

Education in Chagford before 1830 until 1870 and beyond

Introduction

In researching and writing this paper, I have endeavoured to determine as far as possible the various types of schools which existed within and before the given time frame. There is evidence of educational establishments existing in Chagford in the mid sixteenth century, and their financial support is documented in the Churchwarden's Accounts of St Michael's Church Chagford ¹(/). The church took the main responsibility for the education of the children, which was, in Chagford in the sixteenth, seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, mainly provided by the Sunday schools in church rooms and in some Dame schoolrooms. The Anglican Church was the main provider during this period and provided space for "the scholars" in the Church house, which it owned. Local oral history reports memories of grandparents referring to Dame schools in the parish, run by elderly ladies in their own homes for a few pupils at a time and on a fee-paying basis.

With the growth of the Dissenters during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Bible Christian movement in the town held their own Sunday school in a room "licenced" for the purpose in Sutcombe (Southcombe) Street, and the Wesleyan Methodists also established their Sunday school in "the schoolroom" at the building they used for worship in Mill Street. As time went on the Anglican church, with endowments and influential local patrons, increased its dominance over the town and became the main provider of regular classroom education.

My main sources for this research has been the Chagford Local History Society archive, which contains copies of papers donated to the society by local families, particularly the Ellis family papers, which have, in turn, been copied and the originals sent to the Devon Record Office/Devon Heritage Centre. I have also used the Chagford School Log books which date from 1863 and are also in the Devon Heritage Centre. I have appreciated being given information by Jane Hayter Hames, and have information from her own book *The History of Chagford*, (*published Phillimore 1981*). I have used sources from the Devon Heritage Centre archive, with the assistance of Jan Woods who has provided several useful pieces of information gleaned not only from local sources but also from her searches in the archive in Bermondsey, London. In the later stages of this research Judy Moss has also provided data following a visit to the Church of England Record Centre at Bermondsey, and has given me data regarding the numbers involved in different schools in the Chagford parish, and for this too, I am grateful.

Geographical Context

Chagford being situated on a rise above the young River Teign, on the north eastern edge of Dartmoor, surrounded as it is by hills and valleys, has developed through agriculture which has been one of Chagford's chief industries, of which sheep farming the most prevalent form. Chagford is one of the five Stannary Town of Dartmoor, and as such it's population has a strong historical connection with the tin mining industry.

Social Context

The Hayter family and the Hames family came to be families of importance, wealth and influence in the town, and, it may be said, over time used their position to improve conditions and provide amenities for local people. In 1637 William Hayter had bought the advowson of Chagford from Roger Whyddon, and with it went the income from the glebe lands which remained in the Hayter family throughout subsequent generations. As from there on a Chagford rector was provided by each generation of the Hayter family, the incumbents of the living were ensured of both a home and an income, and, thereby, status within the community. The Hayters were a well-known and respected family both at court and within the Church. Thomas Hayter became Chaplain to the Archbishop of York, Prebendary of Westminster and, from 1730 until 1751, was Archbishop of York. Thomas Hayter had been tutor to the royal princes, one of whom was to become George III, and who, as a friend,

¹ transcribed from the original by F M Osborne M.A. published by Winifred Osborne 1979

later bestowed on Thomas, the Bishopric of London; a post as a Privy Councillor; and installed as the Dean of the Chapel Royal.



Thomas Hayter Bishop of London 1755²

It is this author's supposition, unsupported by any historical evidence, that Thomas Hayter on a visit to Chagford not long after the Weekes bequest was suggested, may have supported his nephew, and perhaps suggested to John Hayter a formal school could be provided with the bequest. Thomas Hayter died unmarried and without issue in 1762, and the living of Chagford passed to his brother George, the elder of the sons of George and Grace. George had two children, George Garrard Hayter, and Grace. In 1825 when George died the patronage of the living went to Grace Garrard Hayter. She married John Hames in 1788 and bore him two sons: George and William. George, went up to Oriel College Oxford and was presented to the living of Chagford in 1819. Only a year later he died, in his carriage on the way back from Exeter, and the living passed to his brother William Hames, who took it up in 1821. William could not let the heritage of the Hayter family who were his ancestors go unremarked, and incorporated Hayter into his name, becoming the first Hayter Hames. William was rector of Chagford until 1852 when he gave up the living in favour of his son, Hayter George Hayter Hames. Hayter George married Constance Colville at St James' Church Piccadilly, ten days after he was presented to the living of Chagford. With the money she brought to the marriage the family were able to buy the Rushford estate in Chagford comprising of a farm, a mill, houses, and much land and woodland. Through their generosity, and a conviction of responsibility to the town, the Hayter Hames family have used their wealth to provide and bestow property and land for the use of the people of the town and for their betterment.

In 1801 the population of Chagford was 1,115 but, due to the development of the woollen industry in the town, the number rose during the first half of the nineteenth century to 1,836. Much of the town's population was involved in work associated with the development of the woollen Mills on the banks of the Teign: the 1841 census lists occupations such as wool sorters, fullers, serge weavers among others. Chagford's woollen factory, producing serges and 'long ells,' and owned by John Berry, was one of the largest in the county. In 1829 the Reverend J. T. Moore (distant relative of the Hayters and the incumbent at the time) recorded the Chagford manufacture of 'long ells' and noted that 'The number of hands included 115 men, 127 women and 98 children.'³ John Berry died in 1848 and the factory properties passed to Richard Leach Berry, who in 1850 was listed in White's Directory for Chagford as 'gentleman' and second only to the Earl of Devon in importance in the town.

² Photograph of portrait of Thomas Hayter by kind permission of the Hayter Hames family.

³ Moore, RevdT (1829) *The History of Devonshire from the earliest to the Present*, London: Robert Jennings.

The remainder of the adult population of working age were mainly involved, during the time of this study, in service, in agriculture, in trades such as blacksmithing, bread baking, butchery and basket-making.⁴

The Anglican Church, with its thirteenth century building and historic rich endowments, was the most powerful influence in the town during the nineteenth century, but there were also a few families in the town, notably the Thorn family who in the late eighteenth were initially Bible Christians and later mid nineteenth century, Plymouth Brethren; and the Perryman family, who were also Bible Christians. These families established a following, and out of their group emerged the Wesleyan Methodists who built their own church building in the mid nineteenth century in Mill Street, whilst more loyal members to the Plymouth Brethren community continued to worship in their Southcombe Street hall.

