

A
Short History
Of
Deane Church School

By

Robert Walmsley

DEANE VICARAGE
BOLTON
LANCASHIRE
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I have been asked to write a few words of commendation of this History of Deane School.

Those who know Mr. Robert Walmsley, and who have read some of his work, will be aware that his writings commend themselves at once to anybody who wishes to review history in an impartial manner.

We are most fortunate in having so able an Historian on our doorstep, who has very many means of research at his disposal, and who delves into them with the utmost patience.

I thank Mr. Walmsley very much indeed for what he has done, and hope that many people will read this History with pleasure and pride.

KENNETH BISHOP
Vicar of Deane

A SHORT HISTORY OF DEANE CHURCH SCHOOL

By Robert Walmsley

When the new Deane Church of England Primary School opens in September 1964, a new chapter in the history of education in this part of Bolton begins. A modern up-to-date school, yet carrying with it centuries of tradition, for although it is the newest primary school in Bolton, as successor to Deane Church School, it is the oldest. It is even more than this: for, as the present-day primary school is successor to the former elementary school, it is the oldest school of this type in Lancashire.

The Bolton Education Authority, as the dominant party in this new venture, with its lesser one – the Deane Church authorities and School Trustees – are only fulfilling, with their scheme for building a Church of England (Controlled) School, what Government authority were anxious to preserve even as late as 1900, when the charity Commissioners' Report of that date had this to say:

(Remarking on the re-foundation of 1870 to bring the school in line with the new Education Act, they were providing then) “for the management of the school as a boys' school and a girls' school and for the conduct of the schools as public elementary schools, with religious instruction in accordance with the principles and doctrine of the Church of England subject to a conscience clause, and the (School) Trustees were empowered to permit the premises to be used under the direction of the Vicar for a Sunday school.”

“The reasons for the Church of England character,” the Report goes on, “thus impressed upon the school were that in 1830 the Trustees resolved to introduce the National School system, and that the cost of repairs would be divided between the grammar school, as they then called it, and the Sunday school, which was then held in the same building; that the addition of the infants' school in 1837, and the enlargement of the school in 1863, was effected by the subscriptions raised in church for the “Day and Sunday Schools”, and that in fact the school, or more properly schools, as the building was divided between a boys' school and a girls' school, had always been conducted as Church of England schools by Church of England Trustees.”

Deane “Sermons”, an annual event which still retains much of its old vigour, is a modern link with these “subscriptions raised in church” referred to, dating back at least to 1813 when the will of Thomas Nuttall provided for an annual charity sermon to be preached and collections taken in support of the schools.¹

The exact beginnings of Deane (or Rumworth) School have hitherto never been strictly determined. It was usually considered to have been founded by the will of James Crompton in 1636 and augmented by later benefactions. As a 1636 foundation it is listed as the fifth oldest elementary school in the Victorian County History of Lancashire (Vol. II, p.561):

“The earliest elementary school whose endowments have been traced is Astley, in 1630; those of Hindley, Haigh, Ringley, Rumworth (Deane), and Much Woolton between that year and the outbreak of the Civil War were Caroline efforts.” And at p.616 Rumworth School is dated 1636, by the will of James Crompton.

Deane School predates by some years any of these, for it possesses among its endowments an annual rent-charge of 40/- arising out of an estate at Windle Park, near Prescot; this is in fact the oldest endowment, and the Charity Commissioners, in 1828, could not trace any account of its origin, but, they said, “it is paid regularly to the Master.” Its origin takes the date of Deane School back into the 16th century, and to founders and benefactors – the Marsh’s of Halliwell, Barton of Smithills, and Heaton of Heaton whose names occur long before that of James Crompton.

(1) Robert Marsh, of Marsh Fold, in Halliwell in the parish of Deane, bequeathed by his will dated 1590 “XXs. Towards the purchasing of a rent-charge for the maintenance of the “Scole at Dean Church”; and (2) his sister Cysele, by her will 1596 gave “3S. 4D. towards a free schole to be kept at Dean Church”, whilst (3) Gyles Marsh, a younger brother, by his will 1615 also bequeathed “towards the procuring of a yearly stipend for ever at the Dean Church for a scole the sum of £10, desiring Mr. Barton and the rest of their worships (Justices of the Peace) in the said parish to labour for a free scole there.”²

