

A School to go with St Paul's Church

By Evelyn Brown

Children's education in early 19th century Britain

At the beginning of the 19th century there was no formal system of education for children in Britain, though Sunday schools were often run at churches and chapels, providing the children from very low-income families with basic literacy, mainly to enable them to read the Bible. A desire for regular day-schools led to the formation of a new Church of England body in 1811, the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church. Three years later the British and Foreign Schools Society was founded, to promote the education of children from non-conformist church backgrounds. In 1833 the Government provided the first financial support for elementary education by granting £20,000 to these societies to help them set up day schools; however, attendance by children was voluntary,¹ and applications were only considered if accompanied by a favourable report from the appropriate society.²

Education in Woodhouse and Woodhouse Eaves in 1837

When St Paul's Church was built in 1837, the population of Woodhouse Eaves, including the hamlet of Maplewell, would have been around 900, with up to 200 more living in Woodhouse. Of these, about a fifth were children aged 5–13, for whom opportunities for formal education were almost non-existent. A high proportion of the working population was employed in framework knitting or agricultural labour, so living in poverty.³

For a privileged few there were the free school in Woodhouse and a small private school in Woodhouse Eaves. The free school, in School Lane, was built and endowed by Thomas Rawlins, of Pestilence (or Pest) Cottage, Woodhouse. The master, Henry Lester, offered reading, writing, arithmetic, and Latin as required, to 34 poor boys, 22 of whom had to be drawn from Woodhouse and Woodhouse Eaves.⁴ The latter catered for 23 girls and boys, aged 6–14, who were taught 'at a room in a Public House for want of better

¹ Elementary education in the 19th century [<https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/livinglearning/school/overview/in19thcentury/>] [Viewed 22nd January 2018.]

² Gillard, D. (2011) *Education in England: a brief history*. Chapter 2 '1800–1860.

[<http://www.educationengland.org.uk>] [Viewed 20th January 2018.]

³ The Office of National Statistics, 1841 census for Woodhouse Eaves.

⁴ John Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester*, Vol. III, p.119 (London: 1800). Also accessible on line at University of Leicester Special Collections [<http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/cdm/ref/collection/p15407coll6/id/6931>] p.166.

accommodation'.⁵ They may have been taught by 31-year-old Miss Elizabeth Judd or Miss Hannah Roberts (55), both of whom were teachers, living close to the Bull's Head pub in what is now Main Street.⁶

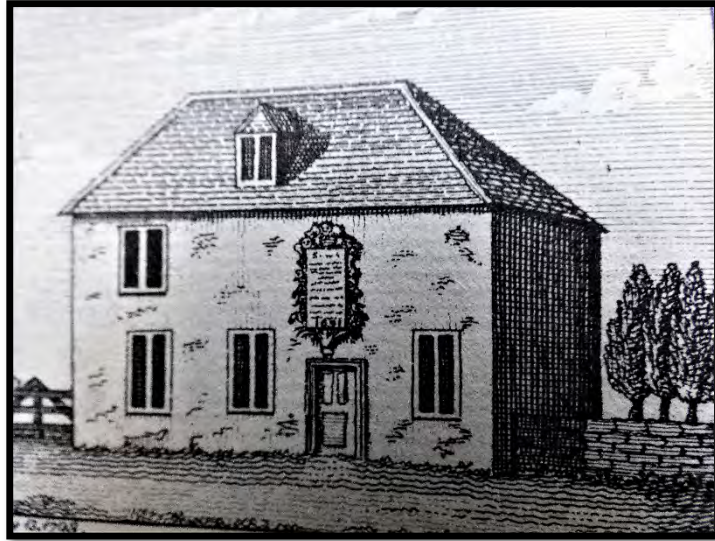


Figure 1. Engraving of Rawlin's School in 1793.⁷



Figure 2. Pestilence Cottage, Woodhouse (from the Brian Axon archive, date unknown).⁸

⁵ Leicester Record Office: DG9/2166. Copy of a letter to Joseph Wigram, Secretary to the National Society, 5th June 1837.

⁶ The Office of National Statistics, 1841 census for Woodhouse Eaves and Woodhouse.

⁷ John Nichols, op. cit., p.115. (London: 1800).

⁸ Brian Axon: late Chair of the Woodhouse and Woodhouse Eaves Local History Group. The sources of his extensive photo-archive are not known. Collection online: *Woodhouse and Woodhouse Eaves* [<http://www.qwkz.uk/index.html>].

A further 158 boys and 117 girls were receiving a Sunday-school education, supported by voluntary contribution, mostly attending the Methodist and Baptist Chapels in Main Street, Woodhouse Eaves.



Figure 3. Woodhouse Eaves Baptist Chapel as it would have appeared in 1837 (from the Brian Axon archive).

Funding a National School

With the building of the new church, plans were made to establish an elementary day-school in Woodhouse Eaves. Probably early in 1837, Revd Samuel Piggott, Curate of St Mary-in-the-Elms Church, Woodhouse, applied to the National Society for financial aid. In late March he received from the society's secretary, Revd Joseph Wigram, a copy of the official application form, which was to be completed and returned, along with a supporting letter ('memorial') for the benefit of the Lords of HM Treasury, who were acting on behalf of the government.⁹ The memorial was written under the names of Revd Robert Stammers (incumbent of St Mary's), Revd Samuel Piggott (the curate), Ann Christiana Watkinson of

⁹ Leicester Record Office: DG9/2166. Copy of the application for funding from the National Society. Date stamp suggests it was sent out on 29th March 1837.

Woodhouse and William Herrick of Beaumanor.¹⁰ The memorial suggests a local population of 1,360, which is probably an overestimate, based on the data from the 1841 census.

An initial estimate of the cost of building a school to accommodate 70 boys and 70 girls was £400, plus £200 for a house for the master and mistress.¹¹ However, the completed copy of the application shows a revised estimate of £440 for the school; this now included £20 for the ground, and a further £20 for fittings. No mention is made of the cost of a teachers' house. This may be because governmental financial support for National Schools was restricted to the school buildings, and was not to be used for teacher accommodation.¹²

Ann Christiana Watkinson, a woman of independent means,¹³ undertook to find the land, and to build the school and a house for the master and mistress, provided that the government and the National Society would contribute £100. The historian Thomas Rossell Potter (1842, p.86) described Ann Watkinson as living in Garat's Hay, Woodhouse, the house that was the birthplace of Mary (*née* Hartopp), the first Countess of Howe.¹⁴

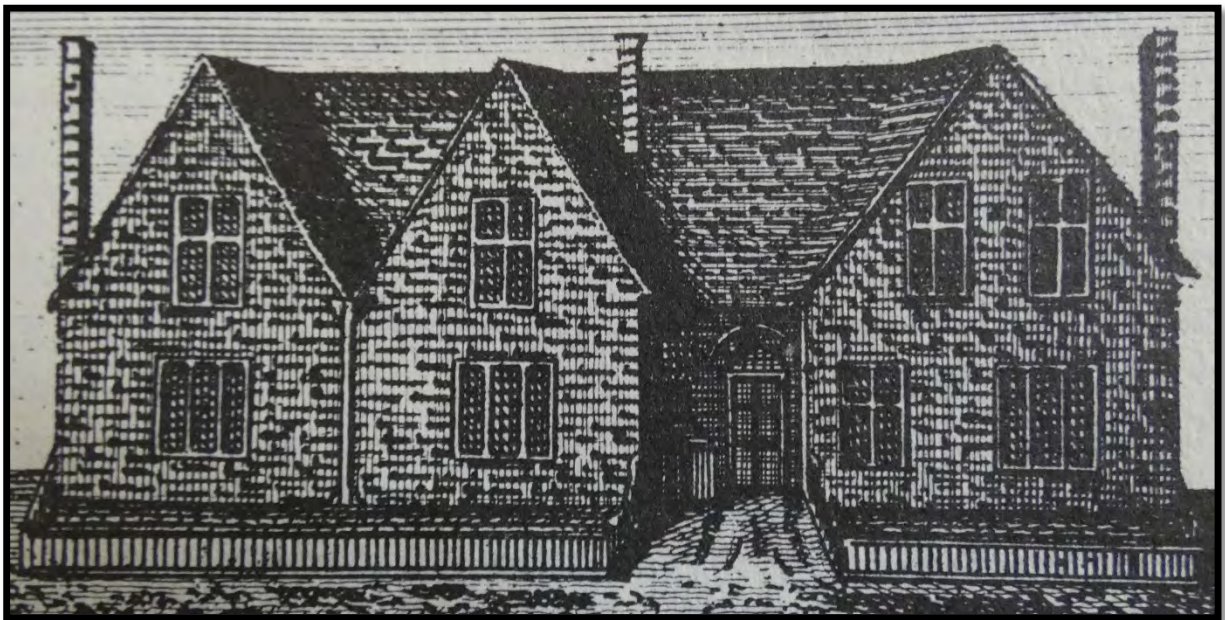


Figure 4(a). The birthplace of the Countess of Howe c.1800.¹⁵

¹⁰ Leicester Record Office: DG9/2166. Copy of the memorial to the Treasury (undated).

