

Schools in Lutterworth

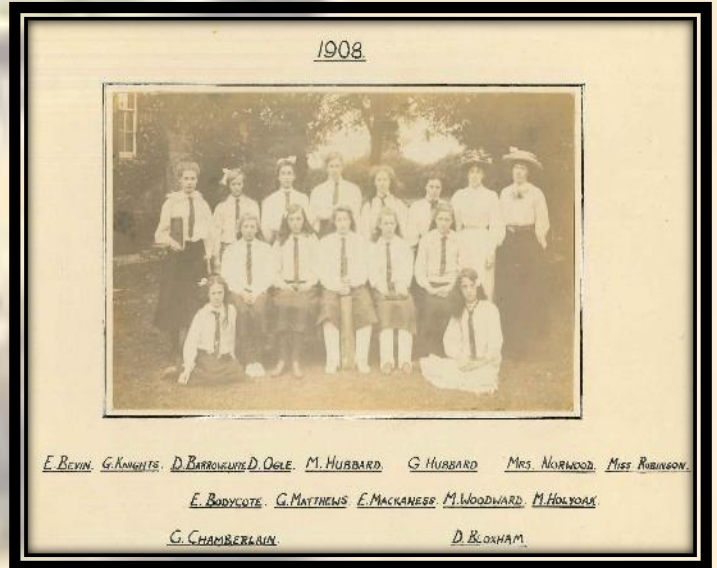
What were they taught?

This poster looks at Lutterworth's elementary school between 1906 and 1918. The school was divided into three departments: boys, girls and infants. All children were taught reading, writing and arithmetic; girls were also taught cookery and needlework, whilst the boys learnt to make toys, and a heavier emphasis was placed on mathematics. The Leicestershire Band of Hope Union was permitted to deliver lessons in these schools in December 1904, the first of which was given on 27 January 1905 by Mr Palmer for half an hour. Timetables were implemented to meet the requirements of His Majesty's Inspectors, but were flexible if necessary. For example, in July 1907 pupils in Class III in the Girls' School had been delayed in making some garments due to an 'endemic of measles', and were allowed to finish them rather than attending their usual lessons.

How were the schools run?

The schools were run as part of the community, participating in local events such as tea parties, entertainments and memorials. In 1907 the children were dismissed early to attend the funeral of Dr Ogle. When staff members were ill, colleagues from throughout the three elementary departments would cover their duties – for instance in October 1906 the infants' mistress ran the girls' school for the girls' mistress. However, the departments do not seem to have been affected by weather disruption or diseases at the same time, suggesting that school closures were at the teachers' discretion, or that they were not meticulously recorded.

The departments often came together to celebrate events, such as Empire Day on 24th May, when they sang patriotic songs and heard speeches from the managers. The three departments were run by a single committee of managers, who dealt with extraordinary administrative and disciplinary issues, for example requesting the presence of parents to answer for the poor attendance of their children, and on one occasion the teachers at the girls' school complained to the managers about an abusive child.



Impact of WW1

The First World War seems to have had little effect in the early years, and celebrations of Empire Day went unchanged except for the introduction of saluting the flag. However by 1916 conscription took away three teachers from the boys, including Mr Claude Taylor, who died in action. In March 1916 both the infants' and girls' departments closed for entertainments that raised £10 8s. 3d. for the local VAD hospital. Later that year, the girls' school closed early to enable attendance at a memorial to Lord Kitchener.

It was not only conscription into the forces which disrupted the teaching. A teacher at the infants' school was sent to Liverpool General Hospital in 1915. She returned the following year, but was graded badly in her teaching.

The war effort also affected the schools. Both the girls' and the boys' departments went 'blackberrying' in the autumns of 1917 and 1918 for the Food Production Department of the Army and Navy. In September 1918, the boys collected 687 lb. of fruit.

Armistice Day was not recorded by the girls' school, which had closed on account of influenza; the boys were given the afternoon off due to many absences, while the infants went to a thanksgiving service after singing patriotic songs. In May 1921, pupils made a wreath of poppies and attended the unveiling of Lutterworth's War Memorial, where the two minutes' silence was observed.



The unveiling of Lutterworth's War Memorial, on 24 May 1921