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Education before 1830 in Chagford:

In the C16 and C17 in rural areas the church was commonly the provider of public education, funding schools through the parish rate and public subscription, and overseeing by the Church Wardens.. The following extracts ⁶ offer evidence of the existence of schooling in Chagford by 1579 through to 1590. There are references to a schoolmaster and a schoolhouse, but no indication of location. It is likely that the church or the Church House (sometimes referred to as St Catherine's House, now known as Endecott House) was the location.

1579 - Paid Thomas Yolden (a lawyer?) for charges to send away the schoolmaster

158? – Paid for mending of the church gate and the schoolhouse.

1590 – Paid to a boy for touching [cleaning?] the schoolhouse.

1659 - David George was appointed schoolmaster in Chagford by the churchwardens⁷ (*ref. Chagford Churchwardens Accounts 1600 – 1775*).

However, these accounts do not give any indication of what subjects were taught, nor the numbers, status and ages of the children. It is likely that the children were taught to read and basic writing skills.

1744 - Bishop Clagett's Visitation

The next indication of education in Chagford comes from Bishop Clagett's Visitation of 1744. The relevant extracts are given below, showing that 40 - 50 children from a population of 214 families were taught religious education and catechising.

Below are the responses to some of the eleven queries responded to by John Bestey, the residing Curate, who was paid forty pounds per annum. He did "*not live in ye parsonage house but live in ye town near ye Church.*" Joshua Hayter, the Rector, was resident at Christ College, Oxford at the time.⁸

1. Population and dissenters : *Number of families about two hundred and fourteen – No dissenters, no meeting house.*

⁴ 1841 Census returns.

⁵ Chagford Archive Local family histories .

⁶ Chagford Church Wardens' Accounts 1480 – 1600

⁷ Ibid

⁸. Friends of Devon Archives: 1744 Visitation Queries Chagford held at the Devon Heritage centre

2. Public or charity schools : *A Publick School, no endowment to it. Number of children taught in it about forty or fifty. [They are] taught and instructed in ye principles of ye Christian Religion and are constantly brought to Church on Prayr days.*

3. Alms House, hospital or charitable endowment: *There is an Alms house in ye Parish not endowed called ye parish meadows given towards ye repair of ye church but by whom I know not. There is likewise ye rents of ye markets and Fairs kept within ye sd Parish appropriated towards ye repair of ye Church. Ye directions of such benefactions are lodged in ye power of ye church wardens. I know of no abuses are called upon to be instructed or frauds committed.*

10. Catechising of children: *The children are catechize'd usually in ye Summer season ye Parishioners send their children and servants at such time as they are ready*

The Weekes Charity 1790 -1824

By the late 18th century there were two schools in Chagford: from 1790 until 1824 there was a school administered by the Weekes Charity, and in 1793 the church wardens set up a school for poor children resident in the Care House.(Later the school in New Street, now known as the Old School).

The Weekes family had lived in the Parish of Chagford since the fifteenth century. An engraved stone was put up in Chagford Church in 1790 at a cost of £1 15s 6d, Richard Thorn was paid 1s 6d for fixing it. The inscription states that John Weekes, mariner, left a £200 legacy to be administered by John Hayter the Rector, and John Hooper.⁹ The Declaration of Trusts of £200 4 parts Consols for the education and binding out poor children of the parish of Chagford given by the Revd John Hayter and John Hooper Esq Inrolled in his High Court of Chancery This the sixth day of March in the year of our Lord 1790 being first duly stampd according to the tenor of the stamps made for this purpose. A tablet on the south wall inside St Michael's Church Chagford states:

Anno Domini 1790

The Revd John Hayter and John Hooper Esq of this parish gave for ever the interest of the sum of £200 for the following purposes to teach yearly six poor children in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic and to place out yearly one or more of such children in an apprenticeship to some Trade.

NB The above £200 was a legacy to the said Revd John Hayter and John Hooper Esq. by the will of John Weekes late of this parish, Mariner, Fig 2

The money was invested in 4% stock and additional trustees John Coniam and Samuel Lethbridge were appointed.

The trust fund was set up to educate six poor children of the parish. The children's parents had to be members of the church and have 'the ability to educate their children.' Perhaps this meant that they had to ensure that their children attended regularly and were not kept at home for tasks.

⁹ The Weekes Charity trustee Document DHC reference Chagford 1429A and 3/PFI

There were to be, continuously, places for six children who were between the ages of six and twelve, and on leaving school each child was to be apprenticed. However, due to the range of ages, this meant that only one child would leave at a time and only one child could take the place.

Money was allowed for the salary of a teacher. 1790-94 - The Weekes Charity paid a schoolmaster.

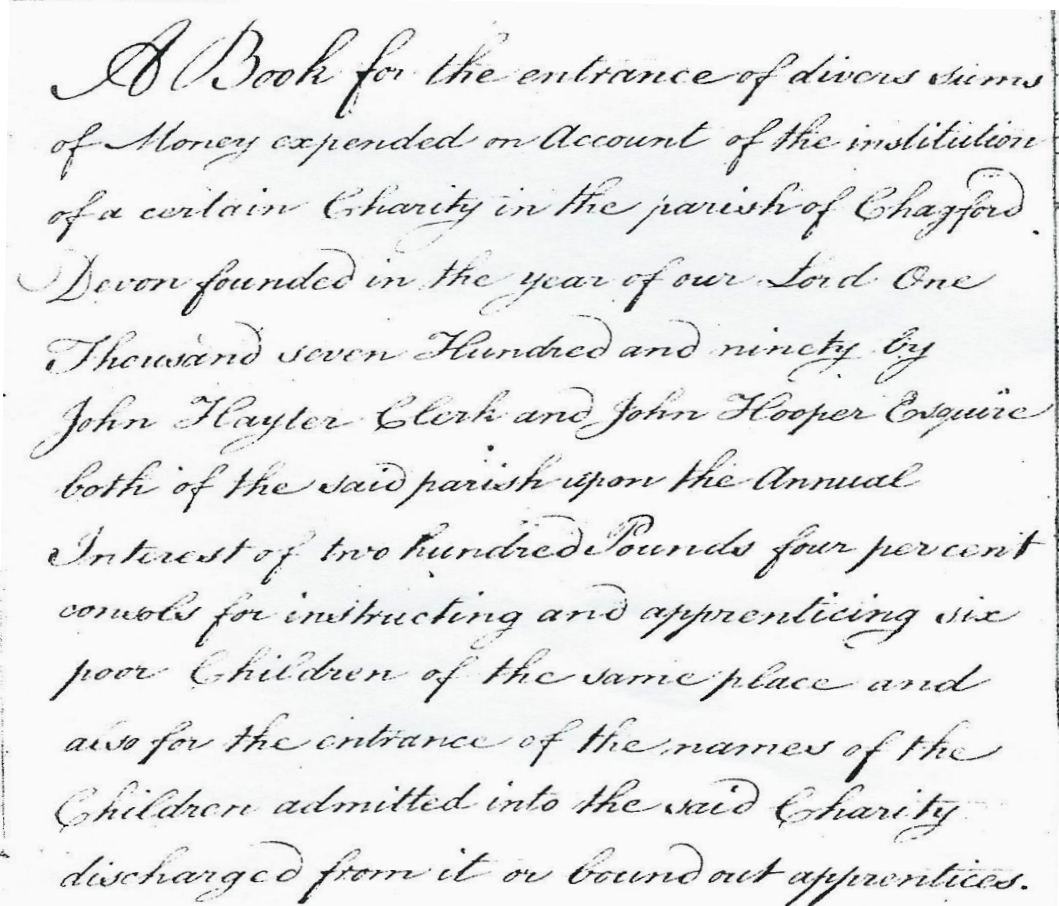
A Bible was bought for each child, and over time the cost of this varied from 4s to 6s 9d each, and indentures were paid when the child was apprenticed. Again, there were costs involved in setting up indentures: the school teacher earned 2s 6d each time they wrote an indenture for the apprentice, and the premiums paid to the Masters of apprentices varied from £1 2s to £1 7s.

