and Tebay - did earn about £100 a year, the reward for coping with between 120 and 140 children helped at the best by a couple of pupil teachers and at the worst by no one at all. At the other end of the scale, the teachers at Crosby Garrett, Little Strickland and Swindale were all paid between £20 and £30 a year and 14 more were paid £60 a year or less. Some of this bottom group were therefore less well off than farm servants living in and none was markedly richer.

These ill-paid, unqualified teachers, working in their cramped school-rooms, faced classes of all sizes. Where they were small, a good teacher might capture the atmosphere of a happy family.<sup>(1)</sup> Too often they were forbiddingly large: half the non-graded schools had over 50 pupils and none had more than one adult teacher. Moreover, whether classes were large or small, the teachers invariably had to face the problems of teaching children with a wide range of age and an even wider range of ability. How they coped with these problems is difficult to describe, as few log books have survived from the 1860's and these are not necessarily typical.

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1. S.I.C. xix. p. 340, Reagill School. "The general aspect of the school was cheerful and contented, and there was evidently much sympathy between the master and his scholars."

Nor are they very informative. Often they tell us more about the weather than about what went on in the classroom, but occasionally the routine chronicle of "ordinary progress" or "bad weather, attendance diminished" is broken by an entry which enables us to see the children at work. "Subtraction to the juniors is a puzzler," wrote the Teacher at Firbank. "One little boy, after placing the figures on his slate  $\frac{4}{2}$ , when asked what would remain if he took 2 from 4, he rubbed out the 2 and confidently answered 4."<sup>(1)</sup> From such snatches of information, a picture emerges of the children bent over their slates, laboriously forming unfamiliar letters and figures and, when the time came to move on to copy books "quite excited at the thought of using pen, paper and ink."<sup>(2)</sup> In general however there was little enough for them to be excited about. At all levels, the work of these schools under government inspection (the only ones to keep log books) was dominated by the Revised Code and there was not much relief from the monotonous grind at the three R's. At one school, the teacher might read stories every Friday afternoon. Usually there was some singing and, for the girls, needlework. Geography, too, seems to have been popular; the higher classes at Tebay did a lot of map work (perhaps as a device to keep them quiet in a school with one unaided teacher to 100 pupils) but, inevitably, this led to criticism by the H.M.I. that the three R's were being neglected.<sup>(3)</sup> Such were the narrow confines within which the teachers had to work.

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1. Firbank National School log book 1869-91; 24 September 1869.
  2. Ibid; 2 November 1869.
  3. Tebay School log book; 16 March 1868.

As yet, however, only a minority of the schools were under inspection and sharing the curriculum of the Code. What all schools did have in common, whether inspected or not, was a close link with the Christian church. In this respect, a sharp contrast existed between Kendal and the rest of the county. Kendal, with its great variety of sects, had a corresponding range of denominational schools: Anglican, Wesleyan, Catholic, and, for those who wanted simply 'Bible Christianity', the British School. There was, therefore, virtually no religious problem; the parents were able to send their children to a school which accorded with their own religious outlook. Outside Kendal, however, nearly every school was a Church of England school, the only exceptions being the British schools at Meal Bank, Appleby, Dufton and Kirkby Thore, and the school at Bolton which was non-denominational.

These Anglican schools were not all of one type; in fact, three main groups may be distinguished. Firstly, there were the endowed grammar schools, most of which had since their foundation been closely connected with the Church. Usually their statutes enjoined that the master must be an Anglican, and often the vicar was a member - and, one may suppose, a prominent member - of the trustees. Thus in practice they were controlled by the Church and so it had a near monopoly of secondary education in the county.

After the endowed schools, there were the parochial schools. Without a substantial endowment or a government grant, these were often struggling, but the Church was active in helping them through the Carlisle Diocesan Education Society, which had been formed expressly for the purpose of helping the smaller schools to reach the standard necessary to qualify for the government grant. "Our object", wrote the Dean of Carlisle, "is to raise the humbler

schools to that desirable level, when we consider our work done."<sup>(1)</sup>

This help took various forms. Even though the National Society no longer thought the appointment of organising masters worthwhile because of the rising standard of teacher training, the Diocesan Education Society still felt that they could do good among the unqualified staff of the village schools, and it employed two of them full time.<sup>(2)</sup> It also gave donations to poor schoolmasters, and grants towards the purchase of school-books and apparatus, and towards the repair and rebuilding of schools. The amounts at its disposal, however, were small compared to the needs of the diocese. In 1866, the National Society tried to help by offering to match grants made to country schools either to buy books and apparatus or to increase salaries so that a qualified teacher could be employed. Even so, the Diocesan Society could only offer to spend £40 a year for the first purpose and £50 a year for the second.<sup>(3)</sup>

On a local as on a national scale, a system of grants implied a system of inspection. In 1866, therefore, diocesan inspectors had been appointed.<sup>(4)</sup> Before 1870, they seem to have concerned themselves with the whole work of the school, and it was through them that a prize scheme was run for those schools not receiving a government grant. On the results of an examination which they administered children were given prizes and the staff cash grants.

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1. Kirkby Lonsdale National School papers. Letter to R. Roper, 20 January 1859.
  2. W.G. 29 July 1865.
  3. W.G. 27 October 1866.
  4. W.G. 7 July 1866.

In 1870, for instance, eight teachers in the rural deanery of Kendal received grants which ranged from £2-9-6d. for Mr. Cowell at Crosthwaite to 10/6d. for Miss Lough at Casterton.<sup>(1)</sup>

Overlapping slightly with both groups were the National Schools, a few of which were re-organised village schools like Barbon or endowed schools like Brough and Stainton. In addition to these, a number of new national schools had been founded, some in villages where there had been no school at all like Holme, others in four of the market towns of the county - Ambleside, Appleby, Kirkby Stephen and Kirkby Lonsdale. In all these places the same basic situation can be discerned: an old endowed grammar school which had stopped trying to provide elementary education for all and had thereby left a gap, which the National Society was the likeliest agency to fill. What happened at Kirkby Lonsdale is a good example of this. In the early nineteenth century, the grammar school had about 60 day boys, receiving an elementary or classical education practically free;<sup>(2)</sup> but in 1846 a boarding house had been founded and in 1860, in an attempt to raise the social status of the day boys to that of the boarders, a fee of four guineas a year had been imposed on them. By 1867 their number had shrunk to 10.<sup>(3)</sup> Whatever it had been before, the school was obviously not then meeting the needs of the town; for, if the population had not increased, the demand for elementary education certainly had. This was shown when a subscription school, housed unsatisfactorily in the old workhouse, soon had 145 children

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1. W.G. 28 May 1870.

2. 'The State of Kirkby-Lonsdale Grammar School in 1808'.

3. S.I.C. xix. pp. 365-7.



attending it.<sup>(1)</sup> The necessity for an elementary school thus proved, a public meeting was called, and the money raised to build a national school.

Whatever the type of Church school, there is no doubt that in most cases the clergy were actively supervising them. Several of the most flourishing grammar schools had the most direct form of supervision, a clergyman as headmaster. This had almost ceased in the other types of school, but the local clergyman often visited the village school to teach Religious Knowledge or to catechise the children. Not only the frequency of their visits but the respectful terms in which they are referred to in the log books leave little doubt as to their powers.

Nevertheless, even though it verged on monopoly, this Anglican control of the schools does not seem to have been widely resented by the Non-conformists. In his evidence before the Schools Inquiry Commission, the Rev. Simpson claimed that no practical difficulties had arisen about Non-conformists attending Church schools, partly because parents were ignorant about their rights, and partly because the schools made little attempt to teach the Catechism or any dogma. "I think", he said, "the clergy in our neighbourhood never did endeavour to impose anything upon a dissenter's child that would be unpleasant to the parents. I never heard of a parent objecting to a child being taught anything in the Church school in our neighbourhood. There has been a case or two in Kendal, I believe."<sup>(2)</sup> Simpson was a partial witness, and there was more feeling against the Church among the

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1. Kirkby Lonsdale National School papers: letter of R. Roper to Rev. Carus-Wilson, 20 January 1857.
  2. S.I.C. v. p. 574-5 (Minutes of Evidence, Wednesday, 7th March, 1866. Rev. James Simpson. Q. 14,343).

the Non-conformists of the Eden Valley than he allowed for. Within a few years of his giving evidence, the School Board elections in his own parish of Kirkby Stephen were being fought on denominational lines. Even so, he was right in his general emphasis; and this fact, that church and chapel were not at one another's throats, meant that the passage and implementation of the 1870 Act left Westmorland relatively undisturbed by the fierce controversies that raged elsewhere.

III. Appendix A : Schools receiving an annual grant in the year ending 31 December 1870 (from the Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1870-71, C.406 1871)

Ambleside National	Kirkby Lonsdale National
Appleby Bongate	Kirkby Stephen National
Appleby St. Lawrence	Kirkby Thore - British
Barbon	Kirkby Thore - National
Belton*	Langdale (refused under Art 52d)
Brough*	Levens
Burneside*	Long Marton
Burton - Morewood	Meal Bank
Burton - National	Milnthorpe - St. Thomas's
Cliburn*	Staveley*
Duften British**	Great Strickland
Endmoor	Tebay*
Grasmere*	Temple Sowerby
Grayrigg* (refused under Art 52d)	Troutbeck* (refused under Art 52d)
Holme	Warcop
Kendal - National**	Windermere, St. Mary's
Castle St; G. and I.	Yanwath.
Fell-side British	
Castle St. British	
Parish	
St. George's	
St. Thomas's	
Wesleyan.	

- \* = endowed schools reported on by the S.I.C.

\*\* = endowed non-classical schools listed by the S.I.C.

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Number receiving grant = 37

Number under inspection = 40

The proportion of schools receiving grant in Westmorland was therefore rather low, as may be seen from the fact that the proportion of schools receiving grant increased more rapidly in Westmorland than in the neighbouring counties of Cumberland, Northumberland and Durham.

	Number of schools receiving grant		Percentage increase
	1870	1880	
Westmorland	37	102	276
Cumberland	98	259	264
Durham	228	455	199
Northumberland	142	309	218

III. Appendix B : School Building 1830-70

	<u>New Schools</u>	<u>Schools replacing existing ones</u>
1830	Crosby Ravensworth G & I Kendal, Castle St. G & I	
1831	King's Meaburn	
1832		Kirkby Thore
1834	Maulds Meaburn Kirkby Stephen National	Martindale
1835	Kendal, Castle St. British X	
1836		Patterdale
1837		Windermere Grammar
1838	Shap endowed	
1839	Mansergh	
1841	Casterton National	Staveley Beetham
1844	Appleby (Bongate) National - Holme	
1846	Meal Bank	Kirkby Lonsdale Grammar
1847		Grayrigg
1848	Great Strickland Kendal, Wesleyan D	
1849	Appleby (St. Lawrence) British X	
1851	Kendal, Fell-side	Milburn
1852	Crook	Hutton Roof
1853	Kendal, St. George's Ormside	Asby
1854	Yanwath	Grasmere
1855	Yanwath	
1856	Windermere, St. Mary's	Bolton
1857	Kirkby Lonsdale National	

Appendix B (cont)

	<u>New Schools</u>	<u>Schools replacing existing ones</u>
1858	Sleagill	Burneside
1860	Firbank	
1861		Orton, Greenholme Kendal, Kirkland
1862		Ambleside, Kelsick's
1863	Longsleddale Ambleside, National Warcop	
1864		Orton, Tebay
1865	Oakbeck	Dufton
1866		Crosby Garrett
1867	Burton, Morewood Milnthorpe, St. Thomas's G & I Helsington	Barbon
1868	Bowness Endowed Girls	
1869		Preston Patrick

N.B. It has not always been possible to establish the date with certainty. Sometimes the date taken has had to be that of the year in which the school received its building grant, but the school may well have opened earlier. For instance, Ormside received its building grant in 1854, but opened in 1853 (W.G. 10 December 1853).

*5 National  
2 National  
1 National*

III. Appendix C : Numbers of people making a mark in the  
Marriage Registers

Date	Place	No. of marriages	No. of 'markers'		Percentage of 'markers'	
			M	F	M	F
1820-9	<u>Kendal</u>	1,061	263	514	25.8	50.4
1863-9		328	48	91	14.5	27.6
1870-9		350	60	85	17.1	24.3
1900-14		677	9	5	1.3	0.7
1800-8	<u>Kirkby</u>	138	28	54	20.3	39.0
1813-19	<u>Lonsdale</u>	126	35	67	35.0	53.2
1820-9		185	45	62	24.3	36.2
1830-9		158	39	65	24.7	41.1
1840-9		129	22	38	17.1	29.1
1850-9		130	23	25	17.7	19.2
1860-9		120	18	16	15.0	13.3
1870-9		128	14	9	10.9	7.0
1880-9		85	2	2	2.4	2.4
1890-9		84	1	0	1.2	-
None after 1899						
1800-9	<u>Ravenstonedale</u>	64	7	18	10.9	28.1
1810-9		51	8	21	15.7	41.2
1820-9		54	6	16	11.1	29.6
1830-9		46	2	13	4.4	28.3
1840-9		55	2	12	3.7	21.9
1850-9		77	7	13	9.9	14.3
1860-9		66	6	11	9.1	16.7
1870-9		46	2	3	4.3	6.5
1880-9		41	0	1	-	2.4
None after 1885						

III. Appendix C. (cont.)

Date	Place	No. of marriages	No. of 'markers'		Percentage of 'markers'	
			M	F	M	F
1800-9	<u>Askham</u>	32	3	13	9.4	40.6
1810-9		28	2	9	7.1	32.1
1820-9		43	1	14	2.3	32.5
1830-9		34	4	11	11.8	32.4
1840-9		28	4	7	14.3	25.0
1850-9		30	7	3	23.3	10.0
1860-9		27	3	2	11.1	7.4
1870-9		18	2	2	11.1	11.1
None after 1879						

Although this sample is too small to base generalisations on, it suggests that illiteracy was much more of a problem in Kendal and the smaller market towns like Kirkby Lonsdale than in those country parishes which were well provided with schools. In them, there does not seem to have been much illiteracy among the men in the 19th century.



III. Appendix D : Deficiencies in elementary education in  
Westmorland, 1871

This table is based on the Inspectors' Returns (P.R.O. Ed. 2/456-8), which only cover 46 of the 106 civil parishes. Probably, this was the majority of the ones with obvious deficiencies, but other parishes have been counted where the Civil Returns show clearly that there was no school, e.g. Skelsmergh and Lupton. Even so, the real figures would certainly be higher than those in the table, as some parishes from which no returns have survived did not have efficient schools, e.g. Kentmere.

WEST WARD : Population 8248

Parish	Population in 1871	No school	No efficient school	Not enough efficient schools	How remedied
Hampton	559		x		1883 Bampton G.S. 1883 Measand- Mardale Roughill
Brougham	250	x			1876 Board School
Clifton	341		x		1877 Board School
Crosby Ravensworth	909			x	1879 Alterations to G.S. To Barton
Low Winder	21	x			
Martindale	171		x		1876 School altered
Shap	1270			x	1878 Rosgill 1881 Shap G & I 1881 Wickersgill
Little Strick- land	} 108				1875 Altered by
Thrimby		} 62	x		School Board
Yanwath			x		To Sockbridge
Total		4	4	2	
Population		650	1179	2179	

EAST WARD : Population 16937

Parish	Population in 1871	No school	No efficient school	Not enough efficient schools	How remedied
Appleby St.M	1545			x	1875 Murton rebuilt
Asby	492		x		1873 Board sch(temp)
Brough	669		x		1875 Board school
Brough Sowerby	125	x			To Brough
Hilbeck	67	x			To Brough
Crosby Garrett	585		x		1876 School altered
Hartley	167	x			To Kirkby Stephn
Kaber	192		x		1875 School altered
Kirkby Stephen	1871		x		1877 Board school
Kirkby Thore)	538			x	1875 Board school
Newbiggin )	116	x			To Gt. Musgrave
Little Musgrave	58	x			
Mallerstang	585		x		1877 Board school
Nateby	222	x			1876 Nateby & Wharton
Wharton	100	x			Board school
Ormside	686		x		1876 Re-opened by School Board
Orton	1661			x	1874 Longdale
Ravenstonedale	998		x		1872 Fell End 1874 Ravenstonedale G.S. 1875 Newbiggin
Smardale	180	x			To Waitby
Soulby	458		x		1876 Board School
Stainmore	536		x		1879 Board Schools
Total		8	10	3	
Population		1035	7072	3748	

KENDAL WARD : Population 26499

Parish	Population No in 1871	No efficient school	No efficient school	Not enough efficient schools	How remedied
Beetham	773		x		1871 Beetham altered 1875 Storth
Haverbrack	94	x			To Beetham
Crosthwaite	716			x	1872 The Howe
Dillicar	161		x		1875 Re-opened by School Board
Docker	78	x			To Grayrigg
Farleton	69	x			To Preston Patrick
Fawcet Forest	51	x			To Selside
Hincaster	129	x			To Heversham
Lambrigg	147	x			To Grayrigg
Langdale	686			x	1873 Little Langdale
Lupton	245	x			1870 Lupton
Meathop & Ulpha	133	x			Nothing done
Nether Staveley	286	x			To Over Staveley
Patton	98	x			To Grayrigg
Skelsmergh	350	x			1875 National School
Underbarrow	484		x		1875 Underbarrow
Total		11	3	2	
Population		1680	1418	1402	

III. Appendix E : Endowment income of 29 non-graded Schools,  
from the report of the Schools Inquiry  
Commission, Vol. xix.

<u>School</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>No. of Pupils</u>
Bampton-Measand	£82- 0- 0	16
Barton	70- 0- 0	45
Beetham	32-10- 0	50
Bolton	13- 0- 0	36
Brough	6-18-11	100
Burneside	21-10- 0	140
Cliburn	24-15- 0	48
Crosby Garrett	7- 9- 4	20
Crosby Ravensworth	53-10- 0	32
Reagill	30- 0- 0	24
Grasmere	14- 6- 9	50
Grayrigg	39-10- 0	95
Hugill	62- 0- 0	48
Old Hutton	17-19- 2	60
Morland	15-16- 8	57
Orton	49-16- 6	62
Tebay	55- 0- 0	124
Greenholme	69- 0- 0	47
Ravenstonedale	42- 0- 0	56
Selside	54- 0- 0	60
Stainmore	81-10- 0*	46
Stainton	14- 6- 0	53
Staveley	60- 0- 0	107
Little Strickland	5- 0- 0	16
Swindale	10- 0- 0	13
Troutbeck	47- 0- 0	51
Waitby	60- 1- 0	25
Winton	14- 0- 0	30
Preston Patrick	16- 0- 0	60

\* Not all the endowment at Stainmore was for the School.

Chapter FourThe Country Grammar Schools, 1870-1903

Until 1869, the state of the law relating to charities had made any reform of the endowed schools almost impossible. Although the Charity Commission had been established in 1853 with powers to reform trusts, it worked under severe limitations. Unless the income of the charity was very small, it had no power to act until approached by the majority of the trustees. Even then the revised schemes it drew up were bound by the legal rule that they must carry out, as far as possible, the intentions of the original donor. The Endowed Schools Act of 1869 removed both these limitations. Under it, three Commissioners were appointed with power to take the initiative in altering trusts, "in such a manner as may render any educational endowment more conducive to the advancement of the education of boys or girls, or either or them."<sup>(1)</sup>

The purpose of this Act was to put into effect such of the recommendations of the Schools Inquiry Commission as were deemed practicable. Looking at the endowed schools not as local charities but as the basis for a national system of secondary education, the Schools Inquiry Commission had criticised them for not being where they were needed and for the low standard of their teaching. The first fault they could hardly be blamed for; but the second arose partly from factors under their control. Although the schools might be handicapped by out-of-date statutes enforcing too narrow a curriculum, they did not help themselves by mismanagement of the endowments, by allowing Headmasters to be

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1. 32 & 33 Vic. Ch. 56 s.9.

irremovable, and by failing to augment their often meagre resources by charging adequate fees. This last point led the Schools Inquiry Commission to a fierce attack on "indiscriminate gratuitous instruction",<sup>(1)</sup> which it argued was depriving the schools of much needed income and lowering the standard of education by admitting pupils who could not benefit from it.

The Endowed Schools Commissioners started with a bold policy for remedying the first defect; by regrouping endowments area by area, they hoped that something approaching a national system of secondary education would emerge. The second defect was to be remedied by giving each school a new scheme of government, by which it would be placed in a hierarchy of grades according to the social class of its pupils.<sup>(2)</sup> First Grade schools were to prepare upper-middle class children for the universities, keeping their pupils to the age of 18 or 19 and remaining predominantly classical. Greek, however, was not to be compulsory in Second Grade Schools, although they were to retain Latin. Their other basic subjects were to be English, mathematics, science and political economy, as these schools were intended for the children of rising men of business, prosperous shopkeepers and substantial tenant farmers, who would leave at 16 to go into business or such careers as the army and the law. For a class "distinctly lower in the scale - smaller tenant farmers, small tradesmen and superior artisans", were the Third Grade schools which the children were to leave at 14, having studied English, history, geography, elementary mathematics, a modern language and possibly the rudiments of Latin.

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1. S.I.C. i. pp. 146-9 & 574-5.
  2. S.I.C. i. pp. 16-20.

These graded schools were to charge graded fees, but scholarships created out of the endowments were to form a ladder by which the deserving poor might climb to the highest grade.

For such a policy to succeed, one essential was that there should be sufficient endowments. Westmorland could therefore have been an ideal area in which to try out a pilot scheme. That such a possibility was in the minds of the policy makers can be seen from the report "On a Proposed System of Grouping Schools in the County of Westmorland", which Richmond submitted to the Schools Inquiry Commission.<sup>(1)</sup> Basing his arguments probably on the local knowledge of the Rev. Simpson,<sup>(2)</sup> he suggested that the small endowed schools should be treated purely as elementary schools, and should be grouped "as tributaries to a more advanced central school." For instance, Brough, Stainmore, Crosby Garrett, Ravenstonedale, Waitby and Smardale, and Winton were all to become tributaries of Kirkby Stephen Grammar School. Those endowments of the tributary schools which were for secondary education were to be transferred to the central school, but in return there were to be scholarships. In the larger market towns, the central schools were to keep their character as grammar schools by teaching Latin, Greek and French, but those in agricultural districts like Crosby Ravensworth and Lowther were to offer a more practical education. Altogether, Richmond suggested, there should be twelve of these schools, forming the middle grade of his hierarchy. Above them,

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1. S.I.C. ix. pp. 901-11. Memorandum by D.C. Richmond.

2. S.I.C. v. pp. 567-69; Q. 14,280-14,288.

crowning the pyramid, there should be a central boarding school, offering scholarships to pupils from the central schools. So, Richmond concluded, "a promising boy, of parentage however poor, might rise first from the small primary school in an outlying township to the nearest central day school ..... and from this again might be passed on as an exhibitioner to a public school of the highest class."<sup>(1)</sup>

Radical proposals like these were inevitably difficult to put into effect. Although the Commissioners would have liked to start with some pilot schemes like Richmond's, they soon found themselves side-tracked into dealing with the more urgent cases of decayed charities. For instance, in 1872, the Heversham feoffees asked them to reorganise the endowment because a new Headmaster (Rev. W. Hart) had just been appointed and the dreadful state of the School House was preventing him from developing the school. As this seemed a non-controversial matter, the Commissioners agreed to take up the case "without prejudice to the future organisation of the Westmorland foundations"<sup>(2)</sup> - a phrase which suggests that they were still hoping to deal with Westmorland as a whole.

Meanwhile, however, further obstacles to radical reform were becoming apparent. The Elementary Education Act of 1870 had the incidental effect of encouraging the smaller endowed schools to become public elementary schools, and thereby led to a flood of applications for new schemes. The consequent pressure of business made long term planning difficult. More awkward still, as Sir Henry Longley (the head of the Charity Commission) told the Select

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1. S.I.C. ix.p. 910.

2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5175. Instructions to Fearon; 16 October 1872.



Committee on the Endowed Schools Acts, was the opposition of local people unwilling to see their endowments drastically modified to fit into some wider plan:

Q. "Each parish or village clings very much to the endowment it possesses?"

A. It does.

Q. And desires the development of it, and not the development of the education of the whole district?

A. They are unable to look at the matter at a distance and in relation to other endowments; that, of course, is only what might be expected."<sup>(1)</sup>

In a county with such strong local traditions as Westmorland, opposition of this sort was to prove very fierce in several places. The first shots in the impending battle were fired very early on. At Kendal in November 1871, the Rev. Simpson, the leading local protagonist of radical change, made a powerful plea for the regrouping of endowments to create central schools in the country districts.<sup>(2)</sup> Immediately there was a salvo of protest. Simpson was accused of wanting to take "the gifts of our pious ancestors for the promotion of the education of the poor in country parishes" and use them for the benefit of middle class children.<sup>(3)</sup> This, said his critics, was little short of spoliation; and one fevered imagination even managed to link this "attack on property" with "the downward course of Socialism

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1. Report from the Select Committee on the Endowed Schools Acts (1886), Q. 6, 247-8.
  2. W.G. 10 November 1871.
  3. W.G. 18 November 1871. Letter from F.A. Argles.

and the ideas of the Communist international".<sup>(1)</sup> After this initial gust of controversy, however, things calmed down. The Endowed Schools Commissioners were so busy dealing with opposition elsewhere that they had little time to tackle the problems of reform in Westmorland. In fact, the opposition they aroused proved so strong that in 1874 they were disbanded and their work handed over to the Charity Commissioners - their only achievements in Westmorland the new schemes for Heversham and Kelsick's.<sup>(2)</sup>

Having witnessed the discomfiture of the Endowed Schools Commission, the Charity Commission decided to content itself with piece-meal reform. This did not mean that its work was incoherent. Although it now approached each grammar school individually, it was still trying to remedy defects along some of the lines recommended by the Schools Inquiry Commission. Because of the exceptional concentration of endowed schools in Westmorland and the complete lack of secondary education for girls, its work was bound to have important repercussions there, particularly on the ten schools which the Schools Inquiry Commission had recognised were - or were still struggling to be - grammar schools.

One obvious effect was that Crosthwaite, Lowther, Bampton and Kelsick's became elementary schools. Crosthwaite indeed had ceased to teach classics even at the time of the Schools Inquiry Commission report, and was never thereafter regarded as anything but an elementary school. After the 1870 Act, a vestry meeting of the rate-payers of Crosthwaite and Lyth appointed a new committee,

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1. W.G. 23 December 1871. Letter from J. Brunskill.

2. See below pp. 87 and 80.

including the trustees of the endowed school, to consider the educational needs of the parish.<sup>(1)</sup> Without any formal sanction from the Charity Commission, this committee came to manage both the endowed school and the new school built at Howe as public elementary schools, and, perhaps because this informal arrangement worked well, the trust was never re-organised.

The situation was more complicated at Lowther: a rural parish with four small schools all drawing money from the one endowment.<sup>(2)</sup> The defect in this from the Charity Commission's point of view was that the income from the endowment was more than was needed to provide elementary education. So the new scheme of 1882 provided that, after meeting the needs of elementary education, the balance should accumulate for five years either towards scholarships or towards building a secondary school at Lowther if the Charity Commission thought it expedient. As a result, all the existing schools were closed, and a new mixed National school was built at Hackthorp in 1887; but nothing was done to use the balance for school buildings, as Lowther was clearly too small and the West Ward too thinly populated to support a secondary school. In 1887, and at intervals thereafter, the Charity Commissioners renewed the trustees' permission to accumulate funds, and by 1906 the trust had £14,707 in hand.

Bampton, a rural parish with three small endowed schools, was in many ways similar to Lowther. Two of the schools,

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1. Crosthwaite parish papers. Minute book of the Endowed School; 22 December 1870.

2. W.C.C. Minutes 1906-7. Report on the Lowther endowment, pp. 244-6.

Measand and the Grammar School, had already been given new schemes by the Charity Commission,<sup>(1)</sup> but neither of these had worked very satisfactorily. At Measand, an endowment of nearly £90 a year was being used to pay a master to teach ten or a dozen children, and the post was - according to the unreliable testimony of the Rev. Darling<sup>(2)</sup> - "almost a sinecure."<sup>(3)</sup> At the Grammar School, the scheme had allowed pupils to stay to the age of sixteen and to take Latin if they wished; but when Richmond visited the school he found "anarchy over all" because the vicar and trustees were at loggerheads.<sup>(4)</sup> Not surprisingly, therefore, in 1871 the inspector found all three schools inefficient.<sup>(5)</sup> Here on a small scale was a clear case for the rationalisation of endowments. So, in 1874, D.R. Fearon<sup>(6)</sup> came down to put

1. Bampton parish papers. Charity Commission schemes of 12 August 1862 (Bampton) and 18 August 1863 (Measand).
2. Rev. James Darling, vicar of Bampton 1861-83. For the deception which he practised on the visiting Assistant Commissioner, see S.I.C. xix.p. 307-8. He was described by the Education Department as being "well-known .... as a person whose statements are not wholly reliable". (P.R.O. Ed. 2/456. Minute of 14 June 1880)
3. Bampton parish papers. Letter from Rev. Darling to Rev. Holme; 1 February 1868.
4. S.I.C. xix, p. 307.
5. P.R.O. Ed. 2/456.
6. Daniel R. Fearon (1835-1919), ed. Marlborough and Balliol; H.M.I. 1860; Assistant Commissioner to S.I.C. 1865; Assistant Commissioner to Endowed Schools and Charity Commissions 1870-86; Secretary to the Charity Commission 1886-1900; one of the Charity Commissioners 1900-3.

before the trustees a scheme for the amalgamation of the two charities, which they agreed to in principle. As finally passed in 1877, it established a new foundation - the Bampton Endowed Schools - to run elementary schools at both Bampton and Measand. In 1879, the third school, Roughill, was also brought under its control.

The Charity Commission did not however intend to deprive the parish entirely of secondary education, for Clause 32 of the scheme provided that there should be an upper department at Bampton Endowed School teaching "the following subjects, or as many of them as may be practicable: English grammar, composition and literature, geography and history, geometry and algebra, natural science, latin or some foreign modern language, drawing and vocal music." In other words, it was to be one of the third grade schools whose importance the Schools Inquiry Commission had stressed: "The most urgent educational need of the country is that of good schools of the third grade . . . . It is just here that the endowed schools appear most signally to fail, while nothing else takes their place."<sup>(1)</sup>

Altogether the Charity Commission tried to create upper departments at Bampton, Crosby Ravensworth, Asby and Kelsick's. The first three were very similar: large rural parishes a long way from a grammar school, and (except at Asby) with several endowed schools offering the possibility of a re-grouping of endowments. Yet none was a success. Those at Bampton and Crosby Ravensworth were non-starters; the one at Asby, though provided for in a scheme of 1875, only began in 1897 and did not develop far. In 1898, the Governors' Minutes do indeed refer to

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1. S.I.C. i. pp. 79-80.

the classes in higher education during the past year, but these turn out to consist of three boys doing mensuration and seven girls doing cookery.<sup>(1)</sup>

The basic reason for failure was the same everywhere: none of the schools was large enough (in 1899 all three had under 60 pupils) and none had a sufficient income to staff a separate upper department even had there been a demand for one. These weaknesses were most obvious at Crosby Ravensworth, whose Governors replied in 1882 to a Charity Commission questionnaire:

"The Governors regret that they have been unable to award any scholarships or indeed to establish an Upper Department at all, from want of funds. Since the date of the scheme, there have rarely been more than 20 boys in attendance at the School . . . . The receipts of the School from scholars' payments and Government grants have consequently been small . . . . The Governors however have maintained a thoroughly efficient master . . . . paying a salary considerably in excess of the receipts of the school and making good the deficiency out of their own pockets. They regret that they have not been able to do more than this towards carrying out the Scheme, but hope their present difficulties may cease after a time."<sup>(2)</sup>

Unfortunately the difficulties did not cease for, in 1901, even after merger with the girls' school, there were only 31 on the register.<sup>(3)</sup>

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1. Asby parish papers. Minute Book of Dr. Smith's School Foundation 1885-1924; 4 June 1898.
  2. Crosby Ravensworth parish papers. Governors to Charity Commission; 26 December 1882.
  3. Ibid. Rev. R. Webster to Board of Education; 6 July 1901.

The situation at Ambleside was rather different. Although Kelsick's had been classed as a third grade non-classical school by the Schools Inquiry Commission, there was really nothing to distinguish it from an ordinary elementary school. This had been recognised by the Charity Commission when a new scheme was drawn up in 1867 defining the subjects to be taught as the three R's, geography, history and "whatever the trustees deem fit and proper."<sup>(1)</sup> Under this scheme, the school was run simply as an elementary school and was counted as such in the Civil Returns of 1871.

Meanwhile, the passing of the Endowed Schools Act had encouraged some local people to think that the endowment might be put to very different uses. In January 1870, a petition was sent (among the 69 signatures was that of Harriet Martineau) pointing out that the area needed a good secondary school for girls and asking that part of the endowment should be used to create one.<sup>(2)</sup> Encouraged by this, the Endowed School Commission instructed Fearon to suggest to the trustees that the endowment should be wholly diverted to second grade secondary education, either in two separate schools for boys and girls, or - most unusually for those days - in one mixed school, as the Commissioners believed, for some undisclosed reason, that "the mixed system is more likely to find favour in Westmorland than in some other parts of the country."<sup>(3)</sup>

When Fearon met the trustees in October 1871, he soon found that the information given to the Commission had led it to form

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1. W.G. 23 March 1867. Letter from "A Former Scholar" (W.Donaldson).
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5124. Petition received 11 January 1870.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5124. Instructions to Fearon; 14 October 1871.

a false picture of the state of affairs in Ambleside.<sup>(1)</sup> The trustees did not want a mixed school. Nor did they want all the endowment used for secondary education. Instead they put forward counter-proposals that there should be a boys' elementary school with an upper department and that a girls' secondary school should be built when resources permitted. Warned by the trustees that its own proposals would meet "serious opposition", the Commission changed course. If all the endowment could not be used for secondary education, it argued that the most urgent need was to provide a secondary school for girls with a boarding house. This was therefore the main feature of the draft scheme which it produced in July 1872, but, in deference to the wishes of the trustees, some money was to go to the boys' elementary school, which was to have a fee-paying upper department.

