

Langham School Days



In 1991, Maggie Wilson, the then headteacher of Langham School, abstracted selected entries from the school Log Books for a publication entitled :-

“Look Back at Langham School, 1876-1991”

Many of those entries appear here with additional extracts having been selected by members of Langham Village History Group in the course of ongoing research into schooling in the village. We are grateful to Maggie and to Cynthia Bartle, the present headmistress for allowing us to use this material.

We acknowledge the help which Dr. David Tew’s earlier researches for his book “*Langham and Barley Thorpe in Rutland, its History, Church and People*” have been to our own work and we thank those contributors whose School Day Memories conclude this publication.

Margaret Catchpole (nee Hubbard) was born in Langham in 1908, moved away when she went into service but returned to Rutland and still lives in the county. *Ben Walker* came to Langham as a small child in 1915 and still lives in the village. *Dorothy Palmer* (nee Isaac) was born in Langham in 1917 and died here in 1998. *Audrey Hubbard* (nee Rudkin) who has lived in Langham all her life was a pupil at Langham School in the 1930s, became a pupil teacher there in the 1940s and returned as a classroom assistant in the 1970s. *John Carter*, whose home is in Essex, was evacuated to Langham from Walthamstow, East London, in 1939.

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Schooling in Langham

So far, we have no information about education in Langham before 1640 when a Mr Boyd was teaching children in the church. In 1692, Langham was one of several Rutland parishes to benefit from the Forster's Charity which gave £10 a year to pay a schoolmaster to teach catechism, reading, writing and arithmetic.

In 1802 the north transept of the church, which had been used as a schoolroom, was taken down, but the churchwardens' accounts show that schooling continued to be paid for after that date. It is possible that the scholars moved to the cottage at the west end of the church where, what was known as, the Glebe school was apparently held at one time. We find reference in the churchwardens' accounts of Mr Hack being the schoolmaster in 1805 and 1807 and the accounts for 1813 refer to a school house.

In 1820 the Forster's Charity was paying a schoolmaster in Langham to teach 34 free scholars. Pigot's Directory of 1828 suggests that this was still Mr Hack but it could have been George Fowler, who in 1828, petitioned Lord Gainsborough for a "close" on which to graze his livestock and refers to having been a schoolmaster in Langham for 18 years and to have the honour of being his Lordship's tenant already by virtue of renting a schoolroom. According to the 1841 census returns George Fowler was still a schoolmaster.

In 1841 the Earl of Gainsborough built a British School which he supported. The pupils paid one penny a week. (A British School was non-denominational under the auspices of the British and Foreign Society.) White's Directory of 1846 calls the school "a neat building in the Swiss style... usually attended by 40 of each sex" and lists the teachers as William Woodrow and Hannah Clement.



A National School (supported by the National Society for promoting religious education in accordance with the principles of the Church of England) was set up in 1843 by the Vicar of Oakham. The schoolmaster, Mr Joseph Gee (according to White's Directory of 1846) received £36 a year from Forster's Charity for teaching a number of free scholars. The site of the National School is uncertain but the building now called Old Hall Cottage was formerly a row of cottages known as School Row and was described in the 1925 Gainsborough Sale as "Four stone built cottages with yard and outbuildings thereto belonging, situate in School Yard". This may have been the home of the National School.

At some stage the two schools must have united but so far we do not know exactly when this happened. We know that in 1851 John Hodgkinson was schoolmaster at the "Earl of Gainsborough's School" and Joseph Gee was schoolmaster at the National School.

In White's Directory 1863 the two schools are mentioned with Henry Mott and John Smith listed as schoolmasters but in Harrod's Directory 1870 there is reference only to the British school run by Mr and Mrs Flack. White's Directory of 1877 lists Robert Laver as the schoolmaster and it was he who began the school Log Book with the re-opening of the Langham Government Mixed School in 1876.

In 1876, the Vicar and Churchwardens were granted trusteeship of the school for the education of children and adults or children only of the labouring, manufacturing and poorer classes and such other purposes the management committee saw fit.

The committee was to consist of the vicar, two churchwardens and four others who subscribed not less than £10 per annum. The first committee members were Lord Gainsborough, Lord Lonsdale, George Finch Esq. and William Sherrard Esq.

The curriculum was reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, scripture, history and, for the girls, needlework. The Bible was to be read daily but no child was required to learn catechism or attend a Sunday School without parental consent.



In 1880 it was compulsory for all children to attend school until they were 10.

The leaving age was raised to 11 in 1893 and to 12 in 1899 (except for those employed in agriculture). In 1918 the Education Act raised the school leaving age to 14, in 1947 to 15 and in 1965 to 16.

The earlier extracts from the Log Book show how closely the school year followed the farming year and it was not until May 1919 that school terms were standardised in Rutland. Many activities, though appearing only once in our list, were repeated year by year. The same is true of reports of the weather, with January entries almost always recording heavy snowfalls.

Extracts from Langham School Log Book 1876 - 1945

1876:

- 17th Jan Langham Government Mixed School was reopened by Miss Howgill and Mr. Laver. Entered 74 children, their attainment is on a low scale, which perhaps may be attributed to the closing of the School for the last few months on account of repairs etc. going on.
- 7th Apr The average attendance this week is smaller than usual on account of the older children being engaged in agricultural pursuits.
- 28th Apr Alice Sharp left as she is going into service.
- 30th Jun Holiday in the afternoon, and also for the following week on account of the Feast.
- 17th Aug Ada S... left School, simply for no other reason, than that she had to pay 3^d for an exercise book.

1877:

- 24th Jul The School having been closed since Wednesday 27th Jun was today opened by me John Ordish Hulme, assisted by my mother, Mrs. Emily Caroline Hulme. The children were in a very disorderly state, and their attainments very low.
- 30th Jul There is still great difficulty in getting the children to be punctual, and there being no school bell, many get [here] too late to be marked.
- 31th Aug The attendance this week has gradually fallen off, as the harvest is now beginning, although the weather is not very favourable.
- 2nd Oct This School was opened by me R. Barker, assisted by Miss Agnes Keep. The children very noisy and disorderly. There was a scarcity of slates, and small pieces of chalk were distributed in order that sums might be worked on the desks.
- 2nd Nov Attendance has been somewhat irregular this week owing to a wet day on Monday and a Fair at Oakham on Thursday.

1878:

- 18th Apr Attendance is thin today owing to the sale of stock at Barleythorpe Hall.
- 3rd May The Parish Church was formally reopened after its restoration, and there was a holiday.
- 9th Aug Complaints were made of Edward S... and Alfred H... having been ill-used by the other boys. On investigation it appears that E.S. and A.H. were as much, or more, to blame than the others - Lecture + Caution.
- 23rd Aug Yesterday there were very few children at School on account of the ringing of the "Gleaning Bell", and so regular school was not attempted today.

23rd Aug The Managers decided that the Master should charge regularly on the following scale: that for the children of Labourers, and others of like rank two pence per scholar for each week for the first two children in any family should be paid, and half price for all above that number - that for the children of others of higher rank the fee should be four pence - that where there are more than two scholars from any family the half price must be paid for the elder child or children - that all fees must be paid regularly on a Monday morning in advance -that extra subjects, as Book-keeping, Land-surveying etc. may be taught at extra fees, for which application must be made to the Master.

15th Nov Alice W... has been insubordinate this week.

1879:

28th Feb The attendance has been lowered somewhat this week by sickness - a disease called "Blister-pock".

2nd May Average attendance is much lowered this week by reason of the custom of "May-bushing", which was duly celebrated.