¹¹ Leicester Record Office: DG9/2166. Copy of a letter to Joseph Wigram dated 5th June 1837.

¹² Gillard, D. (2011), *op. cit.*

¹³ The Office of National Statistics, 1841 census for Woodhouse Eaves.

¹⁴ Thomas Rossell Potter, *The History and Antiquities of Charnwood Forest* (London: 1842) p.87.

¹⁵ John Nichols, *op. cit.* p.115 (online, p.133).



Figure 4(b). Garat's Hay in 2018, greatly extended and unrecognisable as the original building.

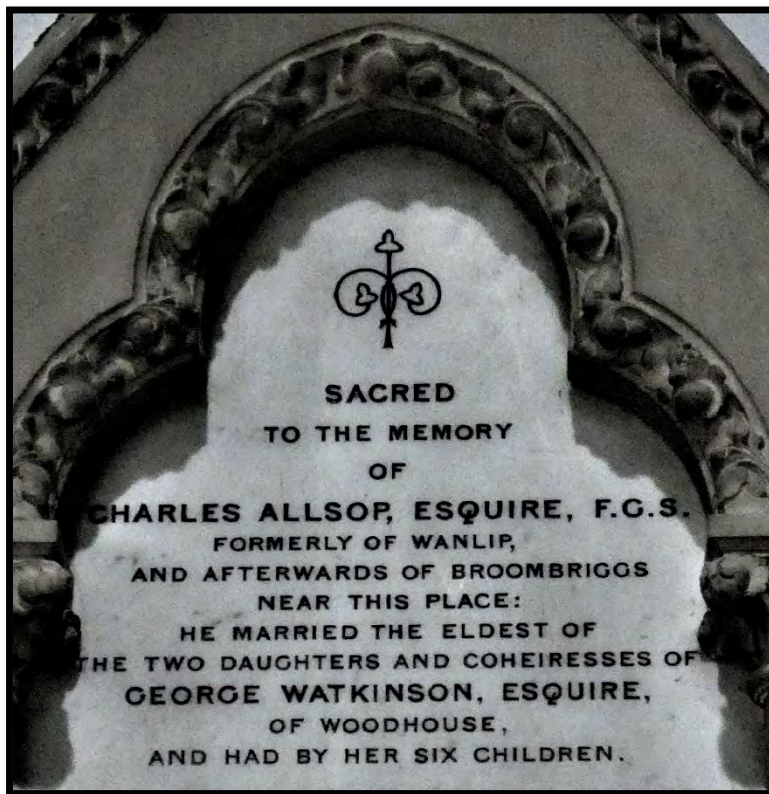
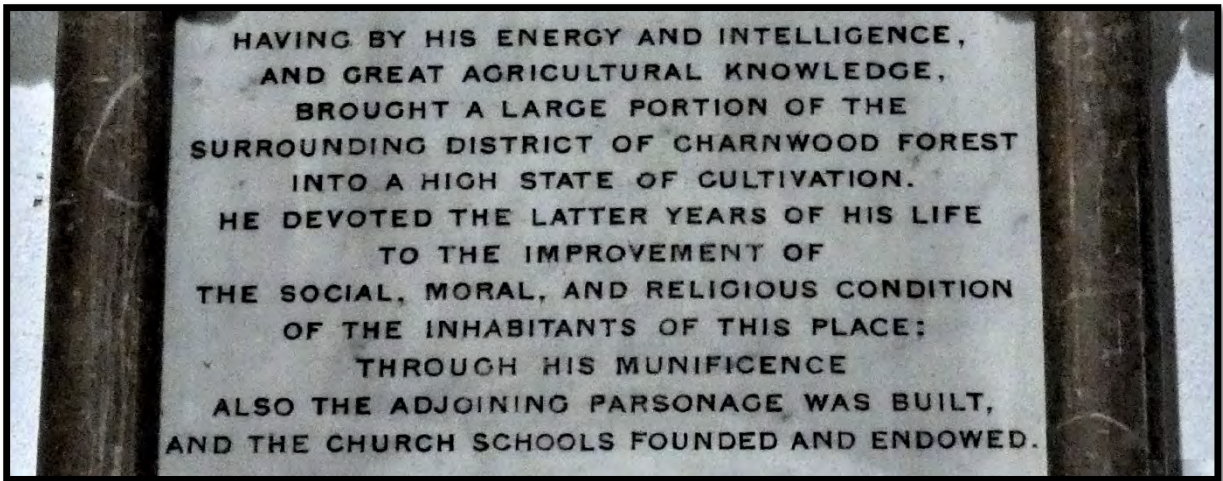
The running costs of the school, including an annual salary of £50 for the teachers, and the purchase of books and other materials, were to be funded, in part, by an endowment, with the investments providing an annual income of £30. An early reference to the school (1846) states that it was endowed by ‘the late Mr Charles Allsop, with £1,000 three per cent consols’, which would have generated £30 per annum.¹⁶ But who was this generous benefactor?

Charles Allsop, benefactor

Charles Allsop (1780–1836) built Broombriggs House, Woodhouse Eaves, where he lived. He was the High Constable for the Hundred of West Goscote, which included Woodhouse Parish.¹⁷ He was a significant local land owner who is credited with having ‘brought a large portion of the surrounding district of Charnwood Forest into a high state of cultivation’, according to the plaque to his memory inside St Paul’s Church. In 1812 he married the eldest of the two daughters of Mr George Watkinson of Woodhouse (Ann Watkinson’s sister, Mary).

¹⁶ William White, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Leicestershire and the small county of Rutland* (Sheffield: 1846).

¹⁷ Obituary for Charles Allsop, Esq, *The Gentleman’s Magazine* (October 1836), p.444.



Figures 5(a) and (b). Extracts from the plaque inside St Paul's Church, dedicated to the memory of Charles Allsop.

As Allsop died in late 1836, and the application to the National Society to help fund a school was not made until the summer of 1837, the endowment must have been made posthumously in his name, recognising his concern to improve the social, moral and religious condition of people in Woodhouse Eaves. He had outlived both his wife and children and so with no immediate family to inherit his estate, one of his heirs was his sister-in-law, Ann Christiana

Watkinson,¹⁸ who was already a wealthy woman following the death of her father in 1834.¹⁹ Potter (1842, p.87) mentions that she was the owner of Long Close, a large house in Main Street, Woodhouse Eaves, though the house was let to the solicitor Thomas Cradock at the time. William Herrick was also a minor beneficiary, as well as being granted first refusal at a fixed sum if Allsop's 'coal estates' were sold. Thus it is plausible that Ann and William would have approved of an endowment in Charles's name.