The wording of these wills: (1) “the maintenance of *the* Scole at Dean Church” could mean that a school already existed; (2) “towards a free Schole to be kept at Dean Church”, and (3) “at the Dean Church for a scole” could mean that a school had not been established, or that if one had it was not a *free* school. By 1624 the legacies had been misapplied and recovery was being sought. The document which records this misapplication however also records that “Ralph Barton, of Grays Inn, Esq., Ralph Heaton and others gave lands &c., in Windle which rent *had ever since* been employed for the benefit of the schoole at Dean Church”,³ and this document seems to put the matter beyond doubt. Ralph Heaton is not exactly identifiable, for one Ralph Heaton occurs frequently in Deane records between 1568 and 1574, and another Ralph Heaton was nephew of Gyles Marsh (1615). Ralph Barton, of Grays Inn, Esq., however is unmistakable as the squire of Smithills Hall, who died in 1598,⁴ and by tracing this endowment through Ralph Barton back to the 1590s, Deane School emerges as the oldest school of its kind in Lancashire.

Whatever difficulties beset the school in its earliest years the bequest of James Crompton, who died in 1636, of “£100 towards the maintenance of a school at Dean” ought to have put them right, but the affairs of the brothers Crompton – Ralph, who made a bequest for the poor, and James who augmented this and provided further for the school – were to remain in a precarious state for some years. Perhaps the Civil War which occurred so soon afterwards had much to do with it. Eventually, in 1653,⁵ the Vicar of Deane, John Tilsley and others complained to the Commissioners of Charitable Uses of the difficulties with the executor of James Crompton, or it was not until 1659 that a settlement was finally made.

In 1660 the Crompton funds were invested in lands, and the first-known Trustees named. Henceforth the Crompton Charity was to become an integral part of Deane parish life which has continued to this day, with one set of Trustees (originally denoted Feoffees) administering Ralph Crompton’s bequest to the poor, and another body of trustees (Feoffees) administering the School, all of whom were required “upon every Tuesday in Easter Week yearly to meet at the parish Church of Deane and give an account to the rest of the parishioners” who “could nominate and appoint whom they would” to the body of Trustees. Despite these stringent democratic

provisions, in course of time the “Feoffees” became self-electing and dropped the Easter Tuesday report to the parish meeting, and the Charity Commissioners allowed Trustees to fill up vacancies by the continuing Trustees.

The school building in those earliest days were opposite the present lych-gate of Deane Church – a building which still stands, although only the slightest trace of the original masonry is now visible. An early record states it was built by Thomas Leigh of Rumworth, and the Leighs of Gottes (Gott Green, in Junction Road) frequently appear in the Deane registers of the 1600s. the school was an old thatched building and continued to be used as a school until 1820.

Deane Church in the 17th, 18th, and the early part of the 19th centuries served a very large parish, stretching from Kearsley to Horwich, and included the townships of Rumworth, Westhoughton, Horwich, Heaton, Halliwell, Over Hulton, Middle Hulton, Little Hulton, Farnworth and Kearsley, and in reviewing the history of education in Deane Parish it should be noted that not only were facilities provided for the instruction of children near the parish church but in the outlying parts of the parish as well. There are references to a school at Westhoughton as early as 1666, and the present school was founded in 1739; in Little Hulton by 1671; Farnworth 1715; Over Hulton school had been “lately erected” 1718; Halliwell before 1723, all dating long before the general upsurge of schools in the early part of the 19th century. Nor should it be forgotten that one parishioner – William Hulme, of Kersley Hall (in 1676 he was a communicant⁶ at Deane Church) bequeathed property which has provided thousands of pounds annually for educational foundations at Oxford and schools in Manchester and elsewhere.

Little is known about the affairs of the school in its early days, but the year 1733 provides the name of the first-known Master. For how long he served is not known, the next name is in 1786, but from that time until the present day the names are complete:

1733	Richard Edge the Younger ⁷
1786	William Kay
1802	Abraham Boardman
1839	Thomas Arthur Barfield
1839	John Horsfield
1870	Moses Molineux
1878	Charles Hughes
1884	Edward Stanley Jacques
1897	Alfred Ainscough
1897	John Kershaw
1901	John J. T. Hill
1932	J. H. Dawson
1952	J. I. Hunt
1955	K. Sewell

Fees were apparently general during the 18th century, although respect was paid to the Crompton intention that children from the township of Rumworth should be taught “free of school wages”, a decision of 1789 however “Ordered that each child taught free of school wages shall pay yearly

At Michaelmas six pence each in lieu of firing;
At Christmas one shilling each at barring-out;
One shilling each at Shrovetide for a Cock Penny.”⁸

More is known about the Trustees than the school and its scholars during the latter half of the 18th century, and the Trustees always included the squire of Hulton. Capt. Roger Dewhurst, of Halliwell Hall, a painter, literary man (his diary was published in 1881) and who died at the age of ninety in 1806, was for a long period active in school affairs;⁹ there are picturesque allusions to his providing a school deed-box with three locks and three keys, one to be kept in the Vicar’s hands, one in John Edge’s of Middle Hulton, and the other in his own. They took good care of their documents.

