

RECOLLECTIONS ON EDUCATION 1899-1959 BY Gladys Sumner, believed to be the sister of Leslie Sumner PhD and resident of Overdale, 45, Queens Road, CHORLEY. Kindly supplied by Maureen Sumner (daughter-in-law of Dr. Leslie Sumner.) to Chorley Historical & Archaeological Society

MY EXPERIENCE 1899-1959

Leyland Methodist School - 3 yrs old, babies class. Teacher Miss Blakely

Classroom – gallery, glass fronted cupboard, few toys. Learnt alphabet, cards, capital and small letters, stick laying and abacus. Pricked holes in outline of animal, then sewed viz. C.A.T. spells cat. Reading chart. Class repeated words after teacher. Counting figures.

Main room , two classes, Head Teacher Mrs. Warry. Class 2, class teacher, Miss Housman.

Class 1 , reading from primers. Little sums, poems, nursery rhymes etc. Learnt by repetition with teacher ,Singing altogether both classes. Every Monday morning Head Teacher said psalms. Viz: God is our refuge and strength, learnt by both classes. She told Scripture stories. Also she had a spectrum, celluloid, of colours from which children learnt names.

School money was paid each Monday morning – half-penny for each child in infant school until 1902.

Children wore clogs, girls wore pinafores, many boys wore suits of brown corduroy, called, fustian, and caps.

Headmaster, Mr. W. Moore. Classes five and six standards. Assistants, Mrs. Crozier. Certified for classes 3A and 4. Miss Billington uncertified. Classes 3B and 2. These were in the main room. Classes sat facing Mrs. Crozier, with Miss Billingtons to the left of the room, and Mr. Moores to the right. There was a cupboard, a harmonium a platform and a door, and also a cloakroom.

Standard 1 Miss Brown, uncertified teacher(qualified by passing Queens or Kings Scholarship exam).

Staff was allocated according to number of children – usually 1 certified teacher for about 60 pupils. Salary paid according to the status of the place not the status of the teacher. Even if a certified teacher occupied an uncertified place, he or she was only paid the salary of uncertified teacher.

Pupil teachers – First as Monitors in school for 4 years. Head Teacher gave them lessons before school began. Annual Grant from Government was based on result of examination held by H.M. Inspector.

Geography, Stds. V and V1: Scotland, Europe, Australia, Africa, Asia, general position names of countries in these continents. MAPS.

Needlework, Girls Std. 1 Hemming specimens and Stocking Stitch.

Standard 11 and 111, seaming specimens, purling, knitting dishcloths. Miss Billington taught girls who brought thick needles, and thick wool and two ply in two colours . viz. Thick Berlin wool, pink, two ply White. How to knit a scarf in two colours . I knitted one in pink and white with tassels at each end. A join in seaming was taught by using two colours viz, red/blue

Sts. 111B 4 V V1. How to patch garments, darn stockings, use 4 needles in knitting. On two needles we knitted white cotton diamond pattern in the middle. These were joined to make a quilt to be sold in aid of school funds. We had to make chemises in unbleached calico which was very stiff and hard to sew. I pricked my finger many times and had to undo the band at the neck. This didn't make me like sewing. We also knitted vests. Boys had drawing during needlework lessons.

Drill, taken usually in the yard, was very formal viz. Forming fours, eyes right, dressing ranks sometimes we used Indian Chuks and hoops. Singing was taken, all classes together. Hymns were sung

Children stood on the back seat when oral lectures were given. Learning by heart, tables repeated daily. Mrs Crozier often took scripture for the whole school. Good disciplinarian and good teacher. Spelling taken daily. Children in lower classes read passages aloud with teacher. Simple addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in St.1 Tables, mental work, long division, division by factors. Std 11 and 111B. Additional subjects etc. £.s.d. money sums. 111A & V1 Practice, proportion, ratio, fractions etc. Std V and V1 Sum cards mostly mechanical but some problems. Mental work in all classes. Writing practice, copying from blackboard, mostly on slate using slate pencil and small sponge in lower classes. Occasionally in books in higher standards, especially after 1902, when books were provided free by Education Authority. Previously children had to provide own slates and pay for any exercise books .