If the Commission thought that this compromise would take the wind out of the opposition's sails, it was very far off the mark. At least since 1867 there had been a self-appointed watchdog of the Kelsick trust, in the person of William Donaldson, an old boy of the School, who had already written copiously to the Commission and to the press (under the pseudonym "A Former Scholar")<sup>(2)</sup> He now came out to do battle in the open by publishing a pamphlet - "Kelsick's Free Grammar School: to the Ratepayer's of Ambleside"<sup>(3)</sup> - in which he argued that the endowment should be used in accordance with the founder's intentions to provide free elementary education for boys and girls; that, if possible, there should be scholarships

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5124. Fearon's report on his conference with the trustees.
  2. See his letters in W.G. 2 March 1867; 23 March 1867; 7 May 1870; 22 June 1872.
  3. Copy in P.R.O. Ed. 27/5124.



to an upper department for boys; and that there should be no secondary education for girls as this would only benefit the better off. The driving force behind these arguments came from two fears common among the opponents of the Endowed Schools Commission: that local endowments would, by being opened to boarders, benefit outsiders, and that "the Commissioners and those who side with them think that it would be better for the community if the endowments left for the poor were divided amongst the middle classes."<sup>(1)</sup>

The next step, inevitably, was a public meeting at which a Ratepayers' Committee was formed. Although Donaldson failed to convince it that the endowment should provide free elementary education for all, even its more moderate objections were brushed aside by the Commission because they tended too much "to secure the application of the endowment to elementary education".<sup>(2)</sup> Only a few minor amendments were made to the scheme and, as finally approved (9th August 1873), its main provisions were that there should be an elementary school for boys charging up to 9d. a week whose Headmaster should be paid £80 a year out of the endowment; that there should be an upper department for boys charging between £2 and £6 a year; and that the rest of the endowment should be used to build a girls' secondary school - though in deference to local feeling, the trustees were allowed to postpone building for three years to see if they had enough money.

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1. W.G. 31 August 1872. Letter from W. Donaldson.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5124. Undated abstract of objections to draft scheme.

On paper the Commission had carried the day, and local opposition had achieved very little. The reality was different; it was one thing to draw up a scheme, another to enforce it. In 1880, when the Charity Commission sent down another Assistant Commission, R. Durnford, to see how the scheme was working, he found that it was practically a dead letter for neither the upper department nor the girls' secondary school had been started.<sup>(1)</sup>

As Durnford admitted, the Governors had tried to create the upper department. They had appointed a master and advertised the department by house to house circular, "but not one parent had ever offered to pay the higher fee."<sup>(2)</sup> Since the higher fee was £5 a year, this was hardly surprising. Most parents who could afford to pay so much probably wanted something better for their children. Durnford interviewed two parents whose boys were away at school to find out whether they would send them to the upper department if it existed, and, though one said he would, the other said he would not, adding that "the Kelsick boys are a very rough lot and their language and manners are bad."

In respect of the girls' school, nothing had been attempted. The Governors had little sympathy with a project which they believed would be unsuccessful; the enthusiasm of the "influential ladies in the neighbourhood", who had originally pushed the scheme, had waned;<sup>(3)</sup> and so the Governors had little stomach to face up to local opinion, hostile to a girls' school and resentful

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5127. Durnford's report; 7 July 1880. The next two paragraphs are based on this, except where otherwise stated.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5127. Rev. J.W. Aston to Durnford; 5 July 1880.
  3. Ibid.

at the loss of the "indiscriminate free education which prevailed before." Instead, that opinion had been placated by only charging 2d. a week in the elementary school.

Having summed up the situation (in 27 MS pages!), Durnford recommended that the upper department should be abandoned, as most of them were proving unsuccessful anyway, but that a renewed effort should be made to launch the girls' school. At once local opposition was re-awakened, Donaldson at its head. Another public meeting was held in June 1881 and another committee appointed, which drew up its own scheme of re-organisation.<sup>(1)</sup> By this, the endowment was to provide free education at elementary schools for both boys and girls, and upper departments, for boys in the first place. This was "indiscriminate free education" all over again. The Commissioners could not conceal their exasperation. In an acid letter to the Governors,<sup>(2)</sup> they pointed out that the division of funds between elementary and secondary education had been settled in principle by the 1873 scheme which excluded the elementary education of girls; that they were determined to allow no more than £100 a year for the elementary education of boys; and that the only question still open was how to spend the balance. As the upper department had failed at Ambleside as elsewhere, the obvious thing to do was to spend it on a girls' school. The Commissioners concluded by expressing the hope that the Governors would see reason, and to help them to do so, sent down Durnford again.

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1. Copy in P.R.O. Ed. 27/5127.

2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5127. Charity Commission to W. Barton (Secretary to Governors); 6 August 1881.

The result of his visit was not quite what they had expected. After interviews with the Governors and the Ratepayers's Committee,<sup>(1)</sup> he came away doubtful whether a girls' school could succeed. "I feel convinced," he wrote, "that no Governing Body appointed under the Scheme and composed of the class of people now upon it will be willing to face an expenditure on buildings for an object with which they have little sympathy and which they believe will not succeed." Nevertheless, spurred on by "the total absence of endowed schools for girls in the North of England", the Commission persisted. In the draft scheme of January 1882, they conceded £100 a year for the higher education of boys in the form of scholarships to boarding schools worth up to £20 a year, but the residue was still to accumulate to build a girls' school.

This concession in no way lessened local opposition. If an inexpensive school like Heversham charged £40 a year, the scholarships were useless to the poor, as even the milder local critics pointed out.<sup>(2)</sup> So petitions were sent up, repeating the request already made.<sup>(3)</sup> When this had no effect, the opposition called up its big guns, in the shape of W.E. Forster, who had a holiday cottage near Ambleside. In August 1882, he led a deputation to London, which met Mundella, the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, and put to him a new plan that, after the

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5127. Durnford's memorandum of his interviews with the Governors and the Local Committee; 2 December 1881.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5142. Governors to Select Committee on the Endowed Schools Acts; 15 March 1886.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5127 and 5138. Petitions to Charity Commission and Education Department; 23 June 1882. See Kelsick's School Foundation Minute Book, 1881-95; 16 June 1882., for the meeting between the Governors and the Ratepayers' Committee to draw up the petitions.

payment to the boys' elementary school, the residue should accumulate and be divided equally between secondary schools for boys and girls.<sup>(1)</sup> When this suggestion was passed on to the Charity Commission, it was not impressed. Quite rightly, it argued that there was not enough money for two schools and in its view the girls should come first.<sup>(2)</sup> At this point, Forster took a personal initiative to avoid deadlock. He went to the Education Department and talked the matter over with Cumin, its Secretary, and Sir Henry Longley, but the only change he could persuade them to make was to allow the Governors to offer scholarships to girls as well as accumulating a building fund.<sup>(3)</sup> Local opinion was far from happy about this compromise,<sup>(4)</sup> but, now that the matter had been settled at the highest level, the Charity Commission felt confident that any further protests could be ignored, and on 5th March 1885, the scheme was finally approved.

Although the Governors did not like the scheme, and went so far as to petition vainly for a hearing before the Select Committee on the Endowed Schools Acts,<sup>(5)</sup> nevertheless they did not fail this time to put the scheme into effect. The results were not

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5138. Education Department interview memorandum ; 5 August 1882.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5127. Charity Commission to Education Department; 18 August 1882.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5138. Forster's memorandum; 21 March 1883.
  4. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5138. The Ratepayers' Committee and the Governors both protested to the Education Department. The Ratepayers claimed that they had "agreed to the compromise suggested by the Rt. Hon. W.E. Forster under protest." For the Governors' protest, see Kelsick's School Foundation, Minute Book, 1881-95; 24 July 1883.
  5. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5142.

those the Charity Commission had hoped for. When A.F. Leach<sup>(1)</sup> reported on the school in 1895, he found that nothing had been done towards providing the Girls' School, though nearly £600 had been accumulated towards it.<sup>(2)</sup> The building fund had progressed slowly because the Governors - as they were legally entitled to do - had chosen to award to girls 14 Scholarships worth £15 a year for two years. Over half of these had been used to pay the fees at a local private school, and, like the 12 scholarships awarded to boys, nearly all were held by the children of well-to-do parents, as they were not enough in themselves to cover the fees. Only an occasional working class child benefited, like H.F. Newton, son of a quarry worker, who was able to go to Heversham because the Headmaster took him at reduced fees, and who went on from there to Oxford.<sup>(3)</sup> Leach concluded sadly that the girls' school would never be built by the existing Governors, and that the only hope was to change them by appointing representatives of the County Council and the Victoria University. This was done by an amending scheme of 19th May 1899, which also raised the maximum value of exhibitions to £30 (£50 in special cases) to make them useful to poor children.

The lessons of this long story are clear. Firstly, there was little interest in the district in secondary education for girls. Secondly, local people were not prepared to see their endowments used for the benefit of a wider area and without their

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1. A.F. Leach (1851-1915), ed. Winchester and New College, Oxford; Assistant Charity Commissioner 1884; Charity Commissioner 1906; author of 'The Schools of Medieval England' etc.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5148. Leach's report; 18 June 1895.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5177. MS answers to Leach's enquiries by Rev. Hart, 1895.

co-operation re-organisation did not work. Finally, this is surely a classic case where endowments intended for the poor were almost entirely diverted to the better off. Donaldson and his Ratepayers' Committee were not exaggerating when they wrote that "no more gross case of flagrant violation of the preamble of the Endowed Schools Act can possibly be presented."<sup>(1)</sup>

Although the Girls' School at Ambleside never started, and the upper department failed there as elsewhere, the other five country grammar schools did survive as secondary schools. To allocate them to grades, however, was a matter of some delicacy. At the lower end, the decisions were relatively simple. The Governors of Windermere, which had always been principally elementary, or of Kirkby Stephen, which had dwindled away to the point where it had closed for two years, could hardly complain if their schools were put into the third grade. Kirkby Lonsdale might well have been put there too, but the Charity Commission did in fact preserve it as a second grade school. It was for Appleby and Heversham, the two schools rated first grade by the Schools Inquiry Commission, that the decision caused heartburning, as both were naturally anxious to retain their status.

Of the two, Heversham was first in the field. When the feoffeees approached the Endowed Schools Commission for a new scheme in 1872, it was doubtful whether the school could remain first grade because the endowment was so small; but, taking into account the school's record and its links with the universities,

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5142. Ratepayers' Committee to Kelsick's Governors; March 1886.

the Commission decided that it should. As it put it:

"A first grade school where a sound and general education can be obtained at a cheap rate and where the arrangements are of a rough and unpretending character is well suited to the circumstances of the county. There is considerable desire for higher education among a class who can neither pay much nor travel far to obtain it, but who will put up with plain living and homely lodgings."<sup>(1)</sup>

Preparation of a scheme for Appleby came much later in 1888, by which time there were already several thriving classical schools in the North West: St. Bees, Giggleswick, Heversham, and in particular Sedbergh, which was "far beyond competition of Heversham or other small first-grade schools in the district."<sup>(2)</sup> Seeing the competition which Appleby would have to face, the Charity Commission wanted to make the school second grade, but was reluctant to insist when the Governors had just rebuilt it in an effort to safeguard its status. So a draft scheme was prepared along the usual lines, with fees for day boys fixed at between £8 and £16 a year. As the Appleby boys had never paid more than £4 a year, this did more than any amount of argument to make the Governors look at realities. What they saw was that fees at this level would be "suicidal";<sup>(3)</sup> that the school could no longer compete as a first grade classical school - a point driven home when Davidson, the Headmaster, resigned because the school was not

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5175. Instructions to Fearon; 16 October 1872.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5151. Sir G. Young to Durnford; 11 May 1888.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5151. Lord Hothfield to Charity Commission; 15 September 1890.



flourishing as a classical school.<sup>(1)</sup>

As an alternative, the Governors then proposed that the School should be re-organised as a second grade Modern School, with a scientific bias, hoping thereby to enter an expanding and less competitive market.<sup>(2)</sup> The Charity Commission readily agreed - this was what it had wanted in the first place - and drew up a new scheme, excluding Greek and fixing the leaving age at 17. But was this the right solution? The Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, to whom the draft was submitted, thought not.<sup>(3)</sup> In his view, to fix the leaving age at 17 would be to cut the school off from the universities, a mistake not only in view of its great successes in the past but because of the unique educational traditions of Cumberland and Westmorland where, as he said "many young men have been drawn and are still being drawn to a higher education who in any other part of England would have no such advantages." To exclude Greek and emphasise Science would also be bad policy; the school would never be big enough to afford the equipment for a successful Science School, but could be run more cheaply with a literary bias. The Charity Commission saw the force of both these arguments, as did the Governors themselves. By the Scheme of 26th September 1891, the school was re-organised as a second grade classical school, with fees of between £6 and £12, a year, a leaving age of 17 (later with the Governors' permission) and Greek as an optional extra.

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5151. Governors to Charity Commission; 15 October 1890.
  2. Ibid.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5151. Provost and Scholars of Queen's College, Oxford to Charity Commission; 5 December 1890.

Although they divided the schools into different grades, in other ways the new schemes had many features in common. One was that they tried to make the Governing Bodies more representative, partly for democratic reasons and partly in the hope that this would make them more business-like. The great difficulty was that local government in the rural areas was still unreformed and unrepresentative.<sup>(1)</sup> The Charity Commission therefore had to look for its representative Governors in such bodies as the J.P.'s, the Boards of Guardians, the parents of day boys, and the nominees of Oxford and Cambridge Colleges. None of these was really satisfactory and, until the 1890's, the co-opted element on the Governing Bodies was usually predominant. However, the County Councils Act of 1888 at last created a representative local government. Amending schemes were therefore introduced altering the balance by reducing the number of co-opted Governors and adding representatives from the County Council. With minor variation, schemes of this sort had been passed for all the schools by the end of 1899.

More important than the changes in the Governors, which had little effect on the day-to-day running of the schools, were the changes in the curriculum. To bring the teaching more into line with contemporary needs, the new schemes insisted on a much wider range of subjects than classics and mathematics. For instance, the Heversham scheme of 1875 gave the "subjects of instruction" as English, Latin and Greek Language and Literature; Arithmetic and Mathematics; Geography and History; at least one foreign European Language; Natural Science; Drawing and Vocal Music. This was the

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1. Rept. S.C. on E.S. Acts (1886), Q. 6246.

standard list, except that, at Kirkby Lonsdale and Appleby, Greek became an optional subject (at £3 a year extra), and at the other schools it was dropped altogether. What these changes meant in practice depended on the teachers, who tended to be conservative. At the opening of Heversham's new buildings in 1877, the Rev. W. Hart made a typical declaration of faith. "It will certainly be my endeavour", he said, "to work on the old lines. Classics and mathematics will form the great staple of the work of the School."<sup>(1)</sup> To this was added the qualification that, of course, a wider range of subjects would be taught, but examination of the Heversham time-table for 1895<sup>(2)</sup> shows that out of a 35 period week the Fifth and Sixth Forms spent 25 periods on Mathematics and all the rest on Classics. Lower down the school, teaching was less specialised; but no History was taught above Form Two, Chemistry was left to a visiting master, and Carpentry was relegated to Saturday mornings - probably to keep the boarders out of mischief. The position at Appleby was little different. Certainly under Threlkeld (Headmaster 1869-86) it was essentially a classical school; and even in 1895 at least half the time-table was taken up with classics and mathematics.<sup>(3)</sup> Little English was taught - there were more periods of French - but the most glaring weakness was that practically no science teaching was done. Windermere which ran a chemistry class under the Science and Art Department, at least from 1896, was the only school which took it seriously, and indeed the only one with a laboratory of any sort.<sup>(4)</sup>

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1. W.G. 6 October 1877.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5177.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5155.
  4. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5237. Leach's report on Windermere G.S.; 19 June 1896. See also "A History of Windermere G.S." (Kendal 1936) p. 68.

Conscious of this weakness as a result of his visits to the schools, Leach met the Technical Instruction Committee of the County Council in 1897 and urged them to encourage science teaching in schools.<sup>(1)</sup> As a result, grants began to be made on a small scale for scientific equipment. By 1899 the Technical Instruction Committee was supporting classes at Windermere (in Chemistry, Maths and Drawing), at Appleby (in Elementary Science) and at Heversham (in Chemistry), but its total grant to the three schools only amounted to £95, and only the Windermere classes were of a high enough standard to qualify for a grant from the Board of Education.<sup>(2)</sup> Once the grants had been made for equipment, the natural development was grants for buildings. So, in 1901, Windermere, which was spending over £1,000 on laboratories to qualify for the Board of Education's grants to science schools, approached the county council for help, and, after some hesitation, a grant of £275 was made.<sup>(3)</sup> These were important beginnings, but they only affected the schools in the last few years of the period and then not to any great extent. In 1903, the position at Heversham - the leading grammar school outside Kendal - could still be summed up as follows: "The laboratory accommodation at Heversham is not sufficiently good ... but what little science work is done is under the inspection of the Board."<sup>(4)</sup>

A wider range of subjects was of little use if badly taught. The Commission therefore tried to improve the standard of teaching.

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1. W.G. 4 September 1897.
  2. W.G. 2 September 1899.
  3. W.G. 14 September 1901.
  4. W.C.C. Minutes 1903-4, pp. 335.

Its usual device was to arrange for the school to be examined each year by an outsider appointed by the Governors. It is doubtful whether this was very effective. The examiners' comments were about as critical as a Headmaster's speech day report is nowadays. Nevertheless, the examiners' visits were a check on the grosser abuses, and another factor was at work which may have helped to raise standards - the introduction of external examinations. Heversham, for instance, started entering pupils for the Cambridge Locals in the 1880's and Windermere for the Oxford Locals in the 1890's. It is a measure of the weakness of Kirkby Lonsdale and Kirkby Stephen that, with rare exceptions, they were not able to bring their pupils up even to this moderate level.

Another common feature of the Charity Commission's re-organisation was that standard scales of fees were laid down, according to the grade of the school. The purpose of this was two-fold: to give the schools an income which would enable them to provide a good education and to make sure that the pupils were of the right social class. Consequently, the annual fees charged to day boys ranged from about £6 to £12. Boarders everywhere paid about £40 a year. As even the lowest of these fees was too high for the ordinary run of parents, it is important to consider how successful the Commission was in creating an educational ladder for the poorer children.

The lowest rung of this was to be provided by scholarships from the elementary schools, paid with money earmarked for the purpose when an old endowed school became purely elementary. How well these schemes worked is not clear. At Crosby Garrett the

money was usually paid to the schoolmaster;<sup>(1)</sup> at Waitby it was spent on prizes;<sup>(2)</sup> in both cases, perhaps, because the scholarships of £10 a year were too small for a boarding school and there was no grammar school near enough for day boys. At Ambleside the scholarships were awarded but went, as has been seen, mainly to the better off. Perhaps the only case where such a scheme worked reasonably well was at Burton, where the endowments of the defunct grammar school had been re-organised in 1879 to provide scholarships worth £3 - £5 a year to children staying at elementary schools after the age of 11, and exhibitions of £20 - £30 a year for those going to grammar schools. These exhibitions were regularly awarded to children from the elementary schools - but were not won by the poor.<sup>(3)</sup>

The next step up the ladder was the scholarships offered by the schools themselves. The Charity Commission's standard formula for this (as in Clause 53 of the Kirkby Lonsdale scheme of 1882) was that scholarships, giving total or partial exemption from tuition fees, should be given on the results of a competitive examination "to not more than ten per cent of the boys actually attending the School." Similar clauses were written into the

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1. C.C. Bundle 120 in W.R.O. Thomas Brunskill to W.C.C.; 13 October 1904. The exhibition was apparently awarded for the first time in 1902. See P.R.O. Ed. 27/5172. Rev. Ridley to Charity Commission; 26 June 1902.
  2. C.C. Bundle 120 in W.R.O. Board of Education to W.C.C.; 8 March 1905.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5169. Leach's report; 28 October 1895, gives a list of the ten winners of exhibitions, 1886-95. There were nine boys and one girl. Three were children of farmers, two of a shoemaker, one each of a widow, painter, coachman and solicitor's clerk. One parent's occupation is illegible.

schemes for Appleby, Windermere, and Kirkby Stephen. The full effects of this were not felt till after 1891. Even then, the combined numbers of the four schools averaged little over 100, giving a maximum of about ten scholarships tenable at any one time, and far fewer available in any one year.

At Heversham the position was slightly different. When the School became first grade, the feoffees tried to safeguard the traditional rights of the local boys,<sup>(1)</sup> but all they had been able to salvage was that there should be twenty foundation scholars, sons of residents in Heversham, who were to pay "not less than £4 a year nor more than half the charge made to boys not on the Foundation."<sup>(2)</sup> Even though the charge made was in fact the minimum of £4, there was not much competition for these scholarships. In 1895, Leach found only eleven day boys on the foundation who "comprise sons of blacksmith, butler, coachman, farmers (4), farm manager, butcher, grocer, paper manufacturer." Two of the farmers and the blacksmith were said to be well-to-do.<sup>(3)</sup>

This was not quite the sum total of the scholarships available. For one thing private charity had not yet entirely died out. The Shuttleworth family, for instance, still helped children from Barbon to go to Kirkby Lonsdale,<sup>(4)</sup> and Windermere Grammar School in 1896 was able to offer some extra scholarships

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5175. Rev. T.M. Gilbert to Endowed Schools Commission; 14 November 1872.
  2. Clause 58 of the 1875 scheme.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5177. Leach's report; 1 October 1895.
  4. Prospectus of Queen Elizabeth's G.S., Kirkby Lonsdale (printed H. Morphet, Kirkby Lonsdale) p. 7. This is undated, but refers to the period when Dr. Burnett was headmaster, i.e. 1905-10.

to elementary school children "due to the generosity of a few ladies and gentlemen in the district."<sup>(1)</sup> Westmorland children were also eligible to compete for the George Moore scholarships.<sup>(2)</sup> More important for the future was the entry of the County Council into this field. In 1900, it approved a scheme of the Technical Instruction Committee which offered eight Minor Scholarships "to enable deserving pupils in the rural districts of the County to continue their education on a higher scale." These provided up to £12 a year for tuition and up to £15 a year for board, and were to be held at schools "in which Technical Instruction is regularly given." To cap the system, there was to be an annual university scholarship worth £60 a year.<sup>(3)</sup>

This intervention by the County Council came too late to make much difference before 1903. The schools therefore remained predominantly middle class. In 1895, the boarders at Heversham were all "sons of the professional and business classes",<sup>(4)</sup> and at Appleby, out of 35 pupils listed, 8 were sons of clergymen, 5 of solicitors, 9 of farmers, 2 of doctors, 3 of tradespeople, 1 of a miller and another of a millowner.<sup>(5)</sup> Clearly the children of poor parents had to squeeze through a very narrow door to enter

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1. W.G. 8 August 1896.
  2. W.G. 6 April 1878. The George Moore memorial fund offered, among other things, at least four scholarships of £50 a year, one or more to be open each year to boys or girls under 15 who had attended public elementary schools in Cumberland, Westmorland or Furness for at least three out of the previous five years.
  3. W.C.C. Minutes 1900-01, pp. 43-4.
  4. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5177. Leach's report; 1 October 1895.
  5. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5155. MS list prepared by the Head for Leach in 1895.



this preserve; indeed, most of those wanting more than elementary education had to take the less attractive path of the pupil teacher system. Nevertheless, the door to the grammar schools and even to the universities was never entirely closed. When questioned on this point by Leach, the Rev. Hart claimed that some university scholarships from Heversham had been won by poor boys, and gave as examples H.F. Newton and two others: (i) "G. Carruthers - son of a blacksmith - came from elementary school at reduced terms and with a George Moore scholarship - now engaged in school work.

(ii) J. Dobson - day boy foundationer - son of a farm labourer - took 1st Class in Maths Mods and 2nd in Finals - now engaged in school work."<sup>(1)</sup>

But whether the chances of the poor were less than they had been in the eighteen sixties is impossible to tell. One may suspect that the chaos of earlier times may well have given them a slightly better chance than the hard and fast lines drawn by the Charity Commission. Such at least was the opinion of Bishop Ware, who knew the district well. "As regards the North West of England," he wrote in 1890, "I doubt whether the changes of modern legislation ... may not have made it more difficult for the poor man's son to rise in the world than it was."<sup>(2)</sup> However, it was not mainly the Charity Commission's re-organisation which had squeezed them out of the schools; that had already been done beforehand by social pressures.

1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5177. MS answers to Leach's enquiries by Rev. Hart, 1895.

2. Bouch. Prelates and People of the Lake Counties, p. 409.

Although re-organisation followed a common pattern: the Assistant Commissioner's visit, the report, the preparation of a scheme most of whose clauses were identical with those of other schemes, nevertheless the effects of all this on the schools varied widely as a brief sketch of their histories will illustrate.

Taking the period as a whole, Heversham was the most consistently successful school, at least under the headship of the Rev. W. Hart (1872-97). Soon after his arrival, he persuaded the feoffees of the need to replace the existing unsatisfactory and insanitary buildings. They therefore approached the Endowed Schools Commission, which agreed that the school should be rebuilt and should continue as a first grade school, on the understanding that the new school and boarding house would be built out of subscriptions in order not to reduce the small endowment.<sup>(1)</sup>

This condition was not entirely fulfilled. The new building cost £8,000, and nearly £2,000 of the endowment had to be sacrificed.<sup>(2)</sup>

Nevertheless, a very large sum was raised for such a small place, and the new buildings, opened in 1877, enabled Hart to build up the boarding house on which, since day boys had been discouraged by the higher fees, the school depended. In the following years numbers, though fluctuating, sometimes reached 100,<sup>(3)</sup> and so new buildings were added - a classroom in 1882 and a gym in 1889.

Moreover, the school won a remarkable series of academic successes. In 1886, it could claim to have won open scholarships nine years running,<sup>(4)</sup> and in 1896 to be the only school in England with under

1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5175. Instructions to Fearon; 16 October 1872.
2. W.G. 6 October 1877. Account of the opening of the new buildings.
3. W.G. 5 August 1882.
4. W.G. 31 July 1886.

100 pupils to have won ten open scholarships in the previous five years.<sup>(1)</sup> In the competitive conditions of those days, it did not hesitate to trumpet these successes in the advertising columns of the Westmorland Gazette.

This prosperity was precarious. Looking back over his years as Headmaster, Hart concluded that, as the only school of its grade in the district without a substantial endowment, it was handicapped in the competition to attract boarders. "Being subject", he wrote, "to considerable fluctuations in numbers from epidemics, trade depressions and other causes, its financial position cannot but be a source of anxiety to any Headmaster - in fine, it is and must continue to be, a struggling school."<sup>(2)</sup> That it had struggled so effectively was largely due to Hart himself, who had just the combination of drive, academic ability and business acumen which a headmaster needed. Certainly, after he left, the school declined. By 1903, the numbers had dropped to 32, and its weakness on the science side was making the County Council wonder whether it was a fit place to send minor scholars to.<sup>(3)</sup>

The fortunes of Appleby were rather more fluctuating. When Durnford visited the school in 1879,<sup>(4)</sup> it was certainly thriving, for the numbers were up to 76, there were five old pupils at Oxford.

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1. W.G. 1 August 1896.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5177. MS answers to Leach's enquiries by Rev. Hart, 1895.
  3. W.C.C. Minutes, 1903-4. Report of Higher Education Sub-committee, pp. 410-13.
  4. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5151. Durnford's report; 21 November 1879.

or Cambridge, and Threlkeld was able to pay £400 in salaries to three assistant masters and still make as much again in profit for himself. Even then, two weaknesses were obvious: one that the "venerable schoolhouse" was inadequate and decaying with the result that half the 51 boarders were in licensed lodgings in the town; the other that Threlkeld had "a wide connection in the district which was purely personal."<sup>(1)</sup> The Charity Commission could do nothing about the second, but suggested that the first should be remedied by building a hostel for the 'outboarders'. This led to years of correspondence about whether the school was to be wholly or partially rebuilt, on the existing site or on another, until in 1884 Lord Hothfield<sup>(2)</sup> offered the present site at Battlebarrow, too far away from the old school to be used for anything but a new set of buildings.<sup>(3)</sup> However, the Charity Commission approved a new building, the Temple Sowerby Trust contributed £1,000, and the new school was opened in 1887 at a cost of £4,926.

Contrary to what happened at Heversham, new buildings did not usher in a period of expansion. In 1886, Threlkeld left, taking his personal connection with him, and the school suffered accordingly. Davidson, his successor, resigned because, as the vicar put it, "the school has been a total failure on the classical lines and has gone down almost to nothing",<sup>(4)</sup> and the school had then to renounce its pretensions to the first grade. When Leach

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5151. Rev. W. Matthews (vicar of Appleby) to Hon. W.Lowther; 13 October 1890.
  2. Formerly Sir Henry Tufton.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5151. Governors to Charity Commission; 25 February 1884.
  4. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5151. Rev. Matthews to Hon. W.Lowther; 13 October 1890.

visited it in 1895, he found a well-run establishment but only 36 pupils, and on this small scale it continued.<sup>(1)</sup>

The most improved of the country grammar schools was Windermere. In the eighteen seventies it was little more than elementary, and, if the trustees had had their way, would have become entirely so. However, when they asked the Education Department in 1878 to give the school an annual grant as a public elementary school, the Headmaster (W. Yates) protested to the Charity Commission against what he called "the degradation of my school".<sup>(2)</sup> Although the Education Department had been quite willing to treat the school as elementary, the Charity Commission took the view that the foundation must be used at least partially for secondary education.<sup>(3)</sup> When Durnford met the trustees in June 1878,<sup>(4)</sup> he put this to them and asked whether they wished the secondary education to be in a separate school or in an Upper Department. The trustees were divided: some wanted a separate third grade school "in which the social distinctions between the classes would be preserved"; but most felt that experience at Ambleside had shown that there was no demand for such a school and that an Upper Department would be better. Durnford, however, sided with the minority, because so many Upper Departments had failed; and on his recommendation a scheme was drafted giving £100 a year for the upkeep of the elementary schools and the rest for a third-grade school for boys.

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5155. Leach's report; 14 May 1895.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5237. W. Yates to Charity Commission; 27 February 1878.
  3. A History of Windermere G.S. pp. 56-60 gives a convenient summary of the ensuing controversy.
  4. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5237. Durnford's report; 18 June 1878, on which the rest of this paragraph is based.

The trustees would have nothing to do with this scheme, which they were able to block because the existing buildings and about half the endowment lay outside the Charity Commission's jurisdiction. By doing this, the trustees hoped to force the Charity Commission to create an Upper Department.<sup>(1)</sup> Instead, it drafted an entirely new scheme by which the endowment income under its control was to accumulate until there was enough to build a separate secondary school. When this scheme was finally published in 1882, people in the town began to realise that it left them with the worst of both worlds. Not only would there be no real grammar school for many, many years but the elementary schools were left with such a small income, in view of their obligation to give free education, that they could hardly carry on. The ratepayers were therefore faced with the possibility of a School Board "with all its attendant luxuries".<sup>(2)</sup> A public meeting was called which unanimously passed a resolution in favour of the Charity Commission's original proposals;<sup>(3)</sup> the trustees gave way; and so, in 1883 the original scheme for a third-grade school was approved.

Although the new school - opened in temporary accommodation in 1884 - moved into new buildings in 1885, it made little headway in its early years. Its first upsurge dates from the appointment of E. Mears as Headmaster in 1892. Mears, then a young man of 27, came from Barrow High School determined "to make a big thing of it".<sup>(4)</sup> He was scarcely in the school before he had persuaded the Governors

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5237. Trustees to Charity Commission; 4 December 1879.

2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5237. Cutting from Bowness and Windermere Chronicle; 20 January 1882.

3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5237. Cutting from Bowness and Windermere Chronicle; 27 January 1882.

4. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5242. Durnford's report; 1 March 1893.

to ask the Charity Commission that the school should be made first-grade and a large boarding house built. The Commission refused point blank to up-grade the school, and was very dubious about the boarding house when there was so much competition in that line in the district; but in the end, it allowed the Governors to sell £3,000 of stock to build a boarding house for 40 - which was never anywhere near full.

Mears may have had some extravagant ideas, but under him the school prospered for a time. Its strong point was its bias towards science teaching. The 6th Form concentrated on Maths, Chemistry and Physics for London Inter., and lower down the boys were prepared for the Science and Art Department Examinations in these subjects, alongside Oxford Locals.<sup>(1)</sup> This pioneering work was rewarded by increased numbers at the school. By 1893 they had nearly doubled to 51; the following year they were up to 63. It was this rising trend which encouraged the Governors to build the boarding house, but unfortunately the trend did not continue. For some unexplained reason, the number dropped off, and when Mears left in 1900 there were only thirty pupils.<sup>(2)</sup> However, if disappointed of expansion, the Governors could take some comfort from the first open award - a scholarship to Clare - won in 1897, from the five old boys who reached the universities between 1892 and 1895, and from the fact that science teaching had been developed further than in any of the other country grammar schools.<sup>(3)</sup>

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5242. MS answers to Leach's enquiries by Mears, 1895.
  2. A History of Windermere G.S., p. 70.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5237. Leach's report; 19 June 1896.

The undistinguished history of the other two grammar schools is quickly told. Kirkby Lonsdale had been in a depressed condition when the Schools Inquiry Commission reported, and it continued to sink until, when Darwent died in 1873, there were only 6 or 8 boys in the school.<sup>(1)</sup> This was its nadir; but the subsequent improvement was not startling. The new scheme of 1882 optimistically confirmed its status as a second-grade school, but this bore little relation to what actually went on, for the school rarely aimed at anything more ambitious than the examinations of the College of Preceptors. The trouble was that the Rev. J.N. Williams, who was Headmaster from 1877-99, was too easy-going in his early days and too deaf to cope in his later. In 1895 Leach reported: "There is no doubt (and the Governors agree) that there ought to be a change in the Headmastership; but the Headmaster has small means and a large family, and it is doubtful whether in view of his deafness he would be given a church living."<sup>(2)</sup> Eventually Williams retired to the quiet living of Chapel-le-Dale, and things began to look up a little under Stowell. In 1902 a few pupils were entered for Cambridge Locals, and the following year an exhibition was won at Christ's, the first for at least sixty years. Even so, the school's own Chairman of Governors had to confess that "anything connected with the Kirkby Lonsdale Grammar School was of necessity on a very modest scale."<sup>(3)</sup>

The situation at Kirkby Stephen was even worse. In 1876 Rowlands, who had been master since 1854 and had long been at loggerheads with the trustees, "had a fit while sweeping his front and died".<sup>(4)</sup> The

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5201. Durnford's report; 26 March 1878.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5205. Leach's report; October 1895.
  3. W.G. 1 August 1903.
  4. W.G. 6 May 1876.



