

The British and Marwood Schools

(Part of a chapter from "Great Ayton – A History of the Village by Dan O'Sullivan")

Thomas Richardson did much for the village. He was responsible for the rebuilding of the waterfall in the centre of the village, and he initiated the project of erecting the four almshouses at the corner of the High Green (although they were actually built by his cousin and heir, John Pease). In 1842 he endowed the British School for the education of the poor children of Ayton and neighbourhood by providing it with four shares in the Stockton and Darlington Railway. This was to be a large, non-denominational school, also run on monitorial lines, under the auspices of the British and Foreign Schools Society, a non-conformist organization started by Joseph Lancaster. When the local paper reported on the opening of the school they were at pains to dispel the rumour that the teaching would be biased towards the Quakers:

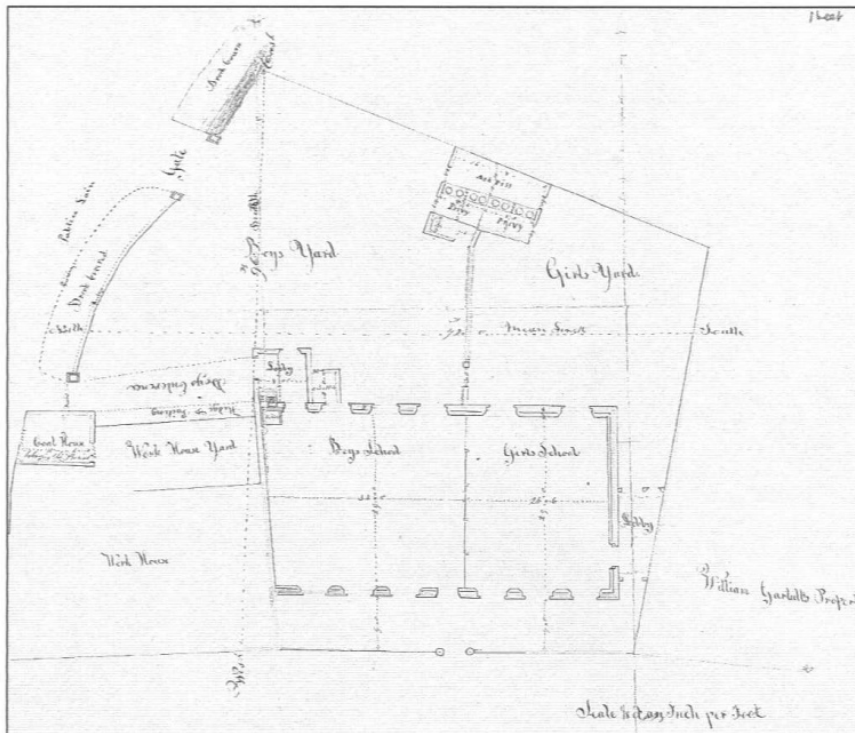
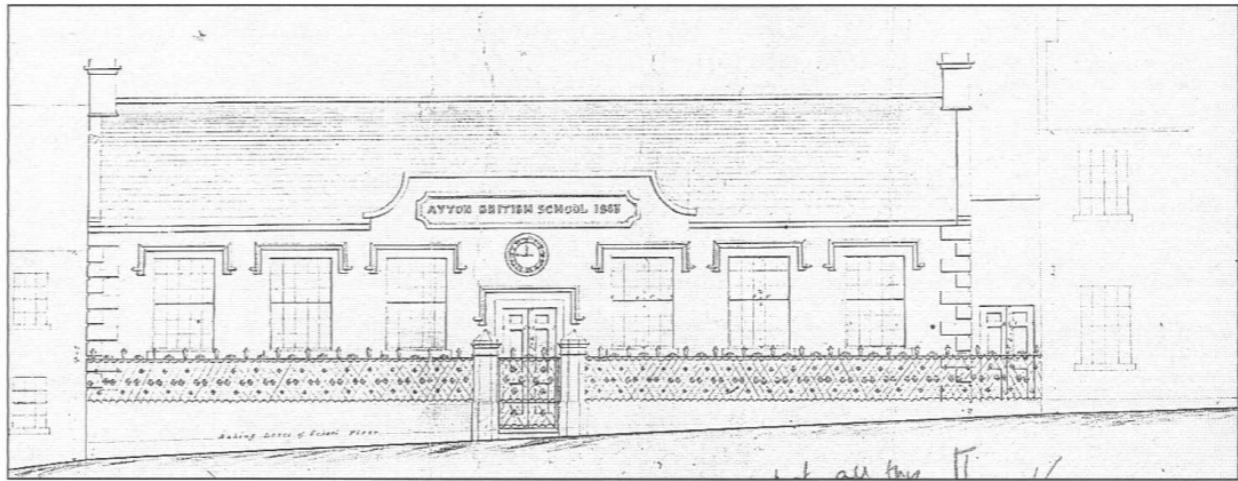
We feel it our duty to contradict the report so current in the neighbourhood that the Society of Friends have a selfish motive in the establishment of the school... On examining the list of persons proposed for officers to this establishment, we find those of the Society of Friends in the minority which clearly justifies the statement we have made.

