

Return of number of children in a parish school, Astley, DR19/626

February's Document of the Month focuses on the theme of education. We have chosen this document from the Astley parish collection, which is a return of the number of children in the parish school.

Dating from August 1833, this document takes the form of a survey. The survey asks the parish Overseers or Overseers of the Poor to note: the types and number of schools present in the parish, the number of pupils, their genders and the ages which pupils typically start and leave each school. The document also interestingly asks if any of the schools are confined to the Established Church, or any other religious denomination, and how the schools are funded.

DR 19/626

Infant Schools :
Specifying
The Number of Infants in each School? _____
And of what Sex? _____
At what Age do they usually enter, and at what Age do they usually quit School? _____

Daily Schools :
Specifying
The Number of Scholars in each School? _____
And of what Sex? _____
At what Age do they usually enter, and at what Age do they usually quit School? _____

Sunday Schools :
Specifying
The Number of Scholars in each School? _____
And of what Sex? _____
At what Age do they usually enter, and at what Age do they usually quit School? _____

Endowed and other Schools :
Whether an Endowed School or Schools? _____
If not endowed, by what Funds supported; that is, whether by Payments from the Scholars, or otherwise? _____
If by Salaries, or other allowed Emoluments, be pleased to specify Particulars? _____

Religion :
Is any School confined (nominally or virtually) to the Established Church?
Or to any other Denomination or Religious Persuasion?

If any of the above Schools established since the Year 1818, be pleased to specify the Date when they severally commenced?
Is any lending Library of Books attached to any of these Schools?
Be pleased to insert any Observations which occur to you relative to the above Questions, or any of them.

Signed this _____ Day of _____ 1833.

Schoolmaster at _____

Schoolmistress at _____

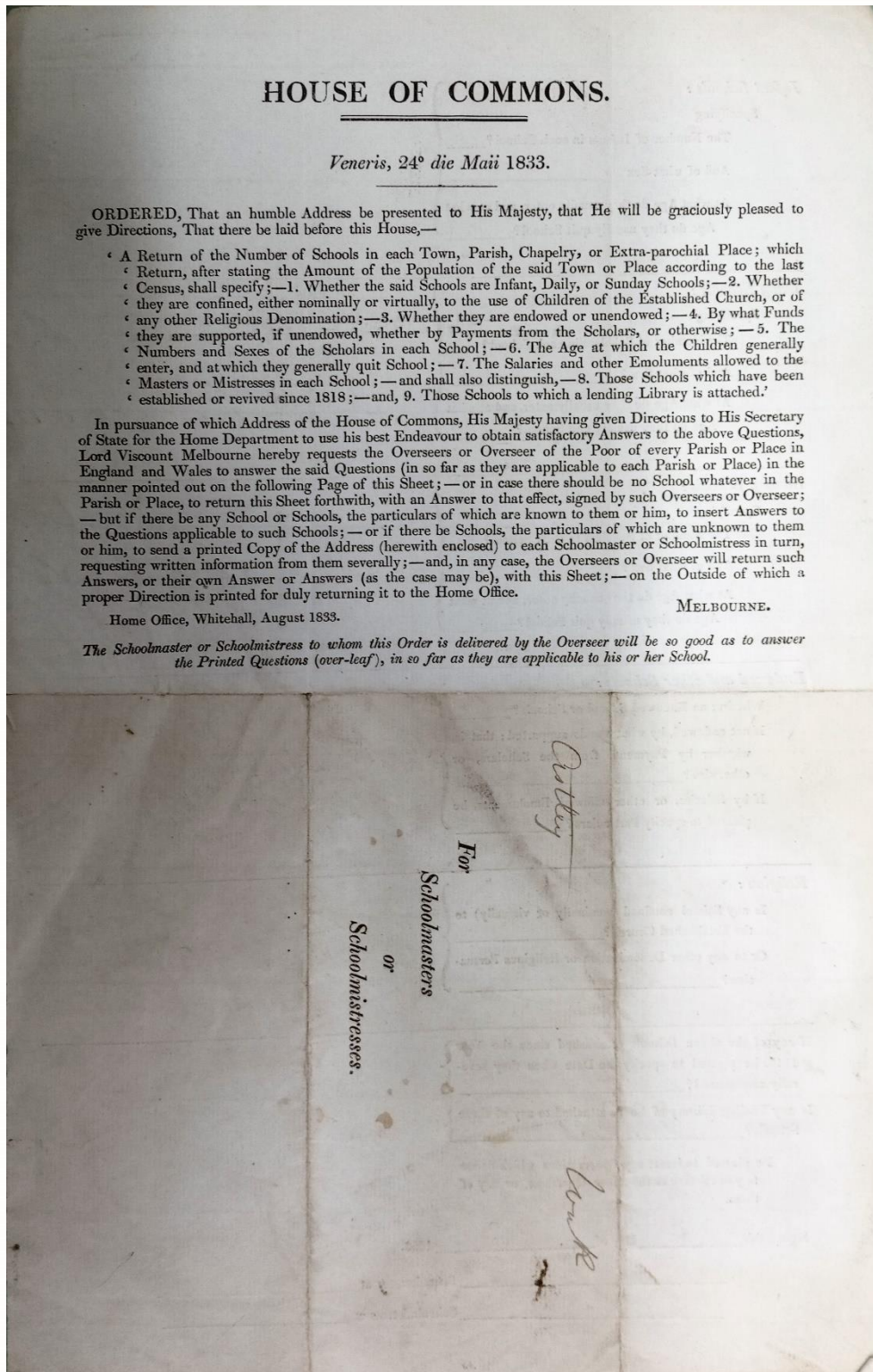
Handwritten notes:
None
one School
53
21 boys and 32 girls
enter at 5 here at 10 or 12
one
54
22 boys & 32 girls
None
Supported by voluntary contributors
Salary paid by F. H. Wigate Esq.
There is no restriction but all the Children are of the Church of England
None