The school was then closed for over two years, while the Trustees tried to re-establish it on a firmer foundation. The difficulties were that the endowment was meagre and that the schoolroom was "small and low, and would certainly not satisfy the requirements of the Education Department for the purposes of an elementary school".<sup>(1)</sup> Even though there was little chance of raising the money for a new building, Fitch<sup>(2)</sup> recommended after his visit in 1877 that the school should be continued as a grammar school because Kirkby Stephen was so isolated, and that girls should be admitted because the population was so low. A new scheme was therefore approved in 1878 for a third-grade school for boys and girls; the trustees spent £300 on improving the schoolroom; and the school re-opened in 1879. It did not flourish however. When Leach visited it in 1895, he found 21 pupils (only 2 girls), none of them preparing for any public examination, and few of them staying more than two years. He had little doubt that the fault lay with Nicholson, the Headmaster since 1883. "The common report in the neighbourhood is that he drinks," he wrote, "and when I met the Technical Education Committee of the County Council it was treated as a matter of course that the school was in a bad way because of the Master."<sup>(3)</sup> Whatever the truth of this, Nicholson was not dismissed, and the school presumably remained in the same

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5208. Fitch's report; 4 January 1877.
  2. Sir Joshau G. Fitch. (1824-1903), a pupil teacher who graduated at London in his spare time; principal of Borough Road College 1856; Assistant Commissioner of endowed schools 1870-77; chief inspector (eastern division) 1883-5; inspector of training colleges for women in England and Wales 1885-94; knighted in 1896.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5213. Leach's report; 17 May 1895.

state until he was pensioned off in 1905, prior to the school's re-organisation as a girls' grammar school.

Why did some schools develop and others stagnate? Initial advantages counted for something. Appleby and Heversham were stronger to start with and more attractive because of their closer links with the universities, but their resources were not really much greater. According to the Schools Inquiry Commission, the annual endowment income of Heversham was £51 and of Kirkby Lonsdale £46, and Kirkby Lonsdale too had exhibitions to Oxford and Cambridge had it been capable of profiting from them. Two further factors seem to have separated the successful from the unsuccessful. Appleby, Heversham and Windermere were all able to raise substantial sums by local subscriptions and to put up completely new buildings. This in itself was not enough. The small country grammar schools could only flourish if they attracted boarders and became large enough to support an adequate staff, and here the decisive factor was the personality of the Head. The ups and downs of the school, in fact, illustrate the simple principle that changes in the organisation of schools are less important than the quality of the teachers.

Although some of the schools had developed more than others, the period from 1870 to 1903 was not one of great advance by the country grammar schools. When the County Council came to survey the educational needs of the area, it found them backward and poverty-stricken.<sup>(1)</sup> Two of the five were little more than elementary schools, and even in the best of them there was little science

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1. W.G. 25 February 1904.

teaching. Moreover, things were even worse if the schools were looked at, not individually, but as a system of secondary education for the county. The failure of the upper departments at Bampton and Crosby Ravensworth had left nearly 8,000 people in West Ward without access to secondary education; in other parts, things were little better; except at Kirkby Stephen, there was no secondary education for girls at all. Altogether in 1903, 345 Westmorland pupils were attending grammar schools, but 228 were in the Kendal schools, leaving 117 drawn from the other 50,000 people in the county.<sup>(1)</sup> Therefore, the number at grammar schools outside Kendal cannot have been much higher than at the time of the Schools Inquiry Commission, though the fact that schools like Heversham were then partly elementary makes an exact comparison impossible.

The County Council survey of 1904 makes a sad contrast with the bold schemes of reform sketched out by Simpson and Richmond. That these had failed was not mainly the fault of the Endowed Schools and Charity Commissions. They had been handicapped because people wanted to see their local endowments used locally and for traditional purposes, and because they had been given powers to re-organise the schools but not to inspect them regularly to make sure that the schemes were carried out. In short, when the Endowed Schools Acts were passed, people still believed that the endowed grammar schools could provide, if re-organised, a national system of secondary education. By 1903, this policy could be seen to have failed and opinion was ready for a new departure.

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1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1904-5. Report of the Secretary on Higher Education. p. 388.

Chapter FiveThe Blue Coat School and the Kendal Grammar Schools,  
1870 - 1903

In 1870 the position in Kendal was worse than in the country districts; for there was no secondary education for girls and no grammar school preparing pupils for the universities. The Grammar School, it is true, was no longer the disgrace it had been, but it was still handicapped by its small endowment, by the cramped accommodation of the old school-house beside the parish church, and by the fact that Brown the headmaster,<sup>(1)</sup> though enjoying a high reputation as a teacher, was only certificated and so did not have the social standing to attract middle class pupils. When Fitch reported on it in 1877, he concluded that: "Although the elements of Latin are taught, its general character is rather that commonly known as a commercial than a Grammar School."<sup>(2)</sup>

Such was the position when the Charity Commission approached the Grammar School trustees in 1876 to ask whether they wanted a new scheme. In reply, the Commission received a private letter from John Whitwell, Liberal M.P. for Kendal,<sup>(3)</sup> There was little point, he said, in tinkering with the 1869 scheme; if they wanted to provide Kendal with a good secondary school, the best thing would be to amalgamate the endowments of the Grammar School, the Blue Coat School and the Green Coat School. "I feel increasingly confident," he went on, "that if wisely announced or suggested,

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1. See Chapter Two, p. 34.

2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5185. Fitch's report on the Grammar School and the Blue Coat School; 3 January 1877.

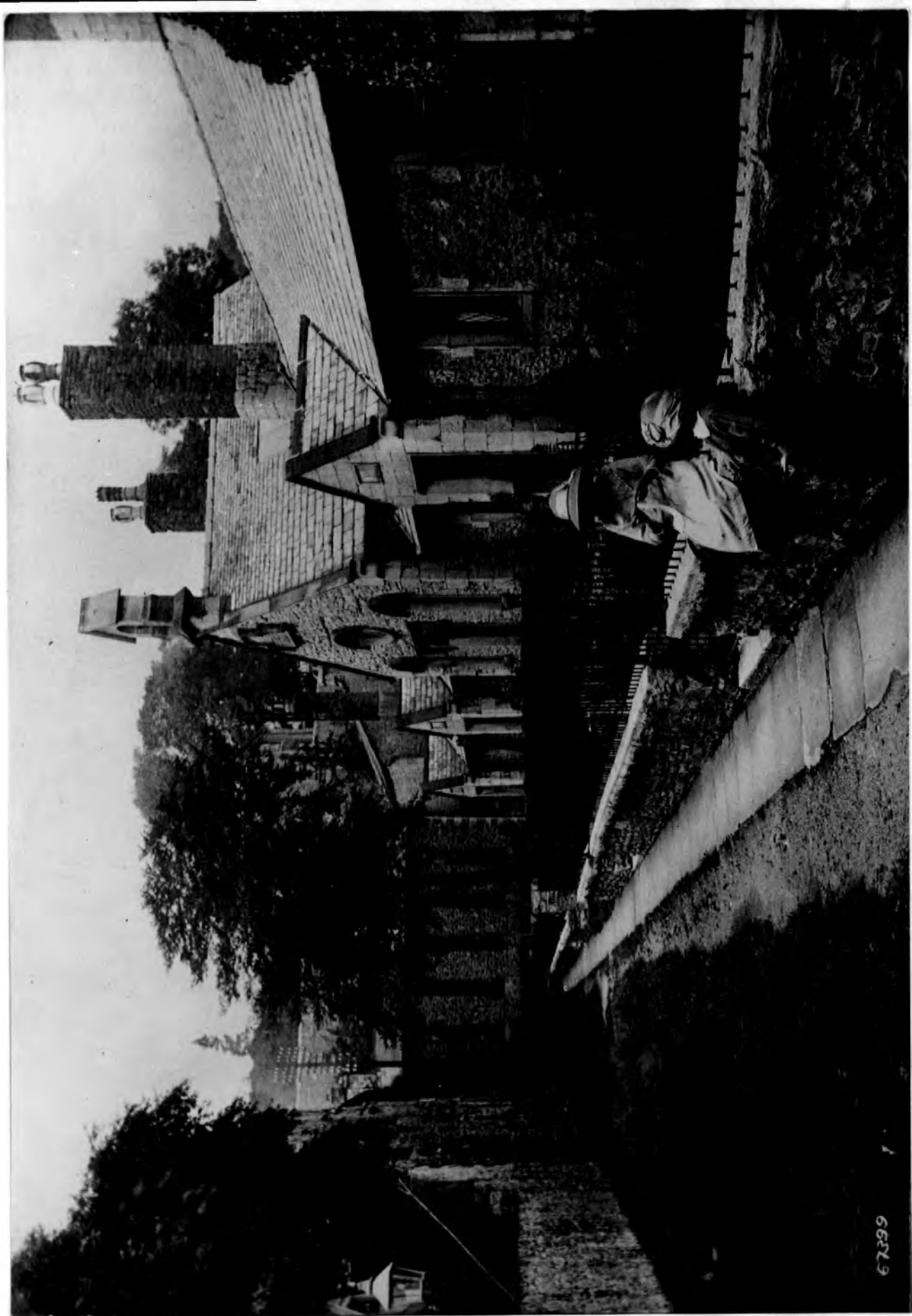
3. John Whitwell (1811-80); born in Kendal; ed. Friends' School; a partner in the carpet-manufacturing firm of Whitwell, Braithwaite and Nelson; several times Mayor; Liberal M.P. for Kendal 1868-80.

so as to present all the good compensation ... that could be offered in the way of scholarships in a good school, made up by a junction of the Blue and Green Coat Schools<sup>(1)</sup> to the Grammar School, those who are most interested, the working classes, would heartily welcome such a means of supplementing the education of the elementary schools."<sup>(2)</sup>

What Whitwell's motives were remains obscure. When the scheme for amalgamation became public, the Westmorland Gazette hinted that local Nonconformist interests were behind it anxious to destroy an Anglican foundation and to replace it by a non-denominational one,<sup>(3)</sup> a suggestion lent colour by the contemporary comment of the Liberal paper, the Kendal Mercury and Times, that "the town had been sleeping and allowing this undenominational school to slip into the practices and slavery of religious bigotry."<sup>(4)</sup> This motive hardly fits Whitwell, a former Quaker turned Anglican, though as a Liberal M.P. he may have acted with one eye on his Nonconformist supporters. It is more likely that he saw in the religious issue a way of getting up steam behind what he regarded as an educational reform, and that, concerned at the poor state of the Grammar School and impressed by the revival of Sedbergh and Heversham, he saw in amalgamation the best way of transforming it into a school which would give "sons of the

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1. The Green Coat School was a charitable Sunday school. Its endowments were outside the Charity Commission's jurisdiction, and therefore Whitwell's proposal to re-organise it was dropped.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5185. Whitwell to Fitch; 15 January 1876.
  3. W.G. 25 September 1880.
  4. Kendal Mercury and Times; 25 February 1881.

The Kendal Blue Coat School



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tradesmen of Kendal a fair start in the battle of life."<sup>(1)</sup>

In response to Whitwell's letter, the Charity Commission sent down Fitch in January 1877, but with instructions only to report on the Grammar School. What he did, according to one local account, was rather different.

"One fine day .... a certain gentleman - a Charity Commissioner - came down from London. He came to the Grammar School and remarked that the Governing Body seemed very poverty stricken. How wat it that they had no funds? The school could not go on like that. So the gentleman walked up the street until he got to Sandes Hospítal and from inquiries he there made he found it was a very thriving institution .... 'Ah', he said, 'we must make the fat fry the lean'."<sup>(2)</sup>

In short, at Whitwell's suggestion, Fitch went beyond his instructions and reported at length on the Blue Coat School.

This school, round which controversy was to rage, had been founded in 1670 by Thomas Sandes, a Kendal-born merchant, who had made his fortune in the woollen trade. By his will, he left property for the benefit of eight poor widows and "for the purpose of founding a school and for the payment of a schoolmaster ... to teach the children of the poor people free of expense and to instruct them in good literature until they shall be fit for the free school at Kendal, or some other."<sup>(3)</sup> The school had subsequently become one of the most popular Kendal charities. A number of benefactors

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1. W.G. 4 December 1881.
  2. W.G. 26 March 1881. Moser's speech to the Town Meeting.
  3. Nicholson. Annals of Kendal. p. 196.



had given property to swell its endowments, and by 1880 a further £3,000 in cash had also been donated and invested. In its early days, however, the income from the endowment had not been sufficient for the running of the school. Subscriptions had been invited; and so, at least as early as 1714 (when the earliest extant Minute Book began) the management of the school had passed into the hands of the subscribers. Nor was this the only way in which the conduct of the school had diverged from the founder's intention. In 1714, the custom had been introduced of giving free clothing to the boys, and the school had thereby become a Blue Coat School. At the same time, girls too began to be given clothing, and, though this was stopped in 1721, it became the regular practice after 1789 to clothe thirty girls, who also received free education at the National School.<sup>(1)</sup>

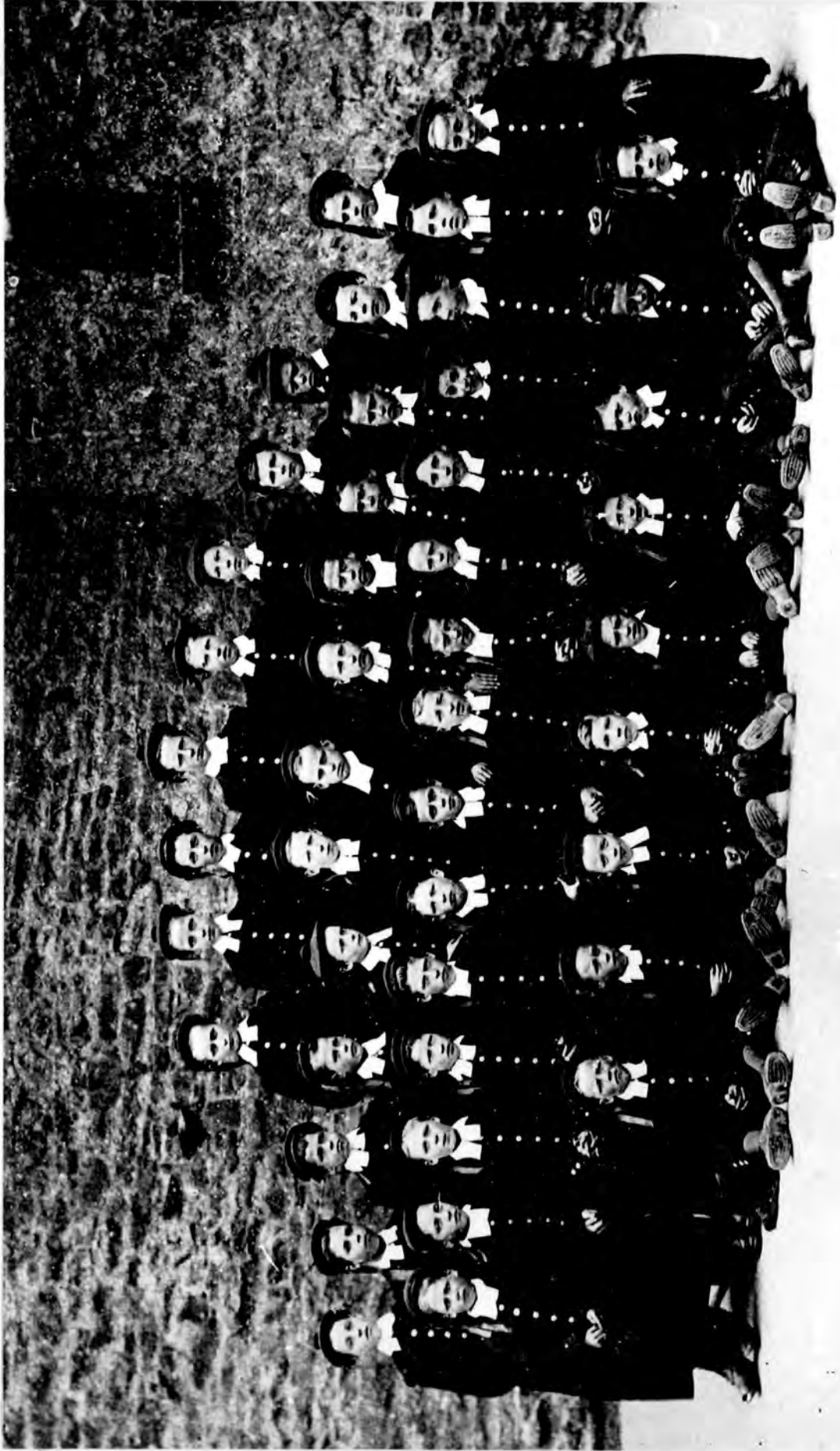
Two more serious divergences, however, were alleged. One was that the places at the school did not always go to poor boys. This was probably true, but many poor boys did benefit. For instance, J.R. Tanner was one of a family of eight, whose father, a woolcomber by trade, had found his skill made useless by machinery and had become a day labourer. Tanner was admitted to the Blue Coat School and later wrote:

"After the clothes had served me for a year on Sundays and then another year on weekdays, in consequence of the ample skirts there was sufficient cloth to make suits for my younger brother, so that in addition to the education I received there was practically clothing for

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5186 contains a printed 'Memorandum of Further Inquiries respecting the Grammar School, Sandes Hospital and Blue Coat School, and other charities and endowments' by D.R. Fearon (30 March 1883) on which this paragraph is based.

Blue Coat School boys.



two and where there were ten mouths to feed ... and clothes as well out of 15/- a week, you may be sure that the education of one child free and the clothing of two was a wonderful help."

Nor, Tanner claimed, was he exceptional, for half the parents were in "an equally evil case."<sup>(1)</sup>

The other unquestionable divergence was that the charity had come under Anglican control. This had arisen almost by accident. When Parish Sunday Schools had been set up in the late eighteenth century, they had been supported by all denominations and had offered to the poor their main chance of elementary education. It therefore seemed sensible to the subscribers of the time to choose the Blue Coat boys from the Parish Sunday School children. When the Nonconformists withdrew to set up Sunday schools of their own, the practice continued, and the links with the Parish Church were strengthened; the boys had to attend Sunday school and sing in the choir.<sup>(2)</sup> Therefore, although a few Nonconformist parents allowed their children to attend the school, the majority found themselves debarred from a charity which had been left without restriction to the poor of Kendal. Yet, until the agitation for the reform of the school had begun, no voices were raised in protest, possibly because Kendal was "a good old Quakerish town, whose people loved her antiquated and neat ways."<sup>(3)</sup>

Once the Blue Coat School had been brought to the notice of the Charity Commission, it gave it a most thorough examination. After

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5188. Tanner to the Education Department; 18 August 1883.
  2. W.G. 26 February 1881.
  3. Report of the Select Committee on the Endowed Schools Acts (1886); H.C. 120-1 (1887) ix. Q. 7452.

Fitch in January 1877 came Fearon in July. They found that the income of the endowment, though difficult to ascertain exactly, was about £470 a year, to which subscriptions added another £63. Out of this, £133 went to the eight poor widows, £64 to the girls, and nearly all the rest to the Blue Coat School. There it gave free education to 45 boys, who also received clothing at Christmas and Easter. Clothing was in fact the biggest single item of expenditure - £186 according to the 1878 balance sheet. As to the education given to the boys, the two Commissioners formed different opinions of its value. Fitch stressed that the school was uninspected and thought that it was probably no better than any other elementary school. Fearon, however, concluded: "So far as I can judge without examining the Scholars, I should say that the school is in good order and discipline, carefully worked in an old-fashioned way ... and I should expect, from what I saw of the Master, that he would have considerable influence on the character of his pupils ... It did not appear to me ..... that this school ..... could be considered a bad school."<sup>(1)</sup>

This is an important statement, coming as it does from a critical witness at a time when heads were still cool. Later, in the heat of argument, some people (including Fearon) tried to suggest that the Blue Coat School was no great loss. Some colour was lent to this suggestion by the fact that, at the time of the controversy, James Whitaker, the Master, was old and failing; but looking back over his long headship since 1837, all the evidence is that the school gave a good education, rather beyond that of the

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5185. Fearon's report; July 1877.

other elementary schools.<sup>(1)</sup> There is plenty of testimony from his former pupils as to its value. One of them, J.R. Tanner, speaking at a Town Meeting, claimed that the Blue Coat boys did better than those from the elementary schools in the Kendal Boys' Local examination; that "he had never been told of one Blue Coat scholar who had ever been convicted of crime;"<sup>(2)</sup> and, to thrust home his argument, he produced an impressive list of positions occupied by former pupils. Even the hostile Kendal Mercury and Times did not attack the school's educational record.

The management of the charity, however, was wide open to criticism and, in Fitch's report,<sup>(3)</sup> those criticisms were duly made. Control was divided among three bodies in a most peculiar way. The Master was appointed by the Mayor, Senior Aldermen and Vicar of Kendal along with the Headmaster of the Grammar School; the property was vested in trustees; the income - handed over by the trustees - was administered by the subscribers, who had no legal standing. Moreover, these same subscribers controlled entry to the school, which was "determined largely by favour and by personal knowledge", and used this patronage in the Anglican interest, even though this was "utterly indefensible on any reasoning based on the founder's intentions." Assuming, as he did, that the school was purely elementary, Fitch concluded that there was no case for allowing it to survive. "That ..... the expenditure of more than £300 a year on 45 children in an elementary school could be

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1. S.I.C. xix. 361. "The instruction includes algebra and sometimes Latin for the more advanced boys."
  2. W.G. 26 March 1881.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5185. Fitch's report, from which all the quotations in this paragraph are taken.

justified", he wrote, "it is impossible to believe." Therefore, although quite aware that this would be "exceedingly unwelcome" to many local people, he recommended that the "Blue Coat School ought to be abolished and that its resources should be united with those of the grammar school under the same governing body," a recommendation which Fearon subsequently endorsed.

The next step was to ascertain the views of the trustees. So the Charity Commission entered into correspondence with their secretary, G.E. Moser, a Kendal solicitor, and, aided by the information he provided, it drew up a draft scheme in 1880.<sup>(1)</sup> This had two salient features. One was that the girls were to get nothing in future. The Commission had a strong legal case for this, as Sandes clearly did not intend girls to benefit from the charity and they had rarely done so before 1789. What weighed more were practical considerations. In the Commission's view there was only enough money to support one good school and the girls must therefore be left out. Moreover, it calculated that this would not be strongly opposed and in this it was right. Some people did complain that the girls were being shabbily treated. "What about the girls?" said Moser. "Postively, nothing, and if they asked the Commissioners how that was, they were told that the boys were provided for, and that the girls, to use a north country phrase, could shift for themselves. He would admit that this might be true, but it was not justice."<sup>(2)</sup> As a result, one of the points of the petition of June 1881<sup>(3)</sup> was that the girls should continue to benefit from the endowment, but there does not seem to have been any strong feeling behind this.

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5185.

2. W.G. 26 March 1881.

3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5186.

When Fearon told the Town Council in 1882 that the girls must be excluded, his arguments were not disputed, and the Westmorland Gazette commented that exclusion was "something not seriously opposed or objected to."<sup>(1)</sup>

All the fury of the opposition, in fact, was concentrated on the second main feature of the Commission's proposals. This was that the endowments of the Grammar and Blue Coat Schools should be united under one governing body, "The United School and Hospital Foundation of Kendal", whose duty would be to provide a day and boarding school for not less than 100 boys. Admission was to be by examination but without religious tests, as Religious Instruction was to be "in accordance with the principles of the Christian faith" and parents might withdraw their children from it. Fees were to be charged; between £3 and £5 a year for the Juniors (7-12 years old), and between £5 and £10 a year (£3 extra for Greek) for the Seniors (13-17 years old). The boarding fee (excluding tuition) was not to exceed £45 a year. To mitigate the exclusiveness which such fees necessarily entailed, 20 scholarships were to be offered, exempting their holders from tuition fees. The 6 Foundation Scholarships simply continued those which already existed but the 14 Sandes Scholarships were intended as compensation for the closing of the Blue Coat School. They were therefore reserved in the first place to boys educated for three years at public elementary schools in Kendal, and to encourage the children of poor parents, the governors were empowered by Clause 54 to award maintenance grants of up to £4 a year to scholarship winners.

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1. W.G. 24 June 1882.



Although sent in confidence to the trustees of both schools, the draft scheme was leaked to the Westmorland Gazette,<sup>(1)</sup> which at once sprang to the defence of the Blue Coat School. So did the Town Council, whose unanimous opposition to the scheme reflected the general indignation in the town. But neither the Westmorland Gazette nor the Town Council was in a position to do anything until the scheme was officially made public. The matter was therefore allowed to drop until February 1881, when the Charity Commission demanded that the trustees should give their opinion on the scheme without further delay, and, as this was virtually impossible, Moser decided to bring the question into the open by calling a meeting of the subscribers.

Once Moser had confirmed officially that the Westmorland Gazette's story was correct, the movement of protest rapidly gathered strength. The subscribers - predictably - passed a resolution that the school was working satisfactorily. At the same time, they realised that some of the things they had been doing were indefensible; so prudently they decided to open the School to all denominations and thereby disarm the local Non-conformists.<sup>(2)</sup> The Town Council too resolved that "the Blue Coat School had done and is doing good work in this town";<sup>(3)</sup> and the Gazette in its leaders continued to inveigh against the scheme.

The culmination of this initial outburst of protest came at the Town Meeting on March 22nd.<sup>(4)</sup> At this, no one was in favour

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1. W.G. 25 September 1880 published the draft scheme.
  2. W.G. 5 March 1881.
  3. W.G. 26 February 1881.
  4. W.G. 26 March 1881 and Kendal Mercury and Times, 25 March 1881.

of the Charity Commission's proposals as they stood, but - most significantly for the future - two distinct schools of thought began to differentiate themselves. The first was entirely opposed to the proposed amalgamation. Its members took their stand on the fact that the school was "doing good work and benefiting the poor"; and they argued from this that endowments intended for the poor were being taken to build a school which would mainly benefit the middle class. Looking round the district, they saw what had happened at Heversham or Sedbergh, where the endowment had been used to build up a boarding school and the local children had been largely squeezed out. To some Kendalians, the success of these schools was a source of envy; to the opponents of the scheme it was a warning signal. Nor did they accept that 14 scholarships at the Grammar School were an adequate compensation for the destruction of the Blue Coat School. They feared that the scholarships would not go to working class children because others would be better coached for the competitive examination, and they doubted whether - even if working class children did win the scholarships - the Grammar School would give them the education they needed. As Councillor Musgrove pointed out, the grammar schools aimed to prepare children for professions such as the law which working class children could not afford to enter.

Against this first group were ranged those who wanted amalgamation so that the Blue Coat endowment could be used to support a higher-grade school. Kendal, they argued, had no school which could act as a stepping-stone to university, and the proposed scheme would provide one. Moreover, at the new Grammar School those working class boys who won scholarships would have a far better education available to them than they now had, and this would be an adequate compensation for the closure of the Blue Coat School provided that the scheme was amended to offer more scholarships. These views however did not go down well with the majority of those present, and so their advocates,

after much heckling, agreed to support a resolution, passed unanimously, "That this meeting, while they do not pledge themselves to all details in the management, believe that the Kendal Blue Coat Schools are of great benefit to the town and especially to the industrial classes therein and protest strongly against those schools being amalgamated with any other schools."

Despite this wave of protest, the Charity Commission published its draft scheme in April 1881. More protests followed. The Subscribers formally lodged one with the Commission as did the body which appointed the Master. Even the trustees of the Grammar School turned down the riches they were being offered.<sup>(1)</sup> A further public meeting was held at which it was agreed to organise a public petition against amalgamation. 4,171 signatures were collected, a large proportion of the adult population; "the most unanimous and largely signed petition", Moser claimed, "that I can hear of as ever being sent up from the Borough."<sup>(2)</sup> But even before it was forwarded to the Commission in June, divisions, foreshadowed at the meeting of March 22nd, were appearing in the opposition to the scheme, and these were to sap its strength.

One straw in the wind was the change in the attitude of the Westmorland Gazette. Up to March 1881, it was uncompromisingly opposed to a scheme which it denounced for depriving the poor of their rights; but its leader commenting on the publication of the draft scheme struck an entirely different note. After rehearsing the arguments for and against, it concluded that Kendal needed a

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5185 contains all three protests.

2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5186. Moser to Charity Commission; 16 June 1881.

good grammar school and that the opening of higher education to the poor was "a prospect not to be lightly set aside."<sup>(1)</sup> The same theme was taken up when the Town Council came to discuss the scheme of May 3rd.<sup>(2)</sup> The familiar division soon appeared between those opposed to amalgamation and those who were ready to accept a modified version of the scheme. To some extent this was a party division: the leading opponents of amalgamation - Monkhouse, Tanner and Crewdson - were all Tories, and the leading supporters of it - Baron and Wilson - were Liberal. So, not for the first time in the nineteenth century, Liberals campaigning for "Improvement" clashed with Tories defending local privileges and consequently appearing as champions of the poor. In the Town Council, the improvers carried the day. After a rambling discussion, a committee to consider the scheme was appointed, which reported back accepting the principle of amalgamation, even though it concluded that the new scheme was unsatisfactory because it provided nothing for girls and because the 14 scholarships did not provide the poor with an advantage equivalent to the Blue Coat School. A letter along these lines was then sent to the Charity Commission. This was really the vital surrender, for the Town Council had accepted the fundamental principle of the Charity Commission's scheme. From this time on argument could only be about how the principle was to be applied.

Why did the opposition to amalgamation crumble so quickly? One clue is in a letter written by James Cropper, who succeeded

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1. W.G. 16 April 1881.
  2. W.G. 7 May 1881.

Whitwell as Liberal M.P. in 1880.<sup>(1)</sup> "You ask me about my opinion of the Scheme. At first I preferred the old plan in 1881, but when I saw that the Bluecoat School was wasting a good endowment on mere elementary education, I felt satisfied with the proposal of the Commissioners."<sup>(2)</sup> Cropper may not have been typical, but this does suggest that some of the middle class people whose first reaction had been to defend a local charity against outside interference gradually came to realise what might be gained from a flourishing grammar school. Another weakness of the opposition was its internal confusion. Once the Blue Coat School had come under scrutiny, simple resistance to change was clearly not enough, but the opposition failed to produce any workable alternative to amalgamation. The obvious solution was to reform the Blue Coat School, turning it into a higher grade school of the type which School Boards had already developed elsewhere. This idea was mooted. Moser, for instance, wrote: "I venture to suggest that if a scheme were prepared for amendments in the Blue Coat School, or of enlarging its scope and giving higher education to the boys, it would be proper to consider it."<sup>(3)</sup> It did not, however, attract sufficient support until too late, probably because, given the social structure of the time, proposals for a revived grammar school could excite far more enthusiasm in influential circles than proposals for a higher grade school. Certainly this was one of the main reasons which Fearon advanced for not reforming the school in

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1. J. Cropper (1823-1900); chairman of the company which owned the Burneside paper mills; Liberal M.P. for Kendal 1880-85; 1st chairman of Westmorland County Council.
  2. Rept. S.C. on E.S. Acts, 1887, Q. 8, 133.
  3. W.G. 23 April 1881. See also the letter from 'Delta' in the Kendal Mercury and Times, 8 April 1881.

this way.

"To carry out efficiently the establishment of such a school," he wrote, "would require the good will and co-operation of leading persons in Kendal who understand educational matters . . . . Such co-operation was secured at Wells, but it is not, I think, to be got in Kendal under existing circumstances. Whereas a scheme for the amalgamation with the grammar school would probably, if once established, work by its own inherent force."<sup>(1)</sup>

This analysis proved correct. Divided and uncertain, no opposition, however passionate, could hope to match the experts of the Charity Commission and their influential local supporters, who knew precisely what they wanted to do.

It was in these circumstances that Fearon came to Kendal in June 1882 to discuss the scheme with all the parties concerned. During a crowded few days, he interviewed, among others, the trustees of the Grammar School, the trustees of the Blue Coat School (two were for the scheme and two against), and the subscribers, who presented him with resolutions against change but turned out, when questioned, to be divided among themselves and unable to make any "practical suggestion for improving the school on any other lines."<sup>(2)</sup> The key meeting, however, was that with the Town Council on June 20th, "one of the most interesting meetings", he afterwards said, "I have ever had with any public representative body."<sup>(3)</sup>

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5185. MS draft of scheme for Blue Coat School and Kendal G.S.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5186 contains accounts of all his interviews.
  3. Rept. S.C. on E.S. Act, Q. 8119.

At this meeting, <sup>(1)</sup> Fearon had no difficulty in making out a case against the Blue Coat School. The whole income of the charity was being administered by the subscribers who had no legal title to do so, and this illegal body was spending the money on purposes never contemplated by Sandes - the provision of clothing and the education of girls. Moreover, Sandes' specific instructions that the school should prepare its pupils for the free school at Kendal were being ignored. All these, however, were really arguments for the reform of the charity not for its amalgamation with the Grammar School; so, when he came to defend this, Fearon found himself on shakier ground. Three main arguments against the proposed scheme were put to him. The first was simply that the 14 scholarships were not enough; this he countered with an elaborately misleading set of calculations designed to show that the 14 scholarships were worth more than the education of 45 boys at the Blue Coat School. The second undermined this defence by pointing out that the scholarships would not necessarily go to the poor; this Fearon had to admit, though he attempted to slide away from the point by extolling the virtues of competition as opposed to patronage. This left the third, and most fundamental, point that endowments intended for the poor were to be used for the grammar school which would be mainly a middle class institution. Fearon's reply to this was most revealing:

"Mr. Fearon observed that 'poor' was a relative term. In the 17th century, when the school was established, the class now called poor was not nearly so great in proportion as that which now existed. It was not usual in matters of this kind to keep up the old restrictions in favour of

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1. W.G. 24 June 1882; Kendal Mercury and Times 23 June 1882.

the poor. The alterations made in recent years in favour of the poor had been very great, while the alterations in favour of the less than poor had been very small. The education of the poor was largely paid for out of the pockets of the middle classes, and they (the Town Council) must observe that the Act<sup>(1)</sup> most distinctly laid it on the Commissioners to have a 'due regard for all classes of persons'. He thought the Commissioners would see that while they were bound to have a due regard to the poor they were also decreed to 'put a liberal education within the reach of all classes.'

Mr. T.C. Wilson: Even though the endowment was given for the poor.

Mr. Fearon: Yes: nearly all the foundations were so originated. Eton and Harrow were founded for the poorer classes."<sup>(2)</sup>

The gist of this argument was that the middle class had a right to share the endowment because the poor were being educated at their expense. Even if the premise of this argument be granted, the conclusion hardly followed. Only the poor, as Collings pointed out, were deprived of endowments on the ground that they had more than they needed.<sup>(3)</sup> As for using the endowment for a middle class school, nothing had been more sharply criticised by the Schools Inquiry Commission than the use of endowments to relieve people of expenditure they could well afford; yet this was precisely what the scheme proposed to do. Somebody might well have asked Fearon why,

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1. The Endowed Schools Act of 1869.
  2. W.G. 24 June 1882.
  3. Rept. S.C. on E.S. Acts, 1887, Q. 7417.



if a middle class school were so desirable, the middle class should not pay for it, as they were soon to do for Kendal High School. But this brutal question was never put.