In 1802 began the long reign of Abraham Boardman, earlier an assistant but then appointed Master and parish clerk. His portrait hangs in the vestry. Abraham Boardman is the link with the ancient Deane School and modern times, for he was the last Master to teach in the old school opposite the lych-gate, and he led his children out of the old and into the new school – a building which has been continually in use, though latterly only as the infants’ school, from 1820 until 1964. Leader in the efforts to raise funds for this new school, cost £750, was William Hulton (1787-1864) who later was in the forefront of the National School movement in Bolton district. He was a man of forceful views and forceful utterances, as some of our national historians recall;¹⁰ but one of his less well-known utterances, in support of religious education, was made in Bolton in 1839:

“The real effect of mere intellectual education is to substitute crimes of fraud for crimes of force.”

It was this same William Hulton who brought (as a tutor for his son) Balliol-trained Rev Edward Girdlestone into Deane parish, who later became Vicar of Deane. Vicar Girdlestone’s views and utterances were perhaps more forceful (but on education questions at least more liberal) than those of his old patron, and in later days in the School Board controversy Canon (as he became) Girdlestone could utter: “I prefer denominational schools to undenominational school, but better the latter than no schools at all!” his great passion was for Sunday Schools, and he lived to see the day, on revisiting Deane parish in 1873 (which by then had been reduced to such an extent from former times that it only included Daubhill, Heaton, Morris Green, and Hulton), but it could boast 1,100 scholars and 150 teachers in its Sunday schools.

In 1828 the Charity Commissioners reported:

“None of the documents we have seen furnish any information as to the freedom of the school. The practice however as far as we can ascertain, has been to admit all the children of the township of Rumworth, each child paying 1s. at Christmas, 1s. at Shrovetide, and 6d. at Michaelmas. (The “barbarous” phraseology of the cock penny, barring-out, and firing had quietly disappeared). For instruction in reading only, no further charge is made, but if they learn writing, or writing and accounts, they paid 3d. a week. The other scholars pay 2 ½ d. for reading, and 4d. for reading, writing and accounts. There are upon an average about 50 children of Rumworth in the school, and between 30 and 40 pay-scholars.”

Thirty to forty children from other townships attending in 1828 suggests a very popular school.

Vicar Girdlestone was appointed Vicar in 1829 after a period as curate. There was a “wind of change” blowing. The Trustees resolved (23rd July, 1830) “That the National School system be introduced in the grammar school under the superintendence of Mr. Girdlestone”, and that his application for the use of the upper schoolroom be granted by the Trustees for the establishment of a female school on the National and Infant School system.” It was a decision of some importance for the good of the school, and for determining its future character. Thomas Nuttall’s fundraising annual charity sermon was soon inadequate. On Sunday, December 18th, 1836, Three Sermons were advertised to be preached in the parish church of Deane and collections made towards the creation of an infants’ school. The accommodation in the upper schoolroom was evidently overtaxed by the girls and the infants, and the need was pressing indeed to organize special services for raising funds in the middle of winter in the scattered parish Deane was then. Yet £50 was collected, donations came in, and “the farmers have also promised to assist in carting of material”. In the following year (1837) the infants’ school was built; it lasted until 1882 when it was demolished to make way for the present day-school. In August, 1838, Two Sermons were preached, when £70 was collected, “a sum far exceeding any ever before collected in the church.”

The Vicar’s zeal for his schools was boundless. The pace was too hot for old Abraham Boardman, and in 1839 his resignation was accepted by the Trustees after 39 years’ service (as his epitaph records) as Master. It was really 37 years, for the first two he was only an assistant. He was only 59! On the 31st of May, 1839 he took leave of his scholars by giving them a treat of tea and buns.

“The many friends of the assembled children and the interest which was awakened in the neighbourhood generally attested the kindness of the Master and the esteem and respect which is entertained for him by all who knew him.”

