

## EDUCATION, c.1600–2000

### Introduction

The Royal Free Grammar School was founded in 1552 by and for the benefit of the townspeople and under its original statutes was to offer free places to the sons of burgesses. This obligation, long redundant due to the lapse of burgess status, was abolished in 1868, with most pupils historically coming from outside the borough.<sup>1</sup>

Small numbers of those admitted as freemen of the borough in this period were designated 'schoolmaster'. The frankpledge list for 1668 contains two schoolmasters, and those for 1709 and 1731 name four each (from 1650 to 1775, no more than one 'schoolmaster' was admitted in each 25-year period).<sup>2</sup> In 1690, Edward Griffiths, churchwarden of St Alkmund, was cited before the bishop's court 'for teaching school without license'.<sup>3</sup>

In fact, as befitted the county town, Shrewsbury had a whole range of schools and educational provision before the 17th century, most of it informal and hard to trace in the records; the first systematic census dates from 1817.<sup>4</sup> But there was a developing range of endowed schools which offered education to the sons and daughters of townspeople. This chapter commences with a brief account of the private educational provision from the 17th century before returning to the education of 'the poor' and the population at large.

### Private Schools

By the late 17th century there was at least one well regarded private school for girls: a finishing school run by Esther Chambre and Barbery Saxfield 'in the more fashionable part of Castle Ward near St Mary's Church'. First mentioned in 1672, it was described by Celia Fiennes (1690s) as 'a very good

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<sup>1</sup> *VCH Salop*. VI (1), 271, and see note [XXX] below. On Shrewsbury School, see *VCH Salop*. II, 154–8. This chapter draws on research undertaken for the VCH by the late Mrs Jessie McFall. See also *VCH Salop*. VI (1), 271–2, 298–301.

<sup>2</sup> A. McInnes, 'The emergence of a leisure town: Shrewsbury 1660–1760', *Past & Present*, 120 (1988), 84–5, 86–7.

<sup>3</sup> R. Hume, 'Changing patterns of educational development in Shropshire from the Restoration until the first Treasury grant 1660–1833' (Keele Univ. PhD thesis, 1982) (copy in Shropshire Archives), 202.

<sup>4</sup> 'A digest of parochial returns made to the select committee appointed to inquire into the education of the poor: session 1818, vol. 1' (House of Commons, London, 1819).

Schoole for young Gentlewomen' 'which concentrated on "behaviour and musick" as well as on "learning work"'. In 1695 'Mrs Saxfield had six young ladies resident at her house' and Esther Chambre a further 12.<sup>5</sup>

Dame schools, although largely unrecorded, certainly existed. In 1785 Mrs Rachel Jones of Coton Hill taught 19 girls and 13 young boys at her house on week days, and Mrs Ann Pardoe had a school at her house in Frankwell.<sup>6</sup>

From the late 18th century, newspapers and commercial directories reveal a *laissez-faire* proliferation of private schools and 'academés'.<sup>7</sup> Comprising both day and boarding schools, most were small and of short duration. One of the earliest recorded was that of William Richardson in 1773. Some offered instruction in particular subjects such as Italian, French, business, book-keeping and handwriting. In 1822 Richard Davis ran a 'Music Academy for the Blind'.<sup>8</sup> Masters from Millington's charity school taught academic subjects to advanced, fee-paying students as a sideline.<sup>9</sup> A directory of 1828 lists 18 'Academés, Private Schools', their addresses clustered in the St John's Hill/Claremont/Belmont quarter.<sup>10</sup>

Private schools offered opportunities for women to teach and to run their own enterprises, and for girls to receive formal education. At least 10 of the 18 such schools listed in 1828 were run by women.<sup>11</sup> In 1842, of 21 private schools run by private individuals, 15 were women and in one case a married couple.<sup>12</sup> In 1856 of 17 schools, 10 were run by women and 6 were specifically for girls.<sup>13</sup> In 1882 of 22 schools, 17 were run by women.

By the late 19th century the expansion of the town is indicated by the presence of private schools in Castlefields (11 Victoria Street and Severn Bank) and two in Longden Coleham.<sup>14</sup> One of the latter, a boarding school established at The Limes by Wyndham Deedes in 1892, moved to Millmead, a purpose-built boarding school in 11 acres on Sutton Road, in 1899.<sup>15</sup> The population of private schools and academies was also becoming more stable and more were specifically preparatory

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<sup>5</sup> McInnes, 'The emergence of a leisure town', 54–87, 64–5.

<sup>6</sup> SA, NO4335/2/1. See 'Sunday Schools' below.

<sup>7</sup> McInnes, 'The emergence of a leisure town'.

<sup>8</sup> List from Hume, thesis, 311–17.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 196.

<sup>10</sup> Tibnam & Co., *The Salop Directory* (Shrewsbury, 1828), 87.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Pigot & Co.'s Directory of Derbys, Dorset...* (1842), 36; cf. *Pigot & Co.'s Directory of Derbys, Herefs...* (1835), 370: six, and not the same as in 1828; S. Bagshaw, *History, Gazetteer & Directory of Shropshire* (1851): six, of which four are the same as in 1842.

<sup>13</sup> *P.O. Directory* (1856).

<sup>14</sup> *P.O. Directory* (1882-3), 161.