After dealing with these arguments, Fearon tried to sum up the feeling of the meeting. He asked the Town Council if the scheme would be satisfactory provided that (a) the number of scholarships were increased and (b) the scholarships were reserved for the poor. Although one or two members clearly expressed their disapproval, with these provisos the scheme was accepted; and Fearon was correct in his claim that at the end of the meeting "there was not even a motion disapproving of the scheme."<sup>(1)</sup> He must have left Kendal confident that the dragon of local opposition had been slain; and indeed it might well have been had the Charity Commissioners amended the scheme along the lines he had put to the Town Council. Instead, perhaps too confident that victory was already won, they made only minor concessions when the scheme was sent to the Education Department for approval in July 1883: one extra scholarship, even though Whitaker had died in the meantime and it was no longer necessary to provide for his pension; and a vague clause that "no scholarship shall be awarded to any boy whose circumstances render him in the opinion of the Governors an unfit object of such benefit." Small wonder that local opinion was once more aroused, and that the Town Council, changing from acquiescence to sharp disapproval, passed unanimously a resolution protesting against the scheme unless the number of scholarships was increased.<sup>(2)</sup>

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1. Rept. S.C. on E.S. Acts, 1887, Q. 8124.
  2. W.G. 3 March 1883.

Although local opposition was again aroused, it was again disunited. The moderates on the Town Council, led by the Town Clerk, John Bolton, simply wanted to press for more scholarships for the poor; but, as so often happens when one side is unyielding, leadership on the other fell into the hands of those advocating more radical courses of action. At a public meeting in St. George's room, Stramongate on 20th August, 1883, Councillor Monkhouse<sup>(1)</sup> (henceforth the leader of the opposition to the scheme) carried with acclamation a resolution:

That this meeting views with alarm that, notwithstanding the protests of the inhabitants of Kendal by petition and in public meeting assembled, the Charity Commissioners persist in their scheme which appropriates the funds of the Blue Coat School for purposes other than the education of the poor, and contrary to the will of the founder. That the town council be asked to withhold its approval to any scheme which so flagrantly interferes with the rights of the poor, and requests that they will take steps which will secure to the poor of Kendal all the benefits intended by Thomas Sandes, the donor."<sup>(2)</sup>

Monkhouse then outlined a scheme of his own by which the two schools were to be amalgamated as a day school only, providing free education for 80-100 boys, to be selected by competitive examination from the elementary school; and the meeting wound up by appointing a rate-payers' committee to organise the opposition, with Monkhouse as its secretary.

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1. J. Monkhouse (1844-1918); born in Kendal; an auctioneer : town councillor 1872; Mayor of Kendal 1897, 1902-3; county councillor 1900-7, 1917-18.

2. W.G. 25 August 1883.

Two days later, a deputation from the rate-payers' committee put these views before the Town Council, where Monkhouse won a majority to his side.<sup>(1)</sup> In consequence, a committee was appointed, including councillors of both points of view, to prepare an amended scheme; and this eventually sent to the Education Department proposals that the boarding house clause should be struck out and that the funds of the Blue Coat School should be used exclusively for the poor of Kendal, by offering 55 free places at the Grammar School to children from the elementary school.<sup>(2)</sup>

Although these proposals were warmly supported by a well-attended Town Meeting, for a long time they elicited no response from the authorities in London. The rate-payers' committee therefore decided to try the effect of parliamentary pressure. The natural channel for this would have been the Liberal M.P. for Kendal, James Cropper, but he was too inclined to go along with the policy of the Charity Commissioners. So the Committee turned to Jesse Collings,<sup>(3)</sup> who had already made a name for his campaigns against the Charity Commission, and in July 1884, he raised the question in the House of Commons.<sup>(4)</sup>

Faced by such well-organised and well-supported opposition, the Education Department seems to have decided that the time had come to make concessions, though the attitude of the Charity

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1. W.G. 25 August 1883.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5188.
  3. Jesse Collings (1831-1920). Radical M.P. for Ipswich 1880-86; Liberal Unionist M.P. for the Bordesley division of Birmingham 1886-1918; a close associate of Joseph Chamberlain.
  4. Parliamentary Debates, 3rd series. Vol. CCXC. 17 July 1884.

Commission was still unyielding. Fortunately, a bargain was possible. There were some bequests to the Sandes charity - those of Jane Harrison, Sarah Scott and Miss Fisher - which had not been included in the scheme because they were outside the Charity Commission's jurisdiction. It was now suggested that, if the trustees would consent to give these bequests to the new foundation, extra scholarships would be offered to the poor.<sup>(1)</sup> The two leaders of the ratepayers' committee, Councillors Monkhouse and Baron, were invited to meet Mundella, Cropper, Fearon and Longley at the Education Department, and on this basis a bargain was struck. It was agreed to drop the proposal to build a boarding house out of the endowment and to offer eight more scholarships to boys from the elementary schools.<sup>(2)</sup>

This offer took the sting out of the local opposition. When transmitted to the Town Council by Cropper, it provoked a confused and acrimonious debate,<sup>(3)</sup> in which even Monkhouse had to admit that, although the offer was not what he had wanted, it should be accepted as the best they were likely to get. At the end the Town Council signified its approval; so in their turn did the trustees of the Grammar School and so did the ratepayers' committee, though with some reservations that lent colour to Collings' later claim that they regarded it as "a compromise of despair".<sup>(4)</sup> Fortified by these acceptances, the Charity Commission modified the scheme, and in May 1885 it was formally accepted by the Town Council.

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1. Rept. S.C. on E.S. Acts, 1887, Q. 6250.
  2. Ibid. Q. 8137.
  3. W.G. 3 January 1885.
  4. Rept. S.C. on E.S. Acts, 1887, Q. 7461.

From then on, further agitation against the scheme could only be futile. It is, therefore, difficult to explain why Monkhouse, who in January 1885 had recognised this, should later have changed his mind. In June 1885, he was to be found speaking at a Town Meeting and trying to organise a petition that the scheme should be amended yet again;<sup>(1)</sup> but the Charity Commission ignored these further moves and the scheme proceeded unchecked through its statutory stages. The end of the old Blue Coat School had come. At Easter 1886, the traditional distribution of clothing took place for the last time; and on June 8th came the closing scene - a presentation to the Headmaster, Mr. Bateman.<sup>(2)</sup>

This, however, was not the end of the story; there were still the proceedings of the Select Committee on the Endowed Schools Act to come. As far as the Blue Coat School was concerned, these were not very satisfactory. Although he claimed to have interested himself in the matter for several years, Collings had never visited Kendal and had no first-hand knowledge of the school. Nor had he made up for this by doing his homework. As a result, he went before the Committee without having the facts at his finger tips, with two inevitable - and unfortunate - results. The first was that cross-examination soon showed that he was ignorant or misinformed on a number of matters: whether the school was open to all denominations, whether entry was by patronage, whether the school was open to government inspection, how long the children had been clothed out of the endowment.<sup>(3)</sup> So an impression was built up

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1. W.G. 6 June 1885.
  2. W.G. 17 July 1886.
  3. Rept. S.C. on E.S. Acts, 1887, Qs. 7343-6; 7421-4; 7427; 7446.

that he did not know what he was talking about, which must have weakened the force of his central contention that the poor were being deprived of their rights. The other result of his ignorance was that he could not expose the weaknesses in the official case put by Fearon. When, for example, Fearon was trying to make out that the Town Council had agreed to the Charity Commissioners' scheme at his meeting with them on 20th June 1882, he omitted the vital fact that the feeling of the meeting had been in favour of certain changes which the Charity Commissioners at first refused to make. Collings allowed the omission to pass unremarked.

In view of Collings' shortcomings as a witness, it is not surprising that the Select Committee unreservedly accepted the official view.

"In the other case," it concluded, "that of the Grammar School and Sandes' Hospital and School at Kendal, it appeared that the particular endowment of which it is alleged that the poor had been deprived by the scheme of the Commissioners, was one which had been diverted from the purposes of higher education, for which it was designed by its donor, to the maintenance of an uninspected elementary school; and that by the scheme which restored the endowment to its original connection with the course of higher education, provision was made for giving children of the poor, by means of scholarships tenable at the Grammar School, benefits of a greater pecuniary value than those hitherto furnished by the endowment. This scheme is now in operation, and it is found that these prizes are won by boys of the same class as those who formerly received the benefits for which scholarships have been substituted."<sup>(1)</sup>

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1. Rept. S.C. on E.S. Acts, 1887, p. vii.

The controversy over the closing of the Blue Coat School has recently been rescued from its oblivion in the Minutes of Evidence before the Select Committee, and is now well on its way, as E.H. Carr would put it, to being transformed from a mere fact about the past to a fact of history.<sup>(1)</sup> The rescue operation was begun by Simon, in his 'Studies in the History of Education (1780-1870)' to support his thesis that in general the effect of the Charity Commission's work was "to cut away the traditional rights of the poor and other local inhabitants and to separate the working class from any organic connection with higher education in grammar or public schools."<sup>(2)</sup> Not surprisingly, therefore, he sees the controversy through Collings' eyes, using his evidence before the Select Committee to show that this was a case where endowments intended for the poor were "to be utilised, among other things, to develop boarding facilities for the well-to-do in the local grammar school."<sup>(3)</sup> Quite the opposite view is taken by Owen in 'English Philanthropy 1660-1960'. He accepts unreservedly the Charity Commission's contention that the Blue Coat School was "a chaotically run establishment ..... which had declined to the status of a poor, uninspected elementary school", and from this he draws the conclusion that "in this instance as in others, the Commission's plan of offering scholarships to the Grammar School gave the poor a better and fairer opportunity than existed under the system of patronage that it superseded."<sup>(4)</sup>

Neither of these views can be accepted without qualification. Owen is wrong in thinking that the Blue Coat School was chaotically

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1. E.H. Carr. What is History? (Pelican edition) p. 12.
  2. B. Simon. Studies in the History of Education (1780-1870). (London 1960) p. 334.
  3. Ibid. P. 332.
  4. D. Owen. English Philanthropy, 1660-1960. (London 1965) p. 266.

run; Simon is wrong in thinking that the new scheme separated the working classes from an organic connection with higher education - at least, if this implies that they had one before. Where Simon is right is in his contention that endowments intended for the poor had been diverted to an essentially middle class institution. It would have been fairer to use the endowment for a higher grade elementary school for boys and girls, but such a scheme was never on the cards at Kendal. Class bias alone cannot account for this. In Kendal at the time, community feeling was almost certainly stronger than class feeling. Most of those involved in the controversy were trying to do their best for the town without harming the interests of the poor. Granted this, the question remains whether the poor, as Owen claims, were better off under the new scheme; which can only be answered by looking at what happened to Kendal Grammar School after the amalgamation.

The first decision facing the governors of the new foundation was whether to build a new school or to reconstruct the old. That the existing site and premises were unsatisfactory was generally agreed, and there was little hesitation in deciding to build elsewhere. This decision briefly revived the dying embers of the Blue Coat School controversy. Several letters appeared in the Westmorland Gazette urging that the new school should be paid for by subscriptions so that the endowments would be preserved for the poor.<sup>(1)</sup> It was not to be. Perhaps because of the bad feeling aroused by the controversy, money did not pour in as it had at Heversham. Excluding the £1,000 donated by W.H. Wakefield to buy the site, only £1,325

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1. W.G. 5 June, 17 July and 24 July 1886.



was raised in subscriptions and nearly £2,000 of the endowment had to be sacrificed. When the building was finished at a cost of £4,867, the school was over £500 in debt.<sup>(1)</sup>

The new buildings on the present site were officially opened on 10th January 1889 by Alderman Whitehead, Lord Mayor of London. As is usual on such occasions, torrents of praise poured forth from the platform and the press. "The Grammar School buildings", wrote the Westmorland Gazette, "are the outward and visible sign of a progressive educational policy; they mark the dawn of a new educational era in the town."<sup>(2)</sup> The new era, however, did not begin at once for in its early days the school was struggling financially and suffered from two quick changes of Headmaster. The Rev. J.W. Constable, appointed in 1886, left in 1888 to be a housemaster at Uppingham; his successor, the Rev. R.P. Browne, left in 1891 for the Royal Naval School at Elton. Only under the Rev. G.W. Williams (1891-1901) did the school begin to prosper.

During this decade, the numbers increased, on average from 70 to just over 100. This was one factor in easing the financial strain on the school. The other was that success encouraged further benefactions. In 1889 the Sleddall Trust gave £175 a year to be used for scholarships, and in 1895 Alderman and Mrs. Bindloss each left £1,000. The effects of improved finances were seen in several directions. Once out of debt, the school was able to improve its facilities. A boarding house was built, a workshop fitted out, and

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5189. Kendal United School and Hospital Building Account.

2. W.G. 12 January 1889.

a laboratory set up which seems to have been a small affair until 1899 when the County Council agreed to spend £200 on building a new one. Nor was the staff neglected. In 1895, for 104 boys, there were three Oxford or Cambridge graduates (including the Head), a Ph.D of Zurich, J. Brown (the former Headmaster, now a B.A. Dublin and in charge of the Junior Department), and visiting masters for Book-keeping, Shorthand, Music, Drawing and Carpentry.

With good facilities and a well-qualified staff, the school became a pathway to the universities. In 1889 it began to enter boys for the Cambridge Locals; in 1892 it was placed on the list of schools eligible to compete for the Hastings Scholarships; between 1893 and 1901, eight open scholarships or exhibitions were won at Oxford or Cambridge, including one by a scholarship winner from an elementary school.<sup>(1)</sup> The Grammar School, therefore, was realising the hopes of those who had supported amalgamation. Was it also realising the fears of its opponents that the children of the poor would not benefit?

This question was already causing controversy at the time of the Select Committee on the Endowed Schools Acts. Under cross examination by Collings, Fearon asserted that "the children who are now elected to scholarships under the scheme are just the same class as were in the Blue Coat School before."<sup>(2)</sup> In an attempt to settle the matter, the Select Committee drew up a list of scholarship winners, but the new scheme was then so short-lived

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1. W.G. 25 May 1901.
  2. Rept. C.C. on E.S. Acts, 1887, Q. 8217.

that this evidence was bound to be inconclusive. When Leach reported on the school in 1895 he therefore made particular inquiries on this point.<sup>(1)</sup> In that year, which seems to have been typical, there were 104 boys in the school, 31 holding scholarships of whom 22 had come from the elementary schools, a very high proportion compared to other schools in the county. The social background of these elementary school scholars can be seen in a list (See Appendix A) drawn up in 1898, giving the names of all the 67 scholarship winners from elementary schools between 1890 and 1898 with the occupations of their parents. How poor the parents were it is impossible to tell, but it is clear that they all belonged to the "industrial classes",<sup>(2)</sup> and could not have sent their children to the school without the help of scholarships. Leach therefore concluded that "the scholarships for boys from public elementary schools appear to reach the distinctly poor".<sup>(3)</sup> More important is the testimony of Monkhouse, who told Sir George Young that:

"He had been the chief opponent of the scheme in the district in the interests of the poor boys. He was now entirely satisfied with the scheme and its working. The scholarships were won by boys whose parents were only earning 30/- a week, but such pride was taken in them that, though the Governors had found the resources insufficient to pay £4 a year extra ... under Cl 34, the scholarships were eagerly taken up by the poor."<sup>(4)</sup>

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5200. Leach's report; 21 June 1895.
  2. P. Gosden. The Development of Educational Administration in England and Wales (Oxford 1966) p. 47, quotes the Science and Art Department's definition of them.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5200. Leach's report.
  4. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5200. Memorandum of interview between Sir George Young, Monkhouse and Greenwood.

This is not conclusive evidence that all was well. The school seems to have been geared more to the few preparing for the universities than for the many who were not, and there were several complaints that most of the boys left very early. In 1895 there were only nine boys over 15 in the school. These, however, were the common faults of the grammar schools, and they must be put in the balance against the opportunities they offered. When this is done, it seems ironic that there should have been the fiercest controversy at Kendal, the only reorganisation in the county from which working class children gained a substantial benefit.

The reformed Grammar School was therefore a considerable success, but with rising success came rising pretensions. Looking round at the struggling country grammar schools, the Headmaster and Governors felt aggrieved that their scheme, with its compulsory leaving age of 17 and optional Greek, put Kendal as a second grade school lower than Heversham, not half its size in the late 1890's. When Leach came in 1895, he was therefore faced with a request that the school should be recognised as "a first grade Modern School .... giving special attention to Science, but possessing a good Classical Side."<sup>(1)</sup> More specifically, the Governors asked for four changes: the abolition of the extra fee for Greek, changes in the regulations for the Wakefield scholarships,<sup>(2)</sup> an upper age limit of 19, and representative governors appointed by the County Council. Argument centred round the first two, both matters in which the Governors had not carried out the scheme. The extra fee for Greek had never been charged, and the Governors claimed that, if insisted on, it

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5200. MS answers to Leach's enquiries by Rev. Williams, 1895.

2. See clauses 54 and 56 of the 1886 scheme.

would cause hardship, a claim difficult to believe when the scheme already provided that scholarship winners should not be charged. The Wakefield scholarships, although supposed to be "freely and openly competed for", had in fact been awarded as prizes on the results of the school's internal examinations. The Governors wanted this practice to be regularised.<sup>(1)</sup>

The first reactions of the Charity Commission to these requests were unfavourable, partly because it had already had more than enough trouble with Kendal. One can almost hear the sigh as Sir George Young minuted: "We are here asked to re-open a contentious case."<sup>(2)</sup> Some controversy, however, was unavoidable. While the majority of the Governors pressed for changes, one of their number, J. Swainson, campaigned vigorously against them. He argued that the abolition of the fee for Greek would tend to make the school too classical and so of less use to the district, and that the proposed regulations for the Wakefield scholarships were invalid and robbed the poor of their rights.<sup>(3)</sup> The Westmorland Gazette was inclined to agree; so was the Charity Commission, but in the end it decided to make concessions over the Wakefield scholarships, possibly the better to resist over the vital question of Greek.

These were the tactics adopted by Leach when he discussed the matter with the Town Council and the Governors in April 1898. He offered to add County Council governors, and to limit the Wakefield

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5200. Governors' petition of 23 November 1897.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5200. Minute on the Governors' petition.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5200. Swainson's petition to Charity Commission.

scholarships to boys already in the school, but the fee for Greek was to be retained "to prevent the school becoming a purely classical school".<sup>(1)</sup> Despite resolutions from both the Town Council and the Governors in favour of free Greek, the Charity Commission stuck to its guns, and submitted a scheme along these lines to the Education Department in 1898.

Unfortunately there is no further trace of the scheme until it was finally approved in 1903. By this time, some very significant changes had been made. The age limit had been raised to 18 (with an extension to 19 at the Governors' discretion), Greek had been included in the normal subjects of instruction, and the maximum tuition fee had been raised to £15 a year. For some unaccountable reason, the Governors had had their way. One cannot help feeling that they had been more concerned with prestige than with meeting genuine educational needs. Yet, looking back from 1903, the Governors might be pardoned a glow of pride. With its increased numbers, its substantial endowment, its new art-room and chemistry laboratory opened in 1902, its connection with the Board of Education as a Science School, the school was in a strong position. When the County Council came to survey secondary education, it found Kendal Grammar School "a credit to the county", the outstanding exception to the backwardness of secondary education.<sup>(2)</sup>

While the Grammar School was being revived amid the clangour of controversy, an even more significant development was taking place practically unnoticed - the beginning of secondary education

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1. W.G. 30 April 1898.
  2. W.G. 25 February 1904.

for girls. In 1887, a committee was formed on which the driving force came from the Cropper family.<sup>(1)</sup> Apart from the inevitable financial difficulties, its other initial problem was that of religion. The committee first approached the Girls Public Day School Company, which was too short of money to help. One alternative was the Anglican Church School Company, any approach to which was bound to raise Non-conformist apprehension. Given the strength of Non-conformity in Kendal, the committee had to move carefully; so it invited down the secretary of the Company, the Rev. W.D. Grant, who gave satisfactory assurances that the Company ran several schools with large numbers of Non-conformists in them without religious friction.<sup>(2)</sup> On the strength of this, the committee applied to the Company to open a school, which it agreed to do on condition that a minimum attendance of 30 was guaranteed and that local people took up 250 of its shares. These conditions more or less fulfilled, the Company leased Ellerbank, Castle Street, and the school opened there on May 3rd 1888 with 27 pupils - an event not considered worthy of notice by the Westmorland Gazette.

Something of the early history of the school can be traced from a MS notebook kept by its first Headmistress, Miss Smallpiece.<sup>(3)</sup> The subjects taught were naturally rather different from those in the boys' grammar schools. There was no Greek and very little Science, though in 1900 the girls were going to the Grammar School laboratory fortnightly. Latin, Maths, History, Geography, Needlework

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1. For James Cropper, see p. 10, n. 3 above. With his support, his daughter convened the original meeting to launch the girls' school. W.G. 4 February 1888.
  2. W.G. 11 February 1888.
  3. At Kendal High School.

and Music were all taught, but the academic emphasis was on English, French and German. In 1891, the school began entering pupils for Cambridge Locals, and from 1896 was examined externally by Durham University, which was satisfied with its standards. A typical report read: "The school, though smaller in size than many others and not attempting such advanced work as some .... is thoroughly efficient and in the actual work done quite up to high school standards." There was also a strong emphasis on conduct. Miss Smallpiece regularly addressed the school on moral topics and her note-book is punctuated with entries like: "Address on 1 Timothy against greed of marks and pot-hunting", or "On Friday, I began usual time and had marks at 12. Spoke on Duty."

Despite the soundness of the education it gave, the school had a struggle to survive. Being without endowments, it had to charge fees ranging from 9 to 15 guineas a year, which restricted its pupils to a narrow social group. Efforts were made to tap new markets - a kindergarten for boys and girls, or the opening of a boarding house - but neither of these ventures proved successful. With numbers fluctuating - sometimes over 50 but down to 29 in 1899 - the school made a loss in some years. By 1900 it was in danger of closing because Miss Smallpiece's health was failing and because it was feeling the competition of the girls' school opened by the Friends in 1899. However, when Miss Smallpiece resigned in 1901, the Church School Company decided to give the new Headmistress, Miss Warren, three years to pull the school round. Encouraged by the fact that a local committee had raised a guarantee fund of £205, the Company took on 11, Thorny Hills when the lease of Ellerbank expired, and the school re-opened there in 1902,<sup>(1)</sup>

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1. Kendal High School papers. Minute book of High School Committee (1896-1909); 1 February 1902.



By 1903, the general picture of secondary education in Kendal contrasts sharply with that in the rest of the county. The town had the only technical school, the only grammar school for girls (even if restricted to the well-to-do), and the best boys' grammar school, which offered more free scholarships to the working class than the rest of the county's schools put together. At one time the black spot of the county, Kendal had become an example to be copied.

Chapter Five, Appendix A: Occupations of the parents of Kendal G.S. scholarship winners from elementary schools, 1890-98.

<u>Occupation of parents</u>	<u>Number of children</u>	<u>Occupation of parents</u>	<u>Number of children</u>
Foreman	8		
Widow	7		
Boot and Shoe-maker	5		
Weaver	4		
Clerk			
Cabinet Maker			
Labourer	3		
Grocer			
Factory Worker	2		
Postman			
Insurance Agent			
Printer	1	Inn-keeper	1
Solicitor's clerk		Dress-maker	
Moulder		Pattern-maker	
Whitesmith		Printer	
Bookbinder		(Orphan)	
Police Constable			
Designer		Total	<u>67</u>
Stationer			
Nonconformist minister			
Boot and Shoe Dealer			
Mechanic			
Excise Officer			
Currier's Assistant			
Contractor			
Builder			
Rates Collector			
Plumber			
Hosier			

Chapter SixDevelopments in Elementary Education, 1870-1903.(a) The Country Schools

Outside Kendal, the passing of the Elementary Education Act of 1870 excited little controversy. This calmness partly reflected the long-term relationship between church and chapel, but the temperature was also lowered by the conciliatory attitude of the Bishop of Carlisle. Although he disliked the clauses restricting government inspection to secular subjects, on the whole he welcomed the Act as "good, well-considered and righteous",<sup>(1)</sup> and urged his clergy "loyally to carry out (its) spirit and intentions".<sup>(2)</sup>

Basically, the Act provided that voluntary schools should continue undisturbed in parishes where they provided enough efficient accommodation. Where there were no voluntary schools or not enough, School Boards were to be set up to fill the gaps by building and maintaining schools, which were to be supported out of the rates. In these Board Schools, by the Cowper-Temple clause, "no religious catechism or religious formulary distinctive of any particular denomination" was to be taught.

The immediate effect of the Act was greatly to stimulate the building of voluntary schools. In Westmorland most of the building was done by the Church of England, as the Roman Catholics were insignificant in numbers and the Non-conformists were satisfied with the 'Bible Christianity' of the Board Schools. Although its

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1. W.G. 12 March 1870. Sermon at Carlisle.

2. W.G. 17 September 1870. Meeting of the Diocesan Education Society.

propaganda exploited the rate-payers' fears of School Board expense, the Church's main purpose was to keep the old system in which the only school in the parish was Anglican, and gave religious teaching under the Vicar's supervision. So, encouraged by the offer of a last building grant from the government, it made strenuous efforts to raise money. In November 1870, the Bishop of Carlisle launched an appeal for a diocesan building fund and within a few months nearly £5,000 had been donated.<sup>(1)</sup> This effort was matched by many local ones, so that altogether in the next three years ten new church schools were built, only two of which were helped by government grants.<sup>(2)</sup> Counting the grant to Kendal Green British school, the total for Westmorland was £500, less than half the amount received by any other county (except Rutland).<sup>(3)</sup> Clearly, the need in Westmorland was relatively small, and the Church was relatively well-placed to meet it.

Table A: Voluntary school building 1870-73<sup>(4)</sup>

	East Ward	West Ward	Kendal Ward
New schools.	3	1	6
Extensions	1	-	3

By the end of 1873, however, it was becoming clear what voluntary effort could and could not achieve. Where the need

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1. W.G. 15 January 1871.
  2. Lupton and Patterdale.
  3. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1877-78, (C.2048, 1878). Table of Building Grants pp. xxxiii-v.
  4. See 'School Continuity Chart, 1860-1914'.

was least, in Kendal Ward, it had done the most, and there its success was so nearly complete that only one Board school was ever to be opened. In the other two Wards it had by no means shot its bolt, but the remaining deficiencies were more than it could hope to meet. In fact, between 1874 and 1880, the initiative passed to the School Boards which built 12 new schools while voluntary effort built seven.

Table B: School building 1870-80.

	Voluntary			School Board			
	East Ward	West Ward	Kendal Ward	East Ward	West Ward	Kendal Ward	
New schools	4	3	10	8	3	1	12
Extensions	6	2	6	-	-	-	
Re-openings	-	1	1	1	1	1	3

As a result, by 1880 nearly all the deficiencies had been met. There were still one or two places like Bampton where the old, unsatisfactory schools had not yet been replaced; one or two remote areas like Wickersgill still waiting for a school to be built; and one place, Meathop and Ulpha, where nothing had been done and the Education Department had simply decided to let the matter drop rather than insist on a School Board where the numbers involved were so small.<sup>(1)</sup> The effort which had gone into this was most impressive: 29 new schools in ten years, compared (to) 28 in the previous 40 years and 11 between 1880 and 1903. Altogether this makes the decade 1870-80 the most intensive period of school

1. P.R.O. Ed. 2/458.

building in the nineteenth century, and probably more intensive than any other.

There was, however, one vital difference between this decade and its predecessors. Previously, the initiative had lain entirely in local hands. Although the Education Department and the National Society made building grants, they did so only when approached by local people and in proportion to voluntary subscriptions. After 1870, the initiative passed to the Education Department, which insisted that the schools be brought up to standard, either by voluntary efforts or by the formation of a School Board. Improvements were no longer made mainly because local people wanted them, but because the Education Department demanded them. Increasingly, it became the driving force behind educational advance.

As a result of its pressure, by 1880 there were enough school places nearly everywhere, and the number of schools under inspection had increased from 40 (in 1870) to 95.<sup>(1)</sup> Most of the remaining shortages were to be ended in the next few years, but there remained one flaw to which the local H.M.I., S.G. Tremenheere, called attention. "There are still a few out-of-the-way villages," he wrote, "whose schools passed muster ..... so long ago as 1871, but have given no proof of efficiency since that time".<sup>(2)</sup> One such black spot was Crosby Garrett. Nothing was done there until after a visit by the Sanitary Inspector in 1888, who reported that "its condition was 'beastly' and the smell when he opened the door 'fit to fell' him."<sup>(3)</sup> After this, the H.M.I. was called in and

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1. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1880-81 (C.2948, 1881) pp. 699-700.
  2. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1883-84 (C.4091, 1884) p. 410.
  3. W.G. 25 August 1888.

*Secular  
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found that the building was damp and primitive, and that the schoolmaster was "an old and feeble man of 89", at loggerheads with the trustees who had been unable to dismiss him.<sup>(1)</sup> Even so, it was not until 1891 that the master was finally persuaded to resign and the way was opened up for a School Board. Kentmere, which was not on the grant list until the eighteen-nineties, may have been a similar case.

Nevertheless, these were the exceptions. Since the population of the county remained static, there were no serious difficulties about accommodation after 1880. By 1899 the county (including Kendal) had 96 voluntary and 20 Board schools, offering places to 16,459 pupils, at a time when the average attendance was 9,964.<sup>(2)</sup> All these schools were recognised as efficient, but the minimum standards for the buildings (as for the teaching) were very low. Even so, many of them scarcely reached it and after the great surge of building between 1870 and 1880, the main development was the bringing up to standard of the existing buildings, under constant prodding from the inspectors.

However much local people might be disposed to put up with them, the faults of the school buildings were glaring enough. The most common was that they were dirty and insanitary. The inspectors must have wearied of peering into filthy cess-pits and of urging that something better should be provided. The schools

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 2/457. Report by A.B. Fisher; 15 March 1890.
  2. Return ... for each public elementary school inspected in England and Wales for the year ended 31 August 1899 etc. (C.315, 1900). Cited as 'Return of elementary schools, 1899.'

usually did what they could, but improvements were limited because there was often no running water. The effects of this can be imagined. The master of Martindale school wrote to the Managers in 1876:

"I thought I would mention to you how very inconvenient it is for the school to be unprovided with washing material, soap etc. When the boys make the fire in the morning, it is impossible for them to wash their hands without soap. Then again there is nothing to dry them with and so they are obliged - after washing their hands without soap in the gutters - to dry them on their handkerchiefs or whatever is handy."<sup>(1)</sup>

Martindale was a remote and primitive school, but the Shap School Board - not one of the most backward - built its new school at Rosgill in 1878 without a water supply and only supplied a water barrel fifteen years later.<sup>(2)</sup> Given the circumstances of the time, this was forgivable in the country districts, but it seems shameful that a school like Kirkby Lonsdale National had no running water until 1890.

The schools were also frequently damp, cold and gloomy. Some had stone-flagged floors through which the damp seeped up, and so one improvement which the inspectors pressed for was that these should be replaced by wooden boards. Heating was nearly always by open fire or a stove, which had to be got going in the morning, with the result that the schools were sometimes so cold that the children could use this as an excuse to stay away.<sup>(3)</sup>

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1. Martindale parish papers, file 'General Correspondence'. M.J. Beeston to W.H. Parkin; 5 March 1878.
  2. Shap School Board minute book; 7 August 1893.
  3. Kendal Ward S.A.C. minute book (1877-90); 15 February 1890.



Moreover, despite the fresh and airy surroundings, they could be ill-ventilated and ill-lit. "So dark this afternoon", runs one entry in the Reagill log-book, "that we could not possibly follow the time-table".<sup>(1)</sup> Perhaps the best thing that can be said about them is that they were rarely over-crowded, though there were a few cases like Maulds Meaburn, where the H.M.I. reported in 1892 that "the crowded state of the schoolroom renders the task of teaching a difficult one".<sup>(2)</sup>

Though Maulds Meaburn was rather exceptional, for the numbers had jumped from 21 in 1889 to 44 in 1890 as the result of the closure of a private school, the date of this report may still be significant. In the early eighteen-nineties the inspectors undoubtedly began to be more critical of the shortcomings of the country schools. As a direct result of pressure from them, major alterations were made in the eighteen-nineties at Tebay, Asby, Levens and Langdale, and new schools had to be built at Selside and Middleton. Even a school built as recently as Ravenstonedale (1874) was no longer acceptable and had to be extended. Naturally this led to grumbling and even to allegations that the pressure was inspired by the Liberal government's bias against the voluntary schools. "Inspired from above," the Westmorland Gazette complained, "the inspectors during the last two years seem to have gone over the voluntary schools even in the more remote districts with a microscope, searching for deficiencies, and of course finding them in abundance."<sup>(3)</sup> There

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1. Reagill log book; 12 March 1902.
  2. Crosby Ravensworth parish papers, H.M.I's report on Maulds Meaburn; 27 April 1892.
  3. W.G. 12 January 1895.

seems little substance in this complaint. The faults of the schools were themselves sufficient explanation of the inspectors' attitude, and there was just as much pressure after 1895 when the Conservatives were back in power. Indeed, the general impression left by the whole period 1870-1903 is not that the Education Department pressed hard, but that it accepted very low standards in the small country schools. This is borne out by the fact that primitive conditions survived very late. Temple Sowerby school was "a white-washed room 10 feet high and in bad repair; one wall is shaken and nearly all are out of perpendicular; the floor requires renewing and the lighting, heating and ventilation is of a bad character; there is neither classroom nor lavatory accommodation."<sup>(1)</sup> Yet it was not condemned by the Education Department until 1898.

However, despite these flaws in the buildings, school places were provided. The next problem was to get the children into the schools. Little had been done about this by the 1870 Act, which had simply given the School Boards power to enforce attendance if they wished. This was not much use in areas like Westmorland where there were few School Boards. So opinion moved quickly towards some measure of compulsion, and in 1876 Disraeli's government passed an Act which prohibited the employment of children under ten and set up (where there were no School Boards) School Attendance Committees, appointed by the Boards of Guardians or the Borough Councils, with powers in respect of attendance similar to those of the School Boards.

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1. W.G. 2 July 1898.

In one important respect, it was not so difficult to enforce attendance in Westmorland as in many other places, because the traditions of the district meant that there was less parental antagonism to education; but once the children became old enough to be useful the temptation to keep them away from school during hay-time and harvest became too strong to be resisted. There was, therefore, in the country districts, a sharp seasonal variation in the numbers attending. Tremenheere reported that: "One-third, and in some places one half, of the children do not attend school at all from the beginning of April until the end of October, and this absenteeism occurs chiefly among the elders".<sup>(1)</sup> In the log-books, there are frequent references to this problem. When Firbank re-opened after the summer holidays of 1872, only three children turned up because of the long harvest;<sup>(2)</sup> and in July 1877, the Martindale teacher wrote: "I have hardly any scholars, all the boys over 7 are at the Clippings."<sup>(3)</sup> Indeed, it was so much the recognised thing that, from 1877-81, the Kendal Ward School Attendance Committee issued an annual circular that "for the necessary operations of husbandry and the ingathering of crops the employment of children above the age of 8 during 6 weeks between the 1st day of July and the 1st day of October (exclusive of the summer holidays of the respective schools which such children attend) shall be exempted from the operations of the Elementary Education Act of 1876".<sup>(4)</sup> Similarly the original bye-laws of Kirkby Thore School

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1. W.G. 29 January 1870. Tremenheere's report.
  2. Firbank log book; 29 July 1872.
  3. Martindale parish papers, file 'General Correspondence'.
  - M. Moss to W.H. Parkin; 12 July 1877.
  4. Kendal Ward S.A.C. minute book (1877-90); 22 June 1878 etc.