He had known no other school, graduating from pupil to monitor, from monitor to assistant, and then to Master. He lived on in Deane until 1853, a quaint old figure, “one of the last old men in Deane to wear knee-breeches, shoes with large buckles, dark stockings, black velvet stock, and in his waistcoat pocket carried an amber snuffbox.” His epitaph in Deane churchyard:

“Abraham, the son of Giles and Mary Boardman
Who died, aged 73 years, June 10th, 1853, who
By a faithful discharge of duty as Parish Clerk of Deane
Thirty-eight years, and Schoolmaster thirty-nine years,
United with a benevolent disposition and gave good proof of
Faith in that blessed Redeemer in whom he fell asleep
And through whom alone he hoped for a glorious resurrection.”

Deane Sermons in that momentous year of 1839 were preached on Sunday, August 4th. It was a critical time, for the Chartist activities in Bolton were at their height. The Bolton demonstrators had on a Sunday prior to this marched into Bolton parish church, filled the building to the great alarm of the congregation assembling, although nothing really remarkable occurred. Fears were entertained that on an occasion like

Deane Sermons a similar demonstration would take place. But nothing happened. The chronicler of the day observed: “We are glad to find that they did not show themselves on such an occasion – selected for the encouragement of education and the inculcation of true religion on the infant minds.”

The preacher was the Rev. Mr. Frost!

Then came a curious episode in the history of the school: local talent in the eyes of the Vicar was just not good enough. The Trustees resolved (23rd May, 1839): “That a salary of £35 per annum be offered to Mr. Graystone, the Master recommended by the National Society . . .” Mr. Graystone did not arrive, but in his place came a Mr. Thomas Arthur Barfield, and in September of that year the following advertisement appeared in the local press:

EDUCATION

“In a healthy and pleasantly situated part of the Parish of Deane, about two miles from Bolton-le-Moors, it is proposed to receive a limited number of pupils as Boarders. The course of instruction will aim at a thorough proficiency in Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, and Geography. Instruction in Drawing, and the Use of Globes will be afforded without extra expense to those Pupils for whom it may be deemed advisable. Terms: 25 Guineas. No extras except for Washing. The Rev, E. Girdlestone, Vicar of Deane, the Rev. W. Burdett, and the Rev. H. L. Boyce, Deane, have kindly given references. A Quarter’s pay is expected in advance, and a quarter’s notice previous to the removal of Pupils. N.B.: Each boy is expected to be furnished with a knife and fork and silver spoon and six towels. Communications to be forwarded (free) to the Master of Deane School.”

Vicar Girdlestone and his curates (the other two clergy mentioned) *did* give this enterprising young Master references, but it is charitable to suppose they never envisaged his changing the school into a kind of Dotheboys Hall. One reference the Vicar didn’t give was one which the irrepressible Mr. Barfield wrote himself, and hoodwinked innocent Bolton tradesmen into supplying him with furnishings, books and pictures on credit, which brought him into the local courts in December 1839, on a charge of forgery. As the Vicar said in evidence: “He would not say that he was a young man of considerable attainments, but he was a young man of considerable professions. He was an artist and had taken a portrait of him (Mr. Girdlestone) and taught his daughter to write . . .” There is no doubt that the well-intentioned Trustees and Vicar were completely taken in by this slick operator; but his tenure lasted only from July to November, 1839.

Earlier in the century, in accordance with the usual custom of electing prominent parishioners as Trustees, the two opulent brothers Thomas and Joseph Ridgway, of Wallsuches, Horwich, came into office. Young Vicar Girdlestone married the daughter of Thomas, and the other brother Joseph was not only active in the affairs of the school but his will (proved 1843) bequeathed to it a large sum which produced an annual income of £40. The Ridgway bequest was to prove extremely valuable later on. The Vicar however needed funds for his wider schemes for other parts of the parish – in 1842 Deane parish claimed to have three Sunday schools (539 scholars) and three daily schools (376 scholars), and the net for drawing in subscriptions was thrown far and wide, so wide indeed as to attract Royal bounty: “February 26th, 1842.

Her Majesty the Queen Dowager (Queen Adelaide) has been most graciously pleased to cause the munificent donation of £20 to be forwarded to the Rev. Edward Girdlestone towards the liquidation of the debt incurred by the establishment of several new Sunday schools and daily schools in the district attached to the parish of Deane.”