The funding is granted

New National Schools were required to be in union with the National Society in order for their applications to go through to the Treasury. On 1st July 1837, an application to the National Society was made by William Herrick, Ann Watkinson and the Reverends Stammers and Piggott, requesting 'union', and agreeing to abide by the society's principles 'as far as is practicable'. The application was considered and approved at a committee meeting of the society on 5th July, held at the society's headquarters in Sanctuary, Westminster (adjacent to the Westminster Hospital),²⁰ and chaired by Edward Grey, Bishop of Hereford. This was possibly the last union he approved because he died less than three weeks later.²¹

¹⁸ Will of Charles Allsop, Esq. Ancestry.com. *England and Wales, Prerogative Court of Canterbury Wills, 1384–1858* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2013. [Viewed 22nd January 2018.]

¹⁹ George Watkinson, record of death. Ancestry.co. *England, Selective Deaths and Burials, 1538 – 1991* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2013. [Viewed 22nd January 2018.]

²⁰ Edward Walford, 'Westminster: King St, Great George St and the Broad Sanctuary', in *Old and New London: Volume 4* (London, 1878), pp. 26-35. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/old-new-london/vol4/pp26-35> [accessed 5 February 2018]

²¹ See <https://www.geni.com/people/Rt-Rev-Edward-Grey-Bishop-of-Hereford/6000000004079698732> [accessed 6th February 2018].

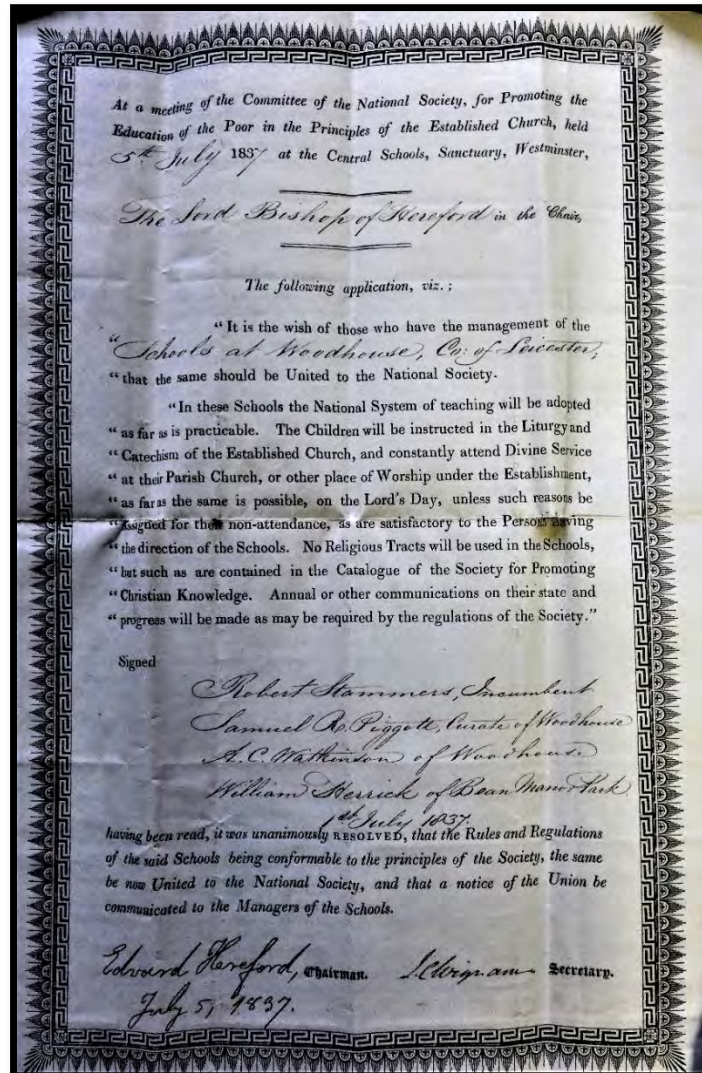


Figure 6(a). Official letter approving the union of the Woodhouse Eaves school with the National Society.

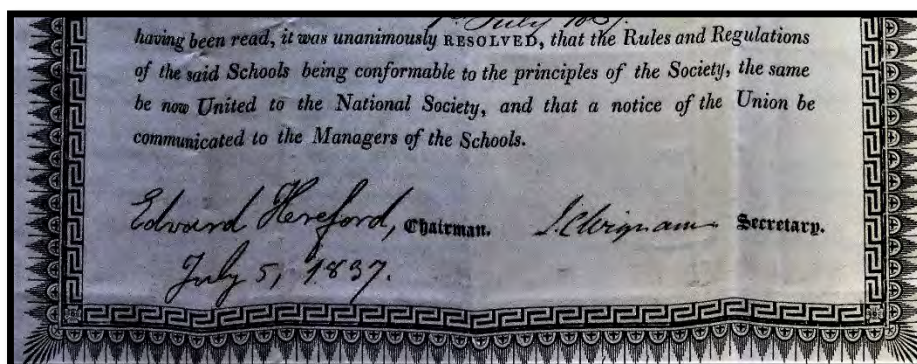


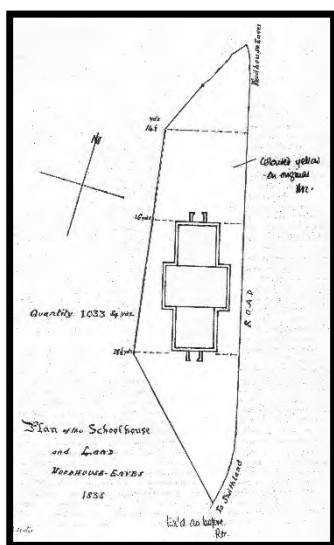
Figure 6(b). Bishop of Hereford's signature, approving the union.²²

²² Leicester Record Office: DG9/2166. Approval of the union of the Woodhouse Eaves school with the National Society.

The application for funding was successful. On 5th July 1837 Joseph Wigram was able to confirm that the National Society would contribute £34 of the £100 requested, provided that a site had been secured, and that ‘the building [was] considerably advanced towards its completion’.²³ It seems that the National Society was not disposed to put the money up front before it was clear that the school project would be successful.

Joseph Wigram wrote again to Revd Stammers on 13th July to say that the National Society would be recommending that HM Treasury provide £66 towards the cost of building the school. Given that the application was for a building accommodating 140 children, this was at ‘the usual rate of granting £1 for every two scholars at 6 square feet to each.’ The generosity of Ann Watkinson’s financial contribution was also acknowledged: ‘the Committee entertain a lively sense of the liberality of the Lady...and beg you will express their sentiments to her’.²⁴

The school materialises



Building of the school would have been well underway by late October 1838 when formal approval of the Treasury funding was received, following a recommendation from the National Society.²⁵ An outline plan of the site, on what is now Church Hill, is dated 1838; it shows the building aligned approximately north to south, comprising a broader central section flanked by a narrower wing on each side.

Figure 7. Plan of the National School site in 1838 (from the Brian Axon archive).

A later plan, detailing alterations to be made, shows that the central section was two-storey and was originally intended to be the residential accommodation for the schoolmaster and schoolmistress, with a parlour at the front, a kitchen to the rear and stairs leading to the upper floor, which presumably housed at least one bedroom.²⁶

²³ Leicester Record Office: DG9/2166. Letter from Joseph Wigram, 5th July 1837.

²⁴ Leicester Record Office: DG9/2166. Letter from Joseph Wigram to Revd Stammers, 13th July, 1837.

²⁵ Leicester Record Office: DG9/2166. Confirmation from Joseph Wigram of Treasury grant (22nd October 1838).

²⁶ Leicester Record Office: DE30 Ma/E/Bg/362/1-10. National School Building Grant Plans.