The children were to be taught Reading, Writing and, unusually for the time, Arithmetic.

The trustees could either establish a new school or use the school in the parish (this would have been the upper floor of the schoolhouse, previously known as St Catherine's House).

By 1820 Samuel Lethbridge was the only surviving Trustee of the original four. He had lent money to the Charity because dividends from the investment had not been received for six years. In 1823 this was resolved, the accounts were balanced and new trustees appointed.

The trust documentation contains a book in which the charity accounts are recorded and where a list of the children who were over the period from 1790 to 1824 educated and to which trade they were apprenticed can be found. Page 1 of the Weekes Trust document :



*A Book for the entrance of divers sums
of Money expended on Account of the institution
of a certain Charity in the parish of Chagford
Devon founded in the year of our Lord One
Thousand seven Hundred and ninety by
John Hayter Clerk and John Hooper Esquire
both of the said parish upon the Annual
Interest of two hundred Pounds four percent
consoles for instructing and apprenticing six
poor Children of the same place and
also for the entrance of the names of the
Children admitted into the said Charity
discharged from it or bound out apprentices.*

Names and apprenticeships granted to Weekes Charity pupils

1790 : Ann Dicker, Betty Weekes , John Dodd , Humphrey Thorn, William Stoneman, James Beere.
Ann Dicker was apprenticed to her mother in the business of making mantles.

William Scutt was admitted in her place.

1791 The above John Dodd was discharged. Mary Henshole was admitted in his place.

- 1792 The above Betty Weekes was apprenticed. John Lyddon was admitted in her place.
- 1793 The above Humphrey Thorn was apprenticed. James Horsham was admitted in his place.
- 1794 The above William Stoneman was apprenticed. Edward Jeffrey was admitted in his place.
- 1795 The above James Beere is discharged, not being an object to be bound apprenticed by the charity. John Dodd was admitted in his place.
- No date: The above William Scutt was apprenticed. Daniel Statt was admitted in his place.
- 1801 Daniel Statt, Elizabeth Ann Scutt, Elizabeth Lee, Mary Lewis, Ann Ash, William Weekes.
William Weekes was taken out by his parents. Dinah Gould Murch was admitted in his place.
- 1802 The above Daniel Statt was apprenticed. Mary Knapman was admitted in her place.
- 1804 Dinah Gould Murch was discharged not being an object of the said charity as it now of late appearing. Joseph Splatt was admitted in her place.
- 1805 The above Ann Ash was bound apprentice. Jane Tapper was admitted in her place.
- 1806 Joseph Rowe was taken out of the Charity by his parents. Elizabeth Pearce was admitted in her place.
- 1807 Joseph Rowe was apprenticed to William Jeffrey. Susan Lee was admitted in his place.
- 1808 Mary Knapman was bound apprentice. Daniel ? was admitted in her place.
- 1809 Elizabeth Pearce was bound apprentice. Betty Maunder was admitted in her room.
John Jeffrey died. *[There is no mention of John Jeffrey being admitted to the school]*
Jane Stevens admitted in his place. Susanna Lee was taken off the charity by her friends. William Jeffrey Sen. (son of Wm and Susanna Jeffrey was admitted in her place.
Daniel (?) was taken off the charity by his parents.
William Jeffrey Jun. (son of Joseph and Jane Jeffrey) was admitted in his place.
- 1810 William Jeffrey was taken out of the Charity by his parents. William Moore was admitted in his place. Mary Bellamy was bound apprentice. Mary Pike was admitted in her place.
- 1811 Jane Stevens was bound apprentice.
- 1812 John Maunder took Jane Stevens place. Betty Maunder was removed by her parents. Susanna Knapman was admitted in her place. William Moore was removed by his parents. Elizabeth Dymont was admitted in his place. Jane Tapper was bound apprentice. Ann Aggott was admitted in her place. Mary Pike was removed by her parents. Richard Bowden was admitted in her place. William Jeffrey Sen. was bound apprentice. Dinah Bowden was admitted in his place.
- 1813 No changes
- 1814 Richard Bowden, John Luscombe, Elizabeth Dymont, Ann Aggott, Susanna Knapman, Dinah Bowden
- 1815 Susanna Knapman was taken by her parents. John Flood admitted in her place.
Richard Bowden who was educated in the Charity the full time and he never was bound and apprenticed. Ann Pike was admitted in his place.
- 1816 Elizabeth Dymont left for not attending school. Andrew Horsham was admitted to her place.
- 1817 John Liscombe was apprenticed. Mary Ellis was admitted in his place. Andrew Horsham was removed by his parents. Mary Northcotte took his place.
- 1818 Ann Aggott left in June, was bound in October. Elizabeth Bennet took her place.
- 1819 John Flood left as not being an object of the Charity as it now appears. Richard Berry was admitted in his place. Ann Pike was taken off by the Parish. Elizabeth Aggott took her place. Dinah Bowden was apprenticed. Ann Courtier was admitted in her place.
- 1820 Ann Pike was taken off by the Parish. Elizabeth Aggott took her place. Dinah Bowden was apprenticed. Ann Courtier was admitted in her place.
- 1820 Richard Berry was removed by his parents. Jane Jeffrey (daughter of John and Jane Jeffery) took his place.
- 1821 Elizabeth Aggott was bound apprentice. Mary Ann Barnes took her place.
- 1822 Mary Northcotte was bound apprentice. Ann Thorn was admitted in her place.
- 1823 Mary Ellis was bound apprentice. Catherine Morrish was admitted in her place.

