

## Deddington's Schools

*Buffy Heywood*

The first mention found of a school in Deddington is contained in a Chantry Certificate of 1547 which refers to 'The late guild of the Trinity in the parish church of "Dadyngton" '. William Burton, the incumbent was the schoolmaster, and 'the said William Burton is a good schoolmaster and bringeth up youth very well in learning'. Also in the sixteenth century Sir Thomas Pope, founder of Trinity College, Oxford, who it is thought was born in Deddington, left money for a free grammar school – a 'Jhesus Scolle' – at Deddington (see Ashby and Byles, 1923). The actual date may have been 1555 when he made an agreement with Trinity College to provide a schoolmaster and usher for it, who would teach 'gramer & humanitie'.

The *Victoria County History* tells us that in 1673 a 'school house' was made in the Church, the schoolmaster then being Edward Kempster, the Parish Clerk. However, there would seem to have been another school as well, as the Vicar at that time, Jeremiah Wheate, (1673–97) in a letter to Bishop Fell on non-conformity in 1682, refers to a Mr Whately as a non-conformist minister, and later as 'our schoolmaster'. Bishop Fell noted in his diocese book that Mr Whately was an unlicensed teacher. It was probably as a result of Mr Wheate's letter that Samuel Whately was brought before the archdeacon's court in November 1682 and charged with teaching school 'without licence lawfully obtained from his Bishop'. He did not obey the order to stop teaching, and came before the archdeacon again in June 1684. Mr Wheate himself is reported to have taught boys in Deddington from 1682, perhaps in an attempt to counteract the influence of the non-conformist school.

During the eighteenth century the schools appeared to be supported mainly by charity, with a school for 16 boys and 16 girls in 1712, a school for 20 boys in 1718, and reading and the catechism being taught at the expense of 'a private gentleman' in 1727 with the children paying 1d. a week each. By 1738 the three manorial lords and neighbouring gentlemen were supporting a school for 20 boys who, after learning reading, writing and arithmetic, were put out to apprenticeship. In 1808 this is referred to as a Church Charity School with 35 pupils. The school seems to have been too small for the town's needs, with the then vicar again reporting that 50 or 60 children were being taught by 'illiterate men' at a Methodist Sunday School during church services.

1814 sees the opening of a local branch of the National School Society,<sup>1</sup> firstly for boys and a year later for girls, by which time there were 100 pupils and the Charity School was closed. Approximately £420 seems to have been raised by subscription with much support from the Rev. William Wilson of Over Worton. Numbers of pupils grew rapidly to 141 boys and 94

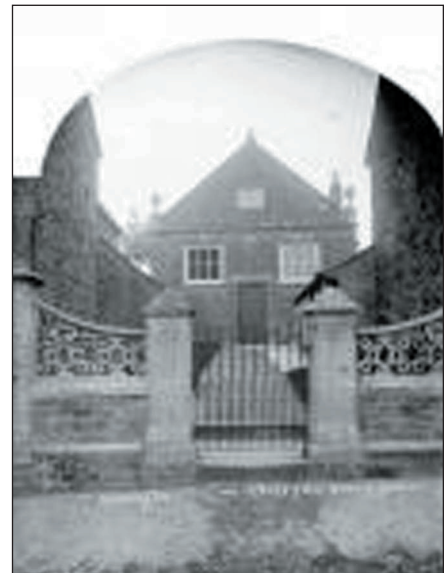


girls by 1816, including about 20 children from neighbouring parishes. The school appears to have been situated in buildings attached to Appletree Farm and lying to the south of Hopcraft Lane (previously known as 'School Lane') and owned by Christ Church College, Oxford.

Numbers fluctuated over the years and by the mid-1830s there were ten other private schools with 110 pupils in all. An Infant

School had been started by the then Vicar, the Rev. Richard Greaves, in premises in Church Street which subsequently became the Wesleyan Chapel.