Survey of the number of children in a parish school in Astley, 1833, Warwickshire County Record Office, DR19/26.

The back of the form states that the monarch at the time (King William IV) had instructed the Secretary of State (Lord Viscount Melbourne) to

“use his best endeavor to obtain satisfactory Answers to the above Questions”¹.

¹ Return of the number of children in the parish school, Warwickshire County Record Office, DR19/26.



Reverse of the survey, Warwickshire County Record Office, DR19/626

The parish of Astley is listed as having no Infants School, but it does have one Daily School and one Sunday School, with fifty-three and fifty-four pupils respectively. When asked about religion, the form states:

“There is no restriction but all of the Children are of the Church of England.”²

The form also states that the teachers’ salary was being paid by F. Newdigate Esquire. This is likely to be Francis Parker Newdigate. According to David Paterson’s article on the Our Warwickshire website, the Newdigate family regularly gave the sum of £5 to help fund the cost of a teacher in the village. They also gave other sums of money to the school³.

Unfortunately, the form hasn’t been signed, so we don’t know the name of the person who filled it in. It is also unclear why the form was never sent back, or for what purpose it was sent in the first place. However, despite this, the form does still give us an interesting insight into the education provisions in the parish at the time.

Astley

Astley is a parish situated in the north of the county of Warwickshire, not too far from Nuneaton. The village consists of the church (St Mary the Virgin), castle, school and cottages⁴.

The castle was the seat of the family of the infamous nine-day queen, Lady Jane Grey. The parish also has connections to the author George Eliot⁵.

² Ibid.

³ David Paterson, A History of Schooling in Astley, 1767-1877, Our Warwickshire, <https://www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk/content/article/a-history-of-schooling-in-astley-1767-1877> (accessed 11/01/2023).

⁴ 'Parishes: Astley', in *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 6, Knightlow Hundred*, ed. L F Salzman (London, 1951), pp. 15-22. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol6/pp15-22> (accessed 11 January 2023).

⁵ Anthony Poulton-Smith, *Warwickshire Place-Names*, *Countryside Books*, page 13.