15th Aug The School Attendance Officer called this morning to see if Fanny B was qualified for labour. Subsequently her father and mother called. She was not qualified. [*Fanny was 11 yrs of age*]

1880:

6th Feb John Harris' name was erased from the register last week. He is dead. He was usually a good boy, and would have made up his times for the Night School inspection in all probability.

25th Mar There is to be no Easter Holiday, it is so early in the year and it is before the Annual Inspection.

2nd Apr Work was concluded on Wednesday by 1. 30pm owing to some of the elder ones wishing to see something of the Burrough-on-the-Hill races.

14th May The two Neils left last week without notice, on account of a quarrel with the Mundays.

16th Jul Wednesday was set apart for the Oakham United celebration of the Sunday School Centenary but tremendous rains and floods prevented the children from coming to school. The same, exactly, happened on Thursday, only that the floods were higher - they reached the Church door, and flooded many houses. On Friday the "Celebration" took place, in Oakham and thence, in wagons, to Burley Park.

8th Oct The Harvest was not properly done with, and during the week there have been heavy rains, some houses - the "Rookery" way - have been flooded both on Tuesday and today [*Friday*].

1881:

- 14th Jan The Prince and Princess of Wales visit to Oakham yesterday made but little difference.
- 11th Mar An alarm has been raised of scarletina, but with little foundation.
- 18th Mar An alarm of scarlet fever having been raised, it was deemed advisable to send home the family pointed out by the Doctor, although the mother declared nothing much was the matter.
- 15th Jul Mr. Swift called this morning bringing a large printed "Public Caution" regarding re-vaccination, and Smallpox in Barrowden and neighbourhood, and requesting that it be posted in the school room.
- 14th Oct It has been very windy - houses have been damaged, parts being blown down. The big finger has been blown off the Church clock.

1882:

- 10th Feb A. H... came on Wednesday morning with a remarkably dirty face and hands. He was kindly requested to be quick home, and wash himself. He went. His old uncle [*his guardian*] came up in a rage declaring that he should not have been sent home as he was clean.
- 17th Mar The attendance is lower on account of the spring work - "foal-footing".
- 27th Oct Measles made their appearance this week... the disease has assumed the character of an epidemic.
- 6th Nov Owing to measles only 32 children appeared this morning [*117 on roll*], wherefore they were sent home, and the school was declared closed for one week.

1883:

- 9th Mar The elder boys came to school instead of being at work, where they could not be for the snow. They had been "bean-dropping" and some one or so "bird scaring".
- 30th Aug Tomorrow [*Friday*] is the day fixed for the Election of a Member of Parliament for Rutland, at Oakham, so it was deemed advisable to include it in the holidays, as many of the scholars intended going to see.

1884:

- 22nd Feb Several children are absent with a disease in the skin, which lasts sometimes two days, and sometimes a little longer. It is called German Measles.
- 23rd May The attendance is small. The reasons for it are sickness - whooping cough - and work. Several boys are away "twitching".
- 4th Jul This morning arrived to hand the announcement from the Education Department that £1-10-0 is added to this year's Grant on account of the Girls' Needlework which had been reported "Good".

1st Aug The Oakham School Tercentenary was celebrated that day, and the bulk of the children went with their parents to Oakham to see the Decoration of the Town, and the other sights.

15th Aug The weather has been remarkably hot during the week. The thermometer has registered 97° in the shade.

1885:

16th Jan Reopened the school. Holiday longer than usual owing to Mrs. Eades illness and confinement with a son.

13th Feb Last week the school was closed owing to the death of Mrs. Eades. This afternoon soup was given away at the Noel's Arms, and caused several to stay away from school.

14th Aug The B...s were sent home this week for their school fee - former experience proving the necessity of the measure.

27th Nov The Election of the Member of Parliament for Rutland takes place today at Oakham. Several wagons started from the school corner this morning loaded with voters, that made it impossible to do much work in school until they were gone.

1886:

19th Mar The Cottesmore Hunt met at Langham this morning, and so some boys went a hunting this afternoon.

9th Apr Burton Races made some difference in the attendance.

1887:

29th Mar A circus in Oakham drew away more than half the children who could walk that far.

24th Jun There was holiday on Tuesday it being the day set aside in Langham for the Celebration of H. M. Jubilee.

11th Nov The newspaper reports that John B...s father was fined 2/6^d.

1888:

27th Jan Several boys came late on Wednesday morning, and went away at play time to see an engine which had been stuck in the mud of an old ditch in the Back Lane got out. It had been stuck there since last Friday morning. They were duly punished in the afternoon, and their parents acquainted with the matter.

24th Feb Snow several feet on the ground has made roads in the neighbourhood impassable, and traps etc. [*Mail Cart at Knossington*] were left stuck in the snow although two, instead of one, horses were harnessed to them.

9th Mar On Tuesday morning David B... was severely punished for writing indecent words in the Reading Book which had been lent to him.

27th Jul There has been a low attendance this week - the causes are a Circus at Oakham on Monday afternoon, and taking Dinners and Teas into the fields, as well as working in the fields. All are at work who can be, so as to take all the advantage of the spells of fine weather.

1889:

15th Feb The snow storm of Sunday, which lasted on the ground till Thursday morning, made havoc of the attendances among the infants. Mr Alderwood called at noon and took away a short list of irregulars. The usual Dinner to twelve poor children took place in the Parsonage today at the usual hour.

19th Feb A sale of Furniture – Mr. R. H. Faulks - kept away many this afternoon.

22nd Mar Wednesday afternoon was the occasion of the Band of Hope treat, and many stayed from school in consequence.

29th Mar A Punch and Judy exhibition was given to the children yesterday afternoon, at four o'clock, in the Infants playground.

12th Apl There was a Tea and Entertainment connected with the Mothers' Meetings on Monday evening and the School rooms were wanted, hence a half holiday. Mrs. Finch gave notice that she must discontinue payment of school fees for the Roses, as it appeared that no good was done by paying for them.

3rd May Mr Alderwood called this morning - paid the last quarter's account for "Non paupers" 9/8^d. There are no "paupers". He also took away a list of irregulars.

9th May Mr Swinger's sale of stock this afternoon kept away many children.

24th May The hot weather has tempted some of the boys to stay away on their own responsibility in the afternoons. Some others have stayed away with their parents' leave. The weather has been remarkably hot - quite July weather: with a thunderstorm Thursday 3.30pm - 4.10pm and Friday 4.10pm

17th Jul Wednesday afternoon is the time fixed for the Baptist Sunday School Treat, and only 41 children came to school; there were 97 on Tuesday afternoon and it was therefore deemed advisable to consider it as a half holiday, and dismiss the scholars.

26th Jul The Church Sunday School Treat is on Friday afternoon, and the rooms are wanted therefore.

23rd Aug Oakham Church Sunday School Treat on Tuesday afternoon - then postponed till Wednesday afternoon, on account of stormy wet weather, made attendance less on those afternoons.

29th Nov The very cold weather has kept many of the Infants at home, and sickness (coughs, colds etc.) has kept away from school several others. Average attendance 80.