Trustees		Committee of Management	
Established Church	5	Established Church	7
Society of Friends	4	Society of Friends	6
		Wesleyans	1
	9	Independents	3
			17



Nancy Tindall lived in Eagle Street and went to the British School, as did her sister, Mabel, and her brother, Herbert.





The original plan by the architect of the British School, William Burn. The provision of separate entrances for boys and girls shows how determined the authorities were to keep the two sexes apart.

In 1851 the British School was attended by 63 boys and 41 girls. The building since 1972 has become the public library, but the school sign can still be seen in the car park behind the library. In 1996 a plaque was put up at the entrance to the library to commemorate the school.

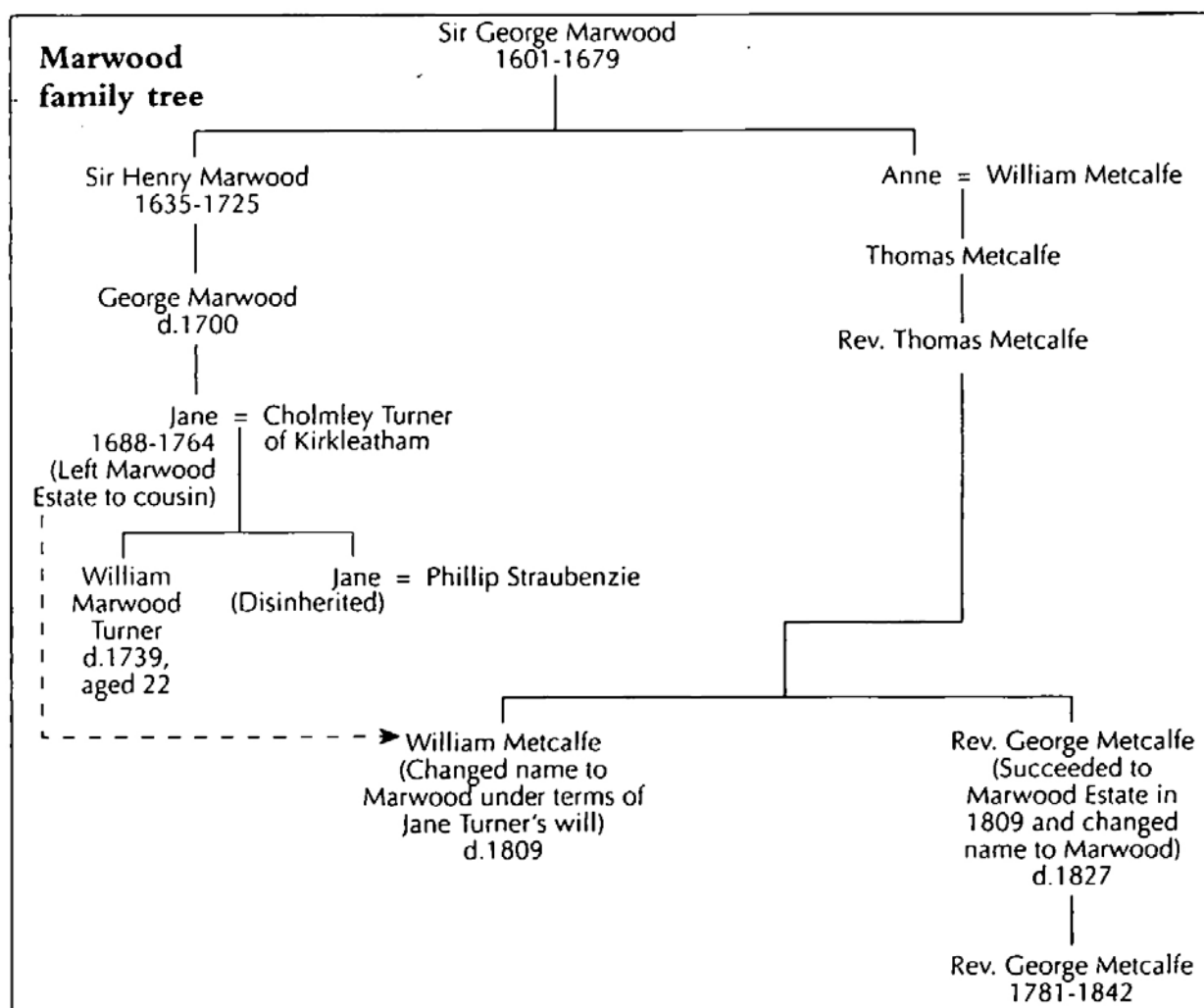
The Postgate School closed in 1851 when the Marwood School opened at the other end of the village. Stephen Hunter, the last master of the Postgate School - he had taken over from Humphrey Sanderson - became the first master of the Marwood, to which post his son William succeeded him at the tender age of 20, in 1874. In addition to teaching, William also ran a bookshop near the school, together with his mother, Rebecca, who was Stephen's widow. The 1891 census shows William living at the school with his wife Alice, while his mother and sister carried on the bookshop from an adjacent cottage. According to Arthur Cumbor, who was a pupil at Marwood before the First World War, William Hunter considered himself an authority on Captain Cook, and used to lecture the pupils about him at least once a week!