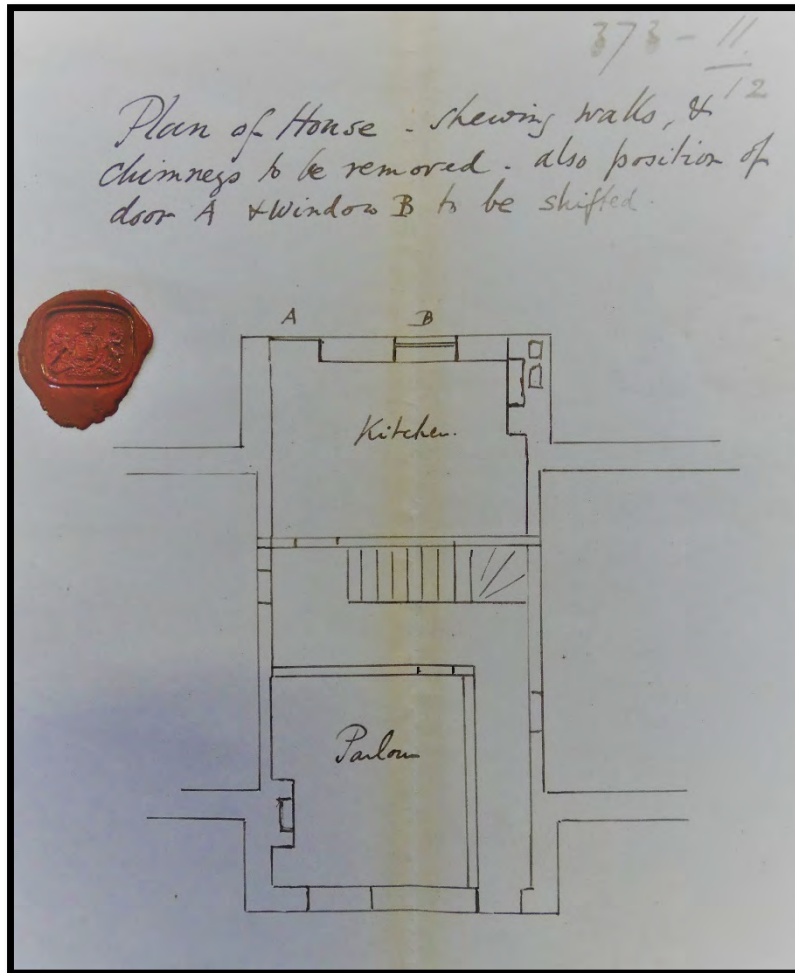


Figure 8. Structure of the ground floor of the central part of the school-house.

The wings were the classrooms and an arch, supporting the school bell, was erected over the north-facing porch. Although the name of the architect is not known, Potter (1842, p.89) described the 'new Chapel, founded on a romantic rock, with a Parsonage and School-house beautifully harmonizing with it in architectural character'.²⁷ Potter's engraving also shows how close the rear wall of the school was to the rock face.

²⁷ Leicester Record Office: DE630 Ma/E/BG/362/1-10. Woodhouse Eaves National School building plans: 373: 10/11/12.



Figure 9(a). Engraving showing the school and church in 1841 or 1842 (Potter (1842, p.89)).

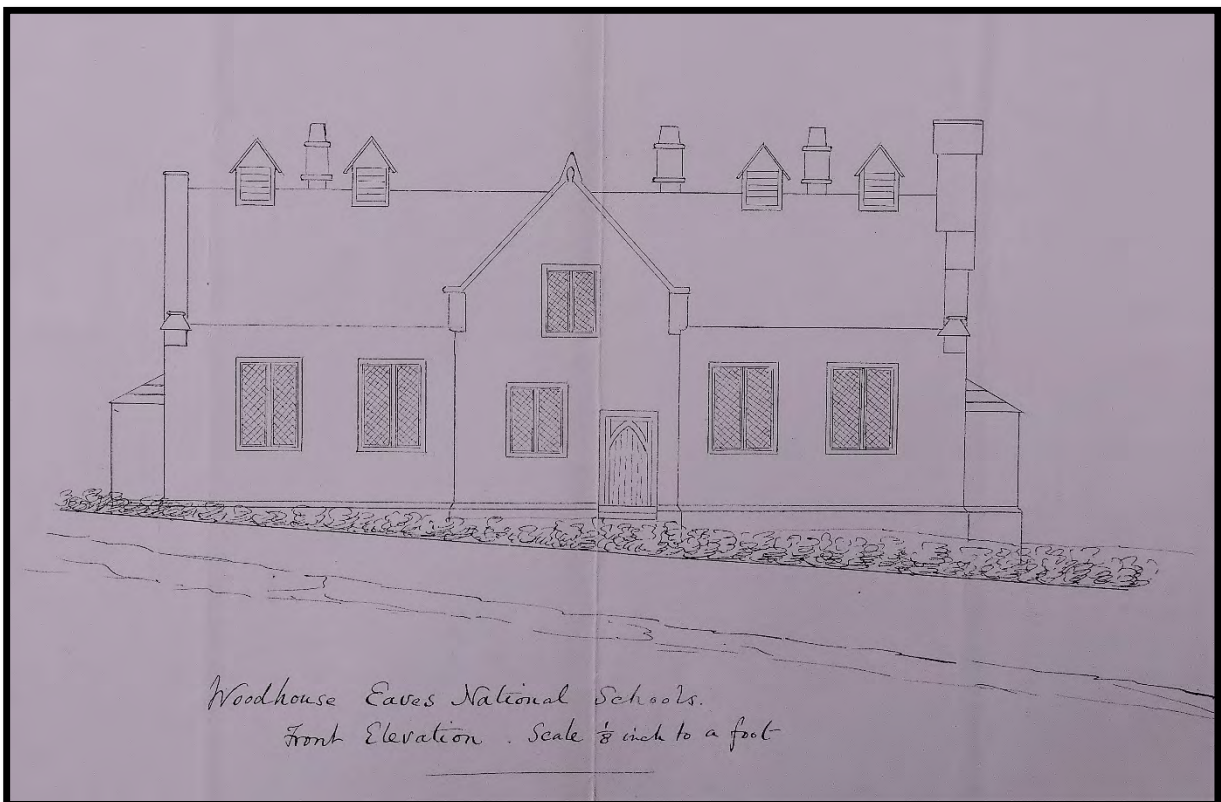


Figure 9(b). Front elevation of the school.

It is not certain exactly when the school opened its doors to pupils. An early reference in William White's *Gazetteer and Directory of Leicestershire* (1846) refers to 'the commodious National School, built a few years ago'.²⁸ In his 1863 edition, White states that the school was 'built about 20 years ago';²⁹ by subtraction, this suggests around 1843. His subsequent 1877 directory interprets 'about 20 years ago' as definitively 20 years earlier, i.e. 1843, a date that is cited in Wright's later directories of 1880 to 1887–1888.³⁰ However, this date is demonstrably wrong. Potter's engraving shows that the school building must have been established before his book was published in 1842. In addition, the April 1841 census for Woodhouse Eaves records 30-year-old William and Sarah Winterton as schoolmaster and schoolmistress, living with two young children and a servant girl in the property adjacent to the Revd Robert Close, the incumbent of St Paul's Church (i.e. in the schoolhouse next to the parsonage). Furthermore, when the details of the Trust Deed for the school were collated in 1903 for the benefit of the Education Office (the Local Education Authority, established in 1902), the original date of the deed was given as 8th September 1838, with the trustees named as Ann Christiana Watkinson and William Herrick.³¹ Based on this evidence, it is most likely that the school opened late in 1938.

The school had to be run according to the National Society's principles, which included the following:³²

- Children to be instructed in the Holy Scriptures and in the Liturgy and Catechism of the Established Church [i.e. Church of England].
- With respect to such instruction, the Schools are to be subject to the superintendence of the Parochial Clergymen.
- The children are to be regularly assembled for the purpose of attending Divine Service in the Parish Church.
- The Masters and Mistresses are to be members of the Church of England.

The growth of the school

²⁸ William White, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of the Counties of Leicester and Rutland* (Robert Leader: 1846).

²⁹ William White, op. cit. (William White: 1863).

³⁰ *Wright's Directory of Leicestershire and Rutland* (Wright: 1880); *Wright's Directory of Leicester and fifteen miles Round* (Wright: 1883–84); *Wright's Directory of Leicestershire* (Wright's historical directories: 1887–1888).

³¹ Diocesan Archive, Leicester: Document stating tenure for the Trust Deed of St Paul's School, Woodhouse Eaves (3rd February 1903).

³² Leicester Record Office: DG9/2166. Statement of the National Society's principles for National Schools (27th February 1839).