1824 Elizabeth Bennet was bound and apprenticed. Ann Blee was admitted in her place.

The records of pupils end here.¹⁰

Significantly, the schoolroom used by those children benefitting from the Weekes charity were educated upstairs in St Catherine's House, and the room below used for [another purpose]The likelihood being a workroom for the older poor parishioners.



The Chagford Schoolroom (2016 Photograph)

The Carehouse School

The Carehouse was entirely separate building, located in New Street (refer to Fig 2. Pg 8). In 1793 the Churchwardens paid 10 shillings and 6 pence to a Mr Harvey '*for teaching the poor children in the Carehouse since the house under the school was taken off*'. These were not children who were being educated by the Weekes charity, but those for whom the Churchwardens felt they had a moral responsibility to provide a basic education, particularly in the Principles of the Established Church.

1798 – An advertisement for a schoolteacher was put in the Flying Post newspaper and William Hooper was appointed in 1799 at a salary of £10 a year with deductions for absence. His contract was decided at a public meeting and he continued in the post until April 3rd 1803 ¹¹

1795 -1824 – A schoolmistress was paid £5 a year. But in 1801 – The schoolmistress was due two and a half year's salary but accepted just £10 as the full number of children did not attend. Were the children employed at the factory at this time and therefore not at school?

1803- Churchwarden's accounts October 31st 1803 : ' We the inhabitants and of the Parish of Chagford and payees of the Church Rates of said Parish do agree to a public meeting calld for the Purpose of setting a salary on the present elected Schoolmaster Richard Thorn

I think we agree on the said terms That the said Richard Thorn shall be paid as such schoolmaster the sum of Ten pounds per Annum by Equal half year Payments the year to begin 14th November and the same to be taken out of the Church Rates and other monies in the hands of the Churchwardens. The term to be 7 years determined at the end of any one year by three months Notice in Writing either by the Churchwardens or the said Schoolmaster. For the above Allowance ten Poor Children are to be

¹⁰ *Private papers from the Ellis Family at Great Weeke. Donated to Chagford Local History Society 2000, copies kept by CLHS and original deposited at the Devon Record Centre as part of the Chagford Parish Papers collection*

¹¹ *William Hooper's contract from Churchwarden's accounts January 27th 1799*

instructed in Reading and those taken out of the house of care if there shall be many otherwise the number to be made up with other children of the Parish to be appointed by the Officers subject to the control of the Meeting.

Witness our hands

William Dodd, John Perryman, John Scutt, James Pike, Wm. Ellis, Dick Bennett, John Wills, Robert Tremblett, John Dodd'

1809 - William Short answered an advertisement in the Flying Post and was appointed as a teacher in the school receiving £15 a year. There was no contract drawn up so from 1821 he received a reduced salary of £12 per year due to some confusion in payment from Charity Funds. It is not known how many children attended the school at this time (1809 - 1845) but in 1811 Richard Thorn and John Wills conducted a survey which was recorded in the Churchwardens accounts: 'Account of the population of Chagford in the year 1811 by Richard Thorn and John Wills.

Males 559. Females 638 Total 1197'

In 1811, during the reign of King George III, a "Design" [a plan] was formed for the erection of schoolrooms and the "Encouragement of the Education of the Poor.." The funds for this were raised through public subscription, collected by local churchwardens, and as well as providing premises for education, were aimed at enrolling and training competent teachers. Chagford was not the beneficiary of a new building for its school, but it appears that the churchwardens did not shrink from their responsibilities and used church funds for founding a school and employing teachers at the Carehouse in New Street.

Education in Chagford from 1830

The Education Return from Chagford Parish 1833 Population 1,868. Five Daily Schools: one of which contains 10 males and 12 females, and is endowed by the Weekes Charity for £5 per annum for which 6 females are instructed, the rest paid for by their parents; another contains 50 males and 20 females, of whom 10 are paid for by the church rates the remainder by their parents; the other three contain as follows 17 males and 18 females (commenced 1821); 12 males and 23 females (commenced 1831) and 12 males and 16 females (commenced 1832); these are all instructed at the expense of their parents. *Three Sunday Schools:* one of which is attended by 30 males and 50 females, supported by the Rector and J. Berry Esq., another attached to Wesleyan Methodists (commenced 1822) consists of 28 males and 4 females; and the other, to Calvinistic Baptists, (commenced 1830) of 16 males and 44 females; the last two are supported by collections, and conducted by gratuitous teachers.¹²

1841 Census:

The occupations listed in the census supports the likelihood that a number of small, "house" schools, and Dame schools, existed in Chagford at the same time.

Joseph Rowe age 65 Sutcombe Street Schoolmaster

Elizabeth Hutchings age 40 Sutcombe Street Schoolmistress (two daughters , Ann 7 and Elizabeth 3 no husband mentioned).

¹² House of Commons Parliamentary Papers Online 2006

Harriet Statt: age 30 Sutcombe Street Schoolmistress (five children Dinah 10, John 7 Henry 5 Mercy 3 and Mary 1. No husband mentioned).

William Short continued in the post for 36 years until 1845 : April 17, at Chagford, suddenly, Mr William Short, aged 65, for thirty six years schoolmaster of that place, universally beloved and respected. ¹³

William Short's son, Caleb, stepped into his father's post.

The Church"and a house, let to the overseers for 20s., except the upper story, used as a school room. The dividends of £200, four per cent. stock, left by John Weekes, in 1790, are applied in schooling and apprenticing poor children. The poor have £5 a year out of Withecombe estate, left by John Hunt, in 1732. For distribution in bread, they have 27s. ¹⁴

The Infant's School 1853

By 1853 the school population was growing and Mrs Constance Hames, the wife of the Rector, Hayter George Hayter Hames, saw the need to establish a separate Infants' School to cater for children less than 6 years old.



Mrs Constance Hames (photograph kindly loaned by the Hayter Hames family)

'By resolution of the vestry held 24th February 1853, the houses under the parochial schoolroom, being the property of the churchwardens, were granted, rent and rate free, to the then Rector for an Infant School, with leave to make any alterations or additions thereto, and the garden behind the schoolroom was let to the rector as a playground for the children.¹⁵ Fig 4

By a similar resolution of 24th May 1860, certain alterations were authorised to be made. The whole building, thrown into one has always since been used for a schoolroom and the garden for the playground of the children attending the school.