John Horsfield was appointed Master on December 13th, 1839; the terms of his employment embodied all kinds of safeguards to avoid a repeat of the situation the Trustees had just suffered which included three months’ notice (Mr. Barfield had got away with six months’ salary and expenses), but it was all unnecessary, for the affairs of the school entered into a more expansive and progressive era which ended with the great Education Act of 1870, during all of which period John Horsfield presided with such success that the transition into the post-1870 era (which marked the beginnings of the modern elementary-school system) was an easy one. The Vicar’s zeal for schools of every kind made him impatient with those who cavilled at the Government’s plans. He “pamphleteered” (true to his “Better undenominational schools than no schools at all” ideas) and published in 1850: “The Committee of Council on Education An Imaginary Enemy: A Real Friend”. (London: J. Hatchard & Son, 187 Piccadilly, 1s.), and Deane School early qualified for the Government grant and the visits of the H. M. I.s. The Inspector’s report (25th June, 1850) gives a clear picture of the school at that time:

“Deane Boys’ School. 56 present at examination; 18 left last 12 months; 25 admitted last 12 months; 55 in ordinary attendance. Master’s Desk, six double writing-desks with fixed benches; stool seats, book-closet, clock; very fair supply of books and apparatus; Five open square classes. Very fair instruction and discipline; usual methods. Manner of the Master, Mr. Horsfield, seems to me to be much improved; he appears to have a good deal of taste for drawing, and several of his scholars are tolerably proficient in that art. I think the school is improved since my last visit and the number of children in attendance seems larger, and the boys more accurate in their attainments.”¹¹

In 1854 (in the general report on Lancashire) the H. M. I. could say:

“I am happy to observe that a society has been established [in Lancashire] in the last two or three years (chiefly through the exertions of the Rev. Edward Girdlestone, Vicar of Deane) called the Church of England Education Society, the main object of which seems to be helping and enabling the poorer class of schools to avail themselves of the annual grants made by the Committee of Council. I cannot conceive a more useful object than this; it is an actual and pressing want.”

The Vicar’s sentiments in 1850:

“Education, it is manifest, is the great battle-ground. For whatever becomes of the present generation, the character of the next must, under God’s blessing, mainly depend upon whether we educate, and how we educate, those who are soon to step in our places.”

Such sentiments had they been uttered fifty years later would have seemed trite; but in the year 1850 they were challenging ones.

In 1851 the School House was built; it had long been considered desirable, indeed in 1820 Vicar Brocklebank on recovering the funds of another charity tried to get the Charity Commissioners to agree to their use as capital for a school-house, without success. Later, of course, there were other priorities.

There was an Achilles' heel in Canon Girdlestone's character: his hatred of Tractarianism and Popery hurled him into bitter controversy even in his own parish, and his last school-building activity in the Wingates area of Westhoughton chapelry (which though largely independent was still part of the parish of Deane) was attended with much acerbity and unpleasant feeling. It was at its height not very long before his retirement from Deane. Canon Thicknesse, with consummate tact ended the controversy with remarkable speed after his arrival. Canon Girdlestone's writing and public speaking on education questions undoubtedly brought him to the attention of Lord John Russell, and through him his later preferment as canon of Bristol Cathedral. He left Deane in 1855.

Deane parish during the next fifteen years was both to contract and to expand immensely; contract, because out of it were carved other parishes, but expand because of mushroom-like growth of the Daubhill area with the erection of mills and houses. The village near the church was to change little until after the 1870s. Deane School, under John Horsfield, was to become the nursery which reared the managers, clerks, and men in executive positions in the mines and workshops in the district around. William Ford Hulton could claim, in 1871, that all his agents, clerks, &c., (with the exception of a few older men) had been educated under John Horsfield at Deane School, and that scholars in those days came, not only from Rumworth, but from all the districts around.

Canon Thicknesse (Vicar 1855-1868) was a worthy, if less spectacular, successor to Canon Girdlestone. Apart from "extra mural" activities like popular lectures, a parochial library and reading-room, a move to enlarge the 1837 building was begun, an extra storey was added, and it was opened with due ceremony in January, 1864, and with an "improving" speech by Canon Ethelstone of Manchester. He digressed on the importance of religious and godly literature, and said he once asked the secretary of a mechanics' institute how many such books they had in their library. He was told that the members didn't want them; "They wanted 'Woman in White', Jack Sheppard; 'Oliver Twist', and books of that nature"! Surely our forebears expected too much from the young, inquiring minds of those days!