According to Kelly's *Directory of Leicestershire and Rutland*, the original school building had already been enlarged three times by 1891.³³ Unfortunately, plans showing the various changes are undated, and so while it is possible to put them in chronological order, *when* the alterations were carried out is a matter of conjecture.³⁴

The 1840s and 1850s

The school was originally planned to accommodate 140 children; attendance was voluntary but was not free. No age-range was specified but four-year-old children were attending Sunday schools, and children under four years old were being registered in the 1860s (see '*The 1860s*'). In the 1841 census, around 190 children aged 4–10 were living in Woodhouse Eaves, including the hamlet of Maplewell, with a further 25 in Woodhouse. Almost 50 more were aged 11 and 12. However, according to William White's *Gazetteer and Directory* of 1846, only 120 children were attending the day school. This is not surprising because more than a third of households were engaged in the framework-knitting industry, working from home, and a quarter in agricultural labouring. These were households living in poverty, especially the framework knitters; many parents could not afford to pay for the school attendance, and children were frequently required to help with the home industry. Five framework knitters from Woodhouse Eaves were called as witnesses at the 1844 Royal Commission of inquiry into the [working] conditions of the framework knitters, a few years after the National School was opened.

Thomas Sills earned about nine shillings (45p) a week. By the time he had paid his frame rental, he was left with no more than six shillings (30p) to keep himself, his wife and five children. The amount of education he could give his children was 'very trifling'.³⁵ Charles Pritchett's testimony was equally harrowing:

I know for a fact that the greater part of the men at Woodhouse Eaves are in a very deplorable state; their children are neither educated, nor clothed, nor fed as they ought to be; we have not the means; and as soon as our children can work, we are obliged to put them to it. I know it from experience; I myself have six small children, and the oldest, a girl about ten years of age, has never been to a day-school; I am obliged to

³³ Kelly's *Directory of Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland, and Nottinghamshire* (Kelly's Historical Directories: 1891).

³⁴ Leicester Record Office: DE630 Ma/E/BG/362/1-10. Woodhouse Eaves National School building plans

³⁵ Testimony of Thomas Sills at the 1844 Royal Commission of inquiry into the conditions of the framework knitters [access via Google search of w-we.qwkz.uk/woodhouseeaves/framework-knitting.html] [viewed 7th February 2018].

keep her at home to do a few little jobs...I have been a teacher in a Sabbath-school, and those parents that could not send their children to the day-school, have tried to avail themselves of the privilege of sending their children to Sabbath-school.³⁶

By the early 1850s there had been a change of trustees for the school.³⁷ William Herrick remained, although now known as ‘Perry-Herrick’ following the death in 1852 of his uncle, Thomas Perry, whose estate he inherited. John Simeon Hiley, Curate of St Mary’s, Woodhouse, appears to have taken over the role from Ann Christiana Watkinson (the benefactor and an original trustee of the National School) whom he married in April 1845 when she was 49 years old. Sadly, she died only four years later in 1849. The third trustee was Revd John Street Millington, appointed the incumbent of St Paul’s Church in 1853.

Unlike the 1841 census, the 1851 census recorded the status of school-aged children who were not in employment. The overall age-distribution was very similar to that in 1841. Around 180 children aged 4–12 in Woodhouse Eaves and Woodhouse were described as ‘scholars (approximately 80 per cent)’.³⁸ Given the testimony of Charles Pritchett, it is likely that many of these were Sunday-school scholars, rather than attending day school. Some 40 children aged 12 or under were listed overtly as in employment, mostly in aspects of framework knitting, with the youngest aged only six; however, based again on the evidence of Charles Pritchett, this is probably an underestimate.

It is not clear from the 1851 census whether, by then, the school master and mistress were still living in the school adjacent to the parsonage, as their residence is listed four properties away. The plan of the earliest alteration to the school building shows the proposed conversion of the former teachers’ parlour into a further classroom. The infants and younger girls were to be accommodated in the southern wing, and the boys and older girls in the northern wing (*Figure 10(a)*). Which children would be taught in the new classroom is not stated. The infants were to sit in rows in a raked gallery (*Figure 10(b)*) while the boys (and presumably the older girls) were to sit at desks, arranged in rows (*Figure 10(c)*).

³⁶ Testimony of Thomas Sykes at the 1844 Royal Commission (op. cit.).

³⁷ Kelly’s Historical Directories, *Post Office Directory of Leicestershire and Rutland* (Kelly and Co.:1855)

³⁸ The Office of National Statistics, 1851 census for Woodhouse Eaves and Woodhouse.

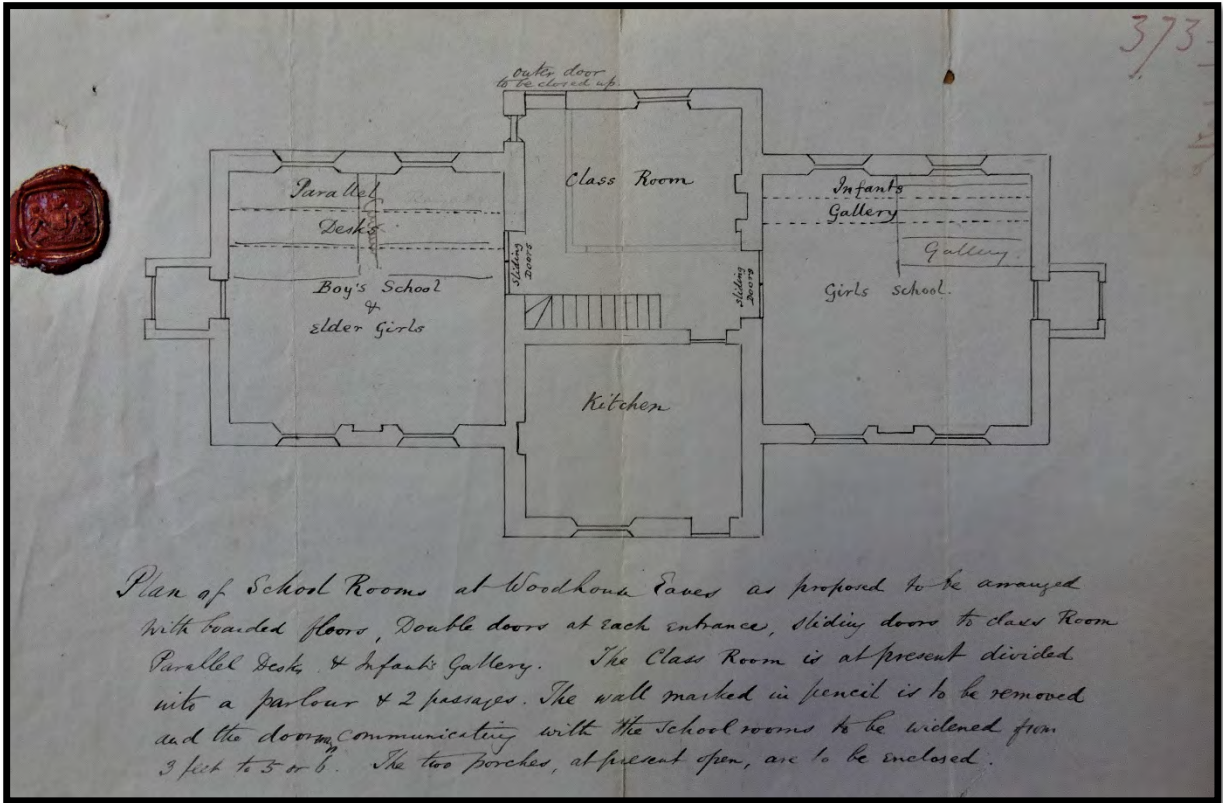


Figure 10(a). The first alterations to the school-house and teachers' accommodation.