Board provided that children between 10 and 13 need only put in 80 attendances between May 1st and October 31st, a provision which the local H.M.I. held up as a model because nothing better could be enforced in country districts.<sup>(1)</sup>

Nor was farm-work the only way in which the traditional patterns of country life tended to take precedence over attendance at school. The teachers found themselves under pressure to let the children go to local fairs, or to allow "the usual half-holiday to gather nuts".<sup>(2)</sup> On February 12, 1871, there was a "thin school" at Preston Patrick because of a local ploughing match,<sup>(3)</sup> and as late as 1898 the Crosthwaite teacher wrote: "This is the Blackberry Season, when boys can earn 1/- to 1/6 an hour by the road-side, and consequently they are there when they ought to be in School."<sup>(4)</sup>

Other difficulties hampered the work of the School Attendance Committees. Initially, in a few cases, it proved impossible to find out how old the children were, and the Clerk had to be authorised to determine a child's age "on production of such evidence as may be satisfactory to him".<sup>(5)</sup> Slightly more serious was the existence of private schools, which parents could claim that their children were attending, though this was not the great

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1. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1876-77 (C.1780, 1877). Report by Rev. C.H. Parez pp. 526-37.
  2. Reagill log book; 20 September 1875.
  3. Preston Patrick log book, 1869-93.
  4. Crosthwaite parish papers, Endowed School log book; 16 September 1898.
  5. Kendal Ward S.A.C. minute book (1877-90); 18 May 1878.

problem in Westmorland that it was elsewhere. The payment of fees also helped to make attendance more irregular, but much the most intractable difficulty was the distance which some of the children still had to walk even after a school had been provided in all but the smallest parishes. In Kendal Ward alone in 1880 there were 289 children living more than two miles from the nearest school,<sup>(1)</sup> and there is no reason to suppose that the number greatly diminished before 1903. In wet Westmorland weather, the prospect of walking two miles or more to a school usually without cloakrooms or drying rooms was not an inviting one. Invariably, attendance fell off sharply when the weather was bad. On January 26th, 1883, the Preston Patrick log-book recorded: "Very wet and stormy, only 66 present this morning."<sup>(2)</sup> The average attendance was about 110.

The difficulties facing the School Attendance Committees were therefore considerable and it was some time before they got to grips with them. Although they were set up promptly after the 1876 Act in all three Unions (but not in the borough of Appleby until 1885), there was at first no compulsion on them to do anything. They simply had power to make bye-laws if they thought fit. In West Ward none were made, and the Committee did practically nothing until the law was changed by the 1880 Act.<sup>(3)</sup> After that the making of bye-laws was compulsory, and the next twenty years saw the net grow gradually finer through which a truant could slip.

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1. Kendal Ward S.A.C. minute book (1877-90); 23 October 1880.
  2. Preston Patrick log-book (1869-1893).
  3. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1880-81 (C.2948, 1881), p. 355.

The changes in Kendal Ward will serve as an example of this.<sup>(1)</sup> The first bye-laws of 1881 allowed total exemption at the age of 10 to those who had reached Standard IV and half-time (five attendances a week) to those who had reached Standard III. If it had rested with the School Attendance Committee, these bye-laws would have remained unchanged, for it was only after prompting from the Education Department that the standard for total exemption was raised to Standard V in 1889, and after further prompting from the Board of Education that the half-time standard became Standard IV in 1901. Meanwhile the law had been changed, raising the age at which exemption could begin to 11 in 1893 and 12 (with certain exceptions) in 1899.

The machinery for enforcing these attendance requirements was rather cumbersome. In practically every parish where there was no School Board, a local committee was set up, which was supposed to pass on to the School Attendance Committee information about truancy and advice about prosecutions. Their functions, however, over-lapped with those of the school attendance officers, and very soon the work was being done by these paid officials and the voluntary committees dropped out of the picture.<sup>(2)</sup> Instead, the attendance officers collected the necessary information either from returns or by visiting the schools, and they themselves sent out warning letters to the parents. If this failed, the parents were summoned before the School Attendance Committee, where a further warning was given. Usually this was enough, but where the parents were recalcitrant, the final sanction was to take them before the magistrates.

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1. Kendal Ward S.A.C. minute books, 1877-90 and 1890-1903.
  2. W.G. 24 March 1883. Article on compulsory education in rural districts.

The effectiveness of this system depended on two factors. One was the zeal of the School Attendance Committees, which inevitably varied. To judge from its minute books, the Kendal Ward Committee was business-like and efficient. Meetings were held monthly, dealing mainly with requests for half-time certificates and with a steady trickle of absentees' parents. The West Ward Committee, on the other hand, having drawn up its bye-laws in 1880, sank into apathy for several years. Meetings were frequently called off because there was no quorum,<sup>(1)</sup> and little action was taken against offenders until, suddenly, in September 1889, 20 warnings were sent and four parents prosecuted. After which burst of activity, the Committee settled down to work at a normal rate.

The other important factor was the attitude of the magistrates to the cases brought before them. Without an exhaustive analysis of the court records, it is impossible to state categorically what this was, but there were certainly complaints that "the magistrates ..... seem to be obstacles to regularity (of attendance) through their undue leniency,"<sup>(2)</sup> and some probably did share the common prejudice that truancy was not a serious offence. But prejudice is not the whole explanation: magistrates were naturally reluctant to punish poor parents as long as the schools charged fees,<sup>(3)</sup> or to be severe on some of

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1. West Ward S.A. C. minute book (1870-1903). In 1886 for example there was no quorum for four meetings.
  2. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1891-92 (C.6746, 1892), p. 342.
  3. W.G. 11 July 1891. The Hon. W. Lowther M.P. said that: "He had felt himself when people had been brought before him as a magistrate for not sending their children to school .... that it was very painful to him to punish them for not being able to pay."

the very awkward cases which came before them. For instance, in 1889, a Mrs. Richardson was summoned because her son Joseph (aged 11) had made 36 attendances out of the last 134. The trouble was that Mrs. Richardson had been deserted by her husband who had 'married' another Kendal woman, and Joseph had to look after the other children while his mother worked. Rather than punish her, the magistrates adjourned the case.<sup>(1)</sup>

Even where they were disposed to enforce the law, it was not necessarily very effective, for fear of the law was "almost nil in the very quarters where it was most needed."<sup>(2)</sup> One such troublesome case was that of the Hodgson family of Hutton Roof.<sup>(3)</sup> In 1878, J. Hodgson was up before the court because his children were attending irregularly. Two years later he was back again. The fear of legal proceedings then brought three of his four children to heel, but John - at the age of eight - seems to have been already out of control. "The boy would not go to school," his mother told the court. "If the father took him in the morning, he ran away at dinner-time, and had on more than one occasion spent his school-pence and stayed out all night six or seven times."<sup>(4)</sup> The magistrates imposed a fine, but the following year John had again to be taken to court.

Compulsion, however, was not the only way in which the attendance problem was tackled. As long as the grants were

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1. W.G. 3 August 1889.
  2. W.G. 24 August, 1883.
  3. Kendal Ward S.A.C. minute book (1877-90), numerous entries.
  4. W.G. 24 April 1880.



related to average attendance, the schools had a powerful incentive to use every possible means of persuasion. Sometimes the managers took the initiative, either by visiting the parents or by offering prizes for good attendance, as was done at Fell End and Preston Patrick. Indeed the Preston Patrick managers were so enlightened as to provide school dinners, partly with better attendance in mind.<sup>(1)</sup> The teachers too were zealous in pressing for higher attendance; in fact, the log books sometimes give the impression that this was their main interest in life. Although this was not so, attendance still affected the teachers very directly, especially in the earlier part of the period when most were paid a fixed sum plus a proportion of the grant. This naturally put in their path the temptation to falsify the registers, and several of them succumbed.

One glaring case of this was at Asby.<sup>(2)</sup> In 1885, the Governors became suspicious that the master, Rebanks, had been falsifying the register and, on making enquiries, they discovered that on one wet day in June he had marked 17 absentees present. He was therefore given three months notice and resigned on November 1st. When the Governors came to examine the register he had handed over, they found that he had taken out the original pages on which their charge of falsification was based and had inserted new ones with different entries. The Governors did not know what to do. The H.M.I. was called in; the Education Department was consulted; letters were sent to Rebanks asking for the return of the original pages, to which he replied threatening legal action against these "unfounded and libellous charges." In the

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1. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1883-84 (C.4091, 1884) p. 421-22.

2. Asby parish papers, minute book of Dr. Smith's School Foundation; (1885-1924) 2 July 1885 to 7 October 1886.

end, the Education Department refused to accept the register as trustworthy and the school lost nine months' grant. Even in the face of this decision Rebanks denied having altered the register, but his guilt was so clear that he was sacked from his new post at Kirkby Malham.

Until the late eighteen-nineties, the efforts of teachers and managers to secure better attendance were rather sporadic and unco-ordinated; but the increasing financial pressure on the voluntary schools then sharpened their awareness of what could be gained by improving it. As early as 1891, the Westmorland Gazette had pointed out that on average 2,368 of the 10,974 children on the register were absent every day, and that "many a poor school, struggling for bare existence, could keep its head above water if its attendance was what it ought to be."<sup>(1)</sup> Therefore, one of the first steps taken by the Carlisle Diocesan Voluntary Schools Association after its formation in 1897 was to start an attendance competition. Medals were to be awarded to children making 100% attendance, and a challenge shield to the school with the highest percentage attendance in each district. Some schools took this very seriously. In the Kirkby Lonsdale district, the local rivalry of Middleton and Barbon pushed their percentages suspiciously high. For instance, in 1900 Barbon won the county attendance shield with 98.8% and Middleton was second with 98.4.<sup>(2)</sup> Such fierce competition had its dangers for the children, but there is no doubt that it did good if not pushed to

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1. W.G. 17 October 1891.

2. W.G. 7 April 1900.

extremes, and it certainly benefited the finances of the voluntary schools.<sup>(1)</sup>

How successful was all this effort, voluntary and official, in improving attendance? To begin with, the work was done by the School Attendance Committees, which undoubtedly did have an important effect in their earlier years, in raising both the number on the register and the proportion attending, as the following figures for Kendal Ward show.

Table D: Attendance in Kendal Ward 1875-84.<sup>(2)</sup>

	1875		1884	
	No. on roll	%age in average attendance	No. on roll	%age in average attendance
Ambleside	1155	73.3	1624	82.2
Grayrigg	805	73.6	1073	82.5
Kirkby Lonsdale	852	73.3	1253	83.0
Milnthorpe	841	73.9	1130	82.4

This still left a good deal to be done, especially as attendance in some places was far below average, only 63% at Little Langdale in 1884. Yet, after this initial upsurge, progress was very slow. In 1891 the average attendance for the county as a whole was only 78.5%;<sup>(3)</sup> five years later, presumably as a result of the reduction of fees since 1891, it had inched upwards to 81.4;<sup>(4)</sup>

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1. W.G. 26 May 1900. The Bishop of Carlisle claimed that improved attendance was worth an extra £750 a year in the diocese.
  2. W.G. 31 January 1885 prints the table on which this is based.
  3. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1891-92, Table C, pp.xlviii-xlix.
  4. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1896-97 (C.8545, 1897), Table C, pp.lvi-lvii.

New  
figures
 but by 1905 it had risen sharply to 90.6 and would have been higher but for the poor attendance in East Ward (South).<sup>(1)</sup> This second upsurge coincides with the attendance campaign run by the Voluntary Schools Association from 1897, a fact which suggests that its persuasive methods were as important a factor as the compulsion exercised by the School Attendance Committees. Altogether, with attendance on or just above the national average, the situation in Westmorland was satisfactory, considering the exceptional difficulties. Nevertheless, at the end of the period, the problem of school attendance was still not completely solved; for the general level in East Ward (South) was too low, and quite a few children were beyond the reach of the schools. For the great majority, however, school had ceased to be a short or occasional interlude and had become a regular part of their lives for six or seven years. This made it more than ever important that the schools should offer a good education, and so throughout the period the Education Department was constantly trying to raise standards.

figures
  
Not clear
 In one respect, at least, it could point to a definite success. Under the 1870 Act, each school district had to have enough efficient schools, and, to be recognised as efficient under the Codes, the schools had to have a certificated teacher in charge. Inevitably, these regulations raised the number and proportion of qualified teachers working in the county. Whereas in 1870 they had been rather exceptional, by 1903 they were at least a substantial minority of the teaching force - 131 certificated

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1. W.C.E.C. minutes 1905-6, p. 155 etc.

teachers as compared to 93 uncertificated and 110 pupil teachers, probationers and 'others'.<sup>(1)</sup> As most of the pupil teachers and probationers were children aged 13 to 15, and most of the 'others' were part-time sewing mistresses, this was hardly a satisfactory state of affairs; only one certificated teacher to 65 children. Moreover, the large number of small schools made staffing ratios vary widely. While 9 schools had under 20 pupils, Kirkby Lonsdale National with about 300 in its three departments was being worked by three certificated teachers,<sup>(2)</sup> and three unqualified assistants, along with a fluctuating number of pupil teachers.

Even this modest improvement had not been brought about without difficulty. To begin with, there had sometimes been the problem of what to do with the existing unqualified staff. Not that these had always been unsatisfactory. W. Wilkinson stayed on in charge of the little school at Reagill until 1890, and when he retired after 35 years service there the H.M.I. commented: "Mr. Wilkinson deserves much credit for leaving the school in so efficient a state. I am sorry that his long service here has come to an end."<sup>(3)</sup> But where the staff were unsatisfactory, it was no easy matter to be rid of them, as is shown by the Asby School dispute.

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1. W.C.E.C. minutes 1909-10, Report on Elementary Education in Westmorland, 1903-9, pp. 368-89.
  2. Kirkby Lonsdale National School papers, Managers' minute book 1898-1901.
  3. Crosby Ravensworth parish papers, H.M.I.'s report on Reagill, 1891.

In 1875 Asby had been given a new scheme by the Charity Commission, and the first action of the new Governing Body was to ask H.P. Guy, the master, to resign, which he refused to do unless paid £300 compensation.<sup>(1)</sup> The position was that he had been appointed in 1861 through the influence of his father, Rector of Asby since 1822. The very same year, his father went out of his mind<sup>(2)</sup> - though he remained Rector until his death in 1875. As the pre-1875 trust deed required the consent of the Rector for the master's dismissal, the trustees had been unable to get rid of H.P. Guy, although he was clearly unsatisfactory. Whether he could be dismissed under the new scheme was a matter of dispute. By the terms of the Charitable Trusts Act (1860), dismissal was possible provided that Asby was not an endowed grammar school. The Charity Commission advised that it was not; the Governors' own solicitor advised that it was and that compensation should be offered. Unfortunately, the Governors, encouraged by the Charity Commission's advice, rushed their fences and dismissed Guy without giving him a proper hearing. When he refused to quit the school, they then took action against him in the High Court, where the Master of the Rolls ruled that he had not been properly dismissed, basing his judgement on the ground that Guy could only be dismissed if he were proved negligent, after being given notice of the charges against him and a chance to be heard; as this had not been done, his dismissal was contrary

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1. Asby parish papers, minute book of Dr. Smith's School Foundation (1875-85); 2 June 1875 and subsequent entries.

2. The Asby parish register shows that he ceased to officiate in 1861.

to ordinary notions of justice.<sup>(1)</sup> The matter then went to the Charity Commission for arbitration, and the Governors had to pay Guy his £300 as the price of his resignation. Nor was Asby the only case. The Governors of Waitby had a similar struggle with William Waistell, and eventually had to pay him £20 a year for life to persuade him to resign.<sup>(2)</sup> Rather than battle like this, some managers preferred to wait until old age or death did the trick; but this could take over twenty years, as it did at Crosby Garrett, and in the meantime the school might be in a terrible state.

*W.C.C. 1878  
from notes  
available*

Even when unsuitable staff had been weeded out, it was no easy matter to recruit satisfactory replacements; for the schools were caught between the Education Department's demand that they put qualified teachers in charge and their own limited funds. As a result, the salaries they offered tended to be as low as possible. Rises were rarely given on the managers' initiative, only when a teacher begged for one; though occasionally a bonus might be voted when the results were exceptionally good.<sup>(3)</sup> On the other hand, teachers had to face salary cuts simply because the managers were short of money. In 1896, for instance, the managers of Crosthwaite Endowed School regretfully had to reduce by £10 a year the salary of the Head, a first-class certificated teacher, who had already given them good service for 18 years.<sup>(4)</sup>

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1. Asby parish papers, MS transcript of the judgement of the Master of the Rolls in *Holme v. Guy*, in the Chancery Division of the High Court, 3 December 1877.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 27/5227.
  3. Shap School Board minute book (1874-97); 1 May 1893.
  4. Crosthwaite parish papers, Endowed School minute book; 6 April 1896.

The problem of recruitment was most acutely felt in the small rural schools, which were handicapped by their isolation and by their poverty. To keep costs low, they usually tried to appoint mistresses at rock-bottom salaries. In the eighteenthies, the Shap School Board was paying its teacher at Rosgill between £45 and £50 a year, (the national average was £73) and unqualified assistants at Shap Girls and Infants School were paid £35. Not surprisingly, there was a rapid turnover of staff and posts proved hard to fill. When Rosgill was advertised at £55 a year in 1894, there were no applicants and the Board had to raise its offer by £10 before an appointment could be made.<sup>(1)</sup> Similar difficulties were felt elsewhere. Maulds Meaburn had six changes of staff between 1880 and 1887, and was again in trouble from 1899 to 1900 when it had five teachers in two years.<sup>(2)</sup> At Martindale in 1894 the school had to be closed for 15 weeks as no teacher was to be had, several applicants having refused the post because of the low salary and the fact that there was no regular communication with Penrith in winter.<sup>(3)</sup> However, where the schools could afford to appoint men, the problem was less acute, and the staff could be much less changeable. In contrast to Maulds Meaburn, Kirkby Lonsdale National (Boys) only had two head teachers in the whole period from 1857 to 1918.

Despite these difficulties, the general standard of teaching

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1. Shap School Board Minute Book (1874-97); 23 April 1894.
  2. Crosby Ravensworth parish papers; H.M.I's reports on Maulds Meaburn, 1880-87 and correspondence between Rev. R. Webster and the Education Department, 1899-1900.
  3. Martindale parish papers, Trustees' minute book (1834-95); 26 June 1894.



must have improved. No one can produce good teachers by administrative action; but the fact that many more teachers were certificated and that all the schools were under government inspection could cut down the number of really bad ones. Administrative action also had a powerful effect on what was taught. That the schools came under government inspection meant that they also came under the Codes. This may have done as much harm as good, for the Codes were "a Procrustes bed on which childrens' minds were liable to a shortening or lengthening process, as seemed most advisable in view of grants and rules of inspection."<sup>1</sup> But information about what went on in the schools is so limited that it is difficult to tell to what extent the Codes had a restrictive effect. Probably most of the uninspected schools before 1870 were teaching children who were so young, and in the school for so short a time, that by force of circumstance their work was limited to the rudiments. The Reagill time-table of 1865 shows the children spending nearly all the time on the three Rs, except when they were singing hymns, reading the Bible or being catechised.<sup>(2)</sup> The only other subjects mentioned are Geography and Grammar, both taught for one hour a week. So when the school came under inspection in 1874, the time-table remained practically unaltered - except for the time set aside for marking the register.<sup>(3)</sup>

To begin with, therefore, the schools were confined within the strait-jacket of the 1871 Code, but gradually this was

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1. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1891-92, p. 350.
  2. Crosby Ravensworth parish papers, Particulars of Inquiry relating to Endowed Schools.
  3. Reagill log book.

Exactly!

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*Sustain this!*

loosened. Grants were offered for class subjects optional for the whole school and for a widening range of specific subjects, which might be taught to individual pupils in the higher standards. After 1890, the principal grant was no longer tied to the percentage of passes in the three Rs, but it was only in 1900 that the Board of Education finally gave a block grant no longer connected with success in any particular subject.

*Why?*

*What direction?*

Slowly then the central authorities were moving in the right direction, but were they taking the schools with them? What evidence there is suggests that through all these changes in the Codes the routine of the schools went on relatively unchanged. Most of them undertook the teaching of class subjects, of which grammar and geography were the most popular in Westmorland as elsewhere, but very few schools were able to broaden their curriculum much further.<sup>(1)</sup> In the eighteen-nineties, Drawing was introduced in nearly all schools, encouraged by grants from the Science and Art Department, but very few tackled any of the other specific subjects. In 1894 there were only three schools teaching woodwork and elementary science (probably in Kendal), and none teaching cookery.<sup>(2)</sup> Nothing else could be expected in the circumstances. Specific subjects were not likely to be taught unless there were appreciable numbers in the higher standards; and, even though the proportion staying on in Westmorland was exceptionally high,<sup>(3)</sup> the schools were too small for

*What circumstances?*

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1. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1879-80 (C.2563, 1880) p. 423.
  2. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1894-95 (C. 7776, 1895) Table C pp. lvi-lviii.
  3. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1885-86 (C.4849, 1886) p. 287; and Education Department, Return showing (1) the expenditure from the grant for public education in England and Wales etc. (Cd109, 1900) Table 11.

this to be of any use. At Maulds Meaburn, for instance, only one child reached Standard V between 1881 and 1887;<sup>(1)</sup> and at Asby in 1901, out of 61 children, there were only 7 in Standard V and two in higher standards.<sup>(2)</sup> The scope of teaching, therefore, remained restricted and, in conforming to the Codes, unrelated to the everyday lives and surroundings of the children: no nature study, no school gardens, no cookery to prepare them for their future as housewives, nothing to prepare them for their lives on the farm.

The restrictive effect of the Codes was probably as much on teaching methods as on what was taught. About these, we know even less, as the main evidence available is that of the Log Books and the H.M.I.'s reports, neither very informative; but the need to earn grants by examination successes must have made it difficult for good teachers to follow their bent or to allow the children to develop their curiosity. Instead, years of teaching under the Codes produced a race of teachers so geared to mechanical methods, that, when they were given more freedom, few of them knew how to use it. Commenting on the greater freedom offered by the 1890 Code, one H.M.I. concluded that the good effects would only come slowly. "At present," he wrote, "we do not possess a body of teachers, devoted and worthy of respect as they are, able to rise at once to the situation."<sup>(3)</sup>

The difficulties facing this body of teachers remained much the same. In big schools the classes were large; in all schools

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1. Crosby Ravensworth parish papers, H.M.I.'s report on Maulds Meaburn.
  2. Asby parish papers, H.M.I.'s report, 1901.
  3. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1891-92, p. 352.

they included a wide age range. A proportion of the children in them would be dirty, sometimes "in such an unclean condition that the other children alleged that they suffered from contact with them and gave it as an excuse for non-attendance;"<sup>(1)</sup> though such complaints were rare, partly because Westmorland children were relatively clean, partly because a certain level of dirt was accepted. More awkward educationally was the fact that the childrens' range of experience was narrow - when the Crosby Ravensworth schools went to Morecambe "many of the children had never been in a railway train, nor even seen the sea"<sup>(2)</sup> - but their range of ability was dauntingly wide. Until the legislation of the eighteen-nineties, there was no special provision for the blind, the deaf, the backward, or the mentally handicapped. The teachers were therefore faced with cases like that of Isabel Fisher who, in 1897, was refused admission to Mansergh School "on the ground that she was unteachable owing to weak intellect."<sup>(3)</sup> The Education Department, however, advised that she should only be excluded if definitely 'imbecile'; otherwise the Managers should "lean to admission." Whether the Mansergh Managers accepted the advice is not known, but two years later Isabel was causing difficulties at Kirkby Lonsdale because "she did not seem able to learn and was destructive".<sup>(4)</sup> She was suspended for a while but, as the doctor would not certify that she was 'imbecile', was eventually re-admitted - to a school of 130 girls with only one certificated teacher.

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1. Kendal Ward S.A.C. minute book (1890-1903); 1 June 1895.
  2. Reagill log book; 12 September 1889.
  3. Kendal Ward S.A.C. minute book (1890-1903); 26 June 1897.
  4. Kirkby Lonsdale National School papers, Managers' minute book (1898-1901); 2 October 1899.

thesis  
This is but one example in this  
where the 'local' has not  
been linked with the  
'National' pattern of the  
developments in struc,  
Admin, Control etc.

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Although the work of the schools and the problems of the teachers may have altered little, a great change took place during this period in the way education was organised: from being mainly locally-controlled and financed, it became largely state-regulated and state-supported. Up to 1870, the backbone of elementary as well as secondary education in Westmorland had been the endowed schools, most of them completely independent; but by 1903 all but the six which had remained grammar schools had become purely elementary schools under inspection. As a result, a large proportion of the voluntary schools (and therefore of all schools) in Westmorland had endowments and in some cases these remained an important part of their income. In 1899, there were still 14 schools where the endowment income was big enough, taken with the grants, for them to do without subscriptions or fees. In fact, with an endowment income of 4/8d. a head (the national average was 1/5d.), the Westmorland schools were the second wealthiest in the country. Even so, the endowment income had shrunk to a small proportion of the total expenditure, only £2051 out of £21,774, to which grants contributed £15,354.<sup>(1)</sup>

The re-organisation of the smaller endowed schools as elementary schools followed the same pattern as that of the larger ones which remained secondary. After a visit from an Assistant Commissioner, they were given a new scheme which replaced the old trustees by a representative Governing Body, enforced a conscience clause, ended free education, and laid down that the

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1. Return of elementary schools, 1899.

school must be run as a public elementary school under the 1870 Act. Usually part of the endowment was allocated to the upkeep of the school, and the rest was to be for scholarships either to encourage pupils to stay in the higher standards or to enable them to go on to a neighbouring grammar school. These changes naturally provoked some opposition.] At Bampton, for instance, the imposition of fees was resented so strongly that the Rev. Darling, that inveterate mischief-maker, was able to stir up "chronic rebellion" in the parish.<sup>(1)</sup> When the Governors, supported by the Education Department, proposed to rebuild the grammar school on a new site, the rebels tried to form a School Board to get control of education in the parish, and were only prevented because it was proved that some of the signatures on the petition for a School Board had been forged.<sup>(2)</sup> Occasionally, opposition could have some effect, as when local jealousies wrecked the Rev. Weston's sensible scheme to group all four Crosby Ravensworth schools under one foundation;<sup>(3)</sup> but on the whole there was little chance of the smaller foundations resisting when wealthy ones like the Blue Coat School were being destroyed. So re-organisation went through without much controversy.

Closely linked to the endowed schools was the Church, the other main voluntary organisation providing education. As has

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1. Cumberland and Westmorland Advertiser; 18 May 1880.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 2/456.
  3. Crosby Ravensworth parish papers, Rev. Weston to Charity Commission, 25 January 1875 and its reply, 12 August 1875. The difficulty here was that two of the four schools were outside the Charity Commission's jurisdiction.

been seen, the Church authorities in Westmorland adopted a conciliatory attitude to the 1870 Act. Once it was passed, their policy was to build as many schools as possible to stop the formation of School Boards, or, if School Boards were formed, to seek to control them in the Anglican interest. As the Bishop of Carlisle wrote in a pastoral letter:

"If in your parish, you are brought into contact with the School Board system, my counsel to you is to endeavour to influence the Board and its schools for good to the best of your ability. The clergyman should seek election to the School Board, and he will generally be elected if he be worthy of election; he should make the operations of the Boards one of his most consistent considerations; he should endeavour to influence for good the teachers in the schools."<sup>(1)</sup>

As far as can be judged, the Church carried out this policy most successfully. In several places, a local clergyman was the original chairman of the School Board, having taken the initiative in its formation, as did the Rev. Whiteside, chairman of Shap School Board from 1874 to 1892. Even where Non-conformist influence was strong, the Church often managed to gain control; the Rev. Simpson was the first chairman both at Kirkby Stephen and at Nateby, and the Church retained control of the Kirkby Stephen Board until it was wrested from it in 1902 - too late to matter.<sup>(2)</sup> The Church's success partly reflects the relative

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1. W.G. 20 January 1883.
  2. W.G. 4 January 1902.



weakness of non-conformity, but more the simple fact that in rural parishes the clergy- educated, leisured, willing to serve - were indispensable.

Control of the School Boards, however, was only a minor part of the Church's activities in Westmorland. Apart from school building, its main work after 1870 was the encouragement of religious teaching in the voluntary schools. As one of the provisions of the 1870 Act was that the H.M.I's were no longer to inspect religious instruction, the Church was concerned lest the teachers no longer gave it adequate time and attention. The first reaction to this new situation was that the Diocesan Education Society, at a special meeting to consider the implications of the Act, passed a resolution: "That henceforth the chief object of this society be to promote and encourage religious instruction in the schools of the Diocese."<sup>(1)</sup> Given the attitudes of the time, the best way of impressing on teachers the importance of religious instruction seemed to be for the Church to run its own system of inspection and examination, which it was entitled to do under section 76 of the Act. A full-time diocesan inspector of education was therefore appointed, who paid an annual visit to each church school; and a scheme was worked out for an annual examination in two parts, one for pupil teachers and one for children, on the results of which the children received prizes and the pupil teachers grants. This became a large-scale affair. Although the separate figures for Westmorland are not available, in the diocese as a whole it was being taken by about 200 pupil teachers and several thousand children a year. Undoubtedly, it was one of the best

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1. W.G. 17 September 1870.

organised schemes of its sort in the country. In 1878, the Bishop of Carlisle was able to claim that "at a meeting at Lambeth Palace last spring he found that out of twenty dioceses the Diocese of Carlisle stood at the head of all others in this direction."<sup>(1)</sup> Nevertheless, the scheme suffered from all the characteristic defects of payment by results. At the diocesan conference of 1878, the Rev. Mantle, the diocesan inspector, made the obvious criticisms: as the syllabus was only for older children, the infants were neglected; and as it was short, the children were crammed for it. "I have found schools," he said, "in which the special chapters are taught as many as nine times in as many months."<sup>(2)</sup> But despite such doubts about its value, the system remained fundamentally unchanged.

A description of the Church's work in building schools, infiltrating the School Boards and organising religious teaching does not in itself give the full measure of Church control of the voluntary schools. The key role here was that of the Vicar. If he were interested and active, he directly controlled the schools. For instance, the meticulous records kept at Crosby Ravensworth by Canon Weston and the Rev. Webster from 1870-1901 show them corresponding with the Education Department and the Charity Commission, keeping the accounts, appointing the staff, visiting the four schools regularly, inspecting the registers, and even subsidising the schools out of their own pocket. At Kirkby Lonsdale, too, it is clear that the Vicar was in control and the other Managers accepted his decisions. Statistically,

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1. W.G. 2 November, 1878.
  2. Ibid.

it cannot be proved that such direct control was typical; but there is a revealing phrase of the Bishop of Carlisle's which contrasts the clergyman in a School Board parish with "his brethren who have voluntary parish schools and who can go in and out with a sense of being master of the position."<sup>(1)</sup> Even friends of the Church, like Captain Bagot,<sup>(2)</sup> admitted that there was too much "one-man government of schools";<sup>(3)</sup> and in a few places like Levens parents' representatives were elected to the Managers to forestall this criticism. Almost certainly, therefore, the Vicar was often in command, and the teachers were subordinate agents of the Church, sometimes compelled whether they liked it or not to sign agreements like that of the Orton schoolmaster:

"I also agree to teach in the Sunday school on Sunday afternoon, and to play the organ in the Parish Church on Sundays, and conduct the choir, except when absent from home during holidays."<sup>(4)</sup>

This Church control was sometimes resented, by teachers who found it irksome or by Non-conformists in one-school parishes; but on balance it was beneficial to the schools. Until the County Council was created in 1888, there was no organisation in the rural areas which could have looked after the schools as the Church did. Even the rural School Boards were sometimes the Vicar in another guise.

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1. W.G. 20 January 1883. Bishop of Carlisle's pastoral letter.
  2. Sir Josceline Bagot, Bt. (1854-1913) of Levens Hall; Conservative M.P. for S. Westmorland 1892-1906; 1910-13.
  3. W.G. 26 August 1899.
  4. Orton parish papers, Orton School minute book (1883-97); 19 August 1893.

Over the country as a whole, Church control tended to weaken during this period, because rising costs were outstripping the financial resources of the voluntary schools. Traditionally, the three financial props of the schools (apart from Government grants) had been fees, endowments and voluntary subscriptions, all of which were becoming relatively less valuable. Fees had always been the least important, and after 1891 they became insignificant, as all the schools accepted the government's offer of a fee grant. This allowed the schools to go on charging fees where they had previously been more than the grant of ten shillings a year. In 1899, 29 of the voluntary schools were still doing so, but the yield was a paltry £219 a year.<sup>(1)</sup> Almost certainly, this change to 'free education' benefited the voluntary schools; they no longer had to battle for fees, attendance was encouraged, and - though a few suffered financially - the majority were better off. Unlike the income from fees, that from endowments did not decline in absolute terms. After 1870, new endowments for elementary education were rare, and so the endowment income of the schools was static: for example, that of a group of 20 schools, whose income is known for both 1868 and 1899, shows a change only from £786 to £793.<sup>(2)</sup> Much the same was true of voluntary contributions. These came in various forms; gifts of sites, contributions to the costs of new buildings, and annual subscriptions, mainly from the local gentry. Perhaps because Westmorland was comparatively unaffected by the

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1. Return of elementary schools, 1899.
  2. The group consists of those schools, graded by the S.I.C. as endowed non-classical, which were still voluntary endowed elementary schools in 1899.

agricultural depression of the late nineteenth century, there is no sign that these subscriptions were falling off. In 1893 they yielded £3222<sup>(1)</sup> and in 1899 £3202. As this was above the national average per head, the Westmorland schools were comparatively strongly placed. Only four administrative counties in England and Wales had a higher income from endowments and subscriptions combined in 1899.<sup>(2)</sup> Even so, the weakness is obvious. Income from both sources was inelastic during a period of increasing school attendance and rising costs. Whereas in 1893 the cost per child in average attendance had been £2-4-6d., by 1899 it was £2-9-7d. in the voluntary schools and £2-11-2d. in the Board Schools - one of the highest rates in the country because of the exceptional number of small schools in Westmorland.

