

## History of the School in Westerdale.

When was Westerdale Village Hall built and how and when has it been altered?

The purpose of this paper is to provide evidence to correct the statement in the citation by English Heritage related to the listing of the Village Hall.

*IoE Number: 328062 Location: VILLAGE HALL, MAIN STREET (west side)*

*WESTERDALE, SCARBOROUGH, NORTH YORKSHIRE*

*Date listed: 20 December 1990 Date of last amendment: 20 December 1990 Grade II*

*NZ 60 NE WESTERDALE MAIN STREET West side 6/144 Village Hall GV II Village school, now hall. C18 with later west extension. Coursed squared sandstone. Replaced pantiles on main roof, Scottish slates on wings. Stone copings and kneelers. Central block of 1 tall storey, 3 windows irregularly spaced; lower 1-storey 2-window end sections, the eastern one original. C20 cross casements, in chamfered reveals except for plain reveals in west extension. Stepped and sloped eaves cornice, sloped kneelers. Truncated chimney at right end. Plain rear entrance. Included for historical interest.*

The tithe maps of 1838 and the Ordnance Survey of 1857 show a building in the position of the main block of the Village Hall but with a clear space between the east end and the old Vicarage wall, now the Church Yard Wall. The 1857 map marks the building as The Endowed School. This may have been the school referred to by Whelan and Co in their book of 1859, "The present school was erected in 1840--". However this statement seems to be at variance with the evidence of the tithe map.

The most compelling evidence is to be found in Minutes of the Vestry Meetings and the Minutes of the School Trustees, three handwritten exercise books in the care of Mrs O Baxter of Westerdale. The Vestry Minutes books include minutes from the 24<sup>th</sup> November 1859 through 17<sup>th</sup> April 1902 and on to 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1935.

A meeting was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 1870 at the Duncombe Arms and those present were Joseph Hebron, Joseph Petch, Robert Pearson, William Barker, David Hartley, John Hebron, Robert Agar and the Reverends Charles Cator and J R Ellis.

The minutes of the meeting record that it was resolved and approved unanimously as follows. "That it is expedient to alter and repair the present School Room and so to enlarge it to provide room for forty children to meet the requirements of the Education Act and if that cannot be done to build a new School Room and to raise a subscription to defray the expenses. That the Church Wardens and Overseers of the Poor of this Parish be requested to carry into effect the foregoing resolution with as little delay as possible."

The minutes of a meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 1872 record: "—to take into consideration the estimate for the proposed **new** School at Westerdale, it was proposed by Mr John Hebron that the Contractors be offered the sum of £170 to build and complete the aforesaid school according to Plan and specification, and seconded by David Hartley.

The next reference to School building matters occurs in the minutes of a meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> April 1873. This meeting of the School Building Committee discussed the logistics of "Leading Stone for the new School" including the hire of a labourer.

Although out of context it is perhaps worth noting that the minutes of a Vestry Meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> April 1873 dealt with the appointment of six representatives to serve for five years according to the Endowed School Commission Scheme of 9<sup>th</sup> August 1872, and a reconvened meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1873 six representative Governors were appointed including Lady Caroline Duncombe of Westerdale Hall.

The next entry of major consequence to the School occurred on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 1894. This meeting of Ratepayers was called "to consider the question of meeting the expense in the alterations in the School building, ordered by the Education Department". It was resolved: "that the alterations for sanitary purposes, and the enlargement at the east end to include a porch and lobby be undertaken".

For further evidence we must turn now to the Minute Book of the School Governors. The meeting minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1893 recorded, “ A discussion took place on the proposed alteration in the School building”. There was no resolution and the matter was deferred until the next meeting. This was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 1894 and “it was agreed that Mr WG Roberts Architect of Middlesborough be requested to visit the School, and prepare plans of the proposed alteration to the building, to be submitted to the Education Department”. At the meeting of May 7<sup>th</sup> 1894 it was reported that Mr Roberts had visited the School on the 10<sup>th</sup> February, submitted plans that were sent to the Education Department who replied that the “Offices” were not satisfactory. A second plan was submitted on April 13<sup>th</sup>. These were satisfactory and specifications “are now being prepared”. On May 23<sup>rd</sup> it was reported that Captain Duncombe had agreed to help towards funding the extension and a reply was awaited from Lord Boyne. On June 21<sup>st</sup> it was reported that Captain Duncombe had promised £25 and Viscount Boyne sent a cheque for £10 for the building fund. It was reported that tenders had been received A motion to accept the tender of Mr F Liddell for £122 for the entire work was carried. At a meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1894 it was revealed that due to a misunderstanding in calculation of the amount for the work Mr Liddell’s tender was not accepted after all and that of Mr Joseph Duck for £139 15s was accepted.

[The average number of children attending the School that year was 44].

On January 14<sup>th</sup> it was reported that Mr Duck had sent in his final account for £140 17s 6p.

A meeting was held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 1895 at which it was reported that Mr Roberts had submitted the Certificate for the building. The minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> May 1895 include a “balance sheet” for the subscriptions and payments. Mr Roberts fee was £6 13s 6p.

If further proof were needed, the ordnance survey of 1892 shows the 1873 building with its out offices, and a clear space between the east end and the Vicarage Wall. The 1913 map shows 1873 building, out offices and the eastern extension running right up to the Vicarage Wall.

From the foregoing I believe it reasonable to conclude that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the central block of the Village Hall and the now demolished out buildings was built during 1873 according to the architect’s plans now archived at Northallerton. The building was extended eastwards up to the Churchyard wall in 1894. This perhaps explains why the outer walls of the existing toilet block look so much as though they were part of the original building. The fact that the costs of the extension were 86% of those of the original also indicates that the work was substantial. Church records and the Minute book of the school Governors Meetings indicate that grants were sort in 1935 to have the floor of the schoolroom replaced.

There are still at least five people living locally who attended the school in its final years. They recall that the School Bell was mounted on the extreme eastern wall. It seems likely that the rather attractive Bell Tower provided in the 1870 design was replaced in the 1894 modifications.

The School closed in 1953 and building lay dormant until the early 1970’s. At this time it was decided to convert it into a Village Hall and to extend westwards to provide kitchen facilities. The work undertaken in the 1970’s included, provision of “modern” toilet facilities in the east end of the school. Brick partitions were created on a concrete floor. The central section of the building was completely re roofed with concrete tiles after removal of the top section of the original chimney. The west section was built over the old out “Offices” on a concrete floor and with cavity walls. The Village Hall was officially opened in 1976.

Later, probably in the 1980’s the rest of the chimney was dissmantled and the floor made good in timber. The windows were to a large extent replaced with double glazed units.

In conclusion, the building is not 18<sup>th</sup> Century. It does not have any particular national interest from a historic point of view. Danby School, four miles away, was built earlier. Castleton School, two and a half miles away, was built in 1874. Both of these schools are in operation. The building has been extensively modified and only the external shell of the of the 1872 and 1894 buildings remain, together with some of the original roof beams

Nigel Wilson

Saturday, 30 May 2009