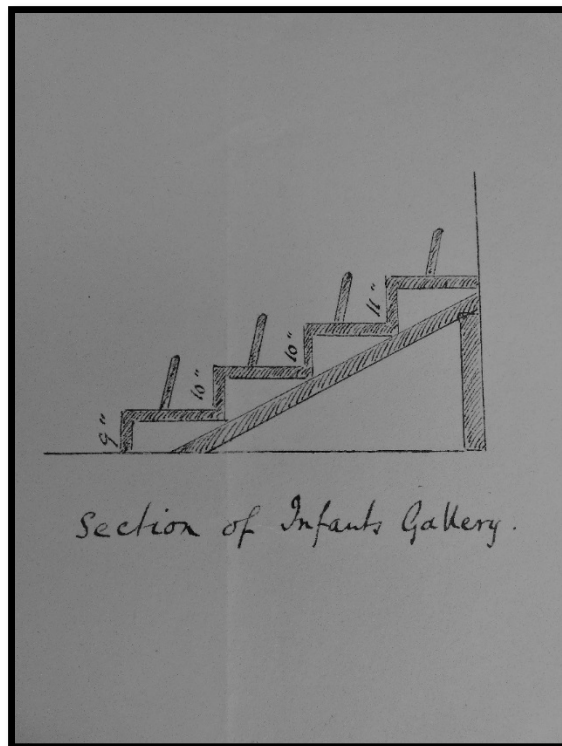


Figure 10(b). Structure of the infants' gallery.

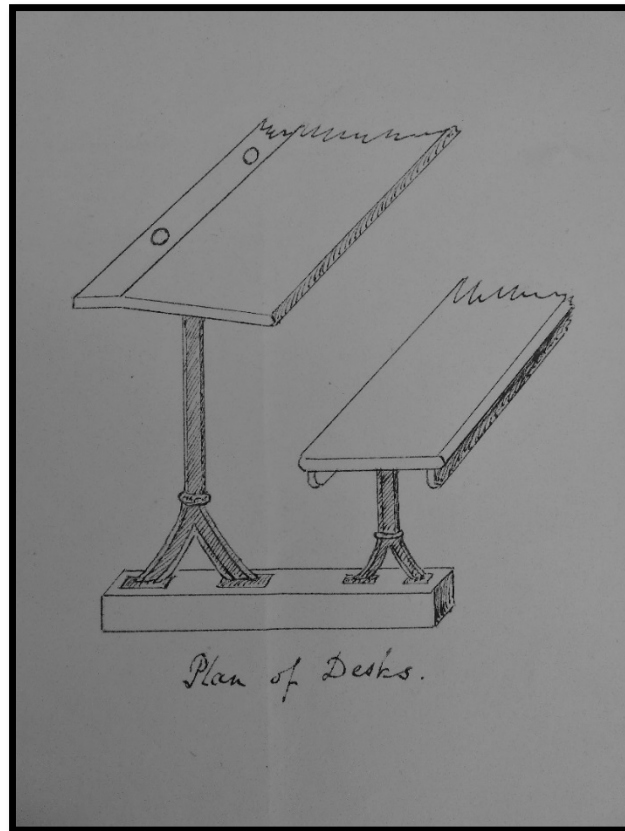


Figure 10(c). Cross section through a desk.

The 1860s

By 1861 the number of children aged 4–12 in Woodhouse Eaves and Woodhouse had risen to about 280³⁹, of whom fewer than 20 are listed as officially working. It is possible that a burgeoning population was the reason for a further increase in teaching accommodation. The next plan in the sequence shows that at some stage the wall between the kitchen and the former parlour had been removed so that the whole of the middle section of the ground floor could be used as a large ‘mixed’ classroom (Figure 11a). The site plan (Figure 11(b)) reveals that the boys’ yard was located on what is now a residents’ parking area, next to the ‘Stone Hole’, or cave (see Figure 9(a), while the girls and infants were restricted to a very small area, much of it abutting the rock face. As well as the school being enlarged, in 1860 a new house was built opposite the school to accommodate the schoolmaster and schoolmistress, and designed to blend architecturally with the schoolhouse (Figures 12(a) and (b)). Both the alterations to the school and the teachers’ house were paid for by Mary Ann Herrick, sister of William Perry Herrick of Beaumanor.⁴⁰

³⁹ The Office of National Statistics, 1861 census for Woodhouse Eaves and Woodhouse.

⁴⁰ E.S. Drake & Co., *Commercial Directory of Leicestershire* (John Kershaw & Son: 1861).

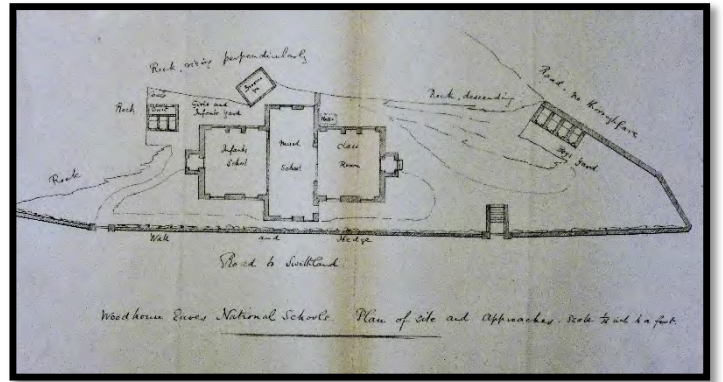
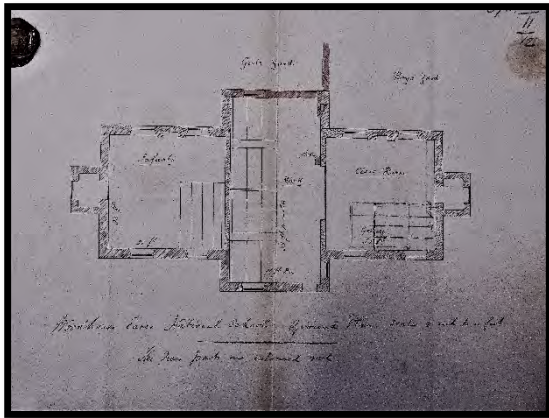


Figure 11 (a and b). *Second alterations to the school-house.*

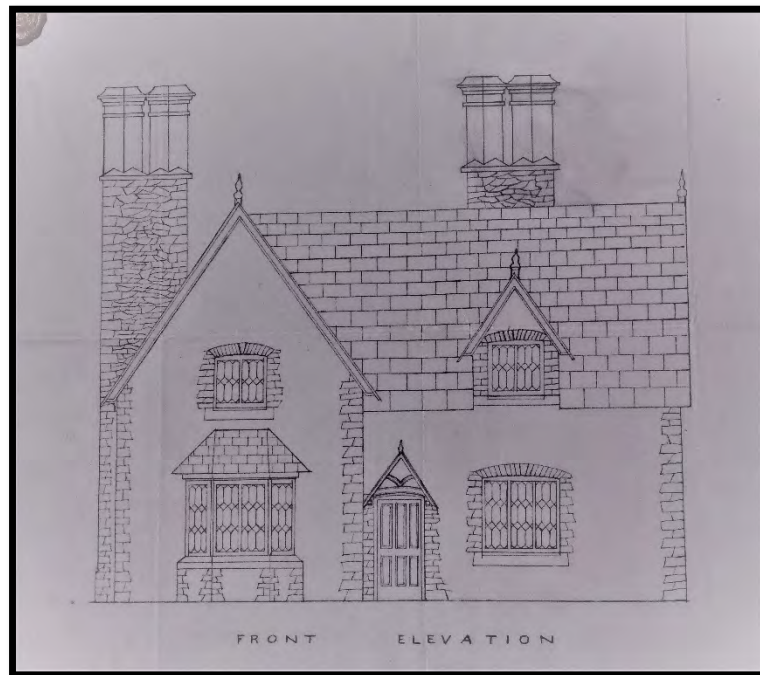


Figure 12(a). *Front elevation of the teachers' house, built in 1860.*



Figure 12(b). Front of the teachers' house in 2018, now a private house.