<sup>15</sup> B. Trinder, *Beyond the bridges: The suburbs of Shrewsbury 1760–1960* (Chichester, 2006), 77–8, 93.

schools for boys' public schools, such as Kingsland Grange and Prestfelde.<sup>16</sup> St Winefride's Convent School, Belmont, has continued from 1872 to the present (2017) as a Roman Catholic independent day school for boys and girls aged from 3 to 11.<sup>17</sup>

## Education 1700–1880

### *Eighteenth-Century Charitable Foundations*

A minority of the town's children benefited from free places at the three charity schools: Bowdler's, Millington's and Allatt's. Thomas Bowdler, draper and alderman,<sup>18</sup> donated £100 and by his will of 1724 bequeathed £1000 to purchase a building as a schoolhouse and a residence for a school master and mistress, to cloth and teach poor children born in St Julian's parish and, if insufficient eligible children were found, then children from Holy Cross.<sup>19</sup> At the age of 12 they were to be assisted in obtaining apprenticeships in suitable occupations, although in 1830 the Charity Commissioners reported that 'no children have been apprenticed for many years' due to insufficient funds.<sup>20</sup> Bowdler's was known as 'the Blue School' or 'Bluecoats' for the clothing given to the pupils. Commenced in 1727, it was situated in Back Lane, now Beeches Lane, in premises that incorporated school rooms and apartments for the school master and mistress.<sup>21</sup> The school building, inscribed with the date '1724', was described in 1837 as 'an oblong brick building, having in the centre a glazed cupola, surmounted by a flying dragon'.<sup>22</sup> By 1891 the school had expanded, with 50 pupils holding free places supplemented by around 50 paying fees.<sup>23</sup> In the 1920s the Trustees also awarded maintenance grants and scholarships for students at the Priory County School. The school was

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<sup>16</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1891, 1900, 1905, 1909, 1913, 1922, 1926, 1929, 1934, 1937, 1941), under 'Private Schools'. See also *VCH Salop*. VI (1), 299; Trinder, *Beyond the bridges*, 73, 107.

<sup>17</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1900), 202; *Shropshire Star*, 6 May 1987, 25, advertisement.

<sup>18</sup> [H. Owen], *Some account of the ancient and present state of Shrewsbury* (Shrewsbury, 1808), 401.

<sup>19</sup> T. Phillips, *The history and antiquities of Shrewsbury* (Shrewsbury, 1779), 120; 'Select committee on education of the poor', 760; Pidgeon, *Memorials*, 143; Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 59, 91; see Hume, thesis, 223. The endowment appears to have been to educate and cloth 15 boys and 15 girls, and to educate a further 20 children: *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1885), 946.

<sup>20</sup> Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 59; Reports of the Commissioners on Charities, 1819–1837, 432.

<sup>21</sup> 'Select committee on education of the poor', 760.

<sup>22</sup> H. Pidgeon, *Memorials of Shrewsbury* (Shrewsbury, 1837), 143; cf. J. Newman and N. Pevsner, *The buildings of England: Shropshire* (New Haven, 2006) [Pevsner], 569.

<sup>23</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1891), 418. By 1851, the master was authorised to take 20 'day scholars': Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 59.

closed for some time around 1900 and became dilapidated; after repairs it continued in operation until 1929.<sup>24</sup>

James Millington, draper, by his will of 1734, founded and endowed a school and almshouses which opened in 1748 on a prominent site above New Street in Frankwell. The schoolroom and chapel were flanked, in 'an ambitious Palladian composition', by the almshouses.<sup>25</sup> The charity employed a master, mistress and chaplain, and offered to cloth and educate 25 boys and 25 girls from St Chad's parish, with priority given to those from Frankwell, in the doctrine of the Church of England; 'no dissenter of any sect' was to be allowed to benefit. At the age of 14 boys were subsidised into apprenticeships and girls into service. The charity also funded exhibitions to Magdalene College, Cambridge.<sup>26</sup> By the end of the 18th century the school was for townspeople in general. In 1853 the High Court approved a new management scheme whereby non-St Chad's residents could enter as fee-paying scholars. The school was still in operation in 1922,<sup>27</sup> but was closed by 1928, with the former headmaster and headmistress receiving life pensions. The funds now constituted as the Millington Education Foundation were allocated to funding scholarships to schools and universities and in particular the Priory County School, with preference given to candidates resident in the parish of St Chad and of Anglican parents.<sup>28</sup>

The third and latest endowed charity school, Allatt's, did not restrict its intake to any particular parish but to children of 'the more respectable class of poor persons resident in the town' who did not claim parish poor relief. John Allatt, for many years chamberlain of the Corporation, died in 1796 having bequeathed land in Murivance and its revenues for the erection of a school house and residences for teachers and to educate and cloth 40 boys and 40 girls, who were to be apprenticed or put into service at the age of 14.<sup>29</sup> The school opened in 1800, near St Chad's church; 'a sober classical piece, of Grinshill ashlar' by J.H. Haycock,<sup>30</sup> with a two-storey schoolhouse linked by arcades to the single-storey teachers' houses on either side.<sup>31</sup> A detailed programme for the school was contained in Allatt's will; the children were taught 'reading, writing, accounts and needlework'. The school's first

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<sup>24</sup> Salop County Council Education Committee Minutes, 1904–69 [SCC Mins (Educ.)], 1905-6, 26; SCC Mins (Educ.) 1920-1, 29.

<sup>25</sup> Pevsner, 544.

<sup>26</sup> Phillips, *Hist. and antiqu. of Shrews.*, 117–18 (prints text of will); Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 60; Hume thesis, 202, 262, 312, plate 15; *P.O. Directory* (1882/3); Will, SA, MI00164; *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1891, 1905).

<sup>27</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1922), 218.

<sup>28</sup> Hume, thesis, 262; SCC Mins (Educ.) 1927-8, Jan, 1928, pp. 93-4; SCC Mins (Educ.) 1928-9, 16

<sup>29</sup> Reports from Commissioners. 3, Charities, 14 June–20 October 1831 (HMSO), 242–5; Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 60.

<sup>30</sup> Pevsner, 570–1.

