

VCH Nottinghamshire  
On-line Texts in Progress  
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Author: Sheila Leeds

VICTORIA  
COUNTY  
HISTORY



Nottinghamshire

## WEST LEAKE

### SOCIAL HISTORY

#### EDUCATION

In 1743 the rector reported that there was no public or charity school, endowed or otherwise maintained, in West Leake.<sup>1</sup> In 1818 there was still no school, although it was observed that 'most of the poor children receive instruction'. This may have been at one of the two Sunday schools, containing about 50 children. One, supported by the parish, was for boys and the other, maintained by the rector, for girls.<sup>2</sup>

In 1833 there was a daily school where one boy and 15 girls were instructed at the expense of their parents. There was a Sunday school attended by twelve boys, which was supported by the parish.<sup>3</sup>

A school was built in 1850 on the main street. It was a small brick building with a very small playground. In 1861 there were 30 pupils on the books, of whom only four were over nine years of age. There was a Sunday school with 46 children. They were taught by a man who was also a carrier, clerk, huckster, haircutter, sexton, labourer and razor grinder and who was described as 'inefficient', and by four ladies, the school mistress and the rector's three daughters, all of whom were 'very efficient'. A night school was to have opened in 1861 but no further mention has been found.<sup>4</sup>

When the diocesan inspector visited in 1861 he described it as 'an old-fashioned dame school'. He also commented that 'for what the children know they are chiefly indebted to the Miss Batemans, the rector's daughters'. Arithmetic was only taught one afternoon a

<sup>1</sup> *Visitation Returns*, 85.

<sup>2</sup> *Digest of Returns* (1819), 129.

<sup>3</sup> *Educ. Enq.* (1835), 251.

<sup>4</sup> Lincolnshire Archives, DBE 9/17/158.

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week and the inspector asked for more time for it. Other subjects were rated 'fair' but needlework was 'very nice indeed'.<sup>5</sup>

The following year the inspector remarked that 'the children are under a great disadvantage as the mistress is unable to teach arithmetic. The Misses Bateman come two afternoons to do that'.<sup>6</sup> In 1863 the inspector reported that 'it has improved in every aspect but arithmetic'. He also noted 'the rector's daughters give great attention to this little school'.<sup>7</sup>

The school was still in existence in 1895<sup>8</sup> but probably closed within the next few years. In 1904 it was stated that the children attended Kingston school<sup>9</sup> and four years later that the children went to school in East Leake.<sup>10</sup>

In 1966 the building was given to the village as a community hall by Lord Belper (then lord of the manor).<sup>11</sup> It remained in this use in 2013.

### CHARITIES FOR THE POOR

In 1743 Mrs Parnel Davis left £5 to be put in the hands of trustees, the interest to be paid annually to teach poor children their catechism and to read. They were usually taught by and the money paid to the master of East Leake school.<sup>12</sup> By 1764 it was noted that the money was 'feared lost' as the person holding it had died 'in very low circumstances'.<sup>13</sup>

### CHARITY OF ELIZA CATHERINE BATEMAN

By her will Eliza Catherine Bateman (died 1922) left money to keep in repair the memorial windows to her family in East and West Leake churches. The surplus was to be given to the deserving poor of West Leake. This bequest was registered with the Charity Commission in 1965 but removed in 2004 when it ceased to exist.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Lincs. Archives, DBR 9/17/159.

<sup>6</sup> Lincs. Archives, DBE 9/17/163.

<sup>7</sup> Lincs. Archives, DBE 9/17/167.

<sup>8</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1895), 91.

<sup>9</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1904), 96.

<sup>10</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1908), 106.

<sup>11</sup> D. E. Clark, *West Leake Past & Present* (2000), (unpaginated).

<sup>12</sup> *Visitation Returns*, 85.

<sup>13</sup> H. Fisher (ed.), *Archbishop Drummond's Parish Visitation Returns 1764* (2012), 189.

<sup>14</sup> Char. Comm. Reg. no. 244749.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

In the early 19th century a village feast was held on the Sunday after Martinmas.<sup>15</sup> A branch of the Women's Institute was formed in 1931 and continued in 2013.<sup>16</sup> There was also a Young Farmers group.<sup>17</sup> In 1887 the first Kingston and West Leake Horticultural Society show was held in the schoolroom at West Leake. It later became part of the Kingston Show.<sup>18</sup> Village cricket and football teams ceased to exist in the early 20th century. In 2013 the village organised events in the village hall but was reliant on its larger neighbours for other clubs and organisations.

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<sup>15</sup> *White's Dir. Notts.* (1832), 650.

<sup>16</sup> Char. Comm. Reg. no. 1033341.

<sup>17</sup> Char. Comm. Reg. no. 1030031.

<sup>18</sup> D. E. Clarke, *West Leake Past & Present Part 2* (2010), (not paginated).