The accounts for the building of the teachers' house, collated by Henry Humphreys of Woodhouse, who was secretary to the school's trustees and William Perry Herrick's land agent, quote a total cost of £424 7s 9d, less a donation from Mr Herrick of £16 13s 11d.⁴¹ William Hunt, brick-maker and publican of the Anchor Inn (now Curzon Arms) in Maplewell Road, supplied 15,000 bricks, and the Revd John Simeon Hiley (of St Mary's in Woodhouse) donated £35-worth of stone 'from his stone quarry opposite'. A notebook dated 1860, possibly belonging to the builder Mr Preston, states that the land on which the house was built was 'conveyanced from Mr Farnham', probably Edward Basil Farnham, a land proprietor of Quorndon House, Quorn, and that the 'National Education Society' [National Society] contributed £65. The notebook implies that some materials were sourced from the school house, presumably items from the original teachers' accommodation.

According to White's 1863 Gazetteer and Directory, by the early 1860s 150 children were in attendance at the National School. The building must have been too small for purpose because a new infants' school was erected in Woodhouse Eaves. An 1866 map of the cottages in Woodhouse Eaves owned by William Perry Herrick shows the new building, located on what is now the southern corner of Main Street and Paterson Drive (*Figure 14(a)*). A more detailed site plan was included with the Trust Deed of June 1867 (*Figure 14(b)*).⁴² The trustees for the school were William Perry Herrick (on whose land the school appears to have

⁴¹ Leicester Record Office: DG9/2328. Accounts for the building of a new house for the Schoolmaster and Schoolmistress (23rd October 1860).

⁴² Diocesan Archive, Leicester: Trust Deed for the new infants' school, Woodhouse Eaves (7th June 1867).

been built), Revd Thomas Street Millington, the incumbent of St Paul's Church, and Mary Hiley, the second wife, and widow, of Revd John Simeon Hiley. The school register for 1866 records that of the 39 children newly registered at the school during 1866, 31 were aged five or under, of whom nine were only three years old, and a further nine only two (the youngest, a boy of two years and two months) (*Figure 13*).⁴³

27	Kate Benson	66-9	2	4	Do	Buckley's
28	H. A. Brooks	66-9	3	2	Do	Farmer
29	Elizabeth Hill	66-9	2	4	Do	Labourer
30	John Hasiman	66-9	3	-	Do	Do
31	Thomas Westley	66-9	2	2	Do	Do

Figure 13. Extract from the 1866 National School register (source location unknown).

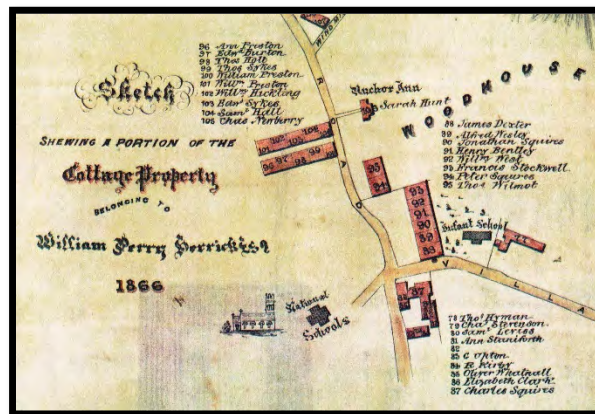


Figure 14(a). Location of the new National School infants' building (1866) (original source location unknown).

⁴³ Scanned copy of part of Woodhouse Eaves National School Register for 1866 (location of original source unknown).

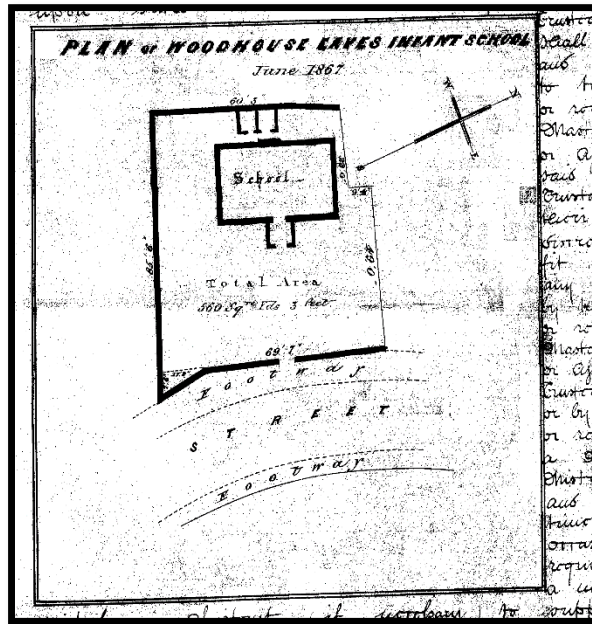


Figure 14(b). Site plan for the infants' school.

The Trust Deed makes it clear that, as for the original school of 1838, 'the National System of Education shall be adopted and used in the said school as far as is practicable.' A photograph of the infant school building, taken in 1968, before it was turned into a private house, suggests that it had changed little in 80 years.

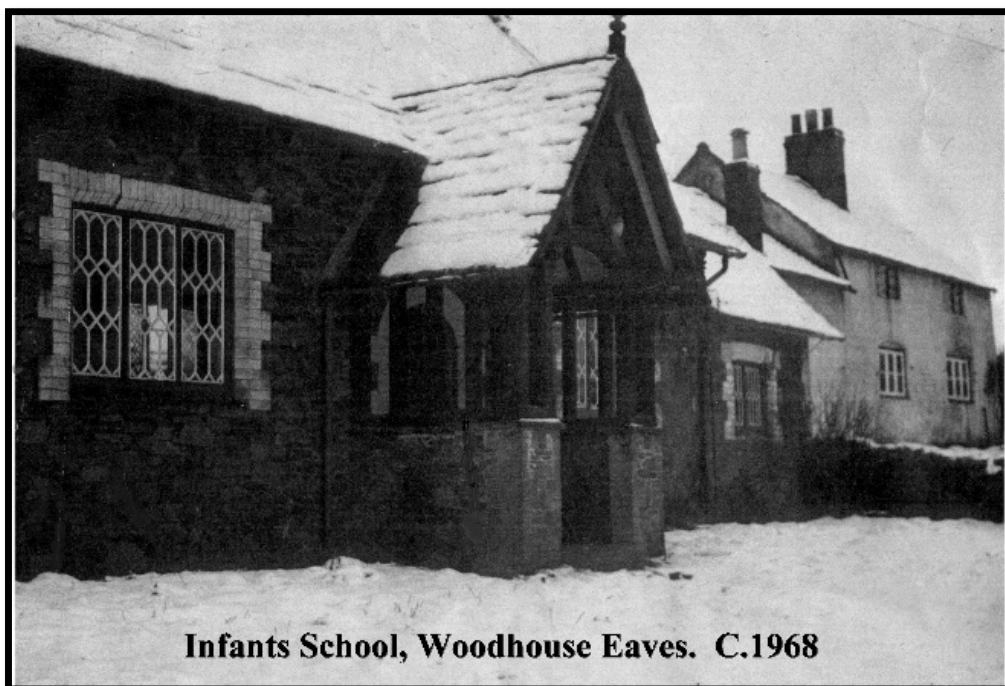


Figure 15(a). The Woodhouse Eaves infant school in 1968 (from the Brian Axon archive).



Figure 15(b). The infant school as a private house in 2018.

The late 1800s

The 1870s, 1880s and 1890s saw the introduction of a succession of education acts that would have impacted on the Woodhouse Eaves schools.

The 1870 Elementary Education Act (9th August 1870) made provision for the non-compulsory elementary education of all children aged 5–13, and established school boards to oversee and complete the network of schools, and to bring them all under some form of supervision. Children were not obliged to attend Sunday school or church services, and any religious teaching had to be non-denominational. Education was still not free, though school boards had the discretion to waive fees in the case of parental poverty. White's *Gazetteer and Directory* of 1877 indicates a probable increase in the school population, with 100 children attending the main school, and a further 100 able to be accommodated in the infants' school.⁴⁴ The existing church schools, such as the Woodhouse Eaves National School were able to carry on, and continued to receive a maintenance grant, but no government funding was now given for new buildings.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ William White, op. cit. (Simpkin, Marshall & Co.: 1877).