1890:

- 10th Jan Jesse B... behaved very badly this afternoon and then on the pretence of “leaving the room” went away. A note was sent to his parents.
- 17th Jan The attendance on Monday was lowered by reason of Plough Monday observances.
- 7th Feb Some children absent, sick of the influenza epidemic.
- 28th Mar Some are absent gathering foalfoots, some bird-scaring.
- 11th Apl The Poetry for Recitation is:-
- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Std. I | <i>The Two Crossing Sweepers</i> |
| Std. II | <i>Lucy Gray</i> |
| Std. III | <i>King Bruce and the Spider</i> |
| Std. IV and upwards. | <i>The Lay of the Last Minstrel</i> |
- 16th May Many children are absent for various reasons such as “cowslipping”, “twitching”, “setting the garden” etc. especially in the afternoons.
- Summary of HM Inspectors Report. Infants appear to be under the charge of a monitress all the time that the older girls are being taught sewing instruction not in a satisfactory condition. My Lords will be unable to pay the 9/- grant (Art 106a) if the infants are withdrawn from the supervision of a recognised teacher.
- 13th Jun The Policeman called on Monday morning to make enquiry concerning the breakage of four window panes in the newly empty house, which was the Parsonage. No information was elicited.
- 1st Aug The new Std. I wrote on paper this week.
- 29th Aug Harvest Holidays commenced at noon today when Rev. J. Stock came in and addressed the children very kindly.
- 28th Nov Attendance lessened by the Cattle etc Show at Oakham and by snowstorms on Wed, Thurs, and Friday.
- 5th Dec There was holiday on Wednesday on account of the opening ceremonies of the new Langham Institute, by the Lady Dowager Countess of Lonsdale, who officiated instead of the Countess who was ill.

1891:

- 16th Jan Attendance good notwithstanding the slippery roads and great cold.
- 16th Mar Weather on Tuesday snowy and cold, many stayed from school.
- 5th Apl New school year began on Wednesday. A Sale at the Grocers etc. Mr. E. Leadnam - made a great difference in the attendance on Thursday afternoon, many stayed from school to go there.

- 24th Apr The new time-table has been used this week, as well as last, the new feature is "Drawing" and that Sewing is taught for the whole of Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, instead of from 1.40pm to 3.00pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons.
- 26th Jun Several new pictures have been hung in infants' room.
- 31st Jul Weather cold and rainy, attendance less than the 100 average of the last 3 weeks.
- 28th Aug Attendance low on Thursday owing to heavy rains. In the afternoon not any came from Barleythorpe. Rev. Mould visited and announced the discontinuance of School Fees from today according to the recent Assisted Education Act.
- 4th Sep Broke up for Harvest Holidays. 4 weeks.
- 5th Oct School reopened and considering that 'Gleaning' has been in full swing the whole week, the attendance may be pronounced 'very good'. The schools have been cleaned during the Holidays and some part of "Older Dept" painted. The old Desks have been mended, and a Mistress's Desk manufactured from an old 'box desk'. Also new locks have been put on one cupboard, one old desk and the Mistress's Desk.
- 30th Oct Infants' Room has been made more usable by the addition of six new desks, each seven feet long, and having attached seats. They arrived on Tuesday evening. Attendance spoilt somewhat by potato-picking.
- 6th Nov Mrs Eades taken ill in schoolroom on Monday afternoon.
- 18th Dec There have been one or two cases of measles, and the school rooms have been fumigated with sulphur each afternoon.
- 1892:**
- 15th Jan Weather was cold and much snow.
- 12th Feb New arithmetic cards introduced.
- 19th Feb A drifting snow storm came on Monday morning. Many parents etc fetched the children home at noon, and did not consider the weather good enough to allow them to come to school in the afternoon. Considered a half holiday.
- 11th Mar Recurrence of cold snowy weather.
- 6th May Inspectors report - "Infants are now in much better order - The gallery might with advantage be reduced to one of three rows and placed at the North end of the room." This afternoon half holiday for Oakham May Fair. Tuesday a wet day, no-one came from Barleythorpe. Monday was honoured as May Day by some of the Girls who went "Maybushing"
- 13th May Attendance much fallen off in first class. Many are helping in garden work or field work. The weather has been very beautiful.

- 30th May Many older children away this afternoon on account of a sale of furniture in the village. Sixty books, in three twenties, came to hand on Tuesday 17th. They come from Messrs Allmann & Son Ltd circulating library 67 New Oxford St. London for which Colonel Jervoise subscribes 3 guineas.
- 17th Jun Mrs Eades resumed duty after nearly a month's absence owing to Bronchitis.
- 2nd Sep Harvest Holiday 4 weeks. Commenced at noon. 140 names on the register.
- 11th Nov The old gallery in the Infants' Room was taken away on Saturday. Small desks are to be used instead. The children sit on low forms this week. Sickness has broken out, usual form is a severe cold with cough. One little scholar Nelly Sewell age 4 died of croup.
- 18th Nov Four new Infants' desks were placed in the School last Saturday and have added much to the appearance and usefulness of the School.
- 30th Nov Frederick E... to stay from school, Diphtheria in family, sister very ill. Rev. Curate started a lending Library on Wed Nov 23rd charging one half penny per book per fortnight. Some ten children availed themselves of it.
- 2nd Dec The books from Allman's Circulating Library were changed. The new parcel came on Monday - 20 Abbott's *'Richard I'* and 18 *'The Three Monkeys'*.
- 8th Dec Mr Alderwood & Dr Turner visited this morning and inspected the closets and drains
- 9th Dec Weather very cold and snowy.
- 16th Dec Rainy weather. This afternoon the scholars were invited by Colonel Brocklehurst to the Bazaar & Rummage Sale at the Institute, and he generously gave each one a sixpence to spend. They were all marched down two by two at four o'clock. 130 sixpences were distributed, 122 at the door, the remaining 8 were sent to sick children.

1893:

- 20th Jan Snowy and frosty, below zero, many could not attend.
- 10th Feb Today has been very windy, and many stayed away this afternoon in consequence - some to go 'Sticking'.
- 3rd Mar Half holiday this afternoon, as a Tea and Conjuring Entertainment in the Institute are being given by Mrs Hamlyn to the whole of the Day and Sunday School. On Wednesday morning it was wet.
- Mar 21 Boys examined in Drawing by Colonel Owen HM Drawing Inspector.
- 17th Apl Report on Boys' Drawing 'Fair'
- 2nd May A new harmonium has been added to the Infants' Room. It was purchased by money collected at concerts and entertainments given by the infant scholars and friends.

10th May Report of HM Inspectors

Infants' Room measuring 20' by 6' cannot be recognised as satisfactory accommodation. As neither of the other rooms is sufficiently large to accommodate the average attendance of the Mixed School I am to enquire whether the Managers will undertake to add a new classroom. The supply of pegs in the cloakroom must be increased to the proper number, the closets must be subdivided and provided with doors, separate offices must be provided for the teachers house, new desks are needed, and maps of Europe, Asia and Africa must be procured.

16th Jun Building alterations commenced on Monday in connexion with the "Offices" [*Toilets*]. Weather very hot and dry.

23rd Jun New drains have been put in, the closets subdivided, and new closets are being built. On Thursday and Friday the closets were inaccessible to the children, and so it was thought best to open only in the first part of the day.

30th Jun Half holiday, next week off for Langham Feast. Also a Switchback Railway was in process of erection. 140 on the Register.

21st Jul Three F...s sent home from school as diptherian family although Mother said they were fit. Warning received from Rural Sanitary Authority.

27th Jul Rooms wanted for Church of England Sunday School Treat. F...s might be allowed back if willing to have their house disinfected.

11th Aug On Saturday a new desk for Mistress came and was placed in the Infant's Room. Money collected as for Harmonium.

Tuesday many stayed from school to patronize some one of the several Trips which ran. Gleaning began on Friday at noon. 109 at morning session and 81 afternoon so the break up for four weeks was inevitable.

27th Oct H family has diptheria.

10th Nov Three new wall maps, Europe, Asia, & Africa, came to hand on Monday and were hung on the wall.

1st Dec School full, weather fine. Lower on Friday when cold and sleety. Colonel Jervoise inspected new screen in the infants' room which he, with consent of School Managers, has very kindly had placed. It forms a kind of porch inside the North Door, and protects from the draught.