School money was 1d for each child. Dictation was given in upper classes. Passages were copied from blackboard. Simple exercises to begin writing, short compositions, writing in own words something that had been told. In stds.. V and V1 cards were given out , each had a few ideas on some subject, often abstract, I remember having one on 'Inertia' Pupils had to try to enlarge on these.

History in lower classes, stories in readers : higher classes periods like, Hanovarian.

Geography in lower classes; definitions of such things as ; capes, islands etc, and finding them on maps. Also finding position of countries on map of the world

Std.111A and 1V. England and Wales, all counties. Capitals of counties and rivers on which they stand. Viz. Lancashire – Lancaster on Lune to be learnt. Mrs. Crozier used to point these out on map, and children were questioned before going home and had to know them. Later Scotland, outline.

Poetry learnt by heart, by repetition. Teacher wrote poem on board. It was copied on slates. I remember learning: 'Graves of a Household' - F. Hemans, and 'Bruce and the Spider.' When I was in std. 11 and 111A 'Horatius at the Bridge' taught by Mrs. Crozier. Also sometimes in fine weather we went in the playground and stood near the Chapel and repeated the poems in unison.

Mr. Moore had a can to use to punish offenders.

When Evelyn was in Std, V1 she passed an examination worth £5 to attend Balshaws Grammar School for one year. There were only a few such scholarships provided by Balshaws Fund. Not many pupils received higher education. Most children went to work half time in the mill at the age of 12, and got half a crown a week for 'tenting', helping a weaver, and learning. They were often sleepy in the afternoon as work started at 6-00 a.m. Evelyn had to attend Wellington House for a few months until the new Balshaws school, adjoining the old one in School Lane, was finished. The old school was used for cookery lessons, and also a chemistry laboratory was made. My father attended the old school. In 1906 Fanny Hargreaves and I passed the Balshaw's Scholarship exam.

A few days later we both heard that we had been awarded the first 'Junior Exhibitions' from Lancs County Council. These were for one year renewable each year for four years, subject to satisfactory reports on our work. We renounced the Balshaw Scholarships. I still went to Balshaws school and Fanny Hargreaves chose to attend a Preston school. I attended Balshaws Grammar school until August 1908, when we removed to Chorley and my Exhibition was transferred to Chorley Secondary School (Grammar).

Balshaws School : I went in 1906, a few years after the new school was built on Golden Hill.

Teachers: Head Mr. F. Jackson, became M.A. on writing a thesis – Top Forms. Mrs. Jackson, Degree in Music. Miss Kay, both forms 1 & 2. Mr. Clements M.A. form 1V taught Maths. : Mr. Stubbs Bsc. Form 111 taught science. In 1907 Miss Dodd B.A. joined staff to teach French.. I was in form 111 and then from 1V.

Co-educational : boys had not to speak to girls or they received Order Marks and vice versa. No speaking in cloakrooms except in French. Gloves to be worn by girls before leaving school premises. Most pupils were fee paying.

Chemistry Laboratory and Cookery room, converted from old Grammar school. Only girls in forms 111 and 1V had cookery lessons. Mrs. Jackson took cookery classes, no domestic science teacher. Other girls had needlework. Drawing was of geometrical figures in groups viz. Cube, cone, pyramid etc. No organised games in curriculum. Drill in the hall with Miss Kay. No P.E. teacher. Trapeze and rings, all girls together.

Miss Kay and Mr. Jackson taught French before Miss Dodd came. Scripture was examined by Diocesan Inspector. I won 2nd form prizes in 1907 and 1908.

1914-1915 Student teachers teaching all week at school, Saturday for lessons

1917-1918 Student teachers 4 days teaching, one day at school

Earlier in the decade Pupil Teachers were at the primary school all day, every day. Head Teachers gave them lessons as well as training in teaching.

Teachers Head Teacher – Miss Spencer. 1st class assistant uncertified - Miss Wareing. Reception assistant uncertified – Miss Lovett.