⁴⁵ Gillard, D. (2011) *Education in England: a brief history*. Chapter 3 '1860–1900 Class divisions [<http://www.educationengland.org.uk/history/chapter03.html>] [viewed 20th January 2018].

In 1880, a further Education Act finally made school attendance compulsory for children between the ages of five and ten.⁴⁶ In 1891 elementary education became free, and further legislation in 1893 extended the age of compulsory attendance to 11, with a further rise in age to 12 in 1899.

These various changes in the law, together with probable expansions in the population of Woodhouse Eaves, may have been the drivers for further extensions to the school. Kelly's Directory of 1895 refers to the school as having been 'three times enlarged'.⁴⁷ The third extension being probably the building of an additional wing at the northern end, and the relocation of the bell tower to face the main road. This extension, built on much of the boys' yard, may have been erected in 1897 because this was the year that a new playground was constructed in a field opposite the school. The children were still crossing Church Hill at play-time into the middle of the 20th century. A photograph of the rear of the school, taken around 1900 shows this extension in place.

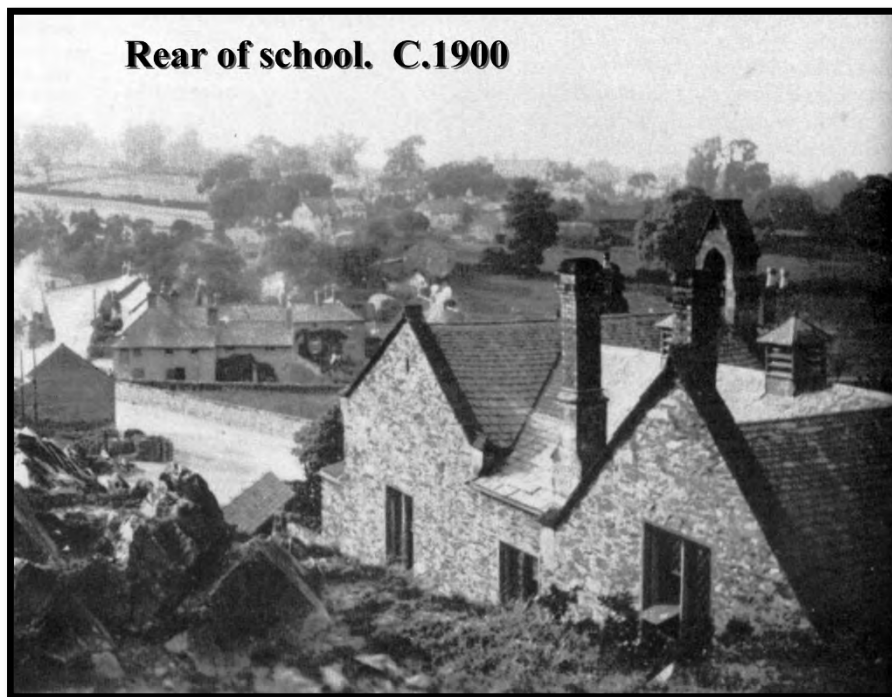


Figure 16. The rear of the National School (c.1900) (from the Brian Axon archive).

Into the 20th century

The 1902 Education Act abolished school boards and created local education authorities (LEAs) based on county and borough councils. These now had responsibility for the secular

⁴⁶ Living Heritage: Going to school, 'The 1870 Education Act' [<http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/livinglearning/school/overview/1870educationact/>] [viewed 20th January 2018].

⁴⁷ *Kelly's Directory of Leicestershire and Rutland* (Kelly and Co.: 1895).

education of children in church schools, such as the Woodhouse Eaves National School. Such schools could continue to provide denominational teaching but if they did so, they continued to forfeit building grants, as well.⁴⁸

In 1903, the document completed for the benefit of the Education Office implies that the existing trustees of the school were being replaced by governors. The trustees at this time were:

- Mrs Sophia Perry Herrick (widow of William Perry Herrick) (Figure 17(a))
- Revd Thomas Street Millington (former Vicar of St Paul's, and a published writer of religious books, school stories and ghost stories)
- Revd Arnold James Watkinson Hiley (son of John Simeon and Mary Hiley, and the new incumbent of St Paul' Church since 1898) (Figure 17(b)).

The new governors of the school, and signatories to the form, were Revd Arnold Hiley, Robert F. Martin of the Brand, and the Hon. Montagu Curzon of Garats Hay, Woodhouse. Despite the change in governance, religious instruction was still to be the 'Principles of the Church of England Liturgy and Catechism', i.e. under the original trust it was to remain a Church of England school.



Figure 17(a). Photograph of Mrs Sophia Perry Herrick, taken in the early 1900s, probably after the First World War (Used with kind permission of the Quorn Village On-line Museum).

⁴⁸ Gillard, D. (2011) (op. cit.). Chapter 4 '1900–1944 Taking Shape'.



Figure 17(b). Revd Arnold Hiley (date unknown) (from the Brian Axon archive).

In 1906 a further education act empowered, but did not require, LEAs to provide school meals for ‘malnourished’ elementary school children. However, it was the 1914 extension to this act, which dropped the requirement for LEAs to apply to the Board of Education for permission to provide these meals, which probably impacted on St Paul’s school. It was in this year that the infants were moved out of their building in Main Street, and back up to the original National School building on Church Hill; it is possible that the infants’ building became a dining hall for the school. The move may also have been the reason for a fourth extension to the school, noted in Kelly’s Directory of 1916, comprising an additional wing at the southern end.⁴⁹ A front-elevation drawing of the school (undated) implies that the new wing at the north of the building had already been built by the time the matching wing at the southern end was proposed.

⁴⁹ *Kelly’s Directory of the Counties of Leicestershire and Rutland* (Kelly’s Historical Directories: 1916).



Figure 18. Front elevation of the school following its proposed final extension (from the Brian Axon archive).

The move marked the final change for the school until 1951 when it ceased to be the ‘National School’ and was officially renamed ‘St Paul’s Church of England School’. In 1953 the infants were moved into two new classrooms built at the bottom of Meadow Road, and the juniors followed in 1970 when the new school was extended. A photo of the schoolchildren clustered outside the front of the building is probably the latest one in existence from before the move took place.



Figure 19. St Paul’s School children photographed outside the school in 1960 (from the Brian Axon archive).

On 10th September 1974 the bell and the bell tower were removed from the old school, for safety reasons (*Figure 20*), and reconstructed the following year in the front garden of what was formerly the teachers' house, opposite. It now bears the tongue-in-cheek name 'Dun Caning' (*Figures 21(a)–(c)*). Note that the commemorative plaque records the date when the bell stopped ringing (1970), not when the bell tower was removed from the school building. In the same year (1974) work began to convert the school building into four private homes (*Figure 22*), thus consigning the National School to memory.

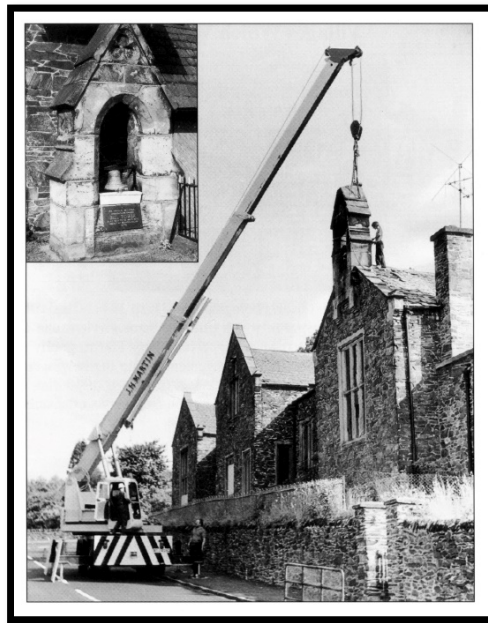


Figure 20. A crane removes the school bell tower in September 1974 (Leicester Mercury Picture Library).



Figure 21(a). The bell tower in its current location.



Figure 21(b). The new name on the bell tower. Figure 21(c). Plaque commemorating the rebuilding of the bell tower in 1975.



Figure 22. Terrace of private houses on Church Hill, formerly the National School.