

Staffing the School

It was not only children that came and went. In the period of this study there were 10 Mistresses of The Infants' School and many more Assistants, Pupil Teachers and Monitresses. The staff was entirely female. This is not the place to make a complete record of all the staff arrivals and departures, but some are worthy of note.

Mistresses of Glemsford Infants Board School

1. March - Dec. 1874 Annie Forbes (Miss Jones - Girls School superintended for 6 weeks)
2. Feb. 1875 - Mar. '78 Eleanor Lilley
3. Apr. '78 - Aug. '78 Effie Gardner
4. Sep. '78 - Aug. '85 Margaret Hammond
5. Sep. '85 - Mar. '88 Amelia Hammond
6. Apr. '88 - Oct. '91 Sarah (?) Roberts
7. Nov. '91 - Feb. '94 M.G. Telford
8. Mar. '94 - May '96 Ellen Robinson
9. Jun. '96 - Jul. '96 Emily Parnell
10. Aug. '96 - Jul. 1903 Eleanor Bowrey

It has already been noted that the Infants' Mistress was paid less than the other two Heads. Until the appointment of Miss Telford, from Barnsley, the Mistress' pay also depended on the size of the grant that the Schools received after the Annual Inspection. Margaret Hammond received £55 per year, plus one eighth of that grant. The size of the grant itself depended on a number of factors, including, certainly, the pupils' success in their examinations, but also attendance levels.

It was usual practice for each teacher to apply for an increase when they thought it appropriate. This was obviously a game of fine diplomacy; sometimes the Board agreed, sometimes they refused in quite withering terms! The Mistresses of the Girls' and Infants' Schools shared a house; they also seem to have hunted in pairs. Until the arrival of Ellen Robinson, the two appointments had always been made simultaneously, and resignations had coincided as well. It is not clear why this changed.

It would be impossible to chart the passage of "ordinary" staff, but one does deserve special mention. Mary Plume first appears in the log book in April 1876 when, at the age of 7, she "passed Standard I" and so moved on to the Girls' School. She started her teaching career in the Infants' School as a Monitress on 7 July 1882. Three weeks later she was described as showing "no aptitude and having no control". She survived. In 1884, she became a first-year Pupil Teacher, and having successfully negotiated several awkward lessons, such as "The Horse" (March 1885) and "How Children Can Be Useful" (November 1885), she passed the necessary exams in April 1889 to qualify as a teacher under "Article 50 but not 52". She then left the school (probably to train further) but was re-appointed in October 1892, now qualified under "Article 52". She stayed another 10 years, sometimes taking greater responsibility, as, for instance, on November 16th, 1900 when she took charge in the absence of the mistress and actually signed the log book. When, on 24 October 1902, she finally resigned, her service with the school covered 20 years. Miss Bowrey recorded Mary's departure in a way which was totally unusual for the school: "Miss Plume, who has been an Assistant Mistress in this school since 1892 left school this afternoon to the great regret of her fellow teachers, and the scholars." Quite a compliment to one who had, so early shown "no aptitude", and whose career spans the whole period of this study.