

**Chs04773 Bontfaen primary school, Broadway**

In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were eight schools in Cowbridge. A Junior School in West Village and an advanced girls' school in Eastgate eventually moved to Great House, High Street.

The National School was held in the building later known known as the Church Sunday School Room on Cardiff Road.

The junior department of Y Bontfaen School was built on Broadway in 1876.

*Notes from an article written about Cowbridge some years ago – source unknown.*



**Records held in Glamorgan Record Office :** Infants log books 1882 – 1941; mixed 1876 – 1937

1873, 8<sup>th</sup> May Mrs Thomas willing to sell one quarter acre for mixed school of 96 children. Tender to be advertised. Chairman willing to sell half an acre at the corner of Stumpy Field, Broadway, for Cowbridge school.

30<sup>th</sup> October 1873 - Cowbridge school to be for 120 mixed and 63 infants with house for master. Mr Blesley to prepare plans.

31<sup>st</sup> March 1874 Tender of Jones & Allan, Gloucester too high, modifications suggested.

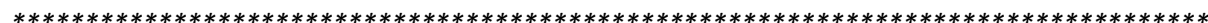
14<sup>th</sup> May 1874 Tender of Jones & Allan, Gloucester accepted for Cowbridge.

28<sup>th</sup> May 1874 Haggling on price – tender withdrawn.

4<sup>th</sup> June 1874 Miles Thomas, Cowbridge, accepted as builder. Both schemes progress.

*Cowbridge Board School minutes E/SB/12/142*

*Notes of Philip Riden 1985*



**17<sup>th</sup> April 1873 Cowbridge School Board**

The first meeting of this Board was held on Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at the Town Hall. The whole of the Members were present. The Rev. T. Edmondson opened the proceedings by proposing Mr Lewis Jenkins to the chair *pro tem*, being head of the poll.

The Rev. D. Jones then proposed The Rev. Thos. Edmondes as Chairman, which was seconded by Mr. John Williams and carried unanimously. The Rev. Thomas Edmondes then proposed Mr L. Jenkins as Vice Chairman, this was seconded by Mr. Huntley and carried unanimously.

There were two applicants for the clerkship, Messrs J. Stockwood, and T. Rees, solicitors, the latter gentleman was duly elected at a salary of £25 per annum.

It was then proposed and carried that three members form a quorum, and that the next meeting take place this day week.

Question of a school at Maindy more urgent than at Cowbridge – sites to be inspected. The Board then adjourned to meet at Maindy at 3 o'clock, to inspect a suitable site for the School there, the need being urgent for the same in the northern portion of the Union.

*Glamorgan Observer (monthly illustrated journal)*

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**Notes of Philip Riden (Cardiff University Extra – Mural Dept.) from material in GRO 1985 :**

24<sup>th</sup> April 1873 Ask Mrs Thomas, Caercady if she will sell site for Maindy school. Census to be taken – chairman and Davies to take census for Llanblethian; Lewis Jenkins & Samuel Howells for Cowbridge; Rev Daniel Jones for Ystradowen; Vincent Huntley & John Williams for Welsh St Donats. Sites for a school at Cowbridge to be inspected.

29<sup>th</sup> February 1876 – Byelaws approved. Compulsory attendance of every child in district from ages 5 to twelve, with exemptions for part-timers under Factory Acts or Workshop Regulation Act 1867. HMI can exempt child of 10 if has reached Standard 111. Fees may be remitted by Board. Table of fees (no amounts) crossed through.

18<sup>th</sup> March 1876 – Two additional candidates attended, William Thomas, Hill House, Llanblethian and Edward John, Cowbridge. Persuaded to withdraw nominations to allow old board to continue, thus avoiding 'expense and unpleasantness' of an election. Agreed.

22<sup>nd</sup> March 1876 – Maindy school opened.

27<sup>th</sup> April 1876 – Board be managers of the school, not a separate body.

25<sup>th</sup> May 1876 – John Bevan of Cowbridge has presented £140 in four and a half per cent railway stock to provide two exhibitions at Cowbridge school. Thanked. Cowbridge railway stock.

27<sup>th</sup> July 1876 – Seven weeks holiday : month in midsummer, two weeks at Christmas, one at Whitsun.

31<sup>st</sup> August 1876 - John Bevan exhibition deed settled. Two exhibitions tenable for two or three years, any board school, either sex, aged 8 – 11. Signed by Thomas Rees, solicitor and William T Gwyn, his clerk. Scheme dated 24/7/1875. Enrolled on chancery 20/1/1876.