Some relief from this mounting financial pressure came with the passing of the Voluntary Schools Act in 1897, which offered the voluntary schools an extra grant of 5/- a head. As a result of the Act, voluntary schools associations were formed by the different Churches. Although a school could join an association run by any denomination, in practice the numbers in each association are a good index of the relative strength of the Churches. In Westmorland, two schools were unassociated, one school joined the Catholic association, seven the Non-conformist, and 85 the Anglican.<sup>(3)</sup> Therefore this latter, the Carlisle

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1. Return for each elementary school inspected in England and Wales for the year ending 31 August 1893 (C. 7529 H.C. 1894. lxxv); cited as 'Return of elementary schools, 1893'.
  2. Return of elementary schools, 1899; Summary Tables.
  3. Board of Education, Associations constituted under the Voluntary Schools Act, 1897 (Cd 212, 1900).

Diocesan Voluntary Schools Association, dwarfed the others. We have already seen it conducting a successful drive for better attendance. The other main part of its work was the distribution to its constituent schools of the aid grant, which by 1899 amounted altogether to £1853 a year for Westmorland (including Kendal).<sup>(1)</sup> This was an important addition to the schools' resources; between 1893 and 1899 their income increased by about £3,600, roughly half coming from the aid grant and the other half from the annual and fee grants. As a result, in 1902 the voluntary schools in Westmorland were not in danger of folding up from lack of money as many were in the industrial towns. Helped by their stronger initial resources, by a relatively static population, by the charitable giving of a resident gentry, the Westmorland schools on the whole were holding their own.

Two qualifications must be made to this; one that on the existing financial basis the schools could hold their own but not advance; the other that a few schools did succumb to the financial pressures of the eighteen-nineties. Not all which were struggling went under. For instance, at Langdale in 1898 there was a public meeting to appeal for more subscriptions because the annual deficit was £60 a year and the aid grant, which would meet half of it, would not be paid unless there were adequate subscriptions.<sup>(2)</sup> The following year £30 was raised in voluntary contributions and the school was saved; but in several places where these financial difficulties were acute before the 1897

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1. Return of elementary schools, 1899.

2. W.G. 3 December 1898.

Act gave a helping hand, the schools could not carry on, and so School Boards were formed at Kaber and Crosby Garrett in 1892, and at Bolton in 1893.

Compared to the work of the Church, however, the School Boards were not very important in Westmorland. Excluding Kendal, only 19 were formed and two of these were very short-lived.<sup>(1)</sup> Asby was set up in 1873 and served a useful purpose in running a temporary school while the difficulties over the endowed school were sorted out. Once this was done, the endowed school provided all the places needed and there was nothing for the School Board to do except enforce attendance. As all its members were also Governors of the endowed school, there seemed little point in preserving its separate existence, and so, after September 1882, there are no entries in its Minute Book until May 1885 when it reads: "As there has been no business needing a record, the meetings of the School Board have all been resolved into meetings of the Governors of Asby Endowed School and recorded in the Minute Books of the Governors."<sup>(2)</sup>

The Martindale School Board had an even briefer life. In this remote valley, with its dwindling population, the school had always been a struggling institution. In 1897, the Education Department finally declared it inefficient and stopped the grant;<sup>(3)</sup> an attempt to raise a voluntary rate to bring the school up to standard failed; and so the school closed.<sup>(4)</sup> As a result, the

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1. See Appendix A.
  2. Asby parish papers, Asby School Board minute book, p. 106.
  3. Martindale parish papers, file 'Martindale National School'. H.M.I.'s report, 1897.
  4. P.R.O. Ed. 2/458, W.H. Parkin to Education Department; 12 October, 1897.

children were "running wild in the dale with no school to go to."<sup>(1)</sup> The Education Department's first reaction to this situation was to press the Trustees to reopen the school, but they refused because they could not get an assurance of financial support from the parishioners. Meanwhile, the Education Department had also suggested that the children might go as weekly boarders to Barton, a very sensible idea had it been prepared to help parents with the cost.<sup>(2)</sup> Both these lines of approach having led nowhere, the Education Department was left with the alternative of forming a School Board, an unwelcome prospect because, as one official minuted, "it would appear from precedent that we have never ordered a Board for so small a number of children."<sup>(3)</sup> The legal duty of the Education Department, however, was clear. Prodded on by a petition from the rate-payers, and encouraged by a local census showing that there were 17 children of school age likely to attend,<sup>(4)</sup> it reluctantly decided to set up a School Board in 1899 - not before the matter had gone as high as the Permanent Secretary, Sir George Kekewich. So in 1900, the school was re-opened in the old building, which the Trustees had sold to the School Board.

Leaving aside the Kendal School Board, which never ran any schools, and Asby, which was defunct, there were therefore 18 School Board ~~in~~ the county in 1903. All of these were small:

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1. W.G. 24 September 1898.
  2. Martindale parish papers, file 'General Correspondence' and P.R.O. Ed. 2/458.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 2/458, minute of 23 June 1898.
  4. Ibid. MS list of children in Martindale.



no county in England had a higher proportion - 13 out of 18 - in parishes with less than 500 people.<sup>(1)</sup> Only two, Stainmore and Shap, were running more than one school, so that altogether there were only 21 Board Schools as compared to 88 voluntary schools (outside Kendal). This ratio makes the Board schools look more important than they were. As most of them were in thinly-populated parishes, the average attendance at board schools in 1899 was 1,157, only 18% of those attending in the country districts. If Kendal is included, the proportion for the whole county drops to 13%, one of the lowest in the country.<sup>(2)</sup>

Nearly all the School Boards were to be found in two distinct clusters; one in the Kirkby Stephen area and the other in the lower Eden Valley.<sup>(3)</sup> Several factors account for their formation there rather than elsewhere. Obviously enough, nearly all 18 School Boards were set up in parishes where the existing provision in 1871 was inadequate; two of them in areas with no schools, 12 in areas with no efficient schools, two in areas with not enough efficient schools, and only two where provision was then adequate. However, in other parishes, which were just as ill-provided, the gaps were filled without the formation of a School Board. The difference seems partly to have been in resources, for none of the parishes where Boards were formed had a substantial endowment.

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1. Education Department, Return showing the expenditure from the grant.... for the year 1899; Table 65.
  2. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1882-83 (C.3706, 1883) p. xxx shows that only two counties, Dorset and Rutland, then had less than 13% of their children under School Boards.
  3. See Trace Two in folder attached to back cover.

Taken with the difficulties of securing attendances and therefore income from grants, this is sufficient to explain the formation of Boards in very mountainous parishes like Dillicar and Shap. In the two clusters, however, the decisive factor was probably religion, as these were the areas where Non-conformity was strong. Elsewhere people were willing to contribute to build and maintain the church schools, but once the alternative of a School Board was on offer, it was natural for the Non-conformists to refuse to do this, and the Church party was rarely strong enough to carry on alone; though where there was a wealthy Anglican family, like the Metcalfe-Gibsons of Ravenstonedale, they might succeed in doing so. (1)

Of the 18 School Boards, 14 had been formed by 1880; the other four came in the eighteen-nineties. Once established, they had several tasks to perform: the building and maintenance of schools and the enforcement of attendance. What they did about them is difficult to establish, as the records of the rural School Boards have almost completely disappeared. The only ones to survive are those of Shap, which is hardly typical, as it was much larger than most and not in a Non-conformist area. Therefore, although the school building done by the Boards can be traced, no worthwhile comparisons can be made between their enforcement of attendance and that of the School Attendance Committees, nor between the quality of the board schools and the voluntary ones. Presumably there was little difference. The Shap School Board, at any rate, was just as zealous as the School Attendance Committees;

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1. J. Butt. Memoir of Anthony Metcalfe-Gibson (Kendal 1913).

the board schools cost much the same per head as the voluntary;<sup>(1)</sup> and, for the rest, the Codes left little room for manoeuvre. This meant that, with their expenditure per head pushed above the national average by the cost of running small and uneconomic schools,<sup>(2)</sup> the rural board schools like the voluntary schools, offered little hope of progress. Whatever the merits of the board schools in the towns, where they set the pace of educational advance, there were few complaints in Westmorland when they were destroyed by the 1902 Act.

#### (b) The Kendal Schools

Unlike the country districts, Kendal in 1870 was in the fortunate position of having all the schools it needed. Even excluding the workhouse school and the three private adventure schools, which were included in the return of schools charging less than 9d. a week, there was plenty of room in the other ten schools, which between them had 2,768 places and were preparing to add more.<sup>(3)</sup> Kendal was therefore a phase ahead of the rest of the county, already confronted with the difficulty, not of building enough schools, but of improving attendance.

Despite the fact that there were plenty of schools at hand, the attendance problem was probably more acute at Kendal than

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1. Return of elementary schools, 1899; Summary Tables.
  2. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1898-99 (C.9401, 1899) p. xxxix gives average annual cost per head in board schools in England (excluding London) as £2-8-11d. In Westmorland it was £2-11-2d.
  3. Kendal School Board minute book (1871-85), pp. 14-15.

1871?

elsewhere. According to the census returns,<sup>(1)</sup> there were 2,322 children aged between 5 and 13 in the town. The actual attendance on the census day was 1,897, and the average attendance for the previous six months 1,687. These figures however, must be corrected because they include all children at school whatever their age. The exact number between 5 and 13 was never checked, but must have been appreciably less, for in October 1870 there were 92 children under 3 on the books, 335 between 3 and 5, and 122 over 13.<sup>(2)</sup> Allowing for the fact that the younger ones would be among the worst attenders, the average attendance of children between 5 and 13 can hardly have been above 1,500; which meant that on any one day at least 800 were not at school. This is corroborated by the first investigations of the school attendance officer, who reported in December 1871 that "there were 478 children in Kendal who did not attend any school at all, and 238 who attended irregularly; making 716 defaulters in all."<sup>(3)</sup> Clearly it was more than mere rhetoric when one member of the town council alleged that: "There were something like 400 children who went to no school whatever. Of these, there were between two and three hundred children who lived, it might be said, in the gutters of Kendal."<sup>(4)</sup>

The 1870 Act made it possible for the first time to do something about this, for it empowered the School Boards to make attendance bye-laws and to pay the fees of the very poor. The

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1. Kendal School Board minute book (1871-85). Report to the Education Department, June 1871.
  2. Kendal School Board, file 'Miscellaneous Papers, 1871-1903'; Returns of attendance, 1870-72.
  3. W.G. 9 December 1871.
  4. W.G. 10 December 1870.

Kendal Town Council was quick to see its advantages, and in December 1870 it applied for a School Board to be set up, even though there was no question of shortage of accommodation, nor of taking over any of the existing schools. On the face of it, this was an uncontroversial decision, designed simply to help the children "who otherwise would be wandering about the streets neglected";<sup>(1)</sup> yet it was hardly announced before the mutual suspicion of church and chapel began to show.

At first it seemed as though this might not prevail over good sense, but attempts by the rival committees to discuss the composition of the Board amicably broke down, apparently because the church party would not negotiate unless given a prior guarantee that the Vicar would be on the Board.<sup>(2)</sup> Failing that, conflict broke out, which Roman Catholic and working men's candidates then joined in. Ward committees were formed, meetings were held (except by the Catholics), and the town was vigorously canvassed by the two main parties. The Church campaigned on a platform of opposition to secular education and school rates;<sup>(3)</sup> the Non-conformists took as their slogan "Perfect Efficiency, Due Economy, Absolute Liberty of Conscience, the Bible - No Dogmas";<sup>(4)</sup> while Jones, the working men's candidate, stood for non-sectarian education and the right of the working class to be represented.<sup>(5)</sup> None of this had much to do with the future

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1. W.G. 12 November 1870.
  2. W.G. 21 January 1871; and the account in the short-lived Kendal Times (radical) of 7 January 1871.
  3. W.R.O. Kendal School Board papers; the broadsheet issued by the Church party.
  4. W.G. 7 January 1871.
  5. Kendal Times, 7 January 1871.

conduct of a School Board which was only to enforce attendance; what it reflected was the struggle of local groups and personalities for standing in the town.

In the end, four Anglican and three Non-conformist candidates were elected, but the Catholics, who had kept very quiet, nearly succeeded in returning their priest, Father Gibson, presumably by all plumping for him with all seven votes. When the Board met for the first time, defeat was still rankling with the Non-conformists, and their leader, J. Wilson, stupidly tried to claim that as Mayor he should be ex-officio chairman.<sup>(1)</sup> The Church party rightly refused and elected the Vicar; but, after this last flicker, controversy died down because there was nothing in the Board's work to excite it. The 1871 election was the last to be contested; and William Willison, the popular sporting pawnbroker who then headed the poll, served until the Board was abolished in 1903 on the strength of one election.

The first task of the School Board was to collect information about school attendance, which it did with commendable thoroughness. After that bye-laws were drawn up compelling the full-time attendance of children aged between 5 and 10; those aged between 10 and 13 could either be part-time "if beneficially and necessarily at work", or could be totally exempt if they had reached Standard Five.<sup>(2)</sup> With the appointment of a school attendance officer, all was set for the attack on defaulters to

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1. W.G. 4 February 1871.

2. Kendal School Board, file 'Bye-laws 1871-1901'; contains this and all subsequent information about the bye-laws.

A group of Kendal elementary school boys with their teacher.





begin. By February 1872, the attendance officer could claim to have accounted for 175,<sup>(1)</sup> to have seen all the remaining 541 personally and to have persuaded 344 of them to be enrolled.<sup>(2)</sup> This still left a hard core of nearly 200, and the Board had to move on from persuasion to compulsion by attendance orders and prosecutions. Although these seem to have been used sparingly, the Board's methods did have a definite effect. Between October 1870 and October 1873, the number on the registers (of all ages) rose from 2,053 to 2,464, and the average attendance from 1,613 to 1,860.<sup>(3)</sup> Though the number attending rose, the proportion of those registered who were attending regularly fell - not surprisingly in view of the previous habits of the newcomers. As the local H.M.I. commented:

"Both at Carlisle and at Kendal the compulsory clauses of the 1870 Act have been put into effect to some extent, and it may be broadly stated that the general effect has been to drive neglected children into school, but not to make any material difference to regularity of attendance... at Kendal, the operation of these clauses has been effectual in bringing into the schools a large influx of rough and ragged children."<sup>(4)</sup>

One side-effect of this was to increase the demand for private schools, so that two new ones were opened in Kendal

1. i.e. those who had left the town, died, were over age, etc.
2. Kendal School Board minute book (1871-85), pp. 35-37.
3. Ibid. p. 71-76, triennial report, December 1873.
4. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1872-73 (C.812, 1873), p. 112.

between 1870 and 1875. Two distinct motives were at work here on different sets of people. At one end of the scale were those who wished to withdraw their children to something more select as the elementary schools became rougher; at the other, those who were attracted to the private schools because "they can more readily retain their children at home owing to the laxity... as to regularity of attendance."<sup>(1)</sup>

After the modest improvement of 1871-3, the School Board does not seem to have borne down heavily on this latter group. In fact, it rested on its laurels for some years, during which complacency led to falling standards. Between October 1873 and October 1879, the number on the registers may have risen from 2,464 to 2,635, but the average attendance actually fell from 1860 to 1833;<sup>(2)</sup> and in November 1878 it had only been 1664. This situation attracted fierce criticism from the local H.M.I., S.G. Tremenheere, in 1880. He sharply attacked the laxity of the Board; for allowing children over ten to go on half-time regardless of their educational standard, and for not prosecuting often enough. Only nine prosecutions had been brought in the previous year, four in respect of one child. "Not unnaturally," he concluded, "the attainments of the Kendal schools are very deficient, the average percentage of passes being only 65.4".<sup>(3)</sup>

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1. Kendal School Board minute book (1871-85) pp. 129-32. Report on private adventure schools, 10 November 1875.
  2. Ibid. p. 218, triennial report, 1879.
  3. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1879-80, p. 414.

Almost certainly as a result of Tremenheere's criticism, the Board began to stir out of its lethargy. In 1879, it drew up new bye-laws, lowering the standard for total exemption to Standard Four, but demanding Standard Two for half-time. This was backed up by more vigorous enforcement; in the next three years it took some action in over 400 cases (compared to 283 from 1873 to 1876) and the proportion of prosecutions rose.<sup>(1)</sup> So did the average attendance, from 66.7% in 1880 to 74.3% in 1884. The improvement in the percentage of passes was much more striking, from 64.9% to 82.7% in the same period.<sup>(2)</sup> Yet this was hardly satisfactory when the attendance in the wilds of East Ward was already 78.2%, even allowing that Kendal had the special difficulties of a town - the greater ease of finding jobs and of using the loophole of the private schools. In his 1883 report, Tremenheere, while admitting the improvement, was still complaining of "the daily absence of 200 truants."<sup>(3)</sup>

For some time, however, no further progress was made, for in 1891 the average attendance was still only 73.9%;<sup>(4)</sup> but in the eighteen-nineties the Board gradually began to tighten up, now that education was free and the poorer private schools were dying out. After 1892, total exemptions was only granted to those who reached Standard Six and half-time to those who reached Standard Four; in 1901 the standards were raised to Seven and Six

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1. Kendal School Board minute book (1871-85) p. 264, triennial report, 1882.
  2. Kendal School Board, file 'Miscellaneous Papers, 1871-1904': Statistics of attendance and attainments in inspected schools in Kendal.
  3. Rept. C.C. on Ed. 1883-84, p. 419.
  4. Kendal School Board minute book (1886-1903), loose sheet at p. 306.

respectively. With the appointment of a new and apparently zealous attendance officer in 1892, the Board began to press hard even on "that class of defaulters of whom school managers naturally complain, namely those children who make .... from six to eight attendances instead of 10 per week."<sup>(1)</sup> By 1901 the Board claimed to have stamped out this casual truancy. Certainly its action, coupled with the greater zeal which the Kendal managers, like the country ones, showed after 1897, had transformed the situation by 1901. In ten years, the average attendance had risen from 73.9% to 87.4%,<sup>(2)</sup> and Kendal, so long disgracefully below, was now well above the national average.<sup>(3)</sup> At last its School Board could conclude on a note of pride: "The Board are glad to report that the more serious cases of irregular attendance which formerly came to their notice no longer exist."<sup>(4)</sup>

No such dramatic change, as was seen - however belatedly - in school attendance, took place in the school buildings; but even so well supplied a town as Kendal felt the stimulus of the 1870 Act. Apart from minor alterations to St. George's, St. Thomas's and the Catholic School, it brought on two major changes which had been hanging fire before. One was the transfer of the National school infants from their "exceedingly inconvenient" rooms in a former public-house in the Old Shambles to a new schoolroom next to the main school.<sup>(5)</sup> The other was the closure

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1. Kendal School Board minute book (1886-1903) p. 224, triennial report, 1897.
  2. See note 4 on p. 188.
  3. W.G. 3 December 1898.
  4. Kendal School Board minute book (1886-1903), p. 281, triennial report, 1901.
  5. W.G. 14 October 1871.

of the Wesleyan school. In 1870 its managers decided to sell the school and hand over the proceeds to the British School Committee so that it could build a new school on a less sectarian basis, a decision precipitated by the need to apply for building grants before December 31st 1870. Helped by the gift of a site from W. Wakefield, £250 from Bryan Lancaster's fund,<sup>(1)</sup> and a building grant of £225, the committee raised the £1500 necessary and the new school opened in 1873.<sup>(2)</sup>

As the population of Kendal did not increase significantly, the quantity of accommodation was never thereafter a problem, and only minor changes were made. Some were simply due to force of circumstance, as when Kendal Green had to expand in the eighteen-nineties because Fell-side had closed down, or when St. George's had to build an extra classroom in 1882 because the lease on its overflow room in the Mission House had run out. But most were the result, as in the country districts, of pressure from the Education Department in the eighteen-nineties. The Catholic school was condemned and a new one built at the foot of Gillingate;<sup>(3)</sup> St. Thomas's had to be improved under threat that the grant would be withdrawn;<sup>(4)</sup> and the National School added new classrooms and workshops at the Department's suggestion.<sup>(5)</sup> Even so, the standard of the buildings was not much better than in the country districts with less excuse. Kendal Green, regarded

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1. For the history of this see Nicholson, Annals of Kendal, pp. 222-3.

2. Kendal Green British School papers, file 'Correspondence re closure of Old Wesleyan School and building of new British School.'

3. W.G. 7 May, 1898.

4. W.G. 14 March, 1894.

5. W.G. 26 March, 1892.

as a model school when it was opened, had no running water until 1892, and two years later the town council was still complaining about its insanitary condition.<sup>(1)</sup>

There were, however, certain differences between the Kendal schools and those of the country districts. One, that has already been noted, was that suitable schools were available to most denominations; whether they used them was a different matter as later evidence suggests that parents tended to send their children to the most convenient school irrespective of its religious teaching.<sup>(2)</sup> Another was that the Kendal schools were practically without endowments. This meant that when they abolished fees - as all did except Kendal Green - they were left heavily dependent on subscriptions. In the eighteen-nineties, however, subscriptions were tending to fall, and consequently several of the schools were in financial difficulties. The outstanding example was the National school, which in 1897 had only 15 subscribers and 19 parents paying £31 a year, at a time when there were 837 children on the books.<sup>(3)</sup> As a result, it consistently ran at a loss until the aid grant came to the rescue, and even then its position was not secure. In 1900 the school was £536 overdrawn and the Board of Education was threatening to cut off the aid grant because the subscriptions had fallen.<sup>(4)</sup>

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1. Kendal Green British school papers, minute book 1887-99; 17 December 1894.
  2. W.G. 29 July 1905. Letter to Kendal Town Council from Gilkes and Canon Trench: "They (the children) are sent to the schools without much regard to the special character of the religious teaching."
  3. W.G. 26 March 1898.
  4. W.G. 26 January 1900.

Similarly, a recurring deficit at St. George's forced the managers to consider handing it over to the School Board in 1898; but instead a bazaar was held to pay off the debt, and the immediate financial strain was relieved by a gift of £100 from four wealthy parishioners.<sup>(1)</sup> Not all the schools were in such obvious difficulties, but it is clear that in general the town schools were in a weaker position than the country ones; because they were larger and the number of their subscribers was relatively small. Fell-side was the only one which failed to carry on, but without the help given in 1902 one or two more could scarcely have held out much longer.

Although their size had drawbacks, it did give the Kendal schools one very distinct advantage: they could offer a wider range of subjects. In 1893 workshops were added to the National school and the boys started doing woodwork. The Kendal Green extensions of 1895 allowed the school to start teaching woodwork to the boys and cookery to its own girls and those from Castle Street. The most striking developments, however, were at the Castle Street British school which, following a pattern familiar elsewhere, became a higher-grade school in the eighteen-nineties, and taught a range of subjects which included woodwork, botany, physiology and hygiene, French, and science, some of them for the Science and Art Department Examinations.<sup>(2)</sup> The contrast with the country schools is very sharp. In 1898, all the boys in the county doing woodwork and probably all the girls doing cookery

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1. W.G. 15 January 1898.

2. W.G. 26 December 1891 and 22 December 1894.

were in Kendal. There was, therefore, a breadth about the elementary education in Kendal, and an upthrust into something more than elementary education, which was unparalleled elsewhere in the county.

The special conditions of Kendal gave rise to another development which can only briefly be mentioned here. In the country districts there was naturally little demand for technical education and great difficulty in providing it for so many scattered centres. The best that could be done was to provide some evening continuation classes and to contribute to the farm school at Newton Rigg, run jointly with Cumberland from 1896. By contrast, the varied industries of Kendal encouraged the setting up of a technical school, which the town was large enough to support.

*W.G. 4 April 1868*

The first move towards this was made by John Whitwell at a meeting of the Christian and Literary Institute in 1868,<sup>(1)</sup> a time when Britain was becoming conscious that her industrial supremacy was vulnerable to foreign competition and talk of the need to improve technical education was much in the air. Whitwell was therefore only repeating current arguments when he said that Britain needed technical education because she was lagging behind other countries. He then urged that it would be useful in Kendal in the "chemical and mechanical branches of science," an opinion apparently shared by his audience as, after further discussion, a "Kendal Education Committee" was set up.

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1. W.G. 4 April 1868.



From its inception this had two main purposes. One was to organise what became known as the Boys' Local Examination, a competition designed to stimulate the town's elementary schools. Far more important was the fact that the Committee at once got in touch with with Science and Art Department, and by 1869 classes were being run for its examinations in chemistry and animal physiology.<sup>(1)</sup> In the meantime, a site had been purchased in New Road; and the school opened there as a Science and Art School in 1870. As such it soon became one of the most important educational institutions in the town. Since the grammar school did not begin to flourish until the eighteen-nineties, the school probably offered until then - if not later - a better secondary education. Certainly, it found an inspiring principal teacher in J. Bateman (1873-90)<sup>(2)</sup> and under him built up an enviable reputation. A former pupil, Professor Musgrove, speaking in 1901, claimed that:

"At that time .... 20 year ago, Kendal occupied a unique position in this country. There was no town of the size of Kendal that had a science and art department to be compared to what they had here. Kendal was, in fact, outside the great cities of this country, the pioneer of scientific education for the people."<sup>(3)</sup>

Such a claim would be difficult to prove and allowance must be made for the exaggerations of speech-day oratory, but the quality of work being done can be gauged to some extent from the later

1. W.G. 27 March 1869.

2. W.G. 22 October 1898 gives an outline of his career. From 1890-98, he was the first organising secretary of the Westmorland Technical Instruction Committee, and was described as "the most inspiring force in her (Westmorland's) educational life."

3. W.G. 28 September 1901.

successes of the pupils. Giving a retrospect of the school's work between 1868 and 1892, Cropper could cite as examples of successful pupils three doctors, two clergymen, a London B.A., a London B.Sc., (1st class in Agriculture), and others.<sup>(1)</sup>

During the same period, only Heversham and Appleby could have produced comparable lists. These grammar schools, however, were socially exclusive, and it would be interesting to know how far the science and art school offered a path to higher education to groups who could not have reached it through the grammar schools.

In the eighteen-nineties the work of the school expanded further because it began to receive County Council grants under the Technical Instruction Act of 1889. The main change was a great expansion of its evening class work which by 1898 included courses in French, German, commercial arithmetic, shorthand, book-keeping, human physiology, and heat, light and sound.<sup>(2)</sup> One result was that nearly £1,000 a year of public money was passing through the hands of a voluntary committee, some members of which began to think that the school was now too large to be carried on by an unofficial body. So the Kendal Education Committee asked the Town Council to take over the school, which it agreed to do; partly because most of the Education Committee were councillors, but also because the council wanted, in view of the impending changes, to stake out a claim to be an independent authority.<sup>(3)</sup> In March 1902, the change-over took place, and the school formally came under the Technical Instruction Committee of the Town Council, its former Governors under a different name.

1. W.G. 26th November 1892.
2. W.G. 11 October 1898.
3. W.G. 28 September 1901.

Appendix A to Chapter VI: School Boards formed in Westmorland,  
with the date of their formation.

<u>School Board</u>	<u>Date</u>
Asby	1873
Bolton	1893
Brough, Brough Sowerby and Hillbeck United District	1874
Brougham	1874
Cliburn	1877
Clifton	1874
Crosby Garrett	1892
Dillicar	1874
Kaber	1892
Kendal	1871
Kirkby Stephen and Hartley United District	1875
Kirkby Thore and Newbiggin United District	1873
Little Strickland and Thrimby	1874
Mallerstang	1874
Martindale	1899
Nateby and Wharton United District	1874
Ormside	1874
Shap	1874
Soulby	1874
Stainmore	1879

① Relate to Commission  
VC of this period?  
in AD. H. Bryce.

② Relate to Nat. Pattern  
- Breakdown of Voluntary  
Principle VC

Chapter SevenThe Local Education Authorities, 1903-14

In the last years of the nineteenth century, demands for educational reform were growing. Among Conservative supporters, they arose to some extent from impatience with the administrative tangle to which the Bryce Commission had recently recalled attention, and from alarm at the encroachment of higher-grade schools on secondary education. But the Conservatives' strongest feelings were aroused by the financial difficulties of the Church schools and by the fear that, in the towns at any rate, they would have to be handed over to the School Boards unless the government came to their help. In a much-quoted letter to Salisbury, then Prime Minister, the Bishop of Rochester wrote in 1901:

"The palliative of 1897<sup>(1)</sup> is exhausted (in many places), and the strain is now at breaking point. Putting it practically, I mean that, if the schools are not in some way relieved in this next session, many will go within the year - enough greatly to weaken the cause, and, by creating the impression that 'the Game is up', to bring down others in increasing numbers and an accelerating rate. I am speaking of what I know."<sup>(2)</sup>

The Conservatives were bound to respond to pleas of this type. When they had returned to office in 1895, they had begun a deliberate policy, both by legislative and administrative action, of attacking the School Boards while increasing aid to the

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1. The Voluntary Schools Act, 1897.
  2. Quoted Gosden. The Development of Educational Administration in England and Wales. p. 172.

voluntary schools, and of cutting back the growth of higher-grade schools, so that the development of secondary education would take place within the more traditional framework of the grammar school. The culmination of the first aspect of this policy was the Education Act of 1902.

By this, the School Boards were abolished, and the administration of education was handed over to local education authorities, which were to be the county or county borough councils, except that non-county boroughs with over 10,000 people and urban districts with over 20,000 could be L.E.As for the purposes of Part Three of the Act (i.e. for elementary education). The L.E.As were made responsible for secondary education in so far as they were to consider the educational needs of their areas and to supply education other than elementary - on which they were not to spend more than a 2d. rate without the consent of the Local Government Board. In respect of elementary education, their powers were more extensive. To begin with, they took over the work of the School Boards and School Attendance Committees. In addition, they were made responsible for "all secular instruction in public elementary schools not provided by them."<sup>(1)</sup> What this meant was that the voluntary schools came under the L.E.A. and were supported out of the rates; but in return for providing the buildings and paying a share of the cost of maintaining them, the churches were allowed to nominate a majority of the managers and to retain control of the religious teaching. There were therefore two types of elementary school after the Act: provided schools, wholly paid for and controlled by the L.E.A., in which religious

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1. 2 Edw. VII. Ch. 42.s.5.

teaching was still governed by the Cowper-Temple clause; and non-provided (former voluntary) schools, in which religious teaching was denominational, though with a conscience clause.

As a result of the Act, two local education authorities were created in Westmorland. In recognition of the differences between Kendal and the country districts, Kendal became a Part Three authority, responsible for its own elementary schools. The rest of the elementary education and all the secondary passed under the control of the County Council. In practice the real power was exercised by its Education Committee, a composite body of county councillors and co-opted members. These new arrangements caused some grumbling, as changes usually do which take power out of local hands and transfer it to some more distant administrative centre; but in Westmorland it was not just a matter of wounded pride or local jealousies. Because of the hills dividing the north from the south, travel between these two parts of the county was still difficult and time-consuming, and Kendal was far from a natural centre for all parts of the county. An attempt was therefore made to have these geographical divisions recognised in the administrative arrangements, when a resolution was passed by the West Ward Guardians that they should act with East Ward to obtain a separate education authority for the north of the county.<sup>(1)</sup> This proposal was actually brought before the county council,<sup>(2)</sup> but was dismissed as impracticable, because the whole trend of government policy was against having a large number of small authorities. All the county council could offer in the way of

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1. Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald; 31 January 1903.
  2. W.C.C. Minutes 1902-3, p. 201.

decentralisation was the setting up of six local committees to collect information about local problems and to pass it on to the county education committee.<sup>(1)</sup> As these had no executive functions to engage people's interests, their history seems to have followed the pattern of that of the local committees set up by the school attendance committees; after an initial period of activity, they faded away into oblivion.

Although the administrative arrangements of the 1902 Act were attacked by the defenders of the School Boards, the fiercest controversy raged round its religious clauses. By a curious reversal of attitudes, the Non-conformists, who had bitterly opposed the arrangements made by the 1870 Act, had come to be zealous defenders of them. Once over their disappointment that the church schools had been allowed to survive, they began to realise that the board schools in fact gave the sort of religious teaching they wanted; and, as they saw the board schools educating an ever-growing proportion of the nation's children, they began to look forward to the time when the church schools would fade away, leaving them in command of the field. Because this prospect was attractive, so were their protests vehement when the 1902 Act destroyed it. A great outcry arose against what one local Non-conformist minister described as "a practical endowment of Romanism within or without the Established Church."<sup>(2)</sup> 'Rome on the rates' was hardly a logical cry when the denominational schools had been drawing money from public funds since the beginning of government grants, but it was understandable in view of the Non-conformists' disappointed hopes.

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1. W.C.C. Minutes 1903-4, pp. 45-50.

2. W.G. 10 May 1902.



After the Act was passed, however, the only constitutional course was to work for the overthrow of the Conservatives at the next election and the return of a Liberal government which would change the law; but some Non-conformists felt that the Act was so unjust as to warrant unconstitutional action, and ripples of their agitation spread to Westmorland. Most of the county was too Anglican to be affected, but in Kendal and the Eden Valley, where Non-conformity was strong, some of the more ardent spirits embarked on passive resistance. In Kendal several protest meetings were held by the Non-conformists during 1903. These showed that plenty of them disliked the Act intensely, but that most were content for the time being merely to let off steam. However, a Kendal and District Passive Resisters League was formed,<sup>(1)</sup> whose members refused to pay the proportion of the rates levied for education. As a result, a few were summoned before the courts and orders were made for distraint upon sufficient of their goods to pay the rate.<sup>(2)</sup> Much the same pattern of events was repeated in the Eden Valley, except that resistance there was rather more determined and over a score of people were sent to prison for short periods. One of the most prominent passive resisters was the Rev. Anderson, Baptist minister at Kirkby Stephen, who was imprisoned several times. Some impression of the atmosphere of the movement can be gained from looking at what happened after his first release from Carlisle gaol in July 1904.<sup>(3)</sup> A procession, headed by all the local Non-conformist ministers, met him at

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1. W.G. 10 October and 28 November 1903.
  2. W.G. 27 February 1904, etc.
  3. Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald, 9 July 1904.

Kirkby Stephen station, and all then marched to the Market Square, where they stood singing 'O God our help in ages past', before further speeches were made affirming their determination to resist. This sort of thing continued sporadically at least until 1907. Carried on by such small numbers it could serve no useful purpose, and it would be easy to dismiss the whole movement, as did one contemporary, as 'comic opera',<sup>(1)</sup> especially as the passive resisters were prone to make rather strained comparisons between themselves and the great Puritan rebels of the seventeenth century. But behind it all, the Non-conformists had a real grievance. Though the principle of rate aid to denominational schools might be conceded, in the rural areas it worked unfairly because the church schools were often the only schools. So Non-conformist children had to attend them, which usually meant receiving the religious teaching, as the conscience clause could not be invoked without putting the children in an awkward position.