When first opened the Marwood School was privately owned and managed, and was known as the *Grammar School*, the staff having their salaries paid by the Marwood family. The fee for attendance at

GREAT AYTON.
BOOKS, STATIONERY, & NEWS DEPOT.
Leeds, York, Darlington, and Newcastle Daily Morning Papers. The Evening Gazette. London Daily Papers. Periodicals and Magazines. Parcels from London Daily.
Bibles, Church Services, and Hymn Books.
BOOKS PENS,
 OF EVERY DESCRIPTION. ACCOUNT BOOKS, NOTE, PAPER,
 MEMORANDUMS, CHRISTMAS ENVELOPES,
 AND BIRTHDAY CARDS AND PRESENTS. PRINTING
 AND BOOKBINDING
 NEATLY EXECUTED
 The Aytton Magazine has a circulation of upwards of 200 in the village.
 Advertisements received by
W. HUNTER.

that time was 2d. a week per child. Shortly after Stephen Hunter took over from his father the school's status changed and it became a state elementary school, though linked with the Church of England.

The Rev. George Marwood, who endowed the school and paid the salaries of the teachers, was not the vicar of Ayton but the patron of the living. In other words he had inherited the right to appoint the vicar and receive the tithes (see page 118). He owned much land in the village although his family home was Busby Hall, south-west of Stokesley. In 1854 the parish council congratulated him on his marriage and gave him a scroll on which they listed his benefactions. He had built a new vestry for All Saints and a new vicarage, endowed the Marwood School, and also rented land to the village for allotments, at a rent *so indulgent as to afford important advantages for many a poor family*. Of course one has to remember also that Marwood was receiving £500 a year from the village by way of tithes.



The Marwood family was a very old one, tracing itself back at least to Edward Marwood de Nunthorpe who died in 1557. The Rev George Marwood, however, was not of this ancient stock. Due to a runaway wedding in the mid-eighteenth century the only heir by blood of the family, Jane Turner, had been disinherited by her mother. Jane had fallen in love with a Dutch officer who had been billeted with the family - at Kirkleatham - at the time of the '43 Jacobite rebellion, and so her mother left Busby Hall together with the patronage of Great Ayton to distant cousins called Metcalfe. So the Rev. George Marwood was actually a Metcalfe, but they had changed their names to Marwood on acquiring the estate.

So by the end of the nineteenth century the village was well served by schools, having both the British and the Marwood (as well as a Quaker boarding school). In 1908 the Edward Kitching Council School, with three classrooms, was built to serve the growing village. Harold Martin, who attended the school when it first opened, could recall the first headmaster, John Henry Cooper, the assistants, Frank Healds and Miss Combs. The British School became used for infants only; children went to it between five to seven, moving on either to the Marwood School if they lived at the west end of the village, or to Edward Kitching, where they attended until the age of fourteen. The vast majority

of village children left school as soon as they possibly could and started work, but a few gained scholarships to the grammar school. Of these, boys went to Guisborough Grammar, and, girls to Middlesbrough High. There were also a few village scholarships available at the Friends' School - followed later by an ever-increasing number of places for paying day-pupils.

The 1944 Education Act changed things in that everyone now left the village schools at the age of eleven and went either to Stokesley Secondary Modern or to the grammar (Guisborough, Middlesbrough or Yarm). In 1968 a large new primary school opened in the village, Roseberry County Junior, and the Edward Kitching and Marwood Schools received infants only. The most recent change was when North Yorkshire went comprehensive in the early '70s so that the eleven-plus exam was abolished and Stokesley became the school for all state pupils from Ayton.

British School Photographs



The British School, shortly before it became the library.



Footnotes

(see "**Great Ayton – A History of the Village by Dan O’Sullivan**")

1 Ord,p.414

2 NYCRO QSB, 1694

3 Personal communication from Prof. John Postgate

4 M. Heavisides, *Rambles in Cleveland*, Stockton 1909, P. 73; Kettlewell, P. 1

5 Graves, P. 459

6 Graves, P. 456

7 C. E.Thornton, 'The Scottowe Family ofAyton', CTLHS no. 35, P. 13

8 Ord,p.414

9 Charity Commissioners' Reports, 1819-37

10 Select Vestry Minutes, NYCRO PR/AYG 4/4

11 A field of 3 acres at Falsgrave was left to the poor of Great Ayton by Elizabeth Bulson, and half the rent of £9 a year was to go to *a schoolmaster ofAyton*. However, the Charity Commissioners could not trace the original will; Charity Commissioners' Reports, 1819-1837

12 NYCRO PR/AYG 4/4

13 Parliamentary Papers 1819 IX

14 Parliamentary Papers 1833 XLIII

15 Dixon, pp. 19-22.The following section is also mainly from *The Jubilee History*

16 *The Cleveland Repertory and Stokesley Advertise*, Jan. 1843

17 Kettlewell, p.13

18 NYCRO ZDU (Marwood)