<sup>31</sup> Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*; Pidgeon, *Memorials*, 145, after [Owen], *Some Account*, 403; *Pigot's Directory* (1842), 36.

master was praised by a visitor in 1813 for his scholarship and good character.<sup>32</sup> Additional fee-paying pupils were allowed from an early date.<sup>33</sup> In 1905 the value of Allatt's charity was assessed at £10,000, along with the valuable site.<sup>34</sup> The last headmaster, J.W. Jepson, was still in office in 1926.<sup>35</sup> The funds were reassigned for scholarships to the Priory County School.

### ***Voluntary Schools, c.1700–1880***

Schools funded by charitable subscriptions, bequests and donations, with small contributions from the pupils, provided for much larger numbers of children.

#### *The Public Subscription Charity School, later Shrewsbury National School*

Notable for its early date and longevity was the school founded in 1708 'for instructing and clothing poor children ... originally taught in a large room in the Sextry, or King's Head Shut'.<sup>36</sup> In 18th-century trustees' accounts it is called the Public Subscription Charity School.<sup>37</sup> The principal funding was from individual subscriptions, bequests and the collections from a charity sermon preached annually at two town churches.<sup>38</sup> Pupils had to be aged 'upwards of eight and under thirteen years', and if any were 'sufficiently taught' before the age of 13, then their places could be taken by others.<sup>39</sup> A master taught boys and the senior girls reading, and a mistress taught junior girls reading and all girls 'plain sewing' and knitting, and the children were instructed in the catechism. Parents had to pay for their children's school books, which the school supplied 'at a very easy rate'.<sup>40</sup> Most, and at times all, of the pupils were also provided with clothing, from which the school was known as the 'Brown School'.<sup>41</sup> Absence from school was the major problem reported in the trustees' accounts. The issue or withholding of new clothing was used as an inducement to punctual attendance. According to a report from St

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<sup>32</sup> George Bagley: J. Nightingale, *The beauties of England and Wales...*, vol. 13 (1) (London, 1813), footnote on pp. 140–1.

<sup>33</sup> *P.O. Directory* (1882/3), 89, 161.

<sup>34</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1905-6, 26.

<sup>35</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1926), 227. He was already headmaster by 1891: *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1891), 418.

<sup>36</sup> Phillips, *Hist. and antiqu. of Shrews.*, 120–1. The room may have been the Mercers' guild hall, *ibid.*, 137.

<sup>37</sup> SA, DO 4, 'The state of the Publick Subscription Charity-School in Shrewsbury, 1762' (Trustees' accounts, 1762), 'The state of the Publick Subscription Charity-School in Shrewsbury, 1763' (Trustees' accounts, 1763), 'The state of the Publick Subscription Charity-School in Shrewsbury, 1780' (Trustees' accounts, 1780).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Trustees' accounts, 1762, 1763, 1780, 1.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*; Phillips, *Hist. and antiqu. of Shrews.*, 120–1.

<sup>41</sup> [Owen], *Some account*, 402; Trustees' accounts, 1762, 1; Trustees' accounts, 1763, 1; 'Select committee on education of the poor', 753.

Mary's parish in 1817, 'The poor have the means of education but perhaps for that reason are not anxious to avail themselves of them, unless the advantage of clothing be added.'<sup>42</sup>

The school still occupied a rented schoolroom in the early 1760s, when there were 107 pupils, but by the 1770s the pupils were apparently divided between different premises.<sup>43</sup> Funds were raised to build a new school; the three-storey brick building, inscribed '1778', still stands on Abbey Foregate near English Bridge.<sup>44</sup> By 1816 the school was following the monitorial teaching system of Dr Andrew Bell and it had joined the National Schools organisation by 1823.<sup>45</sup> The school grew rapidly to around 350 pupils, although the number seems to have stabilised from the 1830s.<sup>46</sup>

A charity school for about 150 girls had been set up in the remains of the old St Chad's church by 1816, 'superintended by many respectable ladies of St. Chad's parish', which also adopted the system of Dr Bell.<sup>47</sup> It had ceased by 1900.<sup>48</sup>

### *Non-Conformist Schools*

By 1800 the Unitarian Church in High Street ran a charity school that met on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. Poor children were clothed and taught to read and write, and the girls to knit and sew, and all received religious instruction.<sup>49</sup> Two British and Foreign Society, or Lancasterian, schools were established: one in Abbey Foregate<sup>50</sup> and the other in Castlefields. The latter was founded by a committee of prosperous citizens inspired by the educational method of Joseph Lancaster, who lectured in Shrewsbury in July 1810.<sup>51</sup> Charles Bage, architect of the Castlefields and Ditherington

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<sup>42</sup> Trustees' accounts, 1762, 1763, 1780, 2; 'Select committee on education of the poor', 760.

<sup>43</sup> Trustees' accounts, 1762, 1; Trustees' accounts, 1763, 1, 2; Phillips, *Hist. and antiqu. of Shrews.*, 120–1. Probably in St Chad's: archdeaconry of Salop visitation returns, 1772 (Lichfield RO, B/V/5/18), mentioned in Hume thesis, 256.

<sup>44</sup> Trustees' accounts, 1780, 2; HER, no. 15001.

<sup>45</sup> T.J. Howell, *The stranger in Shrewsbury* (Shrewsbury, [1816]), 122; 'Select committee on education of the poor', 753; SA, 3916/1/2, Visitation of the Archdeaconry of Salop, 1823. See also TNA, ED103/98, 495-8.

<sup>46</sup> Howell, *The stranger in Shrewsbury*, 122–3; 'Select committee on education of the poor', 753; SA, 3916/1/2; Pidgeon, *Memorials*, 145; SA, 3916/1/13, Visitation of the Archdeaconry of Salop, 1843.

<sup>47</sup> Howell, *The stranger in Shrewsbury*, 126; 'Select committee on education of the poor', 759; SA, 3916/1/2 (180 girls in 1823); Pidgeon, *Memorials*, 145; SA, 1048/4579 (Minute book, 1864).