15th Dec New hat pegs placed in rooms.

1894:

16th Mar Colonel Jervoise visited the school. He kindly paid 10/- for a Punch and Judy entertainment for the scholars after 4pm On Monday. Rev. J. Stock very kindly gave a Magic Lantern entertainment to infants and Stage I.

- 30th Mar 26 new Primers, Picture of Tea Plant, & new High Chair for the Mistress were placed in the Infants' Room this week. They were bought with the proceeds of an Infants' Entertainment held on March 9th.
- 26th Apl Four new desks 'The Eastern Counties' Desk were placed in the school (older) on Monday morning. So many absent owing to colds & cough so school closed Thursday evening.
- 4th May Holiday given for May Day as many girls were to go around with "May Bushes". On Friday school dismissed for a weeks holiday which is given now instead of at Whitsuntide owing to poor attendance on account of whooping cough.
- 18th May Report of HM Inspector
Cloakroom accommodation must be provided at once and desirable a classroom should be added. The door between the yards should be kept locked and the offices must be provided with doors.
School Staff - Isaac Eades C. M. - Mrs. H. E. Eades C. M.
Miss. M. A. Sewell Teacher of Sewing.
- 25th Jun Notice was given on Monday, or some time near then, to the parents in Barleythorpe, per Circular, from Langham School Managers, that owing to Langham School being so full, they must send their children to their own Parish School - namely Oakham - after 30th Jun, 1894.
- 29th Jun Next week is Langham feast, wherefore the older children will be needed at home to prepare etc. so it was thought best to give Friday afternoon as holiday. The school is closed for the whole of Feast week.
- 6th Aug Bank Holiday. School attempted this morning but so few attended, they were dismissed after RI and a lesson on the journey to Yarmouth, for which a holiday is given tomorrow.
- 30th Aug The school was dismissed by 1 o'clock in order to give time for an important meeting of the School Trustees and Managers and some of the public, when my Lord Gainsborough took the chair, and there were present Rt. Hon. G.J. Noel, G.H. Finch Esq. M.P., Colonel Jervoise, and B.A. Adam Esq.
- 9th Nov The second session ended at 1.10pm in order to give time for those who chose to be present at the Institution of the new Vicar, Rev. Frederick Baggallay.
- 21st Dec Tuesday afternoon prepared room for the Election which commenced at 4 o'clock. Broke up for 2 weeks Christmas Holiday today.

1895:

- 11th Jan Snowy and very cold.
- 25th Jan Afternoon no lessons so as to prepare the room for the Entertainment to provide prizes for regular attendance.

- 4th Jun Miss. Alice Marshall commenced duty as Assistant Mistress.
- 21st Jun There was Holiday on Thursday to allow the members of the Church Choir to take their annual day at the seaside [*Skegness*].
- 1st Nov On Wednesday the New Organ, gift of Colonel Jervoise, was 'opened' and dedicated, and a half holiday in afternoon was given.
- 20th Dec Colonel Brocklehurst kindly sent Mr. W. Almond to the school this morning at 12 o'clock to distribute new sixpences - one for every child, as a Christmas box. There were 118 present. The absentees were not forgotten.

1896:

- 10th Jan Mrs Brocklehurst very kindly sent a number of dolls, with materials for dressing, for the Infants also a number of toys.
- 31st Jan Children's Entertainment. Two families have measles.
- 7th Feb The Quorn Hunt went through the village at about 1.30pm and nearly all the boys followed, wherefore the rest were dismissed.
- 21st Feb Small children have measles. Schools fumigated with sulphur regularly.
- 26th Feb Attendance fallen to 73. Measles and colds, sent everyone home until Monday.
- 20th Mar School reopened after closure of two weeks & three days.
- 30th Mar Afternoon closed on account of Poll for Parish Council.
- 1st Apl Presentation of books to 4 highest attenders 2 boys & 2 girls. Books worth 5/- each, gift of Mrs Hamlyn. Colonel Jervoise added 1/- cash to each and 6d for 2 next highest.
- 7th May Cards for "Pauper" children were re-introduced this Quarter.
- 15th May The Duplicate Schedule containing names of those who applied for Labour Certificates arrived. Certificates have been given to those who asked for them.
- 6th Jun Cloak rooms built during Whit but not finished so school began on Wednesday morning. Workmen were about all Wednesday and not quite gone yet.
- 2nd Oct School reopened after 6 weeks and 3 days. The east room has been lengthened by 12 feet in length added on to it
- 16th Oct A cupboard arrived last evening, and the books etc. are now removed from the form, and floor, where they had to be placed. One family has scarlet fever.
- 6th Dec Colonel Jervoise came. As the children in the new part of the room were cold he suggested using a paraffin stove, and kindly sent one in. A large "Veritas Stove" enamelled white, and proved effective. Next day he had draughty places in the south window frame stopped with putty. A set of nine pins with 6 balls were added to the Kindergarten stock of apparatus - the gift of Colonel Jervoise.

1897:

- 22nd Jan The weather has been bad this week especially today. This afternoon snow drifted into the Cloakrooms and powdered the hats and coats.
- 29th Jan Colonel Jervoise visited on Monday morning and inspected the cloak rooms as to the effect of the snow. Some brass nails were hammered in, in school, so as to be able to hang coats etc in safety if need arose.
- 5th Feb The weather has been very bad, snow and frost all the first part of the week, and rain with a great flood today. Colonel Jervoise visited the school on Monday morning, and decided to have doors fixed to the cloak rooms.
- 19th Feb "Bean-dropping" is now keeping some absent.
- 26th Mar This afternoon the room was wanted for a Treat kindly given to all the scholars by Mrs. Hamlyn, a medal was given to each in commemoration of the "Diamond Jubilee" and a Magic Lantern entertainment afterwards in the Institute.
- 29th Mar Mrs Hamlyn very kindly gave prizes of books to eleven of the scholars who had made the highest number of attendances during the year.
- 2nd Apl The school year closed on 31st Mar and the new Registers were begun on Thursday morning.

List of Object lessons for Infants:

1 Camel	2 Elephant	3 Cow	4 Pig	5 Hen
6 A Bird	7 Wheat	8 Milk	9 Potato	10 Sugar
11 Meat	12 Apple	13 Butter	14 Daisy	15 Bell
16 A Train	17 A Knife	18 Slate	19 A lamp	20 A Boot
21 Winter	22 Postman	23 Baker's Shop	24 Not Listed	25 Policeman

Conversational Lessons

26 Kindness to Animals	27 Truthfulness	28 Good Manners	29 Cleanliness	30 Helping Mother
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Class Subjects for 'Older Scholars' - List of Object lessons:

1 Flint	2 Lead	3 Slate	4 Slate pencil	5 Horse
6 Donkey	7 Fox	8 Rabbit	9 Hedgehog	10 Mole
11 Frog	12 Earthworm	13 Skylark	14 Robin	15 Summer Birds
16 Butterfly	17 A Fish	18 Wool	19 Fur	20 Starch
21 Mustard	22 Matches	23 Pens	24 Needles	25 Wheat
26 Oak-tree	27 Apple tree	28 Hawthorn	29 Lighthouse	30 Fire engine

Poetry:

Std I	<i>Good Night & Good Morning</i>
Std II	<i>Somebody's Mother</i>
Std III	<i>Casabianca & Village Blacksmith</i>
Std IV & upwards	<i>Horatious</i>