18<sup>th</sup> December 1874 – Propose to borrow £27000 from PWLC for two schemes payable over 50 years. Loan approved 25<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1875.

28<sup>th</sup> October 1875 – To advertise for a certificated master for a mixed school at Cowbridge, 100 – 120 children; and certificated mistress for 50 – 60 children Maindy. Adverts in School Board Chronicle and National Society's monthly paper.

25<sup>th</sup> November 1875 – Two applications : Mr & Mrs Wilcox, East Grinstead, Sussex, and Mr And Mrs S J Harker, Sedbergh, Yorks. Harkers told they will get Cowbridge school in December.

16<sup>th</sup> December 1875 – Harkers appointed from 1 January, £100 and two fifths grant. Mr and Mrs William Skinner, Basingstoke, Hants. Offered Maindy school at £90 and half grant; second choice Mr & Mrs Daniel Thomas Phillips, Caerphilly. Twelve applications of which two are from Wales, Caerphilly & Carmarthen.

30<sup>th</sup> December 1875 – Both candidates had accepted other jobs. George Edward Tutton and his daughter Eva Caroline Tutton to be offered Cowbridge; James H Harvey of Helston, Cornwall to be offered Maindy.

11<sup>th</sup> January 1876 – Harvey accepts (Tutton had accepted already). Mr Harvey be allowed to use Maindy school for a night school.

1<sup>st</sup> December 1876 – Miss Kate Tutton to be appointed as mistress at Cowbridge school, £40 pa.

29<sup>th</sup> March 1877 – Bevan exhibition ages to be extended 8 – 11 to 8 – 12

26<sup>th</sup> April 1877 – First exhibition awarded

28<sup>th</sup> June 1877 – Mr David Davis be appointed Attendance Officer at 4s for every day worked.

25<sup>th</sup> October 1877 – Letter received from Thos Edmondson saying that the National School had been permanently closed. ED to be informed and board to consider what steps necessary as a result.

27<sup>th</sup> December 1877 – Attendance Officer had taken a census of children aged 5 – 14. Conclusion : no extra accommodation needed. Miss Rees asked not to take into her school any children who had been at board school.

Birth certificates needed under new code as proof of age. Board petitions against : in this district there are many children whose births have not been registered and so it would be impossible to comply, even if they could afford a certificate. Also local cases of children brought over from Ireland. Loss of grant would be serious.

31<sup>st</sup> January 1878 – Attendance Officer dismissed : attendance has not improved.

28<sup>th</sup> February 1878 – William Griffiths Reynolds appointed Attendance Officer : attendance has much improved.

Remission of fees considered by board in each case.

30<sup>th</sup> May 1878 – HMI reports considered 'very satisfactory' on both schools.

16<sup>th</sup> August 1878 – Case of severe punishment : new rules corporal punishment to be reduced as much as possible and in the case of girls not to be used at all. Children not to be beaten on the head.

Non-attendance cases named and discussed at board meetings.

19<sup>th</sup> December 1878 – Proposed to extend Cowbridge school. Loan application to PWLC for £300.

19<sup>th</sup> March 1879 – Second attempt to avoid election : not successful. EW Miles pledged to stand and would not withdraw, also two other candidates, Edward John and Thomas John.

28<sup>th</sup> March 1879 – Bevan exhibition increased to £3.10s

24<sup>th</sup> April 1879 – New board : Edward John of new candidates elected.

27<sup>th</sup> May 1880 – John Bevan to provide exhibition for a girl to learn French at Culverwells' school.

5<sup>th</sup> August 1880 – Question of increasing accommodation at Cowbridge. Better to get more children into Maindy. Better to extend Cowbridge than build at Llanblethian.

30<sup>th</sup> September 1880 – Department pressing for new school : pointed out that many children in district attend private schools in town.

28<sup>th</sup> October 1880 – Had written to board naming four private schools in town attended by about 100 children between them. Lordships would not accept these as relieving board of the need to provide places. Try again.

25<sup>th</sup> November 1880 – Will go ahead with Cowbridge extension : borrow £300 from PWLC.

30<sup>th</sup> December 1880 – Approved by Department for 84 children to go ahead. Extension going ahead. Finished September 1881.

27<sup>th</sup> April 1872 – Results of election announced : contest not avoided.