<sup>48</sup> *Kelly's Directory*, 1900, 200.

<sup>49</sup> SA, NO4335/2/7.

<sup>50</sup> *P.O. Directory* (1882/3), 92. J.D. Lightbown, when appointed headmaster of the new Wyle Cop Board School in 1888, had been headmaster at 'Abbey Foregate British School' since 1873: SA, ED7/103/300. The British School was built adjacent to the National School and is now an annexe to the United Reformed Church, from which it was already leasing the Sunday School rooms in 1886: SA, NO4212/5/2/1–2.

<sup>51</sup> Howell, *The stranger in Shrewsbury*, 123; Hulbert, *Memoir*, 233, 240.

flax mills, designed a 'Shed-like, but spacious building', likened by one of its patrons to a factory, situated below the castle wall, facing the county gaol.<sup>52</sup> The project was financed by public subscription and the issue of shares, and the school opened in 1812 with 130 boys and 103 girls, increasing to 170 boys and 130 girls in 1816.<sup>53</sup> In the 1840s construction of the railway station necessitated the demolition of the original building and the school moved to new premises in Beacall's Lane in 1851. It was rebuilt in the 1870s or early 1880s by Edward Haycock, and extended in 1889 and 1898, accommodating 748 boys and girls and 305 infants. In 1900 the average attendance was 600 boys and girls and 70 infants.<sup>54</sup> Being the only school in Shrewsbury to offer elementary education up to Standard IV it had a superior reputation among the voluntary schools.<sup>55</sup>

### *Parochial Schools*

Parochial day schools, established in early 19th century for the benefit of poor children of the parish and often in proximity to their parish churches, struggled to find suitable premises in the crowded town centre. They were encouraged, however, by the availability of building grants from central government from 1833. At St Alkmund there was still only a Sunday school in 1823: 'Day scholars could not be collected, the poor children going so early to the factories'.<sup>56</sup> When the parish's day school was commenced, it proved difficult to acquire a site for the schoolhouse: 'The schoolmaster and boys have suffered much during the past year for want of a commodious and airy school room' (1847).<sup>57</sup> Plans for building a mixed day school were submitted with an application for a building grant.<sup>58</sup> By 1851 St Alkmund's Parochial School was 'numerously attended' by both boys and girls; the average attendance was 260 in 1885.<sup>59</sup> The school appears to have closed by 1900 but the schoolhouse remains on its confined site off St Alkmund's Square.

St Chad's parish school was erected on Barker Street with the aid of a government grant of £290, in 1838-9; 'a plain, substantial edifice' of brick with a slate roof.<sup>60</sup> After just 20 years, now a National School, it moved to new premises on Bridge Street, designed by Edward Haycock in a neo-Tudor style.<sup>61</sup> The move may have been due to overcrowding; in 1851 the average attendance had been

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<sup>52</sup> Hulbert, *Memoir*, 233-4.

<sup>53</sup> Hulbert, *Memoir*, 240; Howell, *The stranger in Shrewsbury*, 123.

<sup>54</sup> *P.O. Directory* (1882/3), 92; *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1900), 209.

<sup>55</sup> *VCH Salop.*, VI (2), 272.

<sup>56</sup> SA, ED3916/1/2. See 'Sunday Schools', below.

<sup>57</sup> SA, P252/V/2/3.

<sup>58</sup> SA, ED1564/32.7-9.

<sup>59</sup> Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 61; *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1885), 946.

<sup>60</sup> SA, ED7/103/282; ED1564/304-13; SA, DA5/150/7; Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 60; [1215] HC (1850) XLIII, p. ccxxvii, 'Schools aided by parliamentary grants, 1833-49, Shrewsbury'.

<sup>61</sup> From the headmaster's house, which was demolished with the remaining school buildings in 2007 and rebuilt on St Austin's Friars (HER, nos. 10510 and 10116). Plans: SA, ED1564/304-313.

200 children, the new school was designed to accommodate 370, although average attendance was closer to 300.<sup>62</sup> Provision for infants remained unsatisfactory and in 1865 a new site was found for the infants' school on an adjacent site on St Austin's Street.<sup>63</sup>

The history of St Julian's parish school is more obscure. A school is recorded in 1792 and in 1835,<sup>64</sup> but in 1817 'poor' children relied upon the National School at Abbey Foregate while some on the outskirts of the parish attended a day school in Meole Brace.<sup>65</sup> From around 1840, 'St Julian's and Trinity Church Parochial Schools' were managed jointly. In 1843 the infant school closed due to 'depressed funds'.<sup>66</sup> In 1844 a parliamentary grant of £90 was paid for the construction of St Julian's school.<sup>67</sup> In 1854, application was made to the secretary of state for permission to sell St Julian's and Trinity schoolhouses to finance rebuilding.<sup>68</sup> In 1864, however, St Julian's school was two schoolrooms on the ground floor of a rented private dwelling house, managed by the vicar alone and with one schoolmistress, Miss Lucy Darlington. In 1872 the average attendance was 70 and the girls were taught 'plain needlework'.<sup>69</sup> In 1882, still under Miss Darlington, St Julian's infant school was at 'Court No. 7, Wyle Cop'.<sup>70</sup>

A Sunday school and day school was conducted in a chapel of St Mary's church, applying the system of Dr Bell, by 1817.<sup>71</sup> In 1828, a grant was obtained from the National Society to build St Mary's and St Michael's Schools in the industrial suburb of Castle Foregate. The school opened in 1832, soon after the consecration of St Michael's church nearby, both designed by John Carline.<sup>72</sup> The building was originally a single storey, with two classrooms divided by a central entrance. Admissions grew rapidly in the early years; in 1838 there were 209 day pupils and 202 Sunday pupils, compared with a total of 256 the previous year.<sup>73</sup> By 1848 a second storey had been added, and a two-storey

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<sup>62</sup> Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 60; *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1891), 418.