The year 1865 saw an enthusiastic gathering of past and present scholars doing honour to their esteemed Master. There is still a feeling in Deane that he was a great headmaster, and perhaps it is not altogether because the old school is (and has been for many years) situated in Horsfield Street. Allen Clarke recalls him as schoolmaster and parish clerk: "a little thin fellow, whose legs (as the villagers said) were comically set at twenty-five minutes past six"! He retired soon after the 1870 Act got under way, although he acted as clerk to the Trustees for several years longer, and parish clerk until 1886. As late as 1903 (14 years after his death) seventy old scholars of John Horsfield's could gather in the old schoolroom at Deane to honour his memory, and recall the "pains he took with them not only during school hours, but after, and to the efforts he made to obtain suitable work for them when they left school."

In 1868 the Trustees were anticipating events by formulating a scheme which would carry the school into the post-Education Act era. The financial affairs of the trust comfortably enriched by the Ridgway bequest, were put in order; new Trustees appointed (including William W. B. Hulton who would loom large in future years); the ancient “township of Rumworth” clause changed to “School to be opened to the children of all resident inhabitants of the parish of Deane”; the “conscience” clause agreed to; school pence permitted up to 3d. per week; the Church of England emphasis laid down, a Church of England staff, and agreement for Sunday school on the school premises. The whole scheme finally agreed on 18th February, 1870, and on 17th March, 1871, the Trustees adopted the regulations constituting the school a public school under the Elementary Education Act. On July 2nd, 1870, Bishop Fraser (the reredos in Deane Church is a memorial to him) preached at Deane, and could say:

“I see that in the Sunday schools of this parish there are some 888 children and young persons being taught, and in the day schools nearly 800 also; the cost of maintaining these schools is over £500, and I see also, for the first time in any balance sheet which has been placed before me showing the state of accounts of any school in Lancashire, that there was a balance in avour of the treasurer last year of ore than £4... Here are many warm and earnest hearts interested in the children’s welfare; and there is no fear in this parish that religion will ever cease to be made, at least in this generation, the basis and groundwork of education.”

By 1874 Deane parish had opened new schools at Daubhill and Markland Hill, in addition to Morris Green, Hulton, and Rosemary Lane. At a religious inspection of Deane School, November, 1874, the Inspector could say:

“The composition of the Highest Group on Joshua, Judges, and the latter half of Acts, was very well done; they knew the subjects in detail and thoroughly ...”!

The year 1882 saw the erection of the present Deane School, built on the site of the 1837 building which was demolished. Its erection was no great burden to parishioners, because out of the total cost of £1,333, £1,200 came from the sale of part of the funds of the Ridgway bequest,^a with an arrangement with the Charity Commissioners for repayment over a period of years at £45 per annum. It was to accommodate 250 children; the township of Rumworth was rapidly expanding for the first time. The burden of extra expense nearly put the Trustees out of business. In 1887 the number of children attending dropped, probably because of Board School “competition” and there was a bank overdraft of £280.

There was an unprecedented situation in 1888. For the first time in history the School Trust was presided over (almost permanently) by a layman (W.W.B. Hulton), for the Vicar was at loggerheads with the Trustees. A very different Vicar of Deane now reigned in the person of the Rev. Henry Sheridan Patterson, who, in June, 1888 (a fortnight before the Sermons) wrote this very remarkable letter:

“Sir: I hereby resign my trusteeship of Deane School so long as it is managed by the present non-resident and non-interested persons, who have mortgaged our

^a £125 came from the Trustees in personal donations.

estate to the amount of £1,500 and contracted in addition a debt of £300. Nor have they, so far as I am aware, contributed anything to the parochial funds for 5 years.^a

“The landowners and ratepayers are the natural persons to manage their own school. They are now legally liable for education of the township, which the Trustees are not, being non-resident and non-ratepayers. I also withdraw all support of the school till it is restored to the parish. Yours truly, H.S. Patterson.”