The Rev. William Cotton Risley<sup>2</sup> became Vicar of Deddington in 1836 and held jurisdiction over both the National and Infant Schools, the latter being bought by him. He appointed the schoolmasters and mistresses, paid their salaries and 'collected the pence' from the pupils each week. In June 1838 he records in his *Diaries* that he and his wife entertained nearly 200 children with beef and plum pudding in the Infant School as part of the celebrations for the Coronation of Queen Victoria. However, in September of



<sup>1</sup> The lithograph of Deddington Church (original by Nathaniel Whittock, Oxford, printed by D. Redman, London, early 19th century) was sold with the dedication: 'This print is Respectfully Dedicated to the Benefactors & Subscribers to the Deddington National Schools, established July 16<sup>th</sup> 1814, (to whose funds the profits arising from the sale of it will be appropriated) by their humble Serv<sup>t</sup>: C. Faulkner'. It was republished in 2004 by Jimmy Guthrie and John Vaughan of Clifton as a fundraiser for Deddington Primary School.

<sup>2</sup> See also history index, 'Rev. William Cotton Risley'.



that year he was asked about the probability of Deddington being ‘a place for a young man to commence Schoolmaster with success’ – to which he replied in the negative. He approached the Canons of Windsor (the holders of the Living) in 1839 with a request for funds but ‘could not prevail on them to give anything to our School’. He had plans early in the 1840s for new schools, but nothing seems to have come of these and he subsequently resigned the living in 1847, being succeeded by the Rev. J. Brogden. Risley wrote to Brogden in 1848 saying ‘I shall have something to say about the Schools, which have *never* been conducted as I could have wished, *or as they ought to be*, from peculiar circumstances. They are *both* my property’.

In 1848 Brogden published a long letter on the need for new school buildings<sup>3</sup> and this was subsequently read to a public meeting in Deddington. Brogden left the village for some time in 1850 and a Committee took over. In 1852 a site on the Banbury Road (where the present Primary School stands) was given to the village by W.C. Cartwright of Aynho, Lord of one of the three Manors of Deddington. This was reported in Jackson’s *Oxford Journal* in February 1852, and in July of that year they wrote of a meeting which agreed that new schools should be built and an application be made for government aid. The report also mentions a ‘treat of tea, cakes, etc.’ to the children attending the schools of Deddington, Clifton and Hempton, then numbering nearly 400. Funds were raised, building was

<sup>3</sup> A copy of this is in the Centre for Oxfordshire Studies, Oxford (see history index).



commenced, the foundation stone laid in March 1853 and the school was opened in January 1854.

A report was prepared by the two Curates of Deddington, the Rev. W. Wilson and the Rev. G. Venables who had acted, respectively, as Treasurer and Secretary to the Promoters.<sup>4</sup> This report sets out the progress of the negotiations and the work, gives a financial statement with a list of all the donors, donations received and payments made, a record of thanks and a report of a bazaar run by the ladies of the village which resulted in a donation of £150 to the funds. The total cost is recorded as £1,244 14s 7d, leaving a balance of £43 7s 5d from the receipts of £1,288 2s 0d.

However, the Vicar, Rev. Brogden, then returned; he instigated a dispute over the administration of funds and within a year the school was closed. It reopened a year later in 1856, with an average attendance of 90 boys and 90 girls. By 1868 this had risen to 247 children of agricultural labourers in winter and 191 in summer, and it must have been during this time that Thomas Manchip<sup>5</sup> (1843–1911) became headmaster of the Boys' School. He held this position for 37 years and was also Church Choirmaster for 34 years. A tablet was placed in the Church, 'erected in affectionate remembrance and grateful appreciation of his work in this Parish by old boys, members of the choir and personal friends'. In this 1906 picture, the jolly rotund headmaster sits to the right of the vicar, the Rev. Thomas Boniface, surrounded by the choir he developed over many years.



In 1875 a separate infants section was established, which was moved in 1908 into the former girls' school. Jose Stevens has told of several small private schools operating in Deddington in the twentieth century. In 1920 Holcombe House, on the site of the present Holcombe Hotel, was opened



by Miss Bolton who had been Governess to the Kaiser's nephew in prewar Austria. The Holcombe is the tall building covered in greenery almost central in the picture; it took approximately 20–30 pupils, boys and girls who stayed until the age of 14 or 15, including some weekly boarders.