<sup>63</sup> SA, 1048/457-8.

<sup>64</sup> SA, 1078/1; *Pigot's Directory* (1835), 372.

<sup>65</sup> 'Select committee on education of the poor', 760.

<sup>66</sup> SA, 665/3/1066.

<sup>67</sup> [1215] HC (1850) XLIII, p. ccxxvii.

<sup>68</sup> TNA, HO 45/5624.

<sup>69</sup> SA, ED7/103/298, report of 1872. A St Julian's parish school is mentioned in 1792 (SA, 1078/1), 1799 (under 'Sunday Schools', below) and 1835 (*Pigot's Directory* (1835), 372).

<sup>70</sup> *P.O. Directory* (1882-3), 162.

<sup>71</sup> Howell, *The stranger in Shrewsbury*, 126 (250 children); 'Select committee on education of the poor', 760 ('about 160'). See also below, 'Sunday Schools'.

<sup>72</sup> SA, D3651/B/54/2(4); SA, ED4844/1-3; SA, P258/R/2/1; Pidgeon, *Memorials of Shrewsbury*, 146; and see *VCH Salop*. VI (1), 272; Hume, thesis, 316. The school is still in existence, renamed Derfald House and converted into residential accommodation.

<sup>73</sup> SA, P257/R/1/1.



extension in 1870.<sup>74</sup> Soon afterwards, a new infants' school was added, St Michael's Infants' School, designed by Samuel Pountney Smith in 1877, on the other side of Derfald Street.<sup>75</sup>

The Diocesan School, a day and boarding school, was established in Swan Hill around 1842 under the Lichfield Board of Education, 'an institution for the general education of youth ... Particular attention paid to mathematical education'.<sup>76</sup>

Other charity subscription schools appearing in the 1820s were Frankwell (see below) and Coleham Infants, with around 150 children, 'lately established' in 1823.<sup>77</sup> These schools flourished with the support of government building grants from 1833, including Trinity, attached to the new Holy Trinity church on Bellevue Road in 1838; Ditherington (Spring Gardens) Infants (by 1842); and St Mary's Roman Catholic school (1864, see below). Two new Church of England schools in the latter half of the 19th century were All Saints National School (1872), adjacent to the new All Saints church in North Street, Castlefields,<sup>78</sup> and St Giles, at Column Place, Preston Road, for girls and infants (1875).<sup>79</sup> St Mary's Infants, at Jane's Place, Coton Hill, was built in 1874-5.<sup>80</sup> The location of the majority of these schools outside the medieval town centre reflects the areas of contemporary industrial development, especially to the north of the town.

St George's infant school in Frankwell was established by 1824 by two of the sisters of Charles Darwin with the financial support of their father, Dr Robert Darwin, who paid for the school to be rebuilt, in Chapel Street, in 1833.<sup>81</sup> A letter written by a visitor in 1824 describes the classroom scene:

... They sung two hymns very tolerably, and a whole set of them, none more than four years old, seemed to me quite perfect in their multiplication table. I was quite surprised at their proficiency; not that they were all quite under command, for some of the newcomers were toddling about the room without knowing what they were about, and others were lying down upon a bed that was placed in a corner of a room for that purpose... [You] must not expect to see rosy little cherubs in white frocks and pink sashes, but on the contrary perhaps, for the most part, sickly and dirty little children.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> SA, P257/R/1/4-5; SA, ED 1564/318 and 320.

<sup>75</sup> SA, P258/R/2/4; SA, ED 1564/322-3. The infants' school was demolished by 1988 to make way for the present Fire and Rescue Service headquarters..

<sup>76</sup> *Pigot's Directory* (1842), 36; Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 60.

<sup>77</sup> SA, 3916/1/2. A parliamentary grant of £120 was awarded in 1850 for construction of 'Coleham St Julian' school: [1215] HC (1850) XLIII, p. ccxxvii.

<sup>78</sup> SA, 1564/289-90; *P.O. Directory* (1882/3, 116); *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1900), 209.

<sup>79</sup> *VCH Salop*. VI (2), 272.

<sup>80</sup> SA, P257/R/6; *P.O. Directory* (1882/3), 116.

<sup>81</sup> SA, 2133/12, Millington Hospital Trustees' Minute Books, cited in 'Henry Pidgeon's diary: An unusual school', at <http://shrewsburylocalhistory.org.uk/school.htm> cf *VCH Salop*. VI (1), 272.

<sup>82</sup> Bessy Wedgwood to Sally Allen, quoted in H. Quinn, 'Darwin, Shrewsbury's Man of the Millennium' (private publication, 1999) (copy in Shropshire Archives), 21.

Awards of clothing were made to the children to encourage attendance. In 1828 there were 120 pupils and 112 in 1842. In 1837, the school was said to be 'under the direction of intelligent ladies'.<sup>83</sup> In 1868 the school joined St George's National School nearby in Chapel Street, rebuilt between 1879 and 1890. The school building largely remains, having been converted into residential apartments after its closure in 1982.<sup>84</sup>

The first Roman Catholic school was St Mary's, established around 1864 in an existing building on Town Walls.<sup>85</sup> In the 1880s, the Roman Catholic infant school was named St Joseph's.<sup>86</sup> The school was rebuilt on the same site in 1891-2, by the Liverpool architect, Edmund Kirby.<sup>87</sup> The new school had three classrooms plus an infants' school, to accommodate 400 children, under the management of the Sisters of Mercy.<sup>88</sup> In 1900 the average attendance was 110 boys and girls and 96 infants.<sup>89</sup> The Sisters of Mercy had arrived in Shrewsbury in 1869 and established the Convent of St Winefride at College Hill where they also conducted a convent school from 1872.<sup>90</sup>