It is not necessary to point out all the weaknesses of the Vicar’s arguments, nor did the Trustees at that date. It was obvious to them, if not to the Vicar (as it was not) that the Vicar of Deane could not resign his trusteeship, for the “scheme” of 1870 named him as a permanent Trustee by virtue of his incumbency, and the largest “landowner and ratepayer” was Sir Charles Tempest, a Roman Catholic. At least some of the Trustees were “non-resident and non-ratepayers” because the contraction of the parish had put them outside its boundaries. There is no evidence to show that this was the end; indeed, under W.W.B. Hulton’s chairmanship they carried on as usual and ignored the letter. Strenuous attempts were made to clear off the debt, and the chairman even persuaded Sir Charles Tempest to increase his annual subscription to £10 10s. and to make a donation of £150. The crisis was overcome but not before going through a time when the Trustees could state:

“Unless we receive considerable assistance we must resign our trust, sell our schools which are amply large enough for the needs of the township for some years to come, and hand them over to a School Board.”

A grant was made by the Trustees for forming a school library in 1890. School pence disappeared (except 1d a week for the higher standards) in 1891, and completely in 1893. A reminder that the modern age had really arrived is given by a note by the Trustees that “Mr. Wm. Heaton, of Lostock had previously *telephoned* that he could not be present at a meeting (this in 1889!). The teaching profession was hardly a lucrative one in 1891: In addition to the Master and Mistress, the staff consisted of Miss Nancy Winward at £40 per annum; Miss Taylor £35; M.A. Worsley (pupil-teacher 1st Year) £10; Elsie Platt (monitress) £5 4s.

There was an unfortunate dispute between the Vicar and Master in 1894, (and, it should be said, a seemingly efficient Master he was), but in 1896 began a first-class controversy between them which developed still further by the N.U.T. coming in on the Master’s side, and questions were even asked in the House of Commons.¹² There was no question of irregularity or misconduct – it was a clash of personalities. The trustees were of course drawn into it, and after fair consideration were obliged to give the Master notice; but the whole miserable business dragged out for more than six months. The only redeeming feature which emerged from it was the healing of the breach between the Trustees and the Vicar. Up to 1902, however, W.W.B. Hulton remained the Correspondent of the school.

A new era dawned with the appointment of J.J.T. Hill as Master in 1901, and a minute (29th April, 1902) read:

^a W.W.B. Hulton had contributed £400 to church restoration in 1884.

“Vicar absent; W.W.B. Hulton in the chair. Resolved: That Mr. Hill having increased the average attendance by 35, and having won a good report from H.M.I. and the highest grant obtainable, besides showing much zeal and interest in the welfare of the school, the Trustees compliment him, (and they awarded him a bonus of £10).”

A bazaar had been held in 1900 to liquidate the debt that remained, and a surplus in the funds of £342 enabled the Trustees to make what improvements were called for by the 1902 Education Act; the Master’s salary was raised from £120 to £150.

To those who, in modern times, think the problems of youth are peculiar to this age: The Vicar of Deane (1904) at the opening of Deane Church House:

“At present (young people) leave school, to forget all they have learned, and are found in the streets, the theatres, or public houses, their only places of recreation. Youth is the period when character is formed. The Church does little to solve the problem, and improved methods are necessary. In all projects there are many who are indifferent and see a lion in the way, but we hope to make the Church House a refuge and a home where good associations and counsel will afford youth the sympathy and guidance it so much needs.”

Agenda of Trustees’ Meeting January 30th, 1899:

- “1. To consider damage done by the gale.
2. To consider damage done by the Lads’ Brigade” (!)

Mr Hulton had written to the Captain of the Brigade “in consequence of serious and repeated damage and disorderly conduct ... the privilege of using the school on Monday night is suspended until further notice.”

In 1907 “The Deane School Old Scholars’ Association Historical Society was formed to carry on the study of history; a subject which has such ready material to hand.” Possibly the 46-page “History” of Deane by J.J.T. Hill published in 1914 was a direct outcome of this. As the decade which preceded World War I came to a close the Trustees were still a relevant body, fulfilling their obligations, but as the years passed the control of the schools was slowly slipping out of their hands into the more expert hands of the Bolton Education Committee.

If a telephone (in 1889) was a token of modern times, a minute in 1916, reporting that insurance cover against “Aircraft” risk had been effected, was a more vivid token; a premium of £2 9s. on £2,450 seemed fair enough when it is recalled that German bombs fell on Holy Trinity Church Bolton. In 1919 the Master’s suggestion for a School Honours Board was agreed to, but a reminder (in 1920) that there would soon be a possible deficiency in the number of places in the school “when the new housing scheme was completed” was a foretaste of future burdens. Chip Hill (sometimes written Chipple in the 1600s) was for centuries the home of a single farming family, soon it was to be the site of hundreds of council houses. “Scout” damage in the school in 1921. Electric-light installed 1922 because of complaints from the evening classes; it cost £35.

