

Victorian Teachers of the Woodhouse Eaves National School

By Evelyn Brown

This brief summary on some of the teachers of the National School links to the page 'A School to go with St Paul's Church' – take a look to find out more about the history of the school the teachers taught at.

- The first known schoolmaster and mistress were **William and Sarah Winterton**. They lived in the school building with their two sons and their servant, Hannah Stubbs, daughter of Jonathan Stubbs, the blacksmith.

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|---------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Robert W. Winterton | 30 | 1841 | 2 |
| Caroline W. | 25 | | 2 |
| Robert W. | 1 | | 2 |
| William H. Deauman | 10 | | 4 |
| Mary Ann Winterton | 25 | F.V. | 4 |
| Elizabeth W. | 20 | F.V. | 4 |
| Thomas Winterton | 16 | W.S. | 4 |
| William Winterton | 20 | Schoolmaster | 4 |
| Sarah W. | 30 | Schoolmistress | 4 |
| William W. | 18 | | 4 |
| Joseph H. W. | 1 | | 4 |
| Hannah Stubbs | 15 | F.V. | 4 |

Figure 1 – 1841 document listing William Winterton as schoolmaster

- At some time in the **1840s** they were replaced by **Mr Jarratt**, who was assisted by **Mary Woodfield**, but we know nothing more about them except that they, too, didn't stay long.
- In the late 1840s, Chelsea Pensioner **George Crooks** of Westminster, retired Master Sergeant in the 3rd Regiment of Foot (aka 'The Buffs'), took over, with his **wife Ann**.
- In **1851** Burton-on-the-Wolds-born 42-year-old **George Seal** and wife **Mary** were in post. Ten years later, however, they were living in a Herrick almshouse in Woodhouse – we don't know what caused them to fall into such difficult circumstances.



Figure 2- One of the Herrick almshouses

- In 1860 Bedfordshire-born **William Pettitt** (26), his **wife Elizabeth**, their two very young children and William's sister became the first occupants of the newly built schoolmaster's house opposite the school. William's father was a 'fellmonger' (dealer in animal hides).

They were assisted by Ann Preston, daughter of a Woodhouse Eaves slate cleaver.

William and Elizabeth had four more children, then, after he was widowed, he remarried and had a seventh child! He retired December 1895 after 35 years.



Figure 3- Sketch of schoolmaster's house, 1860

Figure 4- The schoolmaster's house in 2018

- In 1871, the infants' school teacher was **Emily Fox**, a fishmonger's daughter from Islington. Retired early 1900s.



- **January 1896: Jesse Gibson**, 'the Gaffer', appointed headmaster. Born in Walsall, he was a schoolmaster in Chertsey, Surrey for at least 10 years. He was assisted for a time by Catherine and Helen Stubbs, daughters of village blacksmith Joseph Stubbs.

Jesse wrote a fatherly letter to the schoolchildren every Christmas, the last one in December 1914, before enlisting as a First Lieutenant in the National Reserve: *'My Dear Young Friend, This is the most difficult letter I have ever had to write...'*

He died from illness on 7th March 1919, in the Military Hospital, Leicester.

Figure 5- Jesse Gibson in military uniform

Woodhouse Tasson

Christmas '14

My Dear Young Friend,

This is the most difficult Christmas letter I have ever had to write: and for many reasons. The school has been closed since Nov 5th. Many have been poorly. Our Country is at war. Many of our friends are now away on battlefields, bravely fighting to defend our homes. Even our own shores have been bombarded, with serious loss of life to women and children. There will be very many vacant chairs in British homes this Christmas-tide.

In all churches and chapels in the land, prayers are being daily offered for Victory and for Peace. As for what it may in time and money, we are determined that you shall never realise the horrors of war. Your parents are having to pay more for your food and clothing. They are asked again and again to make sacrifices for the relief of terrible sufferings, and I am sure they are doing this nobly and willingly. We old folks think and feel, that you children of to-day, can never realise just what this all means. These sacrifices of dear life, of money and of comforts, are for your benefit in years to come. This Xmas cannot be a merry one, but it must be a happy one; happy in the knowledge that we are one and all doing our level best.

Figure 6 - Jesse Gibson's letter to his pupils, 1914