### *Sunday Schools*

The first systematic effort to offer elementary education to poor and working-class children came from the Church of England Sunday school movement in the late 18th century. In 1785 the ministers of the five Shrewsbury parishes combined to establish 'Sunday schools in this town wherein children and youth are to be taught to read and instructed in the Church Catechism', funded by public subscription.<sup>91</sup> The minimum age was five but preference was given to older children, especially those who worked during the week. There was no maximum age; children were expected to leave as soon as they had 'learnt to read well'. The initial plan was to admit 30 boys and 30 girls. Many more applied, however, and by November 1785 the school had 272 boys and 243 girls.<sup>92</sup> Several schools were therefore established around the town to which pupils were assigned. Boys were taught in 'St

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<sup>83</sup> *Pigot's Directory* (1837), 147. Caroline Darwin was headmistress until her marriage to Josiah Wedgwood, her sister Susan then continued to run the school until her death in 1866: A. Pattison, *The Darwins of Shrewsbury* (Stroud, 2009), 50–1, but cf. *Pigot's Directory* (1842), 36, which names the headmistress as Elizabeth Lawson.

<sup>84</sup> *VCH Salop*. VI (1), 272.

<sup>85</sup> SA, ED7/103/290; *P.O. Directory* (1882/3). Possibly the former Catholic chapel, see Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 56. In 1876 the Roman Catholic Church bought a piece of land next to the old church in order to extend the school: P. Phillips, 'A Catholic community: Shrewsbury. Part II: 1850–1920', *Recusant History*, 20 (1991), 380–402, 392.

<sup>86</sup> *P.O. Directory* (1882/3), 116.

<sup>87</sup> Phillips, 'A Catholic community', 392–3.

<sup>88</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1900), 209; (1909), 220; SA, 3217/48.

<sup>89</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1900), 202.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> SA, NO4335/2/1, Minute Book of the Sunday School, 1785–1792.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 November 1785. This was the last date in the minute book to give total enrolment figures.

Mary's chapel',<sup>93</sup> in the north transept of St Chad's church, and in 'a part of the Abby Church' where the appointed master 'for some years has kept a school on week days'.<sup>94</sup> From the beginning, there were efforts to rent more suitable premises, such as rooms in the Court House or the Shearmen's hall.<sup>95</sup> Girls were taught in the homes of their school mistresses, some of which were dame schools on week days. Mrs Fletcher's school provided for girls living at the eastern end of Abbey Foregate.<sup>96</sup>

In spite of the large numbers of children formally enrolled, rates of attendance soon declined. Expedients to improve attendance included paying the teachers per pupil, and the offer of clothing, such as the award of a pair of shoes and stocking to 'the most deserving' children.<sup>97</sup> Another difficulty was raising sufficient funds through subscriptions, and from 1792 this was to be supplemented by the collections from occasional charity sermons.<sup>98</sup>

The minute book of the combined Sunday School ends in 1792, and it is not known whether the scheme continued after that date. Later surveys of Sunday (and day) school provision are arranged by parish, and are therefore not easily reconciled with it.

The first such survey is the archdeacon's visitation of 1799. In that year, there were Sunday schools in Holy Cross parish (attended by 150 children) and St Julian (80), with Sunday schools in the process of formation in St Chad and St Alkmund.<sup>99</sup> Around 1800, a critical observer described St Julian's Sunday school as 'held in the belfry. A paid teacher, Mr Lewis, was employed, and about thirty children, boys and girls, attended. I saw no progress in their humble attainments, nor any encouragement given either to teacher or children.'<sup>100</sup> In 1817 it was reported that the parish of St Alkmund did not make any provision for education of the poor, as poor children could attend schools in neighbouring parishes.<sup>101</sup> By 1823, however, St Alkmund's Sunday School was attended by 70 pupils.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> As the first schoolmaster appointed was the parish clerk (*ibid.*, 1 August 1785), presumably this was a chapel in St Mary's church.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 August 1785. This may refer to the 'Public Subscription Charity School' (see note xxx): *ibid.*, 30 March 1790.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 November 1785, 11 November 1785, 14 November 1786.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 1785.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 April 1786, 20 November 1787.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 October 1792.

<sup>99</sup> SA, 3916/1/1: Archdeacon Woodhouse's visitations of the Archdeaconry of Salop in the Diocese of Lichfield 1799–1807. As a royal peculiar, St Mary's parish is not included.

<sup>100</sup> C. Hulbert, *Memoirs of seventy years of an eventful life* (Providence Grove, near Shrewsbury, 1852), 195.

<sup>101</sup> 'Select committee on education of the poor', 759.

<sup>102</sup> SA, 3916/1/2.

Sunday school provision seems to have increased generally after 1799. In 1817 it was reported that there was a Sunday school for boys and two for girls in the parish of Holy Cross and St Giles;<sup>103</sup> and parochial Sunday schools for boys and girls with up to 350 pupils in total and two Non-Conformist Sunday schools in St Chads.<sup>104</sup> In 1817 St Julian still had a small parochial Sunday school, attended by 40 to 50 girls, but also 'a large Methodist Sunday school' at Coleham Manufactory.<sup>105</sup> There was still a Sunday school and day school in a chapel at St Mary's with around 250 pupils.<sup>106</sup> Battlefield church had a Sunday school for 30 as well as an 'excellent' day school for 60 (including children from Battlefield, Hadnall, Preston and Old Heath) taught by the vicar.<sup>107</sup>