<sup>3</sup> A copy of this is also in the Centre for Oxfordshire Studies.

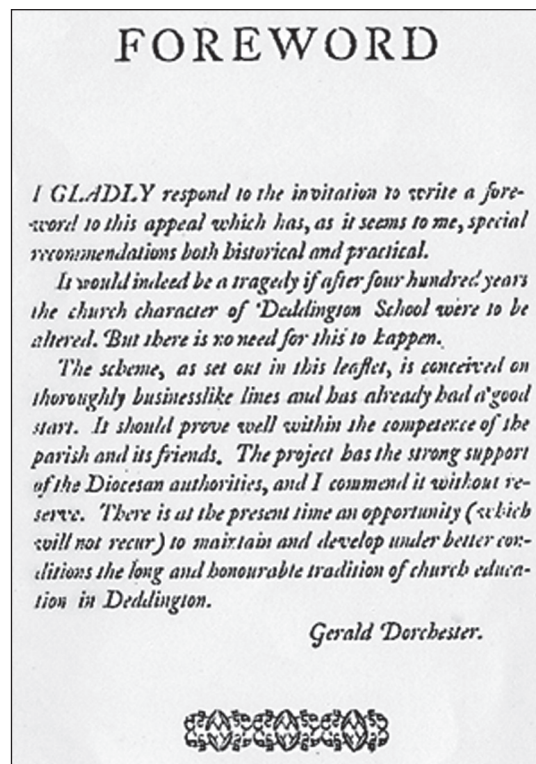
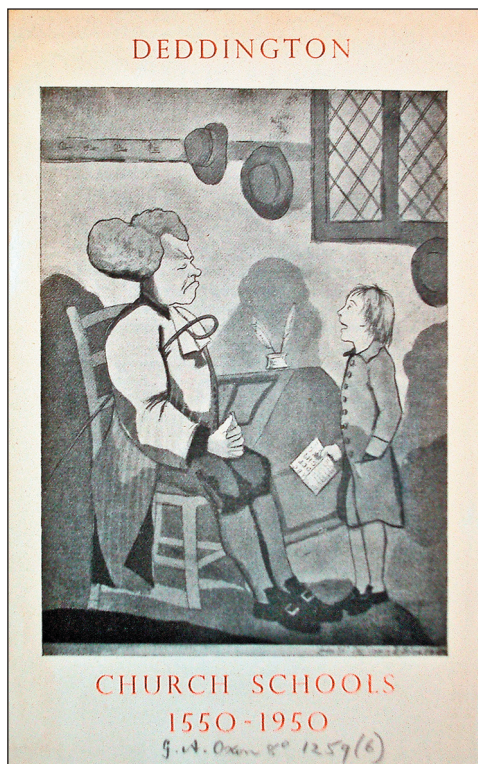
There were five teaching staff and all subjects, including sports, were taught. In the summer months French and German students attended it as a 'finishing school', learning languages and going on various excursions. The school closed in 1935.

Miss Ivens' School in Stoneleigh, Victoria Terrace, was open from 1934 to 1938, took approximately 20–25 boys and girls, also had five staff and taught all subjects including sports. There were two smaller establishments, Miss Melsom in Rosedene House, High Street, had only five pupils (the children of 'the gentry') during and after the war; and Mrs Thompson had a small school and a dancing school in Ilbury House, New Street, in the 1960s.

The Second World War brought change to the village in many ways, one of which was the evacuation of a school in Fulham to Oxfordshire accompanied by a teacher, George Wing. Although most of the evacuee children presumably returned eventually to London, George Wing stayed on in Deddington, where he became in 1941 a distinguished headmaster of the school. In 1950 a new Secondary Modern School opened on the former Windmill site on the Hempton Road, the older children moved over and the school on the Banbury Road became a Church Primary School. The Windmill School had approximately 240–50 pupils, including children from the neighbouring villages of Steeple Aston, Milton and Adderbury, and George Wing now became Headmaster here. George Wing is seen second from the left on the row of teachers. Bob Stevens, the Deputy Head, is second from the right.