Miss Spencer took class 111 with aid of 1st year, myself and second year Nellie Haworth pupil teachers. 1911 number of pupil increased to 120, and additional uncertified teacher was appointed. Pupil teacher had to take section of class 11 for reading (primers used with std. 1)

Reading : Phonetics, reading chart, blackboard . Pupil teachers had to give a Criticism lesson every week. Other subjects were correlated. On Friday morning, Head Teacher gathered up threads of Criticism lessons with children. I learnt a lot from her in this way. Head Teacher taught Cursive Writing from basic forms between lines viz pencils used.

Tables learnt by singing. Pupil teacher took lessons in number in form of games or with sticks – ‘apples on a tree’ ‘birds in a tree’ Head teacher used to ask children ‘how many fingers’ as she held them up. Drawing on blackboards, plasticine. Pupil teachers taught first class girls to hem using material with red and blue dots where needle had to go.

Pupil teach took class 11 for games along with Reception class teacher. Scripture lessons and singing taken together, classes 1 and 11 as classes were in same room with curtain between.

Reception class in separate classroom storytelling. Lone wash basin in cloakroom.

On days at Secondary school lessons were taken in preparation for Preliminary examinations for Teachers Certificate. Qualifications for Uncertified Teachers and for entering Training College and Matric of Northern Universities. Also some students took Matriculation exam of Northern Universities. With unseen passages instead of set books – exam qualified for London University. I passed this exam as well as Prelim. Exam with Distinction in French.

All students could not gain admission to Training College, but due to family circumstances at that time, (1913) I took a position as an Uncertified teacher at Hindley Green V.M. school I had to travel by train and tram Salary £45. Staffing was not as it is now. Very often there was only one Certified teacher, besides the Head Teacher, in the school Ratio of staffing was set out in the Code. Salary was paid according to the kind of place – not for qualifications. Viz If a Certified teacher was in an Uncertified place, she received the salary of an Uncertified teacher . This was altered by Mr. H. Fisher (1918) who set up Burnham Committee and stated that Certified teachers must have minimum of £90 : Uncertified teacher £65.

At Hindley Green I taught std 11 for 6 months and std. 1 for 6 months.

Education was very formal, three classes in one room. Only one set of readers, a third to be read each term, if part was finished before the end of term, it had to be read over again. Three classes in one room – quietness essential.

Std 11, long desks. Back row stood on forms during oral lessons.

English – teacher wrote short composition on blackboard, copied by children and learnt. Slates used as well as pencil and paper. Not much equipment. Formal Drill. Marching etc.

Scripture – Head teacher took Assembly and simple Bible lessons.

Singing – all classes in main room had singing together.

Geography – Pictures of cape, islands, bays etc. then found them on map. Std1. Stories of Dutch, Red Indians and other people.

History – stories of Early Britain : std. 1 in small classroom upstairs: Std. V and V1 in another classroom. Staff: Head Teacher : 1 Temp. Cert. Came on supply.: 1 Cert. Teacher .: 3 uncertified Teachers. Head Teacher; small, but had stentorian voice and was very autocratic.

All Saints school (Junior) (NOT SURE FROM NOTES, BUT THINK THIS MAY BE CHORLEY. J.D.) In July 1914 I was appointed Assistant Uncertified Teacher. Salary £55 -£65. Increments £ 2.10s. During the time I was there from 1914 – 1935 I taught Class 1 Class 11 Std. 1 Std. 11 and many lessons with two classes together. Viz. Scripture, History, Story telling, Singing, Folk dancing, Drill, Games. Often in absence of Reception Class teacher I had to combine Class 11 and Reception class.

I passed Acting Teachers Certificate Examination 1919 and had status of Certified Teacher from April 1920. I had a Distinction in Geography.

In 1925 I was Senior Assistant and was in charge of school when Head Teacher was absent because of illness.

Staff 1914: Head Teacher : Certified Assistant : 4 Uncertified Assistants.

School was used as Church on Sundays. Reception class was in classroom and was seated on a gallery. This was pulled down in 1924. Stds. 1, 11 and 111 were in room with Font at one end. Boards and easels were used. Class 1 and 11 were in room formed by partition. Organ, Choir Stalls (forms) Lectern was in this room. Communion Table was in small space behind closed doors.