The largest Sunday school of all was at the cotton manufactory in Longden Coleham. The factory owner, Charles Hulbert, first offered his assistance at the Sunday school at St Julian's church. Rejected for his Non-Conformist views, Hulbert opened his own Sunday school in 1807. Primarily for the benefit of his large staff of young workers, the school was also open to children from all parts of the town.<sup>108</sup> According to Hulbert, on the first Sunday 60 children attended, and on the third Sunday, 150. By 1814 there were 620, and in 1815, 650 'scholars' and 100 'teachers, male and female'; as many as all the other Sunday schools combined.<sup>109</sup> Initially funded by Hulbert himself, by 1816 the school was financed on the conventional model of charitable subscriptions and managed by a committee.<sup>110</sup> The Coleham Manufactory Sunday School closed in 1839, with children living in the vicinity henceforth attending the nearby Trinity (Church of England) school and those living in the town centre attending the Sunday school at the Methodist chapel on St John's Hill.<sup>111</sup>

## Shrewsbury School Board

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<sup>103</sup> 'Select committee on education of the poor', 753. Probably referring to a boys' and a girls' Sunday school at the (soon to be) National School near the Abbey church. The second Sunday school for girls, and later the Preston Street/St Giles' school for girls and infants, may be associated with the Sunday school expressly provided for girls at the eastern end of Abbey Foregate in 1785.

<sup>104</sup> 'Select committee on education of the poor', 753; SA, 3916/1/2. One of the Non-Conformist Sunday schools was that at the Methodist chapel in St John's Hill.

<sup>105</sup> 'Select committee on education of the poor', 760; SA, 3916/1/2. The 1823 visitation record does not mention a parochial Sunday school or day school at St Julian.

<sup>106</sup> See above, note xxx.

<sup>107</sup> SA, 3916/1/2.

<sup>108</sup> Hulbert, *Memoirs*, 195, 215–16; 'Select committee on education of the poor', 760.

<sup>109</sup> Hulbert, *Memoirs*, 216–17, 235; Howell, *The stranger in Shrewsbury*, 125.

<sup>110</sup> Hulbert, *Memoirs*, 216–17.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 217. Although by this date they could have attended St Chad's National Schools.

The Shrewsbury School Board was formed in 1881.<sup>112</sup> Just four schools were taken under its authority: Ditherington Infants, St George's (Frankwell), St Mary's and St Michael's (Derfald Street, Castle Foregate) and Trinity (Bellevue).<sup>113</sup> Evidently, the creation of the Board and its operations did not initially end the dominance of voluntary schools in the town.

Wyle Cop Board School was established in 1882, perhaps replacing both St Julian's parish school and the Abbey Foregate British school.<sup>114</sup> New premises were constructed at Wyle Cop, first the infants' school (1884) and then the junior school for girls and boys (1888).<sup>115</sup> Wyle Cop Board School continued until 1939 when the premises were taken over by the military authorities, possibly as a recruiting centre; local children henceforth attended the Coleham Schools.<sup>116</sup>

Ditherington Infants (1882) and St George's Schools in Frankwell were rebuilt under the Board. A large new Board school, St Michael's Street, was built in 1897 to replace St Mary's and St Michael's Schools. St Michael's Infants was also part of the Board school, but remained in its existing premises off Castle Foregate, which were condemned in 1930 as 'far from satisfactory'.<sup>117</sup>

## The Twentieth Century

With the abolition of school boards in 1903 and vesting of responsibility for education in local education authorities, the Board of Education approved the establishment of a Borough Education Committee as LEA for Shrewsbury. The Education Committee commenced on 31 March 1903, initially with 16 members of the borough corporation and 8 co-opted members who met quarterly at the Guildhall.<sup>118</sup> In 1945 the Education Committee was succeeded by the Shrewsbury Divisional Executive formed by the Shropshire Divisional Administration of Education Scheme 1945 under the Education Act 1944.<sup>119</sup> The Divisional Executive continued until 31 March 1974 when it was abolished under the Local Government Act 1972 and replaced by the county council as LEA.

### Primary Education

#### *The Education Committee, 1903–1945*

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<sup>112</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1891). On the Elementary Education Act 1870, see *VCH Salop*. III, 174, and on the elite membership of the Shrewsbury Board, see *ibid.*, 175.

<sup>113</sup> SA, ED3106/9/1–3; *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1885), 946; (1891), 418; (1900), 209.

<sup>114</sup> See note XXX, above. Similarly, Lucy Darlington was appointed as mistress of the new Board infant school.

<sup>115</sup> SA, ED7/103/300, 302.

<sup>116</sup> SA, ED4120/16, 25.

<sup>117</sup> SA, ED3106/9/8, 4; ED3106/3/1–2.

<sup>118</sup> SA, ED3106/9/4–5. *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1905), 216; (1909), 220, (1913), 225, by 1913 the committee was reduced to 12 members of the corporation and 6 coopted members.

<sup>119</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1945–6, 117, October 1945.

In 1899, the school-leaving age was fixed at 12 years. New secondary and vocational schools (see below) enabled the progression of the more able and better-off pupils from the age of 11. The majority of children, however, left school at 12 having received their formal education in the ageing 19th-century elementary schools fringing the town centre. The only important primary school building programme undertaken by the Education Committee in the new century was Coleham County Schools which opened on Greyfriars Road in 1910, replacing the Trinity (Bellevue) Schools.<sup>120</sup>

In 1910 most of the schools under the authority of the Borough Education Committee were still divided into boys, girls and infants schools, namely: Abbey (the former National School), All Saints (Castlefields), Coleham, St Chad's, St George's, St Michael's Street and Wyle Cop. The Lancasterian (Castlefields) and the Roman Catholic schools had infants and 'mixed' junior departments. St Giles was for girls and infants, and a Cookery Centre at Wyle Cop was for girls also. There were separate infants' schools at Cherry Orchard, Coton Hill (Jane's Place), Ditherington (Spring Gardens) and Bellevue (Trinity).<sup>121</sup> A report of the accommodation, average attendance and units of teaching staff in these schools in 1910 indicates that, apart from slight overcrowding at All Saints, all had pupil numbers and teaching resources well within their limits.<sup>122</sup>

