

The school at Devoran was built by the National Society in 1846 and was therefore a Church School. The vicar, as chairman of the managers, frequently visited the school, sometimes giving instruction in Scripture. There were several vicars during this period but Mr W. Lidigey carried out the duties of Correspondent for thirty years and longer. The government's contribution to the running of the school was made by a yearly grant directly connected with the attendance and attainment of the pupils, which was assessed each year by a visiting H.M.I. The master's salary was not fixed, but depended on the grant and on 'school pence' brought by the children. This was always difficult to collect and was the cause of some absenteeism.

Children could not be compelled to come to school and some, often girls, did not attend at all over a period of years; while others made such irregular attendance that teaching them was made disheartening and difficult. There was also the problem that children who made less than 250 attendances during the year were not allowed to be presented for examination on which the grant for that year was calculated. The setting up of Local Attendance Committees and the appointment of an Attendance Officer after 1876 had little effect on the long list of absentees which caused such great concern to each successive headmaster.

The keeping of school log books became compulsory in 1863 and these provide a record of every event in the life of the school. From them we learn that for many years all the children were taught in one room, 32' by 15' and 14' high. This assembly consisted of children from the age of two years upwards, with the number present sometimes as high as 100. The Headmaster with the help of one or two Pupil Teachers taught the Standards, while an Assistant Mistress taught the infants at one end of the room and had charge of the needlework of all the girls. Repeated entries show how difficult this situation was for everybody, as the small children became noisy and restless, especially during hot weather. There was a slight improvement after Janusry 1866 when the vicar ordered that no child under 4 years should be admitted. These very young children were then taken to Dame Schools in the district. Conditions continued to be difficult until 1871 when the H.M.I. in his yearly report wrote 'The school cannot

be efficiently conducted while the infants are taught in the same room as the higher classes', and a new room was added, 48' by 18' and 17' high. In 1877 there were 156 children attending the school and by 1880 the managers were again being pressed to provide further accomodation for 162 children.

The curriculum of the school was dictated by the requirements of the 'Payment by Results' system. Subjects to be taught were rigidly controlled under codes laid down by the Education Department and strictly imposed on all schools by Her Majesty's Inspectors. Failure to conform resulted in reduced grants. Each child was expected to reach a prescribed standard of work according to age, consequently much time had to be spent 'drilling' the children in the 3 Rs (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic). In addition there was Geography for boys and Sewing for girls. In 1877 drawing was added (model, freehand and geometry) for which a new grant was offered by the Science ad Art department if the children's work reached the set standard. The school qualified for this grant in each following year; it amounted to £5. 12. 3 in 1881.

Singing was taken in odd moments. The log book for 1873 says 'taught two new songs in time allowed for recreation, 'Under the Willow Tree she's sleeping' and 'Kiss me mother ere I die'. For 1875 it reads 'I have begun to teach Drill in leisure time'.

In 1889 the H.M.I.'s report on the work of the infants stated 'Some attempt to relieve their lessons by interesting manual employment may be made'. They were also to be given object lessons on 'the Table', 'use of the Hand', etc. and Musical Drill was introduced. All the children were given 'Home Lessons' and kept in to correct them.

Over the years from 1863 to 1893 ten masters had charge of the school with varying degrees of success. The most outstanding was Mr Richard Daniell who was there from 1879 to 1893. Under his tuition the school reached a high standard of efficiency and in 1883 earned a grant of £125. 6. 6. The H.M.I.'s report in 1889 reads 'The instruction is as efficient as in past years and higher praise cannot be given, such uniformly good work is seldom seen.' For ten years in succession the Diocesan Inspection brought a report marked 'excellent'. The size of the

staff remained the same even when the the number on the register reached 180, Mr Daniell having at one time to teach 96 children without assistance, while in the infant room there were 80 children under one teacher. Boys and girls who showed promise sometimes stayed on at school to become Pupil Teachers. They served a five-year apprenticeship receiving further instruction from the headmaster, sometimes before breakfast (6.45 - 7.45 a.m.) and then giving lessons under his guidance to the lower classes during the day. The master usually taught standards V to VII, with children sometimes staying on after the age of 14 to form Standard Ex VII. He had classes doing Algebra, Geometry and French. All standards spent a lot of time learning Grammar but he had to admit of some children 'Parsing, especially, is beyond their grasp, while Analysis also shares the same fate.' He liked the children to enjoy their lessons and he made their work as interesting as he could. Lessons on the formation of words using Latin, Greek and Old English prefixes always went well but children found the paraphrasing of poetry difficult. Children from the seventh standard helped out as monitors when there was a shortage of teachers.

Boys and girls were often kept home from school: picking stones in the fields; potato drawing; 'making weight on the coal scales' at Devoran Quay; fetching 'liver and bits' from the market on killing day and getting in supplies for the winter when the pilchard boats arrived, were some of the reasons given for being absent. Boys sometimes went to sea with their fathers, but if they were found to have been 'mitching' they were severely punished. The master occasionally excluded a child when his discipline was not upheld by the parents. In 1876 a mother took her three children away from school because 'she would not allow them to bow on entering and leaving school and as I would have good manners I called them back and made them do it'. In September 1888 children from Higher Devoran Farm had to help their parents with the harvest when 'the men were not willing to work'.