In my first year there Head teacher came once a month to hear me give a lesson. Her comments were very helpful. She was a good teacher and had lived in America and lent me books on Primary Education there. She allowed her teachers to try out new ideas and attend Educational classes. All for the benefit of the school. On Saturday mornings I attended lectures at Wigan, on Handiwork in infant schools, by a lecturer from Manchester, who had formed a Voluntary Nursery School in Ardwick, Manchester after being a Lecturer at Manchester University. Most of those attending were Head Teachers, and in Dec. 1919 all of us received permission to have a day's leave to go to Manchester to visit the Education Dept. of the University and see classes at work in a good class area and then to visit the Nursery school in a slum area – Ardwick. We had lunch with several lecturers and had a discussion. The nursery school was one of the early ones. On the staff was a Cert. Teacher from another city who had a year's leave of absence, so that she could start one (nursery school) on her return. It was quite interesting to contrast the two types of school.

The following year I attended another course, also in Infant work and handiwork. The lecturers were from The other Training College, Manchester, and we learnt various types of handwork, including leatherwork, which was quite new. We had to cut all our own thongs. We made purses, repousse work. Later I made a handbag with several compartments, for use when I went to Switzerland in 1925.

These courses were organised by Lancs. Education Committee, and only a certain number of teachers were chosen to attend from all the applications received. I was lucky and so was another teacher on our staff, who attended classes for Folk Dancing. We told other members of the staff

what we had learnt, so that we could all make use of the knowledge we had acquired. When the other teachers left, on marriage, I was able to take over the Folk dancing lessons.

I must just say that for a number of years there was no School Medical Service, as there is today I remember the first school nurse being appointed.

Scripture – according to teacher's syllabus later, according to Agreed syllabus, FOR Council and Church schools. Examinations yearly by Diocesan Inspector

Reading – Phonetics. Reception class learnt letters (sounds as well as names). Class 11. Games to learn words – word building on desks by means of small cardboard letters. I drew all kinds of articles with words underneath and hung pictures on wall. Reading books used. Class 1 reading from books individually to teacher. Stds. 1, 11 and 111, reading individually to teacher from good supply of books. New words put on blackboard and learnt.

Number- Class 1 and 11. Games and simple lessons on meaning of figures – using sticks and counters to teach meanings of units and tens. Then simple sums. Stds. 1,11 and 111. Mental Arithmetic , Tables, Mechanical sums and problems . Tables. Neatness in setting down work, important.

History – Stories of early settlers in Britain. 'Highroads of History' used also as a reader in std 111. Stories dramatised.

Geography – Infants – Stories of children in other lands. Juniors – stories of different kinds of areas illustrated by pictures and models and life in these places, including own district and county.

English – Stories told by teacher and retold by children, who then wrote them out. Children taught cursive writing for many years, then script was introduced. Children had to answer questions in writing. They were asked to write about subjects such as , my mother, father, home etc. my holiday.

Drill – At first very formal according to Board of Education Syllabus . Ranks, Dress, Form Fours, Marching etc.

Handiwork – During 1914-18 War, I taught both boys and girls how to sew buttons etc and knit. Later I taught handiwork, involving measuring, cutting and pasting paper and cardboard. Viz. Envelopes, boxes, .passe partout pictures and making of children's books – pictures pasted on cardboard and then fastened, by means of leather thongs.

Drawing. – Free expression, using pastels.

After passing of the 1918 Education Act and formation of Burnham Committee, teachers received salaries according to status and received annual increments. At first – four scales. Lancashire was on Scale 111

School Meals. – During 1914/15 breakfast and dinner were given free to soldiers and children. Teachers had to supervise breakfast at 8-00 a.m. - dinner at 12 noon . Breakfast – Porridge, golden syrup, piece of bread and margarine. Dinner – Mostly stew and suet balls and rice pudding.

Highfield School, (Chorley) School dinners were started during 1939-45 war at Highfield school(Chorley) this was the first centre. Teachers had to supervise meals. Also during 1939 – 45 War teachers had to do Fire Watching at school during night. There were beds on which we could rest.