¹³ *The Western Times* April 24th 1845

¹⁴ *Whites directory* 1850

¹⁵ *Report made to the Church commissioners* 1905

The building was maintained by the rector and his family who paid all expenses (except fire insurance which was paid out by churchwardens out of church funds) until 1902.

Miss Ann Gidley presided over about 85 infants, the infants school continued to be held in St Catherine's House, entirely supported by Mrs Hames.

Caleb Short, Schoolmaster at St Catherine's House School and at the Parochial School

Caleb Short followed in the footsteps of his father, and began teaching at St Catherine's House, at the age of 26. The census returns of 1851 record him aged 32, living in Mill street with his sister, Mary; a nephew, Caleb Honnacott aged 14, and William Endacott aged 15, a school assistant and servant. In 1853 Caleb Short taught in a room at St Catherine's House, in the upper floor over the Infants, the average number of his school being seventy.

In 1856 Caleb was awarded Certified Teacher –First Class.

A newspaper reports: Fig 8

CHAGFORD – In the list just issued of the examinations for schoolmasters held throughout England last Christmas, by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, the names of Caleb Short, schoolmaster of Chagford and JEG Du Chemin, Grouville, Jersey, are the only two which appear in the A First Class. ¹⁶

By 1859 Caleb had a wife, Susanna, and a son Fredrick. Their daughter Eleanor was born in 1862. Their parents were both in their 40s and still lived in Mill Street. They formed a husband and wife team. Susanna took the girls for sewing in the old schoolroom, Fig 6, and, from 1861, at the school in New Street. In later years Caleb's daughter Eleanor, was recorded as a pupil teacher at the school.

Monitors, who were older able children, also assisted him in the classroom. Whilst the girls learnt to sew, the boys were encouraged to become proficient in Military Drill. ¹⁷

The Non-Conformist Sunday Schools.

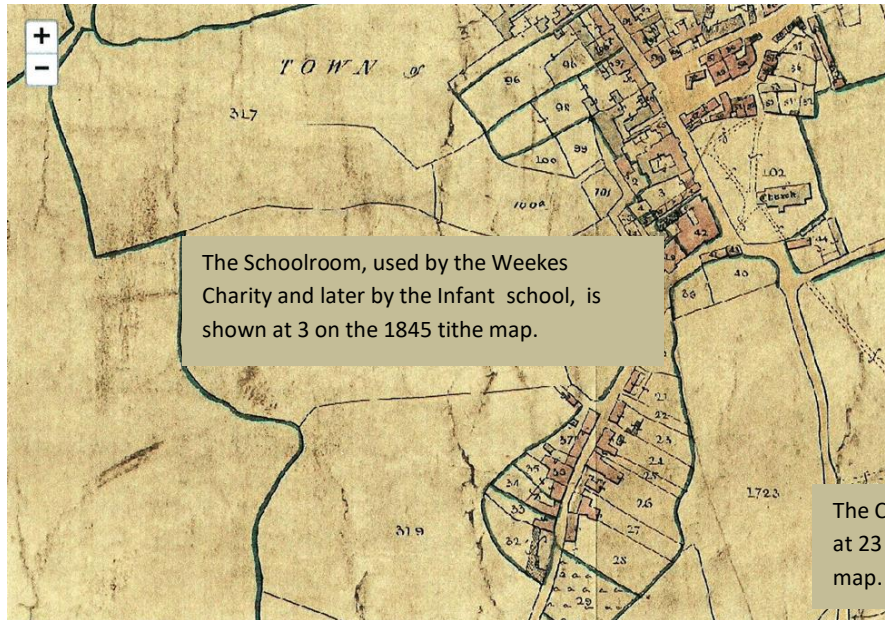
The Parish Church provides a teacher and a house, let to the overseers for 20s., except the upper story, used as a school room. The dividends of £200, four per cent. stock, left by John Weekes, in 1790, are applied in schooling and apprenticing poor children. The poor have £5 a year out of Withecombe estate, left by John Hunt, in 1732. For distribution in bread, they have 27s. yearly from the churchwardens, as interest of money left by unknown donors. A congregation of Baptists was formed here in 1829; and the Wesleyans have a chapel in the town, which was leased to them for 21 years, at a nominal rent, by the late Mr. John Berry, in 1834. Here is also a small chapel, belonging, to the Bible Christians, built in 1844. ¹⁸ The Methodist Church was built in Mill Street in 1867. There was a strong nonconformist congregation in Chagford at the time, and a large number of accounts of their members and their activities were circulated in the local press from the 1830s until the 1980s, when their congregation had reduced to such low numbers that it made keeping the building open for worship unviable and it was sold. However, the Methodist church held regular Sunday School meetings which enabled the elders to provide elementary education for interested adults and children and when the church was built in 1867 a room was added which enabled pupils to meet and study at times convenient to themselves and their volunteer teachers. ¹⁹

¹⁶ *The Exeter Flying Post of March 13th 1856*

¹⁷ Chagford Church Parochial Minutes

¹⁸ *Whites Directory 1850*

¹⁹ *Thorn and Perryman family papers, now in Chagford Local History Archive*



The Schoolroom, used by the Weekes Charity and later by the Infant school, is shown at 3 on the 1845 tithe map.

The Carehouse is shown at 23 on the 1845 tithe map.

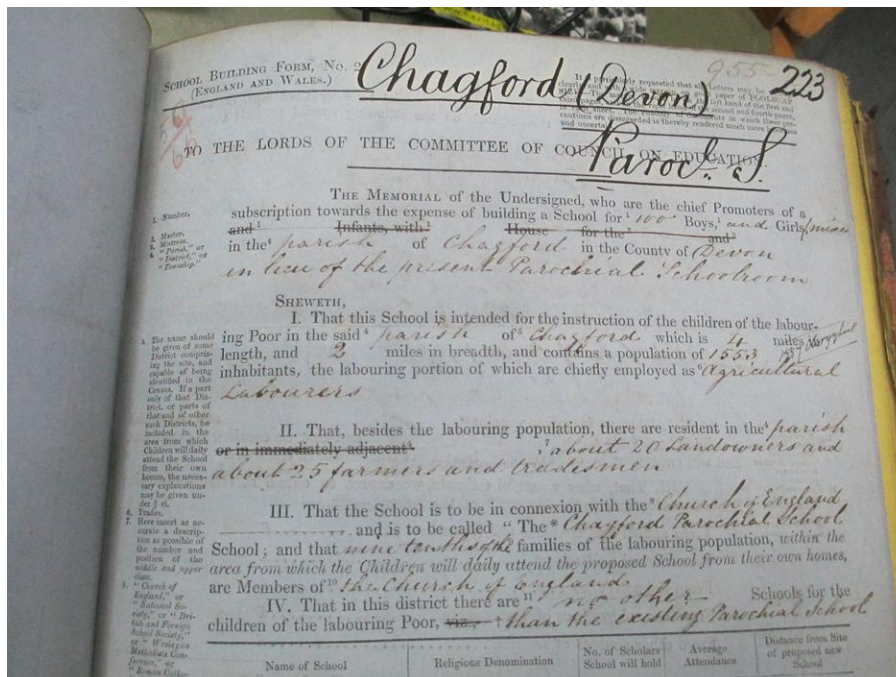
In 1860 the Education Department, Privy Council, Downing Street, London SW issued a declaration to the effect that Parishes which were willing to progress the education of their poorer parishioners would be supported in their endeavours by the government. Chagford Parochial Council began to make serious investigations into the improvements that could be made in the town.