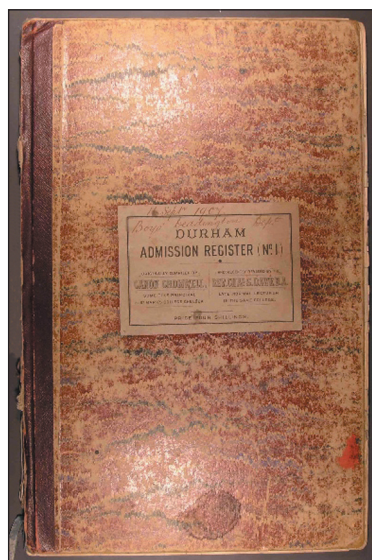






In 1952 an appeal, entitled *Deddington Church Schools, 1550–1950*, was published in the village asking for £9,500 to bring the Primary School buildings up to the modern standards required under the 1944 Education Act. There was to be a new classroom with the existing large room having a permanent stage, new cloakrooms, an entrance hall and a staff room, the Local Education Authority being responsible for central heating, new kitchens and dining arrangements and any work on the playground. The Bishop of Dorchester wrote a foreword to the Appeal which asked for covenants and/or donations, and the alterations were expected to be carried out between 1959 and 1963.

In September 1971 The Warriner Comprehensive School opened in Bloxham taking all the children from the old Windmill School, some of the buildings there being used for heavy craft and domestic science for a short time. Once again George Wing moved to become Headmaster of the Warriner, retiring in 1973 after 52 years with the School.



The Deddington C. of E. Primary School has flourished over the succeeding years with more alterations and extensions taking place. There are now 196 pupils and 30 staff, a Board of 14 Governors, an enthusiastic Parent/Teacher Association and the school is an integral and important part of the village.

There are between 25 and 30 volumes of old books at the school at the present time including day books, lesson books and attendance records from the 1850s onwards.\*

December 2004

*Editor's Note:*

\* All of these records are being digitised at present by Colin Cohen (a Deddington and District History Society and DOL website editorial team member), courtesy of the headteacher, Judith Tinsley. This is an enormous task and it is hoped that eventually they can be viewed on this site.

*Sources include:*

Ashby, A.W. and Byles, P.G. (1923) *Rural Education* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Carter, B. (2004) 'Printers and Publishers in Deddington 1840–2004'.

Claginson, M. (ed.) (n.d.) 'Bishop Fell and Non-conformity'.

*Diaries* of the Rev. W. Cotton Risley in the Bodleian Library.

Documents from the Centre for Oxfordshire Studies.

Jose Stevens, who has lived in Deddington all her life and whose late husband, Bob, was Deputy Head of the Windmill School when it opened in 1951.

Ruth Johnson for articles on Thomas Manchip (*Deddington News*, February 2003) and George Wing.

*Victoria History of the County of Oxford* (1983), Vol XI, ed. A. Crossley (London: Institute of Historical Research).

*Picture credits:*

1814 lithograph of Deddington Church kindly lent by John Vaughan.

Line drawing of the Old School House, Hopcrafts Lane: H.E.Robinson, 1978

Wesleyan Chapel, Primary School, Holcombe House: Packer collection, Centre for Oxfordshire Studies, © Oxfordshire County Council Photographic Archive.

Thomas Manchip: 1906 photograph hanging in the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Deddington.

Windmill School photographs kindly lent by Jose Stevens.

Cover of school records: From a photographic record being compiled by Colin Cohen.

Cover of the 1952 Appeal for Funds reproduced from a print entitled 'The Pedagogue' by George Woodward, 1790, in the possession of Arnold M. Muirhead, Esq. This and the Appeal were printed by the Rev. Maurice Frost, the Vicar of Deddington, on his own private printing press in the Vicarage.

*Layout:* Mary Robinson