While this controversy was spluttering away, the Education Committee was going ahead with its re-organisation of education in the county. One of its first actions was to appoint a higher education sub-committee, under the chairmanship of the Rev. Llewelyn Davies.<sup>(2)</sup> As has been seen,<sup>(3)</sup> its first reports did

1. Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald, 11 June 1904.
2. Rev. John Llewelyn Davies (1826-1916); ed. Repton and Trinity, Cambridge; Fellow of Trinity 1851-9; Rector of Christ Church, Marylebone 1856-88; a friend of F.D. Maurice and a notable social worker; member of the 1st London School Board; vicar of Kirkby Lonsdale 1889-1908. Translator (with D.J. Vaughan) of Plato's Republic and an original member of the Alpine Club.
3. See Chapter Four, pp. 106-7.

not make comforting reading: no secondary school in West Ward, no secondary education for girls outside Kendal, and most of the country grammar schools backward and poverty-stricken. Because of the Kendal schools, the percentage of children at secondary schools in Westmorland was quite high;<sup>(1)</sup> but, as the Westmorland Gazette commented, "there is hardly any other county where a greater part of the population is so totally unprovided for."<sup>(2)</sup> The sub-committee however went energetically to work, and by the beginning of 1904 had prepared a plan to develop secondary schools in every district and to link them to the elementary schools by an expanded scholarship system. This plan was then submitted to the Board of Education, which praised it for being "conceived in an enlightened and liberal spirit."<sup>(3)</sup>

If this plan was to be put into effect, the first necessity was to improve the country grammar schools or to establish new ones, as in 1904 only four schools - Appleby, Kendal, Heversham and Windermere - were of a high enough standard to qualify for Board of Education grants. Almost immediately a start was made at Kirkby Lonsdale, and by 1905 the new buildings for a mixed grammar school were ready. Meanwhile negotiations with the Kelsick's trustees had begun, but these were more long drawn out. Prompted by Wynne-Williams, the local H.M.I.,<sup>(4)</sup> the trustees first proposed a forward-looking scheme by which the grammar school was to charge no fees to its first and second year pupils and was to take all

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1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1904-5. Report on Higher Education, p. 388.
  2. W.G. 24 December 1904.
  3. P.R.O. Ed. 53/242.
  4. Kelsick's School Foundation minute book (1895-1910); 12 October 1904.

children who had passed Standard Five. They hoped that such a scheme would bring children to the grammar school who would otherwise never have gone, and that in consequence they would get "the cream and not only the well-to-do class of the Elementary School."<sup>(1)</sup> The county council however turned down the scheme because the fees were too low, and instead the Board of Education produced its own draft scheme, which was finally approved in 1907, for a mixed grammar school, charging fees of between £6 and £12 a year.<sup>(2)</sup> In 1908 the new buildings were ready and the grammar school, first projected at Ambleside in 1873, finally opened its doors. In this way, two of the gaps were filled; but there still remained the awkward problem of West Ward, where the population was so dispersed that there was no obvious centre on which to base a secondary school. Eventually, the solution arrived at was to send the children to Penrith - a controversial decision which will be discussed later.<sup>(3)</sup>

The re-organisation at Kirkby Lonsdale and Ambleside not only gave each of these places a good secondary school, but, through co-education, made it available to girls. As far back as the scheme of 1878,<sup>(4)</sup> it had been recognised that there were not likely to be enough boys wanting secondary education in such a small town as Kirkby Stephen and that co-education offered a better chance of making a grammar school there viable. However, as Kirkby Stephen Grammar School had not flourished, the effective

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1. W.C.E.C. minutes 1904-5, pp. 372-3.
  2. W.C.E.C. minutes 1907-8, p. 27.
  3. See below pp. 216-18.
  4. See Chapter Four, p. 105.

beginning of co-education in the county's grammar schools was at Kirkby Lonsdale and Kelsick's. Co-education could have been just as advantageous elsewhere, at places like Appleby and Heversham, where both the boys' grammar schools were small and dangerously dependent on the success of the boarding side. Possibly the Education Committee made an approach to both. Certainly, in 1909, the higher education sub-committee passed a resolution about Heversham;

"That in the opinion of this sub-committee there is not much probability of the School being carried on successfully as a Secondary School for boys only, but there may be a reasonable prospect of a useful future as a Mixed School, giving a good Secondary Education at moderate fees."<sup>(1)</sup>

Although supported by the Westmorland Gazette and by a parish meeting at Milnthorpe, which complained that the provision of secondary education for girls was "much below that which exists in other parts of the county,"<sup>(2)</sup> the Education Committee got nowhere. The Heversham governors refused to entertain its proposal. Shortly afterwards the school revived under a new Headmaster, the Rev. F.B. Menneer, its numbers increasing from 33 in 1908 to 77 in 1914, and the governors must soon have felt that their refusal was justified. In fact, not for the last time, they had obstructed a rational re-organisation of secondary education in the county.

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1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1908-9, p. 358.
  2. W.G. 3 April 1909.

The resistance of Appleby and Heversham to co-education forced the Education Committee back on less satisfactory alternatives. For the Heversham and Milnthorpe girls there was the possibility, if they lived near enough the railway, of travelling to Kendal or Lancaster. For the Appleby girls and those of East Ward in general, there was practically nothing to begin with. Of the two schools in the area, Appleby was determined to remain a boys' school, Kirkby Stephen was weak though already co-educational in principle. The only practicable solution was to make Kirkby Stephen a girls' school - which offered the bonus of a chance to pension off Dr. Nicholson. This solution was adopted in the new scheme of 1907, with the somewhat ludicrous result that for nearly fifty years the Appleby girls had to travel to Kirkby Stephen, while the Kirkby Stephen boys travelled to Appleby. Despite this imperfection, the new arrangements were a great improvement from the girls' point of view. In 1908 Kirkby Stephen re-opened as a girls' school with only 7 pupils, but in 1909 it was recognised by the Board of Education and came under a devoted headmistress (Miss Whitley, 1909-40), who was to guide it for most of the time that it was a separate girls' school.<sup>(1)</sup> So it gained rapidly in strength, and by 1914 was as large and flourishing as other country grammar schools like Kelsick's.

As a result of these developments at Kirkby Lonsdale, Ambleside and Kirkby Stephen, girls in the country districts

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1. A. Swailes. Kirkby Stephen G.S. 1566-1966, pp. 48-50, on which this paragraph is based.

came to be better provided for in a way than those in Kendal. Not in the sense that there were more places per head, for in 1908 Kendal High and the Friends' Girls School had about 150 pupils, more than the number of boys and girls at the other three combined. The difficulty in Kendal was that the two schools were independent of the county council, charged fees of about £15 a year, and were therefore socially more exclusive. As a result, Gilkes<sup>(1)</sup> told the Board of Education, "recent demonstration of parents have taken place in Kendal complaining that at Kirkby Lonsdale and elsewhere girls were only paying £7 a year."<sup>(2)</sup> It was therefore agreed that the Education Committee should approach the governors of Kendal High with the suggestion that they should lower the fees in return for grants from the County Council and the Board of Education. The governors had already rejected a similar approach in 1907;<sup>(3)</sup> but this time it seems to have been accompanied by a hint that refusal would force the Education Committee "to consider how Secondary Education for Girls can be provided at lower fees."<sup>(4)</sup> As the competition of a grant-aided school would have been difficult to meet, the governors had little choice but to open negotiations. The only possible stumbling block was religion. On the one hand the school could not remain connected with the Church School

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1. Gilbert Gilkes (1845-1924), born at Dublin; ed. at Friends' School, Kendal; trained as an engineer; returned to Kendal 1881 and bought Canal Iron works; original member of the County Council; Mayor of Kendal 1899-1901; Chairman of the W.C.E.C. 1903-19.
  2. P.R.O. Ed. 53/243. Memo of interview between Gilkes and Bruce; 3 February 1909.
  3. Minute Book of Kendal High School Committee (1896-1909); 13 November 1907.
  4. Ibid; 15 February 1909.

Company unless it was entirely Anglican; on the other, the Board of Education would not give a grant unless the religious teaching was undenominational. However, the Church School Company proved anxious to co-operate and, after consulting it, the governors offered to come to an agreement with the County Council "provided that Church of England teaching in school hours .... be provided for the children of Church of England parents, similar rights being granted to other denominations."<sup>(1)</sup> As a result, a new Instrument of Government was drawn up by the Board of Education, which made the majority of the governors representative, fixed the tuition fees at between £6 and £12 a year, and laid down that religious teaching should be undenominational (though Anglican teaching could be given, if parents asked for it and if it was not paid for out of public funds).<sup>(2)</sup> Under this new scheme the school entered a period of expansion. The Friends decided to give up the unequal struggle, closed their Girls' School, and leased the buildings to the High School which moved there in 1910.<sup>(3)</sup> This naturally led to an increase in numbers, which rose from 100 in 1908 to 128 in 1914. By this time the school was the largest in the county and, with £330 a year flowing in from the County Council grant alone, was in a stronger position than ever before.

This indeed was true to a greater or lesser extent of all the grammar schools; for the Education Committee had not only

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1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1909-10, p. 125.
  2. Kendal High School papers, W.R.O.
  3. Ibid.



re-organised and re-vitalised those which were struggling, but had given important financial help to those which were comparatively well-established. This took two forms. Firstly, the County Council offered grants towards the building or furnishing of new schools. For instance, Kirkby Lonsdale received £550 towards its new building in 1905<sup>(1)</sup> and Kelsick's £287 for equipment and furnishing in 1908.<sup>(2)</sup> More important were the annual maintenance grants which the schools received provided that they were recognised by the Board of Education and that the County Council was represented on the governing body. As re-organisation progressed, all the grammar schools came to be in this position, with the county providing a rising contribution to their expenses. During the period 1904-14, the annual grant to Kendal G.S. rose from £225 to £355 and to Heversham from £50 to £230. Altogether in 1914 the County Council was paying £1980 a year to the grammar schools,<sup>(3)</sup> and, as they were also receiving government grants, the financial insecurity which had worried earlier Heads, like Hart of Heversham, had largely disappeared.

All this represented a great increase in the quantity of good secondary education available. In 1904 there had only been four schools with 220 pupils receiving Board of Education grants - though others, like Kendal High, may have been up to the same standard. By 1914, the county possessed eight efficient grammar schools (excluding the Friends' School for Boys) with 586 pupils of whom 499 were resident in Westmorland. As 39 Westmorland

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1. C.C. Bundle 131-40, W.R.O. Local Government Board to W.C.C.; 25 July 1905.
  2. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1908-9, p. 354.
  3. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1914-15, p. 94.

children were at the Friends' School and others were going to Penrith, something like 550 were receiving secondary education.<sup>(1)</sup> If one assumes, as the Board of Education then did, that the grammar schools should offer a four year course, and compares the number attending to the total number in the age group 11-15 which was 4922, it follows that about 11% of the children were in secondary schools. This compared very favourably with the proportions elsewhere. In 1912, the Board of Education calculated that the average number of boys attending secondary schools on the grant list in (England) per 10,000 of the population was 49.7, and the average number of girls was 39.3. The numbers in Westmorland were 95.3 boys and 68.1 girls, the figure for boys being higher than that for any other administrative county.<sup>(2)</sup>

Although there was this rapid expansion in the number of grammar school places, secondary education was still largely rationed by the purse. All the schools charged fees, £12 a year being the usual maximum for tuition, Even if the actual charge was somewhat less, it was still too high for the majority of people in a period when, with the income tax exemption limit at £160 a year, thirty-eight million people in Britain were in families with incomes below the limit and only five million in families with incomes above it.<sup>(3)</sup> There was, therefore, a great need to extend the scholarship system, and Westmorland, in accordance with its educational tradition, tried to meet it.

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1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1914-15; Statistics relating to Higher Education, p. 12.
  2. Statistics of Public Education in England and Wales, Part One. Educational Statistics 1911-12 (Cd 6934, 1913) Tables 45 & 46.
  3. E. Phelps Brown. The Growth of British Industrial Relations. London 1959. pp. 52-3.

This extension of the scholarship system was built on the twin foundations of endowments and of the County Council scheme of minor scholarships. The endowed scholarships at places like Waitby and Selside of course continued, and were added to in the re-organisation of endowments which followed the 1902 Act. The two main cases were at Lowther (which will be discussed later) and at Staveley, both of which - as was the way with charity reforms - gave rise to disputes. At Staveley, the charity originated in a will dated 1696 by which George Jopson left the yearly profits of his estate "Unto a preaching Minister, that shall officiate as Curate at Staveley Chapel .... provided he shall take upon him to teach and instruct children, and perform the office of a Schoolmaster within the said chapelry."<sup>(1)</sup> Until 1858, the vicar did in fact act as village schoolmaster, and received the income from the trust; but when the school was rebuilt in that year a full-time teacher was appointed and the income from the trust went towards his salary.<sup>(2)</sup> Under Section 13 of the 1902 Act, the question now arose as to how much of the endowment should be paid to the L.E.A. The vicar claimed that, as the money had been left for a dual purpose, half should revert to him,<sup>(3)</sup> but the Parish Council, which seems to have been on (had) terms with him, disputed this, and accused him of sharp practice in trying to do a deal with the Education Committee behind its back.<sup>(4)</sup> Eventually, after some heated exchanges in the County Council,<sup>(5)</sup> a public meeting was held at Staveley in

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1. C.C. Bundle 120, W.R.O. MS transcript of the will.
  2. Ibid; Trustees of Jopson's Charity to W.C.C. 31 March 1903.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Ibid. Petition of Parish Councils of Over and Nether Staveley to W.C.C.; 3 June 1904.
  5. W.G. 10 September 1904.

November 1904, and agreement was reached on the principle that the trust's income should be divided between the Church and education.<sup>(1)</sup> As it finally emerged from the Board of Education in 1908, the scheme provided that one-third should go to the Vicar and church-wardens and the rest to the County Council to be used either to provide scholarships for Staveley children at secondary schools or to provide special facilities at Staveley in practical or technical subjects "suitable to the circumstances of the neighbourhood."<sup>(2)</sup> In fact, the money seems to have been used exclusively for scholarships. The first was awarded in 1909 and by 1913 the charity was supporting two girls at Kendal High, paying each £3-8s. a term for tuition and £3-6-8d. for maintenance.<sup>(3)</sup>

As well as the re-organisation of existing endowments, there was at least one important new one. In 1908, Sir James Whitehead Bt., an old boy of the school who had made his fortune and had been Lord Mayor of London, offered Appleby £5,200, part of the income from which was to be used to establish six scholarships at the school worth £20 a year each.<sup>(4)</sup>

However, in the provision of scholarships as in other directions, endowments were becoming relatively less important than public funds, and so the most significant development of the period was the extension of the County Council scheme of minor scholarships. In 1904 the number on offer was raised to 25, a

1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1904-5, pp. 368-9.
2. C.C. Bundle 131-40, W.R.O. Board of Education Scheme, 29 April 1908, s. 21.
3. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1903-14, p. 72.
4. W.G. 26 December 1908.

limit which was later pushed upwards by the Board of Education's regulations that secondary schools receiving grants must admit a proportion, normally 25%, of free scholars each year. By 1914, about 20 scholarships a year were being awarded in Westmorland and the actual number holding them had risen to 71.<sup>(1)</sup> To this must be added a few holders of endowed scholarships, and about 30 scholarship boys at Kendal G.S. Altogether, therefore, over one-fifth of the Westmorland pupils at grammar schools were being supported by scholarships, the proportion to be expected in view of the Board of Education's regulations.

Against this extension of County Council help must be set the destruction of the old pupil teacher system, previously the commonest educational ladder for children from the country districts. After 1902 it became the Board of Education's policy to break down the educational isolation of the elementary school teachers, who had usually gone through the "dull, narrow and numbing groove"<sup>(2)</sup> of elementary school, apprenticeship as pupil-teacher, training college, and then back to elementary school. Instead the Board planned that all teachers should spend some time in the more 'liberal' atmosphere of the secondary schools. New regulations were therefore introduced in 1903 that children should not become pupil teachers until they were 16 (15 in country districts) and that they were then to serve two years' apprenticeship during which they were to spend half their time at school and the rest at a pupil-teacher centre, which might be one of the grammar schools.

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1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1914-15. Statistics relating to Higher Education, pp. 18-19.

2. W.G. 7 November 1903.

These regulations caused some alarm in Westmorland. Most of the pupil teachers were girls from the rural areas and in 1904 there were as yet no secondary schools for girls outside Kendal. The pupil teachers therefore found themselves travelling long distances to Penrith and Kendal. For instance, the district H.M.I. cited the case of a girl who left Ravenstonedale for Penrith at 7.40 a.m. and returned home nearly twelve hours later.<sup>(1)</sup> Nor was this the only difficulty in applying the regulations. In many of the rural schools there was only one pupil teacher who could no longer be used as a full-time member of staff. As the managers of these small schools could hardly afford to pay a part-time pupil-teacher, the tendency was for their employment to be confined to the larger schools. Taken together, these two factors were bound to reduce the number of children seeking to become pupil-teachers. As the 1905 report put it: "The supply from the genuine Rural Districts will be cut off and it is no exaggeration to say that some of the best possible material will be lost to the profession."<sup>(2)</sup>

The Education Committee sought a way out of these difficulties in two directions. The first was the provision of secondary schools for girls in the country districts, with their accompanying system of scholarships. Undoubtedly one of the main reasons for doing this was the need to provide an alternative to the pupil-teacher system. The second was to persuade the Board of Education to modify its regulations to make them more suitable for a country district. In 1906, it put to the Board a suggestion that the pupil-teacher system should be abandoned altogether except in a

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 53/242. Wynn Williams' report on Pupil Teachers in North Westmorland; 28 January 1905.
  2. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1905-6. Report on Higher Education, p. 293.

few remote places, and instead intending teachers should spend four years in a grammar school, followed by a period of full-time teaching before going to college.<sup>(1)</sup> Although the Board was doubtful at first, the following year it came round to Westmorland's point of view, with the important addition that, after three years at grammar school, intending teachers should receive a bursary for the fourth year. By 1914, Westmorland was awarding about 15 of these a year. Meanwhile the pupil teachers had practically disappeared; between 1906 and 1914 their number dropped from 144 to 4.<sup>(2)</sup>

How far this widened or restricted opportunity is impossible to tell. We do not know how many of the children who were at grammar schools in 1914 would have been pupil-teachers under the old system; and even if this could be worked out statistically the result would take no account of the comparative value of education as a pupil teacher or at a grammar school. But taking scholarships and bursaries together, there can be little doubt that this period saw the doors to secondary education, if not thrown asunder, at least pushed wider apart. Two groups in particular benefited: the girls for whom there had only been expensive schools in Kendal, and the boys in the country districts, for whom there had been few scholarships available and some of these to schools of little worth. In fact, the only group not to be better off were the Kendal boys who were specifically excluded from competing for minor scholarships, an interesting

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 53/242. W.C.C. to Board of Education; 7 February 1906.

2. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1914-15. Statistics relating to Higher Education.

tribute to the generous number of scholarships available at Kendal G.S. In contrast, the passage on from the grammar schools to the universities remained very narrow, as the County Council continued to offer only one major scholarship a year.

Within a decade, therefore, the Education Committee had carried out its intentions and had given the county a coherent system of secondary education. In every district by 1914 there was an efficient secondary school satisfying the requirements of the Board of Education. More had been achieved in ten years than in the previous thirty, because the Education Committee had the administrative machinery for carrying through a continuous policy, whereas the Charity Commission's reforms had been stultified by the lack of it. Yet, despite the extensive changes which it made, the Education Committee never had to do battle against local opposition to anything like the same extent as the Charity Commission for a number of reasons: it came bearing gifts, opinion was ready for change, and the Charity Commission had already fought the decisive battles. In fact, the only serious controversy which the Education Committee had to deal with was that at Lowther.

The problem here was how to use the money which had accumulated since 1882 so as to provide secondary education for children in those parts of West Ward which were not within reach of Appleby. In 1903 the Board of Education suggested the obvious solution: to co-operate with Cumberland in setting up a grammar school at Penrith, the market town for the area. In October 1904 a sub-committee was appointed to discuss the matter with Cumberland, but negotiations dragged on for two years until a conference at Greystoke Castle agreed that the Lowther endowment should



contribute £3,000 of the £9,000 estimated as the cost of the new grammar school at Penrith, and that the balance should come from various sources in Cumberland.<sup>(1)</sup> Strong opposition to this proposal came from the majority of the Lowther trustees, led by Major W.H. Parkin. Their basic objection had really nothing to do with education, for it was simply that money from a Westmorland endowment should not go out of the county.<sup>(2)</sup> This was based on a doubtful premise, as the purpose of the original deed had been to "establish a place of higher education at Lowther for the sons of gentlemen,"<sup>(3)</sup> which did not suggest restriction to Westmorland. Moreover, the objectors offered no constructive alternative which would help the children of West Ward. The Education Committee were therefore not impressed by Parkin's arguments, but when their proposals came before the County Council in December 1906, he was able to muster so much support that they only squeezed through by 17 votes to 15.<sup>(4)</sup> Despite the fact that, in the meantime, the Board of Education had announced its intention of drafting a scheme along the lines agreed by the two County Councils, Parkin returned to the attack in June 1907, and this time persuaded the County Council to go back on its previous decision and to pass a resolution in favour of giving £3,000 to Appleby instead of to Penrith.<sup>(5)</sup> On this the Westmorland Gazette commented:

"There is something provokingly comical as well as stubborn in the fight Major Parkin makes for the Lowther

1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1906-7, pp. 244-6. The Report on the Lowther endowment gives a convenient survey of its history up to the end of 1906.
2. W.G. 15 September 1906; report of Parkin's speech.
3. W.G. 20 October 1906; letter from Lord Lonsdale.
4. W.G. 15 December 1906.
5. W.G. 17 June 1907.

education money on the Westmorland County Council.

It is the stubbornness of the Englishman who will not accept defeat, though others see that he is defeated and are amazed that he does not see it himself."<sup>(1)</sup>

Parkin's resistance did not turn out to be as futile as the Westmorland Gazette expected. Since the Lowther endowment was so wealthy, the Board of Education decided to buy off the opposition by allocating £3,000 to both Appleby and Penrith.<sup>(2)</sup> It was at this point that Parkin became unrealistic, as he continued to battle on to prevent anything going to Penrith, even to the extent of reviving the discredited idea of an Upper Department at Lowther.<sup>(3)</sup> The Board would have none of this, and as finally approved in 1909 the scheme provided that £3,000 should go towards the building costs at Penrith, £3,000 to Appleby, and the residue should be used for scholarships to grammar schools for children from West Ward (with preference to those from Lowther), for university exhibitions for boys from Appleby G.S. and Penrith G.S. (with similar preferences), and for the upkeep of the two grammar schools.<sup>(4)</sup>

One other matter which inevitably caused some controversy was finance. Between 1904 and 1914, the annual amount spent by the County Council on secondary education rose from £4,312 to £7,137, and the rate rose from nothing to over 2¼d. in the £. Although these sums now seem trifling, attitudes to public

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1. W.G. 17 June 1907.
  2. W.G. 7 March 1908; draft scheme for Lowther endowment.
  3. W.G. 12 June 1909.
  4. W.G. 11 September 1909.

spending before 1914 were very different, and the increase was not made without some protests. In 1906 some members of the County Council became alarmed lest the Liberal Education Bill should abolish the 2d. limit on rate aid to higher education. The debate on this gave Alderman Monkhouse, now a crusty reactionary, a chance to launch into the standard lamentation of the old, that the younger generation were degenerate and not worth the money being lavished on their education. In the end, by 19 votes to 11, the County Council agreed to send a resolution to Parliament: "That this council regrets the prospect of the withdrawal of the 2d. taxation limit for higher education."<sup>(1)</sup> Fortunately, when the 2d. barrier had to be broken through, the County Council was in a more enlightened mood. In 1910 the Education Committee asked for a 2½d. rate, because it now had more grammar schools to support and was having to give more generous grants to keep them up to standard. When this proposal came before the County Council, there was considerable opposition, but the prevalent feeling was that education must not suffer and that Westmorland must "hold its place".<sup>(2)</sup> So, despite grumbles from the Westmorland Gazette that "at present higher education is being pressed beyond the limit which the occasion justifies,"<sup>(3)</sup> the increase was accepted.

As the grammar schools came to be linked to the County Council and the Board of Education, one consequence was that the quirks and oddities which make the Victorian period at once so

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1. W.G. 9 June 1906.
  2. W.G. 22 October 1910.
  3. Ibid.

delightful and so exasperating tended to disappear. The schools could never be so bad again; but the price of better administration was less individuality. Their history therefore becomes less interesting after 1903, and certainly more difficult to write, as there is no source of information for that period corresponding to the earlier endowment files of the Education Department. Few school records have come to light other than those of Kendal High and Kirkby Lonsdale, and so these are the only grammar schools whose separate histories can be related. That of Kendal High has already been told;<sup>(1)</sup> that of Kirkby Lonsdale must serve to illustrate the fortunes of the country grammar schools in these years.

In 1903 Kirkby Lonsdale had been "a grammar school in a languid and poor way"<sup>(2)</sup> but, as the Rev. Llewelyn Davies was chairman both of the higher education sub-committee and of the school governors, the Education Committee soon began to take an interest in reviving it. In 1904 a conference on its future was held, attended by representatives of the governors, the County Council, the Kirkby Lonsdale U.D.C., and the Board of Education. This recommended that the school should be enlarged to include science laboratories and that it should become co-educational.<sup>(3)</sup> Local interest was at last aroused to the extent of raising £1,000 in subscriptions,<sup>(4)</sup> though not to the extent of persuading the Urban District Council to contribute anything out of the rates.<sup>(5)</sup> The County Council made a grant of £550, and in 1905

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1. See above pp. 207-8.
  2. W.G. 10 September 1904.
  3. W.G. 16 April 1904.
  4. C.C. Bundle 131-40, W.R.O. Copy of Extension Account.
  5. W.G. 11 & 18 November 1905, for an account of local controversies.

the new buildings went ahead, adding to the old schoolroom a science laboratory, a woodwork room and girls' cloakroom. The cost of this came to just over £2,000, but the local gentry came to the rescue, and a bazaar, organised by the Countess of Bective and opened by Princess Marie Louise of Schleswig-Holstein,<sup>(1)</sup> realised over £400. Under a new Head, Dr. Burnett, the school was ready for a fresh start as a mixed grammar school and pupil-teacher centre.

Its early years, however, were marred by controversy. Burnett seems to have been a character; a keen country-lover, pot-holer and mountaineer, well-liked by his pupils whom he took fell-walking in the Lake District at a time when this had far more of an aura of adventure than nowadays.<sup>(2)</sup> These somewhat unorthodox activities may have been one reason why the school was not well-regarded in the town, but the more fundamental reason, already expressed in the Urban District Council when it refused rate aid, was that the school was too expensive to be of use to the majority of local children. One critic, W. Taylforth, kept sniping away at the school, both in the council meetings and in the correspondence columns of the Westmorland Gazette, complaining that the Head was over-paid, that the fees were too high, and that the school was not offering enough free places.<sup>(3)</sup> Indeed it seems true that at one stage the school was counting as free scholars those children whose fees were paid by private

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1. Daughter of Prince Christian and Princess Helene of Schleswig-Holstein, and grand-daughter of Queen Victoria.
  2. W.G. 4 July 1908, and reports in MS school magazines at Queen Elizabeth School.
  3. W.G. 7 December 1907, etc.

benefactors<sup>(1)</sup> - a practise subsequently condemned by the Board of Education. Apparently therefore, if Kirkby Lonsdale was typical, there was some resentment at the amount of money being spent on the grammar schools, from which the middle classes benefited most.

Perhaps because of this local ill-will, the school did not develop very rapidly under Burnett, even though it was put on the Board of Education grant list in 1906 and passed its first inspection in 1907. In 1910, however, Burnett moved to a larger school in London and was succeeded by J.L. Johnson. When he took over, the numbers had dropped back to 32, there were no boarders, and despite the new buildings the future of the school looked uncertain.<sup>(2)</sup> But the combination of an energetic Headmaster and the general expansion of secondary education proved its salvation. One key to success for a country grammar school lay in building up the boarding side, and in this respect Johnson succeeded where all his predecessors at Kirkby Lonsdale had failed. Starting from scratch, he had attracted 14 boarders by 1914, a number which was to be trebled in the next two years. Meanwhile the school had begun to obtain good examination results, including an open exhibition to Christ's in 1913. This was the other key to success. So the number of day pupils rose as well; in October 1914 the school started with 82 pupils altogether and was well on its way to becoming one of the foremost grammar schools in the county.<sup>(3)</sup>

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1. W.G. 9 May 1908; letter from Rev. Llewelyn Davies to Kirkby Lonsdale U.D.C.
  2. Information from the late J.L. Johnson; interview on 23 February 1964.
  3. Queen Elizabeth School. Headmasters' reports to Governors.

While the numbers at grammar schools were in general increasing, though not always as rapidly as at Kirkby Lonsdale, the numbers at elementary schools were declining. Outside the area controlled by the Kendal Part Three L.E.A., the number of children on the register fell from 8385 to 7134 between 1905 and 1913. Westmorland therefore did not have the usual problem of dealing with rising numbers, but it did have special difficulties of its own. On the appointed day, May 1st, 1903, the Education Committee took over 108 elementary schools.<sup>(1)</sup> Many of these were small and isolated, so that school attendance remained a problem. Most of them became - and were to remain - non-provided schools, so that limits were set to the Education Committee's planning powers by the need to work with the Managers. There was also a host of small endowments, like that at Staveley, to be sorted out under Section 13 of the 1902 Act.

None of these difficulties was fundamental; so the improvements made by the Education Committee could hardly be dramatic. Its first task was to settle the status of the schools which it had taken over. Naturally, all 21 former Board schools became provided, or, as they were popularly known, Council schools; but nearly all the voluntary schools became non-provided. Only four gave up their religious independence straight away,<sup>(2)</sup> though Yanwath (1908) and Mealbank (1910) did so later. Four new council schools were built and one closed,<sup>(3)</sup> but the

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1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1909-10. Report on Elementary Education in Westmorland 1903-9 (cited as 'The 1909 report') p. 368.

2. Appleby British, Dufton, Longdale and Milburn.

3. Orton infants, Tebay infants, Holme and Appleby were opened, and the former Appleby British school was closed.

proportion of provided to non-provided schools in 1914 was still low: 30 out of 109. Moreover, of the six voluntary schools which had become council schools, only Yanwath was a Church school. Anglican control over the religious teaching in elementary schools was therefore as strong as ever.

Hardly had the Education Committee taken over the schools than it began to feel the Board of Education's pressure for improvements. As has been suggested, the central authorities had previously tended to take a lenient view of the short-comings of the rural schools, rather than make too great demands on local charity; but now that the schools were supported from the rates, the Board felt that it need no longer be so tolerant. "It was more than ever evident," Gilkes told the Education Committee, "that the Board of Education was going to be more strict than hitherto in regard to school accommodation."<sup>(1)</sup> This strictness was seen in the closing of school buildings which the Board had condemned at Sedgewick, Appleby (Bongate and British schools), and Holme. Pressure for closures also came from the Education Committee, anxious to reduce the number of very small country schools. This achieved little. At Firbank, the attempt was given up in the face of local opposition.<sup>(2)</sup> At Waitby, where the average attendance had dropped to 6.5 in 1906, the Education Committee did succeed in closing the schools for a while,<sup>(3)</sup> But the inhabitants fought to have it re-opened, claiming that there were 16 children of school age living near the school all of whom

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1. W.G. 26 December 1903.
  2. W.G. 26 February 1908.
  3. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1907-8, p. 71.



had to go over two miles to another.<sup>(1)</sup> So in 1913 the school re-opened, and with an average attendance of 12 was by no means the smallest in the county.

To balance these closures, seven new schools were built between 1903 and 1914,<sup>(2)</sup> far fewer than in the decade which followed the 1870 Act. One reason for this was that improvements could not simply be decreed but had to be negotiated with the managers of non-provided schools. What happened at Yanwath (though strictly speaking an alteration, not a new building) illustrates this. In 1905 the school, which was over-crowded, badly-ventilated, and liable to flooding, was condemned by the Board of Education which paid its grant "under protest."<sup>(3)</sup> Two years later, the Education Committee was still trying unsuccessfully to persuade the managers to submit plans. Instead, the managers threw their hand in, and the Education Committee took over control of the school in 1908.<sup>(4)</sup> This was not the end of its difficulties, because its playground was owned by separate trustees who at first refused to sell a small piece of land necessary for the alterations.<sup>(5)</sup> In October 1909, Gilkes had to confess that progress was far too slow:

"They had been proposing alterations at Yanwath since 1905. The Board of Education had a very poor opinion of the Westmorland Education Authority's expedition in carrying out alterations and had said so strongly."<sup>(6)</sup>

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1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1901-12, p. 89.
  2. The four council schools plus Beetham, Little Langdale and Winster.
  3. W.G. 29 July 1905.
  4. W.G. 28 November 1908.
  5. W.G. 23 October 1909.
  6. Ibid.

Even then, matters dragged on and the alterations were not made until the summer of 1911.

More important than these difficulties with the managers was the simple fact that there was no need for more schools. With the number of school children falling, the existing school buildings were large enough. The great need therefore was to improve the standard of the more primitive ones, of which there were still plenty. At one stage, probably in 1909, the Board of Education drew up a 'black list' of nine schools;<sup>(1)</sup> one (Holme) was condemned outright, and the other eight were warned that their grant would be withdrawn unless major alterations were made. These were only the very worst cases. In 1907, the Education Committee had itself drawn up a much longer list of schools in urgent need of improvement,<sup>(2)</sup> but many of the defects listed were still in evidence when the School Medical Officer reported in 1909. Most of the schools, he found, still had no sanitation except the pit privy; only a few of the larger ones had water closets; heating was usually by open fires or stoves which left the schools damp and cold in mid-winter; and drying arrangements were often inadequate considering the weather and the distances the children had to walk.<sup>(3)</sup> Bit by bit, these defects were being remedied, for between 1903 and 1911 at least 22 major improvement schemes were carried through and many more minor ones. The effect of these is less easy to estimate than that of building new schools where there had been none before, but by 1914 the Education Committee could claim that all the black spots condemned by the Board of Education in 1909 had been eliminated.

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 16/319.

2. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1906-7 pp. 344-5.

3. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1910-11. 2nd Annual report of the School Medical Officer. (S.M.O.)