Illness and bad weather often caused the attendance register to drop so low during winter months that registers were not marked. Children suffered from measles, whooping cough, scarlatina, scarlet fever or mumps each year. A very severe epidemic of measles caused the Medical Officer of Health to close the school for three weeks in 1882. A single case of smallpox occurred in

1881. Influenza is first mentioned in June 1891 when it 'ragged tremendously' through the district and the school had to be closed. There was 'a fearful panic among the parents' in 1892 after a child was found to have the 'itch', an infectious complaint looked upon with horror; a case had occurred once before in 1885. Heavy falls of snow were reported in 1881 (snow in the playground was said to be over 18" deep) and again in March 1891.

Small private schools and Dame Schools continued to operate. children admitted from Dame Schools were always reported to be backward, if not totally ignorant. Another Dame School was opened in a private house in Carnon Downs in 1891 - 'surely here is a field of labour for the Attendance Officer'. Numbers at Devoran dropped when children from Perran left to attend a new Board School opened there in 1879.

The government's Special Fee grant of 10/- per child, introduced in 1891 to make education free for most children, failed to make any noticeable improvement in the attendance at Devoran school during the time of Mr Daniell. In October 1892 it was decided to offer prizes for regular attendance, in the hope that this would prove an incentive. With little or no help for much of the year 1892 - 93 the master battled on, desperately trying to keep up the standard of work throughout the school. He left in March 1893 with 'deep regrets' after giving 14 years of service to the school. On June 1st 1893 it was reported in the Royal Cornwall Gazette: 'Mr R. Daniell has the Inspectorship of the Western District'. Mr W.R. Cock commenced duties as headmaster of Devoran School on June 5th 1893.

Thanks are due to the county Archivist and his staff for making available the log book of Devoran School on which the above is based.

HEADMASTERS OF DEVORAN NATIONAL SCHOOL

1863 - 1893

1863	John Dennis	Certified teacher
1866	Francis Walker	Certified teacher
1868	James Phillips	Certified teacher
1869	George Crook	Certified teacher
1870	Watson Fellowes	Certified teacher
1873	R. Baker	Temporary for 2 months, from Merthyr Tydfil
1784	Henry John Hill	Certified teacher
1875	William John Henry	Certified teacher
1878	J.H. Sansom	Certified teacher
1878-		
1893	Richard John Daniell	Certified teacher
1893	W.R. Cock	Certified teacher

ASSISTANT MISTRESSES

Mrs Mary Hosking
Miss Sarah Penrose
Miss Emily Yeoman
Miss Laura Webber
Miss Rosine Gartrell
Miss Chapman

PUPIL TEACHERS

Indentured for 5 years

James Arnold Clear
(won Queen's
Scholarship)
George Williams
Janie Nicholls
Harry Apps Clear
Thomas Bray
T. Mitchell
Alice Stephens
Meta Michell

TRELISSICK

The gardens, park, woodlands and some farmlands were given to the Nationls Trust by Mrs R. Copeland in 1955, but this is only a remnant of the estate that existed between 1800 and 1920 (see map) and included land beyond the parish of Feock.

A farm has probably existed here from early times; there is a reference in the Assize Rolls of 1280 to 'Trelesyk' (1); 'Matthew Treleset' is mentioned in the Lay subsidy Roll of 1327; in a will of 1632 the premises called Trelissick were held of John Trefusis Esq. 'as the Manor of Trevilla' and worth 6/- yearly. The property later passed to the Lawrence family and is mentioned in the will of Edward Lawrence of 1705.

The first mention of the house that I have seen is in 1838 (3) 'Trelissick is now the most splendid feature of Feock. The house was built about the middle of the last century by Mr John Lawrence, a captain in the County Militia during the Seven Years War' (1756 - 1763), 'still remembered for his good nature, convivial habits and wild eccentricities. It is perhaps deserving of notice that the architect was Mr Davy, grandfather of the celebrated chemist', (Sir Humpgrey Davy of Penzance). 'The property became divided at Mr Lawrence's decease.'

1800 - 1832 The Daniells and the formation of the estate.

The date of John Lawrence's death is unknown, but the expense of building had probably overstrained his resources. About 1800 (4) Mrs Lawrence still owned Trelissick, which was rated at £3. 4. 3 and occupied by Francis Pender Esq. She also owned King Harry Quay (£1) let to R.A.Daniell Esq. Mrs Ann Lawrence occupied La Feock (£4. 4. 0), had part of Harket (Harcourt), Trevilla and Nanfellows.

In the Gazette (5) of March 1805 there is a notice: 'To be peremptorily sold. Pursuant to an order of the High Court of Chancery - Daniell and others, Plaintiffs against Lawrence and others, Defendants. Two third parts of the Freehold of the Capital Barton called Trelissick and Rosuggan now in the occupation of Francis Pender Esq. - 37 acres of meadow, three acres of garden and orchard, and seven acres of wood'.