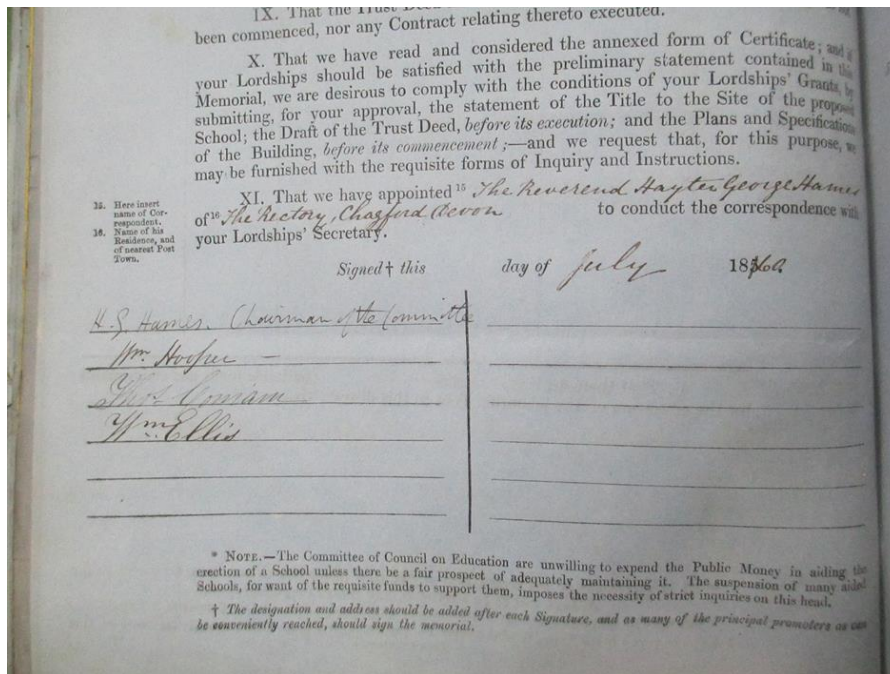
The New Parochial School.

In 1860 the Almshouse –The Care House – in New Street was identified as the building to be transformed as the new parish schoolroom.

Official documentation began, and groups of local “worthies” began fund raising and giving support to the project.

Application was made to the School Building Fund, was approached and became involved. This was the official government body which was overseeing the local projects, and which ensured that any money provided was effectively used,





Invoice Receipt ²⁰

Chagford 15th February 1861 The Trustees of Chagford School
to

Mr G W Ormerod
1860

8 Octr : Attending upon Mr Short who came on behalf of the Promoters of the new Parish School; reading through and considering the papers brought by him as to the proposed appropriation of the site of the "Care House" for that purpose 6s 8d

and conferring thereon Instructions for Deed. 6s 8d
Drawing up the matter for completing draft conveyance in the form said by the Committee of Council on Education and copying same 10s 6d

10 [October]

Preparing answers to the questions of the said committee as to the Title of the Land and copy of the same and attending upon Mr Hames "The Correspondent" therewith for his signature 11s 8d

11 [October] Letter to Mr Fulford Clerk to the Okehampton Union with Draft for perusal on behalf of the Guardians 3s 6d

31 [October] The like to the Secretary of the Poor Law Board 3s 6d

8 Novr : I having received back the draft from the Secretary of the Poor law board with letter suggesting that a communication should be made to the committee of Council on Education as to the Management Clauses prior to the approval of the draft by them, Attending upon Mr Hames and conferring thereon when it was decided that the draft should be sent as it stood. 11s 8d

8 [Nov] letter to the Secretary of Council with draft and answers to questions of letter 3s 6d

21 [Nov] The Committee of Con E. [sic] having required that the clauses approving a Committee of Management should be inserted attending upon Mr Hames who furnished the names of the Committee stated that the Committee of Con E requested that [end of page so account so far stated] Carry forward £2 7s 8d

[Next page of document]

£2 7s 8d

²⁰ Document Devon Heritage Centre 1429A/Pe/1/3/1

A fresh draft should be prepared embodying the alterations	6s 8d
Amending draft as instructed and fair copy and plan	5s 0d
Letter to Secretary of Committee of Con E. therewith	3s 6d
18 Dec'r Letter to Secretary of Poor Law Board with draft approved by Committee Of Con E.	3s 6d
Letter Mr Fulford inquiring whether amended draft should be sent to him for perusal	3s 6d
Engroping [Engossing?] Grant and copy of same on parchment for Committee of C on E.	£2 2s 8d
Drawing plans on Grant and copy	7s 6d

1861

17 Jan'y Letter to Mr Fulford with ingropment [ingrossment?] requesting that he would procure the Seal of the Okehampton Union to be affixed at the next Board Meeting 3s 6d

Witnessing execution of Grant by the Trustees and Attesting same 13s 4d

30 Letter to Secretary of poor Law Board with Deed for their seal and registration 3s 11d

8 Feb'y Letter to Sec of Committee of Con E. with deed and parchment copy of same for filing 3s 6d

14 Feb' Having received Deed of Conveyance and approved draft returned from Committee of council for Education with letter stating that same had been compared with the copy and found correct writing to the Secretary acknowledging the receipt of the same as requested by him 3s 6d

Stamps and parchment	£2 15s 0d
Postages	2s 1d

£10 4s 5d

16th Feb 1861 Signed over stamp inscribed
ONE PENNY DRAFT PAYABLE ON DEMAND OR RECEIPT
Rec'd the Above G W Ormerod²¹

A long, empty envelope exists with the following inscribed on the front:

N.B.