- 30th Apl H.M. Inspectors - J.B.Haslam Esq and Ellicock Esq examined the school on Wednesday morning and the school was closed in the afternoon. 133 children were present. The Easter Holiday of a week commenced on Thursday morning.
- 7th May May Fair on Thursday demanded half a holiday in the afternoon. The Drawing report arrived. It was 'Good'
- Summary of Inspector's Report
- Mixed School "The school is in hardly more than a fair condition either of discipline or of proficiency. Too many subjects are attempted and all the work suffers accordingly. The singing by note should improve in order to obtain a continuance of the Grant for it."
- Infants' Class "The Infants read accurately and readily, and their elementary work generally and the Needlework of the girls were very fairly well done. Drawing and Singing by note were fairly good. The knowledge of Object Lessons should be conducted in a more quiet and orderly manner."
- 27th May Religious Instruction was omitted this morning, so that the school might be clear for Service: being Ascension Day and the Church closed during the re-flooring. Service was held in the Infants' Room. The Older Scholars were not out until 11.20am.
- 25th Jun There was holiday on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday in honour of Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, which was celebrated on Tuesday.
- 16th Jul Thursday was the day set apart for the Diocesan Inspection in Religious Knowledge. The average for the week is 106.2, low on account of Hay-harvest.
- 24th Sep The East room has been painted and colour-washed.
- 22nd Oct Col Jervoise visited. He kindly sent in six beautifully framed pictures which have very much improved and beautified the walls. The titles are: *'Bubbles'* *'Long Bill'* *'Macaroni'* *'Christmas Offering'* *'After School'* *'Seahorses'*.
- 1898:**
- 28th Jan Miss. Marshall was absent, ill. Her sister, Miss. L. Marshall, and extra monitors supplied her place,
- 4th Mar A Circular re stone-throwing at Telegraph wires and posts, and one on stone-throwing at Railway trains, were read to the children and commented on.
- 24th Jun A circular from the Education Department asking for names of full time scholars who are employed for profit out of school hours, with number of hours employed, nature of occupation, and rate of pay was received. The names of 16 scholars were set down.
- 22nd Jul Rev. A. Rokeby with Mrs. Ruddle visited the school this morning.
- 12th Aug Rooms wanted on Monday afternoon for the Mothers Union Meeting and Tea.

- 23rd Sep One family, Nourish, is absent on account of Measles.
- 21st Oct The weather has been rainy and rather cold. Fires have been used, once in large room and more often in Infants' Room. Ernest W... reappeared at school after an absence of over four months. He had been at work, a School Attendance Officer had now looked him up
- 25th Nov A new swing blackboard, ruled on one side with 1" squares, other side for writing, for the Infants, was placed in school this afternoon.
- 2nd Dec Many are ill - two are absent on account of bad eyesight. One boy attends school and who must not look at a book. Colonel Jervoise is kindly having the three eye sufferers attended to at Leicester Eye Hospital.

1899:

- 7th Apr Mrs. Hamlyn kindly gave prizes to all who had made at least 400 attendances. Lucy Munday who had not missed once for three successive years received a special medal.
- 21st Dec Prizes and certificates were distributed and each child had a toy, a book and a Christmas card.

1900:

- 18th May The school work has been somewhat disturbed by the reports of the Relief of Mafeking. A confident report was about on Tuesday morning and another on Thursday afternoon. Displays of bunting were made both times, and the Church Bells were rung on Thursday.
- 28th May Yesterday showed measles to be spreading rapidly. This morning only 16 presented themselves for school, the symptoms being displayed by several of them, the school doors were not opened, and the 16 went home.
- 31st May School closed by Sanitary Authority for three weeks.
- 15th Jun Same Authority ordered the school to be closed another week.
- 29th Jun School re-opened - 101 were present.
- 17th Jul The Lord Bishop of Peterborough arrived about 10.30am and he was accompanied by Rev. F. Baggallay, Vicar, and Rev. R. D. Ninis. They all left before 11 o'clock.
- 20th Jul This afternoon occurred the most terrific thunder-and hail storm. The hail stones were of the average size of marbles, with many as big as bantam's eggs, and quite spherical. 86 panes in the front window were broken, and half of the school floor was strewn with bits of broken glass and wet, and hail stones. School work had to be suspended. The worst fury of the storm was from 2.50pm to 3.20pm. The time was filled in with Tables, Singing and Oral lessons as well as could be done for the deafening noise of the storm.

1901:

- 8th Feb Rev. R. Ninis came in school on Tuesday afternoon to say “Good-bye” to the children. He sails for India soon to a chaplaincy in Lucknow Diocese.
- 8th Mar A bronze medal for Joseph Nourish came to hand on Thursday morning from the Canadian High Commissioner for writing the best essay on Canada.
- 22nd Mar F. B. Lott Esq. H.M.I. visited the school... and suggested a freer and more general use of paper, instead of slates.
- 7th Jun Exercise books for arithmetic were introduced this week.

1902:

- 28th Feb A part of the ceiling about one sq yd fell upon the third standard on Tuesday morning at 9.55am. Nobody was hurt.
- 1st Aug H.M.I. suggested that Composition should be done in exercise books in Standard IV as well as in Standard V, as was already done.
- 18th Aug Notice was received this morning that Dorothy Munday had diphtheria, and that the family must be absent from school. She died early this morning.

1903:

- 8th May Notification was given by the Sanitary Authority last Friday of a case of Scarlet fever. The family, three Rowetts, are consequently away.
- 13th Nov The school was closed all week last week owing to the death of Mrs. Eades.

1904:

- 26th Feb The Military Point-to-Point Race on Thursday morning brought down the numbers present to 93. Those present had a little longer playtime, in order to see the Race pass near the school.
- 29th Apr The use of slates has been almost entirely stopped.
- 12th May The Staff: Isaac Eades C. M., Miss. Ethel Eades C. M., Miss. Ada Almond [Art. 68]

1905:

- 17th Feb The drains appear to cause some unpleasantness, especially in the summer.
- 3rd Mar A new map - Western Hemisphere - was received this week, to replace the one which was burnt by accident at a Cinematograph Entertainment on Feb 4th 1905.
- 30th Jun The school was closed on Tuesday afternoon on account of the Dinner to the Cottagers and Labourers and their wives, given by Rt. Hon. Earl of Gainsborough, in honour of the coming of age of his eldest son, Viscount Campden. The children were assembled at school at 5 o'clock, when Lord and Lady Gainsborough, Viscount Campden, and several others of the party came in and distributed buns and sweets.

1906:

- 19th Jan Wednesday was the day of the Parliamentary Election, and the excitement was too great - a half holiday was given - afternoon.
- 9th May Arthur V... cracked three panes of glass after the children had assembled in the afternoon.
- 13th Jul We began our duties in this school on Monday morning last. I as Master of the Mixed Department. My wife as Mistress of the Infants. [*Joseph McClelland*]
- 17th Jul I have examined the whole school. All subjects very backward, and discipline at a very low ebb. Owing to this, and because of the weakness of the staff, I can see I shall have plenty of work for some time to come.
- 26th Nov Closed school this morning by order, on account of our own little girl being laid up with diphtheria.

1907:

- 11th Jan I have opened school after the Christmas holiday, and after a very serious illness. Our dear little Cissy died the same night we closed school Nov 26th. I myself was ill for 5 weeks. The school was conducted as usual by Mrs. McClelland.
- 8th Feb I regret to record the sad death by burning of Nellie Harris, a scholar in the Infant room. Her clothes caught fire in a neighbour's house on Saturday. She died the same night.
- 8th Mar The school was closed on 6th and 7th March. The children attended the Rutland Musical Competition, and I am very pleased to place on record, the fact that we carried off the 1st Prize in each of the two classes for which we entered. Oakham came 2nd.
- 14th Jun Tuesday was Polling Day for a Member of Parliament for Rutland. I gave a half holiday as it was impossible to work owing to the cheering outside the school.
- 22nd Nov Several girls are left school though not exempt. They are supposed to be in a dying condition, yet one is a nurse girl, and the other a newspaper vendor!