Although this certainly raised the standard of school buildings, it brought no significant change in the number and distribution of the schools. As the number of schoolchildren was declining, this meant that the proportion of very small schools was rising. In 1906 there had been seven Grade I schools (average attendance 20 or under); in 1914 there were 16. This undoubtedly pushed up the cost of education in the county. In the Grade I schools in 1914, the average annual cost per head was £6-19-5d., more than double the cost in schools with over 50 pupils. In Westmorland, costs per head had always been among the highest in the country, but with the average rising from £3-0-11d. a year in 1906 to £3-14-7d. a year in 1914, the difficulty was becoming more acute. <sup>(1)</sup>

These small rural schools, however, could not be closed, for to do this would have left the children with even further to travel. As it was, the Education Committee was much concerned with the problem of children who lived more than three miles from school, 49 of them in 1908. <sup>(2)</sup> Most of these managed to attend school by boarding with relatives or friends, but this left a hard core of difficult cases. For instance at Swindale, there were four children who could only attend "during good weather as the distance is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles .... and that through a very wild country." <sup>(3)</sup> In Borrowdale there were nine children, one attending a school four and a half miles away, the others not attending at all. This was too many to ignore, but there was no obvious solution. The

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1. W.C.E.C. Minutes, statements for relevant financial years.
  2. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1908-9. Report on children in remote districts, pp. 194-6.
  3. Ibid. p. 195.

children were too scattered for schools to be built or for transport to be conveniently provided, but the county had no powers to pay for them to be boarded out.<sup>(1)</sup> Nevertheless it did what it could. From 1910 the Borrowdale children were driven daily to Selside and the Wasdale Head children to Shap. Even so, this particular attendance problem persisted. So did others. Tipper, the Secretary to the Education Committee, was re-echoing earlier complaints about the attitude of the magistrates when he wrote: "The experience in Westmorland and in other places too, is that irregular attendance at school is apt to be regarded as a somewhat readily excusable offence, with the result that convictions are often difficult to obtain and adequate fines are rarely inflicted."<sup>(2)</sup> In consequence, the general level of attendance remained much as it had been.

If the Education Committee had little success in improving attendance, it had more with a completely new departure, the appointment of a School Medical Officer. This had been considered as early as 1905 when its main advocate had felt obliged, such were the attitudes of the time, to argue that the appointment would save money by cutting down absences due to ill-health, rather than that it would be good for the children. The Education Committee was not convinced and the appointment was deferred.<sup>(3)</sup> In 1907, however, the Liberal government passed the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, imposing on the L.E.As the duty of providing medical inspection at least three times during the school life of each child. In 1908 therefore Kendal and the

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 16/319. W.C.E.C. to Board of Education; 4 December 1908.

2. The 1909 Report, p. 377.

3. W.G. 1 July 1905 and W.C.E.C. Minutes 1905-6 p. 101.

County appointed as their joint School Medical Officer, Dr. Henderson, whose annual reports are a valuable new source of information about the schools and the children. In particular, his report for 1909,<sup>(1)</sup> the first on a complete year's work, is interesting for the light which it throws back over the whole period from 1870, during which presumably conditions had been slowly improving.

What Henderson found was not alarming by the standards of the time. Nearly all the children, even when he made surprise visits, were well-clothed and only one per cent of the footwear (usually clogs) was really bad. Very few of the children showed clear signs of being under-nourished and, as might be expected, they turned out to be taller and heavier than the average children from rural districts, let alone those from the large towns. In other respects, Henderson's findings were less comforting. Though only 0.25% of boys and 1.8% of girls had vermin on their bodies, 3.2% of boys and 31.3% of girls had nits in their hair. Care of teeth was even more generally neglected. About 20% of both boys and girls had more than four decayed teeth, which Henderson put down to the "almost universal apathy among parents" as regards dental decay. "Among 5,157 children inspected in 1909," he wrote, "only 12 showed signs of any attempt having been made to arrest this decay by conservative dentistry" - and nine of these were from the children's homes run by the Board of Guardians at Natland and Staveley. Quite often too the children had bad eyesight; about 5% of boys and 9% of girls had some defect in both eyes, but not many of these wore glasses because of the prejudice

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1. 2nd Annual report of S.M.O. on which the next two paragraphs are based.

against them. Rather fewer, about 3%, had defective hearing.

If conditions were like this in 1909, teachers must have had to struggle throughout the whole period with children who could not see or hear properly. What they put down to dullness may have been partly due to physical defects of which no one was aware; or else to sheer weariness resulting from the excessive hours of work which, as Henderson discovered, were still being done out of school. Among the case histories he reported was the following:

"A.B. Boy aged 11 years 2 months. Pale and thin, anxious expression; rises 5.30 a.m., lights fire, attends to cowsheds, feeds sheep, milks cows, carries milk, walks three miles over rough country to school. Teacher states: 'Apt to be sleepy in school, spiritless.' Returns home 4.30 p.m.; works at farm work, milking cows etc. Bed 9.30 p.m."

The teaching force which had to cope with these difficulties underwent an important change after 1903, with the almost complete destruction of the old pupil-teacher system. As the pupil-teachers and monitors disappeared, their places were taken by supplementary or uncertificated mistresses, a change for the better in that children aged 13 to 18 were being replaced by adults.<sup>(1)</sup> At the same time, the number of certificated teachers rose, from 131 in 1903 to 141 in 1909. Since the total number of teachers remained about 330, this improvement still left the bulk of the teaching where it had always been - in the hands of the unqualified. At the time there was no alternative. As Tipper wrote:

"It may be pointed out that under existing conditions  
(or indeed until there has been a very great change in public

1. The 1909 Report, p. 373.

opinion on the question of educational expenditure) the choice, in a great many of our schools, lies not between a qualified Assistant and a Supplementary Teacher, but between a Supplementary and no teacher at all."<sup>(1)</sup>

The truth of this was shown by the struggle which the Education Committee had over teachers' pay. Because the Board of Education was insisting on better staffing standards after 1903, qualified teachers were in demand and their salaries tended to rise. Faced with the danger that Westmorland teachers would go elsewhere in search of higher salaries, the Education Committee decided to introduce salary scales for assistant teachers in the county, at the rate of £80 x £5 to £110 a year for men and £65 x £5 to £90 for women who were college trained and certificated, and at lower rates for the less well-qualified.<sup>(2)</sup> These scales were fixed lower than those of Lancashire and Yorkshire, in the hope that the attractions of living in Westmorland would tip the balance, and even the Westmorland Gazette, usually Gladstonian in its criticisms of public spending, admitted that the scales "cannot be said to err on the side of extravagance."<sup>(3)</sup> The next proposal was to introduce scales for head teachers, who in Westmorland were the great majority of the qualified teachers. At this some members of the County Council became alarmed.

"When this Act (the 1902 Act) was passed," said one councillor, "we were told that 3d. in the £ would cover it. Now it had reached 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. in the £ and at the present rate of increase it would soon be 1/-d. Was it thought that the rate-payers' resources were unlimited?"<sup>(4)</sup>

Despite Gilkes's reasoned defence that the Education Committee was not

1. The 1909 Report, p. 373.
2. W.C.C. Minutes 1903-4, p. 363.
3. W.G. 6 February 1904.
4. W.G. 10 June 1905.

being extravagant, but was simply doing what the Board of Education required, the County Council decided to refer the scales back to the Education Committee.<sup>(1)</sup> As a result, the head teachers had to go on negotiating individually for their salaries, and it was not until 1914 that they were given even a guaranteed minimum.<sup>(2)</sup> Another concession made to those who demanded economies was that where possible men were replaced by women; from 1903 to 1909 the number of headmasters dropped from 72 to 60 while the number of headmistresses rose from 43 to 54. Even so, it is probable that the general quality of the teachers rose. Certainly Henderson thought highly of them.

"I have been deeply impressed," he wrote, "with the earnest solicitude displayed by Teachers on behalf of the physical as well as the intellectual welfare of their pupils. Many children found defective at the Medical Inspection would still have been untreated had not their teachers, at much personal sacrifice, seen to it that treatment was carried out."<sup>(3)</sup>

The years between 1903 and 1914 saw an important change not only in the teachers but in how they taught. At last the effects of abandoning payment by results were beginning to be felt and under the 1904 Regulations the schools were freer than ever before to build their teaching methods round the needs of the child and the possibilities presented by their environment. Given more freedom, people tend to need more guidance. Therefore, encouraged by the new policy outlined in the Elementary School Code of 1904, the Education Committee appointed an advisory committee on the curriculum, which brought out in 1908

1. W.C.C. Minutes 1905-6, p. 47.
2. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1914-15, p. 104.
3. 2nd Annual Report of S.M.O.



'Notes on Time-tables and Subjects of Instruction in the Elementary Schools of Westmorland,'<sup>(1)</sup> This may now appear a somewhat conventional document, with its careful allocation of minutes to each subject; in fact, it is of great interest, both for what it condemns and for what it advocates. To begin with, it is fairly certain that what was condemned was still going on. "This suggests that in the infant schools there was too much formal teaching and that the children were still being compelled "to sit still doing nothing, either with arms behind or folded in front." Further up the school, the children were rigidly divided into standards and much of the teaching was very mechanical: lectures, disconnected object lessons, hand-writing taught from copy-books and spelling by memorising word-lists, counting threads and practising stitches (which were never used to make anything) - all these were by implication standard practice. By contrast, the Notes put forward much more modern ideas of a curriculum in which subjects were interwoven and related to the childrens' own experience. For instance, in English they were to be encouraged to use their own words so that "Grammar should arise naturally out of the Reading and Composition lessons". In Geography, they should begin with their own locality and do as much field work as possible. In Nature Study, they should be encouraged to experiment and to keep nature diaries. How far these new ideas were adopted in the schools is difficult to tell. Looking back from 1910, Tipper described the previous few years as "a period of transition ... from a system in which the great object was the mechanical acquisition of a certain amount of knowledge, to one in which an all-round development of the intelligence of habits of self-reliance, of independent

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1. W.C.E.C. Minutes 1908-9, pp. 285-303.

reasoning and investigation is the aim."<sup>(1)</sup> Perhaps more revealing is the independent testimony of Henderson who found a transformation from formality to freedom taking place in infant teaching.

"The tiny little mortals," he wrote, "full to overflowing with suppressed energy, instead of being perched up like rows of parrots, now move about upon a floor space hitherto denied them. A small table and chair are supplied to each child."<sup>(2)</sup>

But he also noted that this transformation was confined to some of the larger schools.

Turning from the county's schools to those of Kendal, we find little difference in this period; for Kendal's major problem was one which it shared with the county. Between September 1902 and May 1913, the number of children on the registers in Kendal fell from 2,924 to 2,268.<sup>(3)</sup> As the schools offered places for 3,312, Kendal had far more accommodation than it needed, which led to justifiable complaints that the system was wasteful. For, with the same number of schools, standing charges were roughly constant, while income from government grants was falling. As a result, the annual cost per head rose by 7/6d. between 1905 and 1913. To this economic motive for change was added an educational one. As the H.M.I. pointed out,<sup>(4)</sup> too many of the schools tried to take the children for the whole of their school career. So classes often had children with too wide a range of age and ability, a difficulty which could be avoided if the schools were re-organised so that some were for juniors and others for seniors. Viewed

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1. The 1909 Report, p. 389.
  2. 2nd Annual Report of S.M.O.
  3. Kendal Mercury and Times, 6 June 1913.
  4. W.G. 29 October 1904.

objectively, the combined economic and educational case for re-organisation was overwhelming; in practice, nothing was done. This was simply because the Education Committee was powerless, for only Castle Street Boys had become a council school and the managers of the others refused to co-operate because of their denominational rivalries. Several times the Education Committee renewed its attempts to persuade them, notably after Kendal Green was burned down in 1910,<sup>(1)</sup> but all were unsuccessful, and in 1913 the Committee's chairman, J. Somervell, was writing sadly to the Board of Education that they might have to close the Council School, although one of the best in the town, as this was the only thing they had power to do.<sup>(2)</sup> In fact, this desperate step was not taken, and the problem remained to cause further trouble after the 1st World War.

In Kendal, as in the county, the striking changes were in secondary education, notably the growth of Kendal High and the building of the Allen Technical College. The old technical school had not long passed into the possession of the Kendal Town Council before its buildings were condemned by the Board of Education in 1904.<sup>(3)</sup> Nothing was done; so two years later the Board began to grow impatient and cut the school's grant, even though the work being done there was up to standard.<sup>(4)</sup> Again this produced no immediate action, but gradually the Town Council came round to the view that something must be done. The estimated cost, however, was

- 
1. W.G. 29 July 1905, 28 November 1908, 7 January 1911.
  2. P.H.O. Ed. 16/320.
  3. W.G. 22 October 1904.
  4. W.G. 6 July 1907.

over £10,000, an alarming figure from the ratepayers' point of view. The Town Council therefore approached the James Allen trust,<sup>(1)</sup> which originally agreed to pay about half of the building costs. Even after this offer, there was still a good deal of grumbling among the ratepayers about the "awful extravagance of the Corporation."<sup>(2)</sup> At this stage, the Board finally lost patience, and threatened to refuse the grant altogether until it had more definite information about plans for the improvement of the school.<sup>(3)</sup> Fortunately, the Allen trustees then came forward with a generous offer to buy a site and put up an unfurnished building at an estimated cost of £12,000. Naturally this was accepted, building began in 1912, and the college was officially opened in September 1914.<sup>(4)</sup>

- 
1. James Allen (1814-96); born at Kirkby Lonsdale; made his fortune as a draper in Kendal.
  2. W.G. 9 October 1909.
  3. W.G. 26 November 1910.
  4. Westmorland Mercury and Times, 4 September 1914.

Conclusion

Looking back from 1914 over the period to 1870, one general conclusion emerges. The broad picture usually drawn of rural education at the time is one of backwardness and stagnation, in contrast to the drive and bustle of progressive School Boards in the larger towns. Westmorland does not fit into this simplified scheme. Although much has been said in this study about the defects of education in Westmorland, these were never excessive by contemporary standards. On the contrary, Westmorland spent generously to maintain its many, scattered elementary schools; and with its heritage of endowed grammar schools, reformed by the Charity Commission and extended by the County Council, it remained relatively well-provided with secondary education. If one is looking for innovation and experiment in the schools, it is true that there was little to be found in Westmorland. In this sense the traditional picture of rural education fits. The Westmorland schools were often small and sparsely-equipped, but these material handicaps must be weighed in the balance against the more personal relationships which the rural schools could foster. Therefore, with its network of elementary schools leading to eight grammar schools, Westmorland, with a population of only 63,500, could probably offer its children in 1914 educational opportunities as good as most. Though no longer perhaps the 'best-educated county', its old educational tradition was still strong.

BibliographyA. Manuscript Sources

The main manuscript sources are to be found in the files relating to endowed schools in the Public Record Office, London, and in the deposited parish and school records in the Westmorland Record Office at Kendal. As the appointment of a qualified archivist at Kendal dates only from 1962, these records are still in the process of being located, sorted and listed, and there are as yet no definitive lists, guide or catalogue.

Public Record Office. London.

Parish Files, which include the Inspectors' Returns of 1871 and other papers. (Ed 2/456-8).

L.E.A. Supply Files relating to Westmorland County Council and Kendal Borough. (Ed 16/319-20).

L.E.A. Files relating to secondary education in Westmorland. (Ed 53/242-3).

Endowment Files (Ed 27) relating to the following schools:

Ambleside - Kelsick's (No. 5124-49)

Appleby Grammar School (No. 5151-56)

Heversham Grammar School (No. 5175-80)

Kendal Grammar School and Blue Coat School (No. 5182-5200)

Kirkby Lonsdale Grammar School (No. 5201-6)

Kirkby Stephen Grammar School (No. 5208-14)

Waitby and Smardale School (No. 5226-27)

Selside and Whitwell School (No. 5232-33)

Windermere Grammar School (No. 5237-43)

Westmorland Record Office, Kendal.

## Parish papers of:

- Asby (WPR/1)
- Bampton (WPR/15)
- Crosby Ravensworth (WPR/7)
- Crosthwaite (WPR/3)
- Martindale (on temporary deposit)
- Ormside (WPR/2)

Kendal Castle Street (Girls and Infants) School papers. (WDS/ )

Kendal Green British School papers. (WCEd/ )

Kendal High School papers. (WD/AG)

C.C. Bundle 120: Files on schools endowments after 1902. (W.C.C. Bundle 120)

C.C. Bundle 131-40: Board of Education schemes for the organisation of grammar schools. (W.C.C. Bundles 131-140)

## Minute Books of:

- Shap School Board. (WSSB/1)
- Kendal Ward School Attendance Committee. (WSPU/K)
- West Ward School Attendance Committee. (WSPU/W)
- Appleby Borough School Attendance Committee. (WSMB/A)

## School Log Books:

- Firbank 1869-1891 (WCEd/ )
- Reagill 1874-1902 (WPR/7)
- Webay 1864-1882 (WCEd/ )
- New Hutton 1874-1933 (WCEd/ )

Kendal Public Library: miscellaneous papers - accounts, school lists, examination papers, prospectuses, etc.

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Kendal High School papers (at the school)

Kirkby Lonsdale Grammar School papers (in the possession of the family of the late J.L. Johnson).

Kirkby Lonsdale National School papers (at the Kirkby Lonsdale vicarage).

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Returns of Elementary Education, H.C. 201 (1871) lv.

Returns showing, under county boroughs and administrative counties....

the name and denomination of each school etc.; i) for the year ending 31 August 1893; H.C. (1894) lxx C 7529. ii) for the year ending 31 August 1899; H.C. (1900) lxx Cd. 315.

Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission (1868)

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Vol. V. Minutes of Evidence taken before the Commissioners, Part II.

Vol. IX. General Reports by Assistant Commissioners. Northern Counties.

Vol. XIX. Northern Division. Special Reports of Assistant Commissioners and Digests of Information Received.

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(b) Westmorland County Council Records

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School Continuity Chart: Elementary Schools, 1860 - 1914

Explanation of symbols:

School permanently closed  $\longrightarrow$   
 New School opened  $\longleftarrow$   
 New School of the same type  $\longrightarrow$   $\longleftarrow$   
 School temporarily closed  $\longrightarrow$   $\longleftarrow$   
 Continuity uncertain  $- - - -$

Voluntary (later non-provided) Schools \_\_\_\_\_

Board Schools \_\_\_\_\_

Council Schools \_\_\_\_\_

Major alterations **A**

EAST WARD

Parish	School	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910
Appley St. Lawrence	British -						
	National - Girls & Infants		$\longleftarrow$				
	Council						$\longleftarrow$
Appley St. Michael	National (Bongate)						
	Endowed				<b>A</b>		
Brough	Board			$\longleftarrow$ $\longrightarrow$			
	National		$\longrightarrow$				
	Board			$\longleftarrow$			
Crosby Garrett	Endowed				$\longrightarrow$		
	Board						$\longleftarrow$
Dufton	British -						<b>A</b>
	Parish		$\longleftarrow$				
Great Musgrave	Parish						
	Oakbeck		$\longleftarrow$				

<u>Parish</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>1880</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1910</u>
Kirkby Stephen	National	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Board	—	←	←	←	←	A
Kirkby Thore	National	—	—	—	—	—	—
	British	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Board	—	←	←	←	←	←
Long Marton	Parish	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Parish	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mallerstang	Board	—	←	←	←	←	←
	Parish	—	←	←	←	←	←
Milburn	Parish	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Parish	—	←	←	←	←	←
Murton	Parish	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Board	—	←	←	←	←	←
Nateby & Wharthon	National	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Greenholme	—	—	—	—	—	—
Orton	Grammar	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Longdale British	—	—	—	—	—	—
(Tebay)	Council - Infants	—	—	—	—	—	—
	National	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ravenstonedale	Council - Infants	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Endowed	—	—	—	—	—	—
Soulby	Newbiggin	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Fell End	—	—	—	—	—	—
Soulby	Parish	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Board	—	←	←	←	←	←

	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910
Parish						
Stainmore						
Endowed						
N. Stainmore Board						A
S. Stainmore Board						
Parish						
Endowed						
Parish						
Endowed						

Temple Sowerby						
Waitby						
Warcop						
Winton						

WEST WARD

Parish						
Hilton (Dames)						A
Grammar						
Measand - Mardale						
Roughill						
Endowed						
Endowed						
Board						
Parish						
Board						
Parish						
Board						

Askham						
Bampton						
Barton						
Bolton						
Brougham						
Cliburn						
Clifton						

<u>Parish</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>1880</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1910</u>
Crosby Ravensworth	Grammar		A				
	Girls		←	→			
	Maulds Meaburn		A		A		
	Reagill			A			
Great Strickland	National						A
King's Meaburn	Parish					A	
Little Strickland & Thrimby	Parish						
Lowther	Endowed			←	→		
	Hackthorpe - Girls			→			
	Melkinthorpe - Dames			→			
	Whale - Dames			→			
Martindale	National		A				
Morland	Parish		←				
Patterdale	Parish		←		A		
Shap	Endowed						A
	Swindale		---	→			
	Rosgill Board			←			
	Wickersgill Board			←			
	Girls & Infants Board			←			
Sleagill	Parish						
Sockbridge	Yanwath						A

KENDAL WARD

<u>Parish</u>	<u>School</u>	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910
Ambleside	National, Girls & Infants	→(		A			A
Barbon	Kelsick's	→(					
Beetham	Parish		→(			A	
	Grammar		A			→(	
	Storth		←				
	Arnside British			→			
	Arnside National			←			
Burton	National						
	Morewood		←				
Casterton	National						
Crook	National		→(	A			
Crosthwaite	Endowed			→(			
	The Howe		←				
Dillicar	Parish		→				
	Board			←			
Firbank	Parish						
Grasmere	Parish	A		A			
Grayrigg	Parish	A					
Helsington	Parish		→(				
Heversham	Girls & Infants					A	
Holme	National						→
	Council						←



<u>Parish</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>1880</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1910</u>
Hugill	Ings	→(					
Hutton Roof	Parish						
Kentmere	Parish						
Killington	Parish		A				
Kirkby Lonsdale	National						A
Langdale	Parish				A		
Levens	Little Langdale	→(	→(			→(	
Longsleddale	Parish			A			A
Lupton	Parish	←	←				
Mansergh	Rigmaden						
Middleton	Parish		A			→(	
Mimthorpe	National						A
Natland	St. Thomas's	←	←		A		
New Hutton	Parish			A			A
Old Hutton	National	→(	→(			A	
Over Staveley	National						
Preston Patrick	Parish	→(	→(				
Preston Richard	Endmoor	←					
Rydal	Parish					→	

<u>School</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>1880</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1910</u>
Meal Bank	—	—	—	—	—	A
Parish	—	—	—	—	—	—
Endowed	—	—	—	—	—	—
Garth Row	—	—	—	—	—	—
Crosscrake	—	—	—	—	—	A
Burneside	—	—	—	—	—	A
Parish	—	—	—	—	—	—
National	—	—	—	—	—	—
St. Mary's, National	—	—	—	—	—	A
Bowness Girls Endowed	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bowness Boys Endowed	—	—	—	—	—	A
Troutbeck Bridge	—	—	—	—	—	A
Winster	—	—	—	—	—	—
Parish	—	—	—	—	—	—

KENDAL BOROUGH

Castle St. Girls & Infants	—	—	—	—	—	A
Kendal Green	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wesleyan	—	—	—	—	—	—
Castle St. British	—	—	—	—	—	A
National	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kirklands	—	—	—	—	—	—

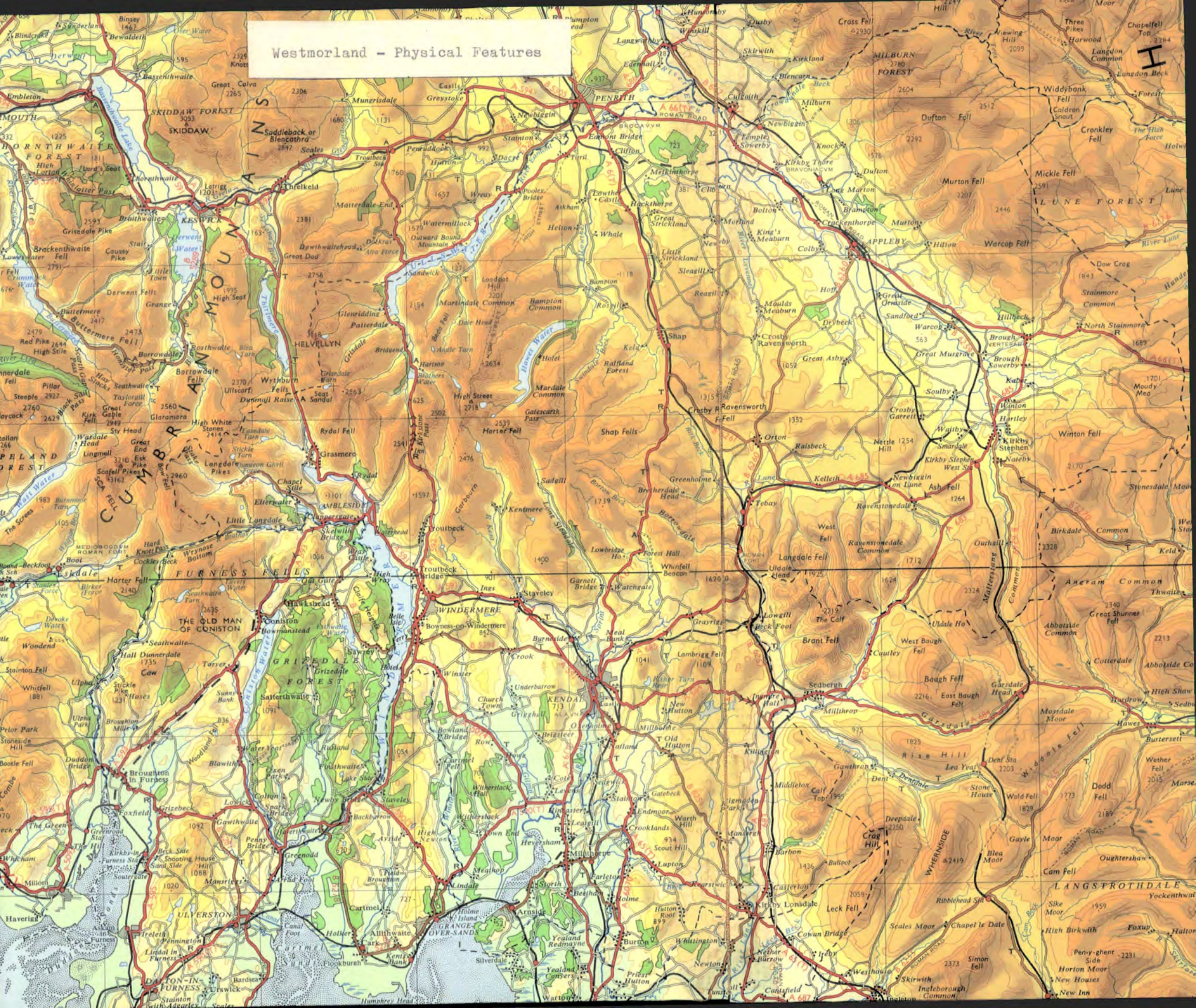
<u>Parish</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1870</u>	<u>1880</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1910</u>
Scalthwaiterigg	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sedgwick	—	—	—	—	—	—
Selside	—	—	—	—	—	—
Skelsmergh	—	—	—	—	—	—
Stainton	—	—	—	—	—	—
Strickland Kettle	—	—	—	—	—	—
Troutbeck	—	—	—	—	—	—
Underbarrow	—	—	—	—	—	—
Windermere	—	—	—	—	—	—
Witherslack	—	—	—	—	—	—

Castle St. Girls & Infants	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kendal Green	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wesleyan	—	—	—	—	—	—
Castle St. British	—	—	—	—	—	—
National	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kirklands	—	—	—	—	—	—





# Westmorland - Physical Features



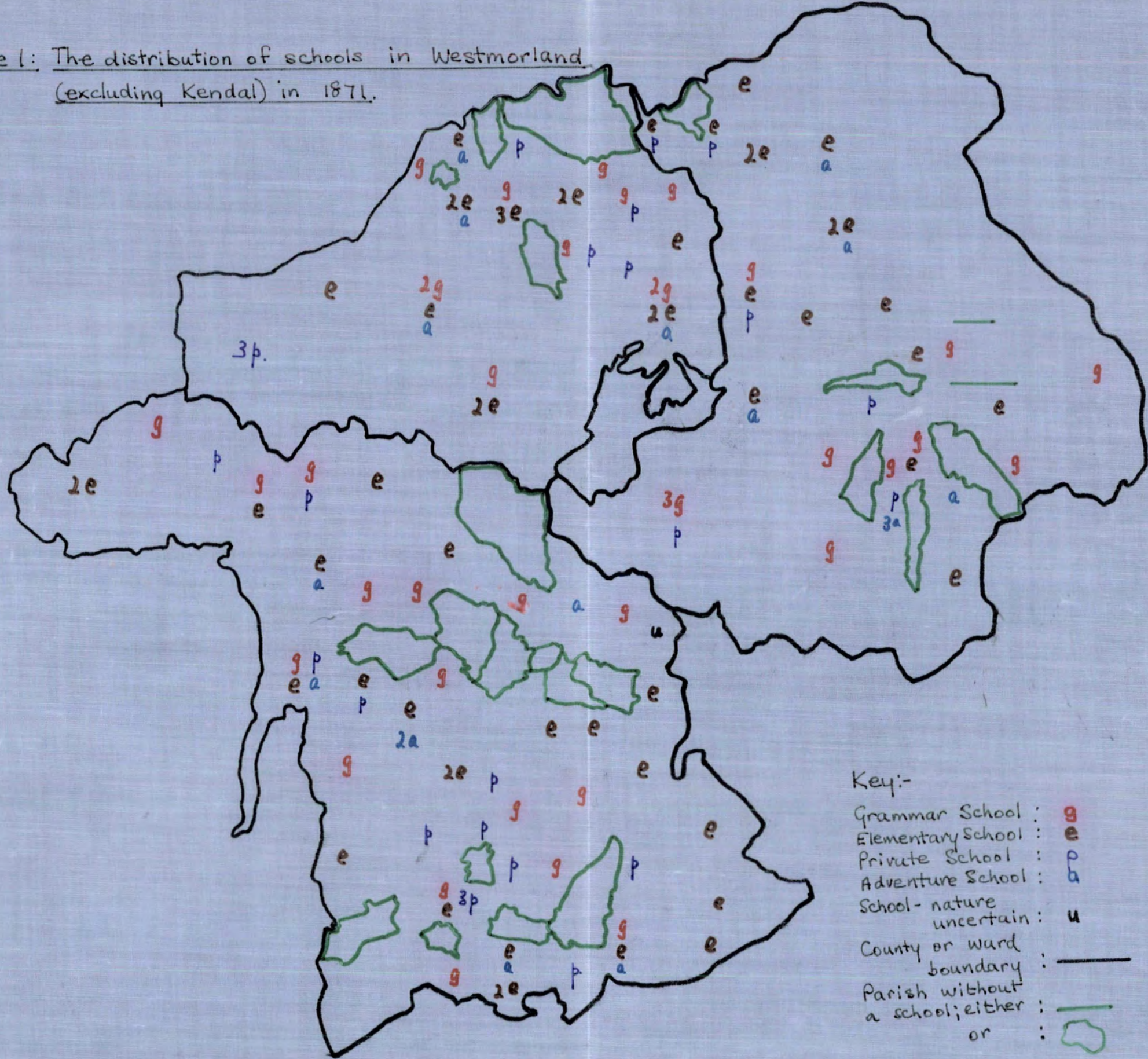


Westmorland - Administrative Divisions.



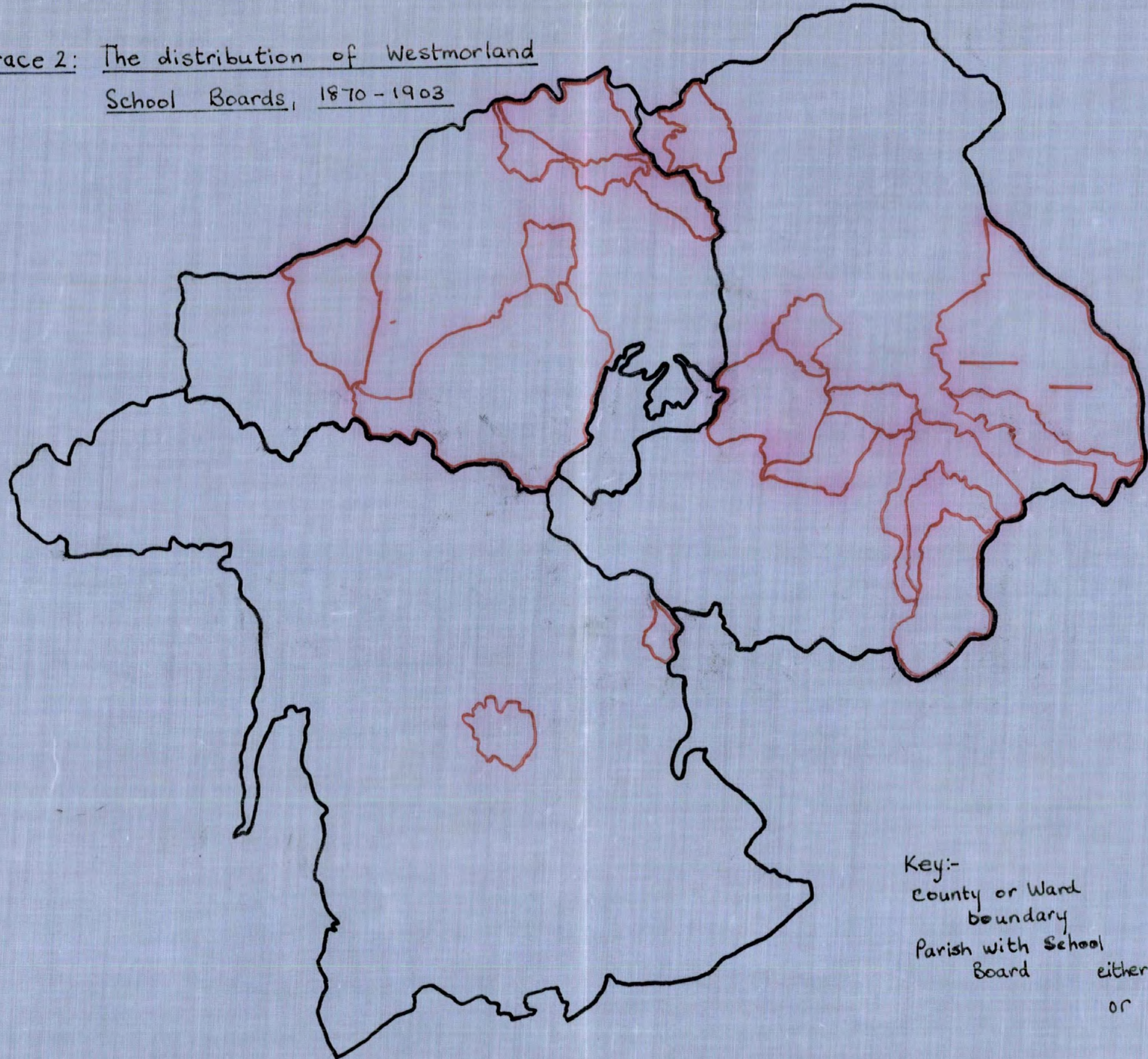



Trace 1: The distribution of schools in Westmorland  
 (excluding Kendal) in 1871.





Trace 2: The distribution of Westmorland  
School Boards, 1870-1903



Key:-  
County or Ward  
boundary —————  
Parish with School  
Board either   
or 