The Deed

The Conveyance of the old "Care House" New St by the Poor Law Authorities in 1861 to Trustees for the purpose of a School (now known as the Parochial School Chagford) was removed from this box on June 3rd 1926 and placed for safer custody in the "Safe" at the Rectory." [punctuation as on envelope].

C G Hayter- Hames
Rector's Ch. Warden and Correspondent to the School
4-6-26²²

NB. Despite a careful search at Chagford House by the descendants of CG Hayter Hames, requested by the author, no trace of this Deed could be found. Perhaps in DCC Archives following 1944 Education Act? But at time of writing still undiscovered.

By the 1860s Chagford's School was known, officially, as the National School number 5197.

The curriculum was basic and very much based on the Scriptures and on rote learning of "ciphering" – the forming of letters and words - and reading, as well as basic arithmetic. The children at the

²¹ Ibid

²² *Devon Heritage Centre 1429A/PE/1/1/1*

'Parochial School' were aged between 7 and 13, after which they left to become part of the working community. They were divided into six 'Standards' but all taught in the same room. The school was overseen by a Board of Managers, chaired by the Rector.²³

Scott Thorn age 16 of New Street Pupil Teacher
Caleb Short aged 42 of 68, Mill Street Schoolmaster
Robert Willis aged 12 68, Mill Street Boarder*
Elizabeth Arrigotti aged 47, widow, The Square Schoolmistress(Private)*
Harriet Bunter aged 39, same address The Square School Assistant*
Ann Gidley aged 32 unmarried schoolmistress (Infant)
William Clampitt aged 17 Pupil teacher at Parochial School

*Probably at a small school run in a private house and supported by fee paying parents.²⁴

On Monday July 22nd 1861 "Two Grand Amateur Concerts" were held "in aid of the New Parochial School Room, Chagford" . Fig 10

The programme which contained classical pieces performed by "some of the most eminent in Exeter, and accompanied by 'an Orchestra, full in every department' was to be held once in the morning, and again the same evening. The Chorus were to be sustained by some of the most talented amateurs in the neighbourhood, and By Members of the CHAGFORD CHOIR. to contain some of the most Morning concert seats were to cost 3shillings if reserved and Unreserved seats 1/6. In the evening the reserved seats cost two shillings , whilst the unreserved seats cost 1 shilling.²⁵

A list of the "Chronology of Chagford" in the Chagford Parish Magazine of July 1867 notes that in May 1861 "School in New Street built." This was probably an extension to the then existing Carehouse building to provide an extra classroom .

Chagford School Log Books

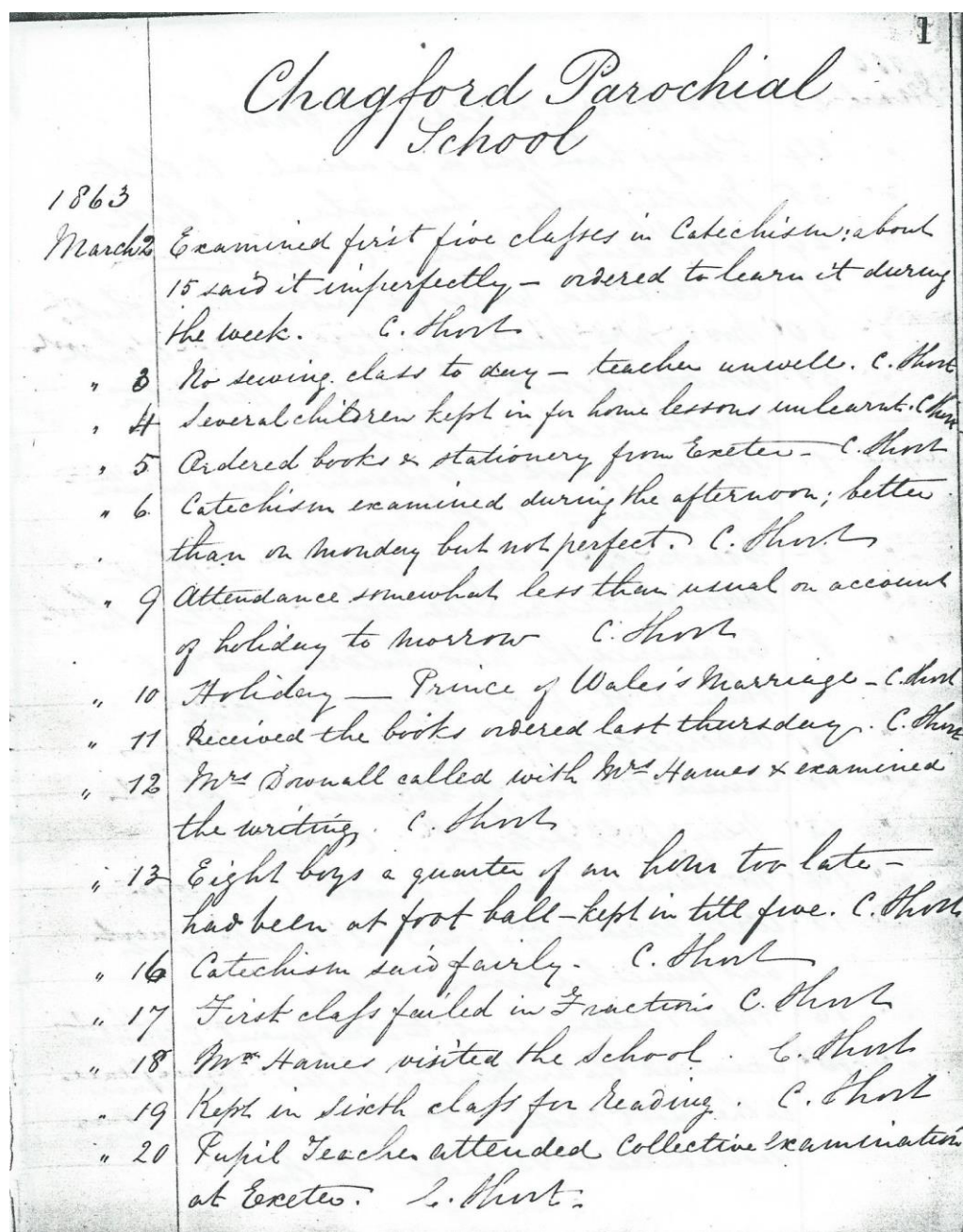
In 1862 compulsory regulations required Schoolmasters, or 'The Principle Teacher,'
'... to daily make in the log book the briefest entry which will suffice to specify either ordinary progress, or whatever other fact concerning the school or its teachers such a dates of withdrawals, commencements of duty, cautions, illness etc'.