1908:

- 13th Mar Maude Waite one of our Monitresses, who taught hereabout 4 years left us on 1st March. Her reason being the refusal of the Council to increase her salary which was 10/10^d per month.
- 3rd Apr Visitors Rev. G. Pattison and G. Ruddle Esq. .
- 4th Dec Visitors Mrs. Ruddle and friends. Children sang very well indeed.

1909:

- 19th Feb Visited by Dr. O'Connor, the Medical Officer, who examined the children's heads. 30 notices were sent out.
- 30th Apr Another Medical Inspection took place on Tuesday. I am supposed to be present. As discipline is not possible in a single room with seven Standards without me, I turned the children who were not examined into the yard. I have received a notice from Dr. Hewitt requesting me to have the names of the children to be examined entered up in the Medical Register. What next?

1910:

- 2nd Dec No meeting possible today. Village flooded, roads impassable. The few drenched children who attended were at once sent home.

1911:

- 9th Jun An Essay on "*Standard Bread*" has been sent to the "Daily Mail" on behalf of Gertrude Smith aged 13.
- 24th Nov On Wednesday HH... came into school at twenty to ten, in such a rude manner that I sent him out again to come in properly. He refused and went home. When he returned in the afternoon I gave him four stripes, two on each hand. This was one only of a series of rebellious acts on his part.

1912:

- 2nd Feb Twenty degrees of frost recorded at Oakham on Thursday night.
- 19th Apr An eclipse of the sun took place on Wednesday 17th.
- 24th May School house water analysed and pronounced unfit for use. This week Messrs. Nichols Bros. begin operations for cleaning out the well.
- 13th Sep A new playground has been made for the children in Mrs. Mantle's paddock. It was opened by General Brocklehurst, Colonel and Mrs. Burn and others. The ground is a good one, and reflects great credit upon Mrs. Burn who collected the funds and saw the whole thing through. The site was given by the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Gainsborough.

1913:

- 26th Jan Closed school on Wednesday by order of the Managers, on the occasion of the Induction of the Vicar of Langham. Langham Parish being created a separate living by an Order in Council and the Rev. Thomas Henry Wood, Curate in charge being appointed the vicar.

1914:

- 22nd May A Red Cross "Field Day" took place on Thursday at Burley. Twenty of my boys, who are Boy Scouts, were taken to provide the "wounded" so that no work of a progressive character was possible on that afternoon.
- 23rd Oct We have had a "War Map" presented by Colonel D.B. Burn, and the scholars take a great interest in it.

1915:

- 12th Feb A.T. Kirslake Esq. H.M.I. visited the school today. He also visited Ranksborough farm and saw the milking class at work.
- 4th Jun Miss. Atkins left here on Monday for Brighton 2nd General Hospital as a Nurse [V. A. D.] on probation.

1916:

- 7th Apr. Visitors Lady Codrington and Mrs. Hodge who asked for, and of course obtained my co-operation in the procuring of dandelion roots, in drying them and forwarding them to London.
- 26th May Empire Day was celebrated here on Wednesday. The school was closed and the children marched through the village at 9. 30am ending up at the playground where a flagstaff had been erected upon which a large Union Jack was hoisted. The children saluted and sang "God save the King" and other patriotic songs. Cheers were given for the King, and the Rev. Mandall addressed the children upon "Empire Day". "Summer Time Bill". The school clock was put forward on Friday May 19th.
- 29th Sep The clock put back one hour.

1917:

- 9th Feb The girls have completed and given to Mrs. Ruddle 94 woollen "swabs" or washing cloths for the soldiers.
- 28th Sep Bertha H has been excluded by the M.O. for one month - tuberculosis.

1919:

- 21st Mar It has been very cold and wet and we have not been able to get any coal. We are riddling the 'slack' to make a fire. The temperature in the room is 48° at 11 o'clock.
- 31st Mar No fires, no coal. Temperature 38°. Sent the children home. Went to Ellis & Everard to try to get at least a few cwt. of coal. None to be had.
- 29th Apr No coals, no fires, no meeting.
- 1st May Coals - 15cwt. have come therefore we are open in the morning.

- 9th May The Education Authority have decided that the year for all schools in the County shall be divided into four terms as follows: Jan 1st to Mar 31st - Apr 1st to Jun 15th Jun 16th to the Summer Holiday - End of Summer Holiday to Dec 31st
- 19th Sep Opened school after six weeks holiday. An extra week having been given by the Managers following up the expressed desire of His Majesty the King that a week should be given in celebration of the Victorious peace.
- 26th Sep The Dentist visited the school and examined all the children.
- 7th Nov Read a copy of the King's letter to the people re the observance of the Anniversary of Armistice Day.
- 11th Nov The Anniversary of the signing of the Armistice by the Germans. I assembled the children and gave them a short address bearing on the Great War and the League of Nations which it is hoped will prevent war altogether. At the stroke of 11am every child stood to attention and for two full minutes observed strict silence as a tribute to our dead heroes.

1920:

- 29th Oct Notices have been sent to me to publish in the village from the Education Committee of offering places in the central School at Oakham to certain children over eleven years of age.

1921:

- 4th Mar Mrs. McClelland Certificated Assistant in this school since 1906 left on Friday Feb 25th to take up the Post of Head Mistress of Manton C. E. School.

1922:

- 3rd Mar A holiday was given on Tuesday Feb 28th on the occasion of the Marriage of Princess Mary and Viscount Lascelles.
- 1st Dec Mrs. Ruddle gave me a box of old tennis balls, and the children have played with them, enjoying them very much.

1923:

- 22nd Jun It is very cold and wet. It is worth while placing on record that fires have been lighted all this week!

1924:

- 11th Jul School was closed on Thursday afternoon on the occasion of a Garden Party at the Old Hall.

1926:

- 9th Jul Closed the school on Thursday afternoon on account of the Garden Fete at Ranksborough.

30th Jul One boy - Norman Walker - received an Exhibition from the Governors of the Grammar School to which he will go at the opening of that school. He was 'Top Boy' of the County.

1928:

3rd Aug I as Head Master, having resigned, leave the district, after 22 years service here, and nearly 40 as a teacher.

1929:

30th Jul Attendance poor - Guides and Brownies attending Miss. Ruddle's wedding.

1930:

27th Feb Lily Barnett, who walks 3 miles to school was in the infant room drying her stockings and was inadvertently marked absent.

1932:

5th Mar I had to call the Vicar's attention to the filthy state of the school walls caused by the games of the choir Club. It appears that members of the club had been scaling the hot water pipes.

30th Jun Today I, E. W. Somers-Joce, relinquish my duties as Head Master of Langham School after three years and eight months.

1st Jul Today I, Leonard Humphrey Hall commenced my duties as Head Master of Langham School.

1933:

11th Jul Today BA... returned to school after six months' enforced absence through ringworm.

1934:

14th Mar I had occasion to give the cane to GD..., RB..., DN... and EW... this morning owing to their bad behaviour yesterday during my absence while I was attending to Jack Hill.

30th Nov School was closed all day yesterday on account of the wedding of the Duke of Kent to Princess Marina.

1935:

20th Sept The "Jubilee Swings" were used in the playground today. These have been erected with the money from funds for Jubilee Day.

1936:

27th Jan School will be closed all day tomorrow for the funeral of King George V.

1937:

- 11th May School closed today for the Coronation of King George VI.
6th Sep "Belisha" Crossings have been made from the school to the playground for the benefit of the children.