In 1926 plans were outlined for school extension, and in 1928, when Canon Worsley came, they were well under way; the following year at a cost of £1,399 10s. (which increased to £1,500) the school extension was completed. It was Deane parish's last big effort on behalf of its schools, and with World War II (and inflation) the Trustees faced (1948) a bank overdraft, and (1950) the prospect of further major expenses of £500. in that year the Trustees took the decision to apply to the Bolton Education Committee for the school to become a "Controlled" one, which was effected on the 23rd September, 1950, the Managers of which were to include the Vicar and another appointed by the Trustees (Foundation Managers), and four Representative Managers appointed by the Local Education Authority.



Much has been said and written about the dreadful legacy the modern educational world inherits in its out-of-date and insanitary Church schools. Whatever justification there is for this view (and there is much) it is an over-simplification to view the inheritance by what is visible. There is another (and hitherto largely hidden and forgotten) part of this legacy, and the foregoing is an attempt to present it as it exists in the parish of Deane. The intention of our forefathers was to bequeath to us what they treasured and believed in.

The whole story is one of development, a school was not just built and left at that. The ancient school was replaced by the one of 1820, and followed by that of 1837 and 1864. The 1882 building by the extension of 1929. Out of the decision to become "controlled" in 1950 has followed the development of 1964.

The bounty of the Marsh's, of James Crompton, of Ralph Barton, of Joseph Ridgway, and of others; the devoted service of Vicars of Deane, Masters, Teachers, Trustees and Parishioners in countless generations; all this is now part of the heritage of the new Deane Church of England Primary School. It does not however end there, for all the successors to these will still have their part to play in the future.

Canon Girdlestone, in 1873, envisaged the time when daily education would become largely secular, hence his emphasis on Sunday schools ... Efficient daily education under the Bolton Education Authority *is* largely secular, but there is still provision made for religious instruction as of old, and the children will be taught in a building planned and fitted with every modern educational aid. Could not the availability of such a building for Sunday school work make possible Sunday schools as an institution thriving once more in the parish of Deane? This, and other questions, only the future can answer.

SOURCES

Much of the information comes from School Minutes Books (the School Log Books have not been consulted), reports in the local press (principally the "Bolton Chronicle"), John Heaton Partington's MSS (History of Deane), Boardman's "History of Deane", and my own extensive notes on the parish. The following would seem to call for special mention.

¹ Re Thomas Nuttall's bequest: Long after other churches in this area were advertising "Annual Sermons" Deane continued to describe its own event as Annual Sermon.

² Wills of the Marsh's quoted in J.H.P.M.S

³ Baines' "History of Lancs". (Ed. Croston) quoting Harleian Collection cod.2.176,fol.47.

⁴ Victoria County History of Lancs. Vol V (Deane parish).

⁵ Transcript of document (1660) in Deane School Papers.

⁶ Lancs. County Rec. Office QSJ/8/10/48 "October 1676 Sacramental Certificate of William Hulme; Minister Richd. Hatton; Churchwarden: Wm. Balfron; Witnesses: Wm. Balfron and John Mather."

⁷ Schedule of School Deeds (quoted J.H. Partington MS) 1787: "(In 1733): Trustees ... pay to Richard Edge the younger, the Schoolmaster of Deane school standing near to Deane Church during his life ... or other person elected schoolmaster ... by Feoffees."

⁸ J.H.P. MS quoting School Minute Book, 1789. Both "barring-out" and "cock-penny" are terms occurring often in school records throughout England in the 17th and 18th centuries. From the latter comes "cockshy". Whether the practice of shying at cocks with sticks and stones as a Shrove Tuesday sport was common at Deane is not known. "Firing" at Michaelmas would merely seem to mean a payment towards the cost of fuel for heating.

⁹ The grave of an earlier Roger Dewhurst (purchased an estate in Halliwell in 1715) is near the south wall of the church. A copy of the Trustee's Diary is in Bolton Library.

¹⁰ William Hulton's fateful command to "Disperse the meeting" at Peterloo 1819.

¹¹ Minutes of Council on Education 1851.

¹² In an answer to a Parliamentary question the following figures were given:

	£	s.	d.
Deane School: State Grant	339	2	1
Endowments	36	3	4
Voluntary Subscriptions	32	14	5
Church Collections	22	10	0
Other Local Sources	18	16	1

(It is probable that the local figures were at a low ebb at this time.)