²³ *Contemporary Inspection reports*

²⁴ *1861 Census:*

²⁵ See fig

Chagford School's Log books record activities, incidents and financial concerns from 1863 until 1971. Below is a copy of Caleb Short's first page in the school's first Log Book:



Extracts from Parish Magazines: ²⁶

July 1868:

The Rev. W W Howards, H.M. Inspector of Schools will examine our Parochial School on the 16th, and the Infant School on the 17th inst. The School Tea Drinking and Fete will be held on 22nd inst., on which occasion the Rectory grounds will be open to the public. The Chagford Band will be in attendance, the children will leave the schoolroom in procession at 3.00pm, and march through the principle streets.

August 1868:

²⁶ Held in the Chagford Local History Archive

The Rev W W Howard, H M Inspector of Schools, examined our Parochial and Infant Schools on the 15th and 16th ult. The result was very gratifying to the Managers, most of the papers(which are forwarded to the Privy Council) being done without fault. The children of different Standards, with but few exceptions, passed their examination in reading, writing, and arithmetic, according to the Government requirements. The writing of the upper classes was especially commended, The girls' sewing and needlework was also inspected in both schools, Mrs Short presiding over the elder girls in the Parochial School, and Miss Waters over those in the Infant School. This branch of their education seemed also carefully attended to. Mr Short, as usual, wins an addition to his laurels and Her Majesty's Inspector signified his intention of recommending him to the Lords Privy Council for the distinguished promotion of "First Division of First Class," usually termed a "Double First," while Miss Walters, who at present holds her Provisional Certificate, will be permitted, after Christmas next, to compete for one of a higher grade still. Upwards of 170 were present altogether in both schools on the days of examination. The holidays commenced on the 30th ult., and the school will reopen on the 17th inst.

The Annual Tea Drinking and School Fete came off on the 22nd ult. The children of the Parochial, Infant and Sunday Schools, numbering 230, mustered in the Infant schoolroom shortly before three, and precisely as the clock struck three, the procession, reaching the entire length of Mill Street, sallied forth, headed by the Chagford band, the children carrying flags and banners with suitable inscriptions. After marching through each street, and the *parterre* in front of the Teign Villas, the whole party returned to the Rectory, where a large concourse of people, and many of the visitors of this place were assembled. Mr Omerod, Miss Primrose, Miss Smith, Mr R Dayrell, Mr Barson, Miss Lewis, Miss Desborough, with the Rectory Party, did good service in supplying the tea and cake, at the conclusion, grace was chanted, and the entire assemblage dispersed in all directions over the Rectory grounds; here a variety of games were enjoyed, and also races between the children of various classes, prizes were afterwards distributed, and the band having played the national Anthem, the procession reformed, and proceeded down the avenue to the schoolroom, followed by all who had honoured the fete with their presence.

April 1869

Miss Lucy Thorn, who is at present the schoolmistress at Marden, near Staplehurst, passed a successful examination in December last, and has been appointed one of Her Majesty's certified teachers. Her sister, Miss Ann Thorn, schoolmistress at Bromsgrove, has also gained a similar distinction. Both were formerly at our Infant and Parochial Schools.

A Middle Class School has opened in Lustleigh, which already contains 14 boys. Mr Kirby is the master, who, we understand, was late headmaster of a large Middle Class school, and passed his pupils successfully through the Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations.²⁷

The first mention of 'half time pupils from the factory' in the Chagford Parochial School log books is in 1869. The log book states that they 'are absent a good deal' as the foreman did not dismiss them because *'he would have to stop the men whose engines they look after'*²⁸

A meeting of the ratepayers was held on the 24th ult., to consider the position of this parish with respect to the provisions of the Elementary Education Act 1870. The Rector presiding, and present Messrs. R. Stanbury (Rushford); W. Ellis (Week); J. Perryman (Yeo); J Rowe (Colly Hole); W. Jeffery, and C Short. Mr Hooper (Withecumbe) was unavoidably prevented from attending.²⁹

²⁷ Published in Contemporary Chagford Parish Magazines held in Chagford Local History Archive and at DHC

²⁸ Chagford Primary School Log Books held in the DHC, and copies in the Chagford Local History Archive

²⁹ Extract from the Chagford Parish Magazine December 1870

The Chairman opening the proceedings congratulated the Meeting on the School accommodation of this parish, and would ever feel grateful to his parishioners for their liberality in aiding him in the erection of the new Parochial Schoolroom, in 1861, as well as granting him the free use of the Infant Schoolroom in 1853.

He thought it far more satisfactory that this should have been done voluntarily so many years before the passing of the new Act, than have to do it by compulsion, or to avoid the expense of a Rate. He felt that Chagford had set an example in the great cause of education, and had kept pace with the spirit of the times.

Mr Short then explained that their Infant schoolroom was 44 feet long, by 16 feet wide, and 17 feet high, while the Parochial School room was 46 feet long, by 16 feet wide and 15 feet high. This gave accommodation for 288 children, viz. 87 more than the one sixth to be provided for as the population which would send to such Elementary Schools would not exceed 1,200. Both Schools being under Government inspection, it would be seen by the Reports that they were considered efficient.

Mr Stanbury then moved, and Mr Ellis seconded, "that this meeting having gone into the details of the Elementary Education Act, and having considered the school provision in this parish, deem the provision sufficient, efficient and suitable." The resolution was unanimously carried.³⁰

Caleb Short aged 53 of Mill Street National Schoolmaster
Also has 3 Boarders at his house, aged 12, 10 and 9 – presumably pupils at school?
Lucy Thorn aged 25 living at the Post Office with parents, Schoolmistress
Emily Combe aged 21, in lodgings in Mill Street Schoolmistress
Julia Scott aged 14 The Town Monitor at Infant School³¹

The last mention of 'Factory children' in the school log books is in 1878.
Caleb Short died in 1879³² having taught in Chagford for 34 years.

Mahala Aggett aged 17 High Street Pupil Teacher
Hannah Aggett aged 14 High Street Monitress [sic]
Jane Stevens aged 30 Mill Street Schoolmistress –unmarried
Mary Fisher aged 48 Sutcombe Street widow Schoolmistress³³

By the end of the 19th century the numbers had greatly increased. The National School had an average attendance of 140 and the Infants 69. The Government had begun to make real provision for education, and were offering a fee of 10s a head which the Managers of the school decided to accept.

Caleb Short's successor was George Smith, whose wife Josephine taught the younger children.

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ 1871 census

³² Chagford Parish Registers

³³ 1881 Census