1938:

- 8th Jul All children were given their second treatment of immunisation against diphtheria this morning.

1939:

- 31st Jan Today, I, Leonard H. Hall, relinquish my duties as Headmaster of Langham School.
1st Feb Today, I, Dolce Ellingworth take up duties as Head Mistress of the school.
11th Sep Owing to the war the school session is from 8.30am - 12.30pm. The afternoon session being given to the visiting children.
2nd Oct School times are as follows - Institute 9am - 12noon. Langham School 1.30pm to 3.45pm exchanging with visiting children.

1940:

- 8th Jan There have been many severe frosts and the heating apparatus has been damaged. The visiting school, Maynard Road, Walthamstow, has decided to use the Institute for morning and afternoon sessions.
14th May School reopened owing to the war situation, the invasion of Holland and Belgium.
17th Sep In the event of air raids and children having disturbed sleep, children may attend school at 9.45am.
14th Dec Over two hundred children, Langham and the visiting children had a Christmas Party in the Institute today. Each child received a present, a mince pie, apple, musical toy, cracker and bag of sweets.

1941:

- 9th Jul Miss. Power H.M.I. and Mrs. Johnson visited the school to arrange about the school canteen.

1942:

- 20th Mar Warship Week.
1st May The children paraded the village this evening. The May Queens were - Ivy Cole, and Jayne Appleby. Maids of Honour - Violet Roythorne, Florence Crump, Rose Royce and Susan Rudkin.
4th May Mrs. Scott W.V.S. gave us an address on Salvage.

15th Sep Gas Masks tested.

30th Nov £11-13-0 sent towards Christmas Parcels Fund for H. M. Forces.

1943:

27th Jul The children gave a display of dancing in Mrs. Ruddle's grounds £1-6-0 was collected for Mobile canteen.

1944:

16th Mar The children assembled outside the school to see the King pass by.

18th Apr I attended the Memorial Service for Lord Lonsdale.

11th May 'Salute the Soldier Week' - the children joined with the Maynard Road Infant School in giving an entertainment on Mrs. Ruddle's lawn.

1945:

18th May School closed for the Whitsuntide and Victory Sports which were held on Colonel Ruddle's lawn.

12th Sep Victory Outing to Skegness. A happy day was spent by 164 children and parents. Price of 4 buses £53-10-0.

Langham School Days 1913 - Margaret Catchpole

The school was divided by a verandah which looked on to the Oakham Road. The back of the school was divided by two playgrounds with toilets at the back. Each schoolroom had its own entrance and cloakroom. In the junior cloak room stood a large rocking horse - probably given by some lady in the village - it was lovely but we were never allowed to sit on it and rock.

Pupils in the junior school were taught by the head master's wife, Mrs McClelland.

In Baby class we learned to count by threading coloured beads from a box, the teacher calling out "three blue, two red," etc. She would hold up the coloured bead so we were learning counting and colours. We played with bricks and looked at picture books.

In Second class we had pieces of wool mixed into a ball - we had to pick out each colour, place the pieces on the desk and, when she came round, we told the teacher the different colours. We also had a leather boot tongue which was clipped over the desk top. The tongue had holes each side, we had to lace the holes with a boot lace, this taught us to lace up our own boots. We had a slate and slate pencil. We learned to add numbers and make words. Later we began to read and write.

In First class we did reading, writing, sums and scripture - I remember a picture on the blackboard of Jesus feeding the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes in the basket. I thought, "Jesus can't feed that lot on that bit of food - we eat a loaf at teatime".

We chanted our tables and had spellings to learn. We had a box of bricks with a diagram sheet on how to build houses. We also made baskets of different shapes from cardboard and other materials. These were leisure lessons while the mistress was taking a lesson with Standard one.

In Standard one we learned multiplication in money; land measurements; liquid measurements; chanted tables; spellings; sums; hymn singing and reading. The mistress would choose a good reader to take the class, she would sit in her rocking chair, eyes closed, but listening, rocking to and fro. If we did not know a word, we gave her a gentle nudge, she would tell us the word and then go back to her rocking.

We were taught to sew. On a piece of calico six inches long and four inches wide, we made a hem. Half sewn in pink, half sewn in blue, the small stitches had to be the same length. If we pricked a finger, the white cloth would end up blood stained, tear stained (especially if we had been smacked) and grubby.

By now we are 8/9 years old going to Senior school. Standards two and three were taught by a pupil teacher. At this stage it was definitely the three Rs.

In Standard four, we went in awe with the Head's beady eyes on us and the cane on top of his desk. We took all subjects, scripture, maths, composition, copybook writing, poetry, history, geography, singing lessons- no piano, just a tuning fork - reading and drawing.

I enjoyed all my lessons except drawing - I could not draw! At the end of the lesson, the paper was in small holes by constant rubbing out and blotched, for which I was caned in front of the class.

I loved poetry. One morning the Head was so pleased with my poetry reading he said: "The next time you are sent for to be caned, tell me you are not to have it because you read your poetry so well." After the next drawing lesson, two boys and I were sent out. He was ready to cane the first boy when I blurted out that I was not to be caned. He looked at me and said: "Well, what am I to do with these?", looking at the boys. I said: "Can't you let them off as well sir?". His reply was, "Get to your seats before I change my mind."

At this age, if a pupil showed aptitude for Grammar School and a place was assured, he would be given extra lessons of a higher standard, sitting at a desk by the Headmaster. If he passed the required exams he went to Oakham Grammar School, but these places were few. The girls were sent to Oakham Bay House School (now a private house.)

I was in Standard five when we took the entrance exam for the new Central School in Oakham. (Now the Vale of Catmose college.) A few of us, including the Barleythorpe pupils passed and we started our schooling there in November 1920.

The pupils who passed with less marks went to the Central School for two days each week - the girls for cookery and housewifery lessons; the boys for gardening and woodwork. Other pupils stayed at Langham until the age of fourteen.

Langham School - Ben Walker

The Langham schoolmaster in my time was Mr McClelland, who was a clever man with a violent temper and used to treat us bad lads very roughly. He was also the collector of rates; was the choirmaster and he kept two cows on the Pastures which his wife milked. I remember an occasion when Mr McClelland thrashed some of the boys, so in retaliation they took his cows and hid them under the Cold Overton Road bridge.

I was a monitor, which meant I had to mix inks from powder. This was a messy job - either I used too much water and made weak ink, or not enough and made it lumpy.

I had to cut foolscap paper into four pieces (an economy measure) and stack them in the cupboard. Pens, pencils, rubbers, chalk etc. had to be counted and put away. The headmaster once told me that he was allowed 2/8d (14p) per pupil, per year, for materials. In the senior class, pupils were issued with an exercise book for arithmetic and one for essays. The class history book covered the period from the coming of the Romans to the Crimean War and the geography book only covered the British Isles.

Mr McClelland was always short of canes and on a number of occasions he sent me to Oakham to buy a bundle. The cost was one shilling and I walked there and back.

Langham School in the 1920s - Dorothy Palmer

Langham had a good school built for the village by Lady Gainsborough in 1841 with the playground across the road on land given later by the Gainsboroughs. When I was at school Mr McClelland was the headmaster. When the Meet of the Cottesmore Hunt was held at Langham it was outside the school in the middle of the road and the whole school was allowed outside to watch. Many of the boys did not return to school but followed the hounds which usually made the first draw at Ranksborough Goss as it was called. They would eventually arrive back at school about 3pm. As a special treat Mr McClelland would read a ghost story about that time in the afternoon but those that had followed the Hunt had to stay outside and miss the story.