30<sup>th</sup> August 1883 – Cowbridge & District Teachers' Association mentioned for first time. Allowed to meet in the school.

26<sup>th</sup> June 1884 – Attendance Officer's list of children attending Miss Rees's school read : those above 5 cautioned they must attend school certified as efficient.

26<sup>th</sup> February 1885 – Board proposed extension at Maindy. Department suggested most extensive alterations. Board will make smaller alterations from own money.

29<sup>th</sup> April 1885 – Another election reported.

*Typed by B Alden 2017 from handwritten notes*

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### **Notes from the log book, Cowbridge District Board**

In May 1876, George Eaton Tutton was headmaster. His daughter Eva Caroline Tutton was assistant teacher (she married David Tilley, Ivy House, Westgate). Another daughter, Kate Tutton, was appointed assistant teacher December 1<sup>st</sup> 1876.

In 1881, at the school was George Tutton, and three Tutton daughters, Eva, Kate and Caroline.

April 20<sup>th</sup>. 1887 The school received 33 dozen copy books from Ann Davis (stationer and bookseller of Eastgate).

April 4<sup>th</sup> 1887 The headmaster was J H Harvey, late of Maindy school.

E/SE 17/5

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**Memories of Y Bontfaen Primary School in the 1940s -**  
*by Barbara Bowen (now Davies, interviewed in 2013). She attended for 5 years from 1940.*

Miss Coghill taught the first class, and children printed when writing.

The teacher of the next class was Miss Aubrey (she didn't believe in anyone being left-handed; Dr Brown Miller sorted her out in this!).

Then came Miss Miles for Standard 1 (she was later Mrs Buchalik). She taught joined-up writing (copper plate). Lines for this were drawn on the paper.

Standards 2 and 3 were taught by Mr Frederick. He crammed the two year groups into one room and kept every child going, from the brightest to the dimmest.

Standard 4 had Miss Gwyneth Thomas (scholarship class) – tremendous discipline, martinet; hit with edge of ruler on knuckles.

Those who did not pass the scholarship went to Mr Roberts, the headmaster, and stayed there till they left at 14. (Miss Bennet Jones was head of the Girls' High School)

The girls were in the front playground, the boys in the back. They had separate toilets outside and round the corner of the building.

No parents entered the school, and there were no sports days (nowhere to hold them). Children exercised by skipping and playing 'tag' in the yard, and all walked to school.

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**1940s Memories of Tim Edwards, who grew up in Woodlands Close, Westgate**

‘Miss Cogbill was my first teacher in infants in 1944. She used to live in the house, part of the Old Hall next to the bank. There is a photo of her in the Town Hall museum with the Rural District Council or Cowbridge Corporation groups. Miss Aubrey was my second infants teacher in 1945 – she was lovely and lived in the first house across the road from the school on Broadway. Then in 1946/7, Miss Miles (taught me) in Standard 1 and 2. During 1947, that must have been when she became Mrs Buchalik and had her son Tim. In 1948, Standard 3 with Mr Frederick. I liked him. He used to live in the white house on the left on the way to Aberthin. Lindsey Thomas and I sometimes used to pick him up when Olly Jones gave us a ride in his big Austin 12, to take Mr Frederick to school. In 1949 it was dread time going into Miss Thomas’s scholarship class. The first day we were there we had homework. Enough said. Miss Thomas used to live in a house just past the railway station road. I can remember the headmaster Mr John Roberts calling most of the school into his classroom to farewell Mr Frederick on his retirement. A Mr Prosser took his place, a person I did not like. Mr Roberts the woodwork teacher only used to come on Mondays – I was only in his class about three times. I left Bontfaen in 1951 to go to Monkton House school in Cardiff.

Just for interest, we were taught Welsh in Standard 1 and 2, but it was dropped in Standard 3. On Fridays, when in Standards 1,2 and 3, we were put in one classroom and Mr Frederick would play the harmonium while we sang Welsh songs and the Welsh national anthem’.

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**1950s Memories of Diane Lloyd (nee Thomas), former pupil :**

The head was Mr Roberts, who lived in one of the bungalows on Broadway – the school house was occupied by Mr Rees, head of Maindy School. The later head of Bontfaen, Miss Francis, came in daily from Llantwit Major on the bus (in the mid 1950s). When he retired, Mr Roberts was presented with a television.

Stacie Morgan (nee Millman) taught one of the two infants’ classes. She was a well respected teacher, married to the organist of Holy Cross church.

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