Highfield Infants – 1935. Aug. I was appointed Certified Asstnt. At Highfield County School, (opened in 1928) in the Infant Dept. I taught the reception class until 1959, when I retired. There were three classes each in a separate classroom. Staff, Head teacher and 2 certified assts.

Equipment – Tables and chairs, large wooden bricks. Each child had a hessian bag with an embroidered picture on it. Bag contained ; Coloured pencil, plasticine, in tin, plasticine board, box of crayons . Bag was fastened by tapes on back of chair. Also hung on back of chair; each child possessed a sponge bag, provided by parent, containing face cloth and small towel and soap.

Jigsaws, small sand trays, large sand tray, rocking horse, slide and swing boat. House made from clothes horse covered with hessian painted to look like bricks.

Number, Rhymes, singing and number games . Large beads counting , matching numbers to numbers on cards. i.e. Sense training: size, shape and colours. Matching shapes, sorting colours. fitting different shapes and sizes in insets Sets of dominoes with coloured dots

Writing – Each child had a card on which his or her own name was printed. Also card viz. Tom can dig. These can be traced using tissue paper. Shapes of letters made in small sand trays and with plasticine . Fill with lines for control. Use small blackboards for large arm movements

Reading – Cards placed on various objects, table, chair, door etc . Small words match these on card, when all matched trace through tracing paper... Large flash cards, Apparatus made by teacher Large cards containing picture with nursery rhyme under – match separate words. News sheet written daily.

Stories dramatised by children. Scripture stories dramatised. Singing taught by teachers singing to the children- hymns and songs. Short poems and nursery rhymes. Games and Drill according to Board of Education Syllabus, taken in yard

Music and Movement in hall to music from gramophone and radio. In 1938 Head teacher attended fortnight's course on Nursery School Education at Liverpool University

Before free milk was provided, teachers made Horlicks and charged a halfpenny a cup.

After her return, the head teacher , introduced 'rest period' in afternoon. 12 children lay on mats, rest of class rested in chairs with heads on tables . I made blankets, from old blankets at home, blanket stitched in different colours . Sheets and pillow cases and pillows were blue . I attached same colour of bead to blankets etc . so that children could recognise their own. Children taught to fold and put away their blankets etc. Also milk had to be served in cups. And tables had to be set, cloth put on first, then mats on which to put cups . Children had to take it in turn to pour milk uin cups from jug and carry to the tables. Children washed and wiped cups.

Teachers joined Nursery School Association and attended lectures at Preston. When I first started I took two doll's prams (my nieces), dolls, dolls beds (2) made by my brother-in-law. My sister made bedclothes for the beds.

Daily news sheets from News from Children

In 1938 I provided small baths (6d each from Woolworths) for water play. Made small holes in for safety. Woodwork Master made 6 easels so that large pieces of paper could be fastened on blackboards. Large brushes were introduced for painting. Free expression

In 1939 before War, more toys were purchased; large engine, large trucks, three wheeled cycles. These were used in the yard and on the lawn. Hammer toys, pull along toys.

After the War – new methods of P.E. Free movement to music and broadcast on radio – Music and Movement, Climbing frames and vaulting horse, large hoops Teams. Children used these things when wearing vest and pants.

In 1950's – new methods of teaching number, using scales, measuring, having shops, cardboard coins, shopping, writing down in books items bought etc.

Cutting out pictures, making scrap books. Drawing pictures to illustrate news. These put on 'News Sheet' each day. Children read news. Large clock for telling time,

Allowance from Education Authority for books - Many books bought for library. Children could get these from folding book case. Friezes made from work done by children. Collage used

Records – Each term work done by each child put in concertina type of folder – added to in each class. This when children were ready for promotion. Head teacher of mixed depts.. could see the child's work from Reception class to class 1. Each teacher made a report of child's work on form pasted on front of the folder.

Absolutely amazing stuff regarding education in various schools in and around Chorley area from 1899 – 1959. Thankyou Gladys Sumner for your memories and recollections, and to her family for passing them on to Chorley Historical and Archaeological Socy. J.D. March 2014. For C.H.A.S.