The arrival of the Dentist van in the school playground was not looked forward to as you can imagine, I suppose it came once a year as it made its way around all the village schools. Fred Williamson and his horse would be sent to collect it from the last school it had been at. It was supplied with water from the school which was carried across the road and the waste, discharged from a pipe under the van, was often found to contain the extracted teeth!

Langham School in the 1930s - Audrey Hubbard

The red brick school on the corner of Melton Road and Bridge Street consisted of two classrooms known as the "little room" and the "big room". Between the two rooms was a house occupied by Harry and Agnes Minor and later by Frank and Mary Symonds. The little room was used by the infants with one teacher, the big room with older children had two teachers.

Each room had a door on the south side connecting the rooms with a veranda. There had been a door from the house into the little room but that was no longer used, shelves had been put across and doors added to make a cupboard.

On the north side were the entrances which we reached through the cloakrooms made of corrugated iron. The big room was heated by a stove, the little room had an open fireplace with a mantle piece and fire guard. On winter mornings the rooms were very cold and to get warm we often marched around stamping feet and clapping hands, by afternoon the rooms were lovely and warm.

There was no electricity, but we did have gas lighting. We had no water, only a tank to collect rain water, but the house had a pump inside. We sat in rows of wooden desks with tip up seats, two children to each desk. The big room had a piano and the little room a harmonium.

The toilets, coal shed and sheds for the house were across the playground on the north side. We had two playgrounds, the one adjoining the school for infants; the children from the other classes using the Belisha crossing to get to the playground on the corner of Oakham Road and Burley Road. Three swings stood on the grass at the far corner, a square of asphalt in the middle and the whole playground was surrounded by a wooden fence with a large wooden gate.

The Teachers - Miss Holmes taught infants in the little room for 38 years. She lodged with a lady in Jubilee Drive and cycled home to her parents at Waltham every weekend. Miss Holmes had large sheets of cardboard on which she had written, in pen and ink, all the tables, the Lords Prayer, the Creed and entire Ten Commandments. Each day she would hang one with a piece of string from a nail on top of the swing blackboard. One child would have a cane and point to the numbers or words which we all chanted. We started school at the age of four and a half and Miss Holmes always gave a new child a penny. We sat on her knee and learnt to knit dolls scarves at the age of six. She taught us how to sew hessian iron holders, kettle holders and oven cloths by making dots with pen and ink where we were to make stitches; she taught us how to tie shoe laces and tell the time.

Miss Stannage taught the middle class at the Oakham Road end of the big room, she cycled every day from Exton. Miss Stannage taught us a lot about nature study. She took us on nature walks collecting wild flowers, back at school we would learn the names. In spring we had horse chestnut sticky buds in jam jars on the window sills watching the leaves appear. We grew broad and kidney beans in blotting paper inside jam jars. We watched frog spawn grow into frogs.

Mr Hall, the headmaster had a class at the other end of the big room, he lived in Jubilee Drive. Mr Hall was keen on entertainment and each winter produced a concert for two nights on the stage in the Institute. He painted the scenery and the backcloths himself. All the children in the school had a part. Miss Holmes made most of the costumes, many fairy outfits from crepe paper and tinsel.

In 1939 Miss Ellingworth became head, she lived with her mother in Oakham and cycled to school every day. Miss Ellingworth was keen on sums. She loved May Days and we walked around the village with a May Queen, singing May Day songs at each house. She had the May Pole made and taught us to dance around it.

Religious Subjects - Because Langham was a Church of England School, Canon Mallory, the vicar came on Tuesday mornings to give a scripture lesson to the children in the little room and Thursday mornings to the older children. The first thing we did every morning was to say "The Lords Prayer". Before we went home at dinner time we said "Be present at our table Lord", back after dinner we sang "Thank you for the World so Sweet" and yet another hymn or prayer to end the school day. All classes went to church for a service on Ash Wednesday and Ascension Day. On Armistice Day, November 11th we had a service standing around the War Memorial, we listened for a gun going off at Oakham and stood for two minutes silence. A cross of moss was passed round and we all stuck our poppies on it. Then it was placed on the Memorial.

The War - At the out break of WWII , masking tape was stuck in diagonal crosses inside the school window panes to stop the glass from splintering should there be an air raid. A trench was dug in the grass at the far end of the big playground for an air raid shelter. It was dug in the shape of a W with entrances either end and was covered in corrugated iron and grass, but the steps down got very muddy. I don't remember it ever being used but we did have air raid practice. We were all issued with a gas mask which we took to school every day. We shared the school with the evacuees from Walthamstow - school in the mornings, Institute in the afternoons for one week, then the other way round the next week. After a time it was agreed we stayed at the school and they stayed at the Institute. We took money to school on Empire day (May 24th) to buy tobacco and cigarettes for the forces. The girls knitted socks for the troops in school time, Miss Ellingworth took the boys to a plot of land on Manor Lane where they grew vegetables. We were encouraged to take money to school every Monday to buy National Saving Stamps and certificates to help the war effort.

Other school visitors - Mr McTaggart was the school dentist, his green van would stand in the big playground. Dr Rollestone was the school medical officer and sent as many children as he could to have their tonsils out. If only one member of a family had an infectious illness like mumps, measles, whooping cough etc. the rest of the family members had to stay at home in quarantine for three weeks. If you were the last in the family to get it you had lost most of that term. For a cut knee we had a dab of iodine and for a bump on the head we went to Mrs Minor in the school house where she rubbed the swelling with butter. Nurse Neal looked in our hair.

Mr Drake was the Attendance Officer he cycled from Clipsham and always wore a bowler hat.

Langham was a very happy school. We played together a lot, hopscotch, ball games and skipping ropes. We never had homework. Our mothers never took or fetched us from school and I don't remember anyone getting the cane or being bullied.

Schooldays of an Evacuee - John Carter

Quite how the education authorities sorted out our schooling is unknown to me except in so far as it affected me. It seemed to me that in the first few weeks we had no schooling but simply went round on nature walks. We then had classes held in the Village School, the Institute and the Scout Hut. Our relations with the village children were at first wary, I believe that during the first few months we may have outnumbered them, but when quite a few children went home during the 'Phoney War', we grew used to each other and friendships were formed although we attended different classes having our own teachers from Maynard Road School.

In my first year, I was taught as part of the Infants under a very nice teacher called Miss Bird. Our headmistress was Miss Withycombe, a tall lady with bobbed hair, a tweed "costume" and a friendly manner who, with Miss Bird, made a point of visiting the foster homes of all her charges to see if they were being looked after properly.

In the Institute, where warmth was provided by the black stove, three or four classes would be held simultaneously in separate corners of the one large room. In the summer of 1940 I was promoted to the Juniors and went to the Scout Hut where we were taught at first by a Mr Green, a somewhat feared teacher, rather too ready with the stick. He was one of many wartime teachers called back from retirement to replace younger staff who had been called up.

Somehow though, I must have learned a few things, such as 'real writing' - to the accompaniment of many ink blots on the exercise book, the desk and me. In those days we used pens with wooden handles and steel nibs which were dipped into inkwells; surplus ink in the nibs had to be scraped off before use. We sang songs in class and I remember such traditional airs as "Early One Morning" and, at a later date, "The Road to the Isles"; a song we all learned to sing for a schools' music festival held in Oakham and adjudicated by Mr Stanford Robinson (unknown to me at the time, he was quite famous in the music world). At that event, I was also ticked off for giggling during a solo by a very large soprano lady. At school we also had to learn to sing, in English, the national anthems of the various allied countries.



Evacuee School Class outside the Institute



Langham School Group Pre 1907



Langham School Group 1928



Langham School Group 1940



Miss Eades and other teachers

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