Overcrowding became a problem in the 1920s. The increase of the school-leaving age to 14 in 1918 was followed by increased enrolments due to an upsurge in the birth rate at the end of the First World War. The Hadow Report (1926) recommended that older children should transfer to senior schools that would provide for pupils aged 11–14 and above. Until such senior schools could be provided in Shrewsbury, however, they remained as 'seniors' in the elementary schools. The Board of Education also imposed requirements for maximum class sizes, corresponding with new teaching methods and subjects, for which the large classrooms typical of the 19th-century school buildings were not well suited. Calculations of the accommodation of schools, based on area per pupil, did not take account of the requirement of numbers per class, hence schools may have had sufficient accommodation structurally, but be unable to meet the Board of Education requirements.<sup>123</sup> The fabric of the school buildings had deteriorated and their facilities were outdated; some still lacking piped water or electric lighting in the late 1940s.<sup>124</sup> The frustration expressed by the headmistress of Ditherington Infants in her terse report to the school's management committee in January 1938 could stand for all: "This school was built in 1883. Since that date it has remained substantially the same although educational ideas have altered."<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Pevsner, 580. The Coleham Schools later absorbed the children who would have attended Wyle Cop Board School from 1939.

<sup>121</sup> SA, ED3106/9/7.

<sup>122</sup> SA, ED3106/9/7.

<sup>123</sup> SA, ED3106/9/8, Proposals for completion of reorganisation of schools, 24 February 1931.

<sup>124</sup> SA, ED3106/8/2: 25 September 1945, 23 July 1947.

<sup>125</sup> SA, ED3106/3/2, 18 January 1938.

Pressure on the existing primary schools and inter-war suburban development necessitated the building of new infant schools, at least. Coton Mount County Infants opened in 1929 to serve the new Coton Hill housing estate; it also replaced the cramped St Mary's Coton Hill Infants, which closed in 1935.<sup>126</sup> An infant school was also provided in 1934 for the new housing development at Monkmoor.<sup>127</sup>

Just beyond the borough boundary, in 1927-8 a new county elementary school was commenced on Featherbed Lane, Harlescott, initially in premises belonging to the Royal Air Force. Fifty of the pupils attending St Michael's Street were able to transfer there.<sup>128</sup> In 1932-3 a caretaker's house was to be built due to the isolated location, and in 1933, due to the excessive cost of conveying children to school (from Upton Magna and possibly also Hadnall and Astley), it was proposed to provide them with bicycles.<sup>129</sup>

In 1930, the number of pupils in primary schools under the Education Committee was 1313 infants, 2023 juniors and 744 seniors, plus a total of 277 in the Roman Catholic school.<sup>130</sup> If two senior schools were provided (the newly built Monkmoor plus one more), the remaining juniors and infants could be accommodated in existing schools, subject to a thorough reorganisation. Enrolment was dwindling at St Chad's and it was to be closed. Other schools were to be refurbished to create more, smaller classrooms, and rationalised by combining boys' and girls' junior schools into mixed junior schools.<sup>131</sup>

#### *1945–2000s*

When the Shrewsbury Divisional Executive took over as LEA in 1945, just five large junior (with infant) schools were under its authority: Coleham, the Lancasterian, Harlescott (now within the borough), St George's and St Michael's Street; plus three infant schools: Coton Mount, Ditherington and Monkmoor.<sup>132</sup> 'Shrewsbury' (Abbey Foregate), St Giles and All Saints Church of England schools were destined to become LEA controlled. The provision of primary school places in modern buildings was an urgent priority. Progressively, schools were to be relocated to new suburban locations where there was land to build with the open space appropriate to contemporary standards of children's health and recreation, and also the greatest demand from young families. The two most centrally situated schools, St Chad's and Wyle Cop, had already closed.<sup>133</sup> Likewise, due to increasing

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<sup>126</sup> SA, ED3106/4/1; *VCH Salop* VI(1), 283. Coton Mount Infants itself closed, due to declining enrolment, in 1988 (Hansard, vol. 309, Written Answers, 24 March 1998).

<sup>127</sup> SA, ED3106/6; *VCH Salop* VI(1), 284–5.

<sup>128</sup> SA, ED3106/9/8, 2.

<sup>129</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1927-8, 12; 1932-3, 92; 1933-4, 15.

<sup>130</sup> SA, ED3016/9/8, 1.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>132</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1946-7, 7–8.

<sup>133</sup> See above, notes xxx and xxx. St Chad's closed in 1935.

numbers on the roll, the junior school of Shrewsbury High School moved from Murivance to Kennedy Road, Kingsland, in 1959.

At the end of 1946 the Divisional Executive published its proposal.<sup>134</sup> The new schools proposed were: Crowmoor Infants (eight classes); Sundorne Infants (six classes, see below); Bicton Heath (Oxon CE school; five classes); Castlefields (a two-form entry junior school and four-class infants); Copthorne (Woodfield) (one-form entry infants and junior schools, enabling the eventual relocation of St George's); Greenfields (five classes, junior and infants); Wenlock Road (see below) and Spring Gardens. St Mary's Roman Catholic school would also have a new five-class primary school. St Giles CE school would close.

Work began immediately on the most urgently needed – Crowmoor and Sundorne infant schools – but it would be 40 years before the 1946 plans were fully implemented with the opening of the Castlefields school, in New Park Road. The new school was named after H. Martin Wilson, the influential county council secretary for education from 1936 to 1965.<sup>135</sup>

Harlescott County School had retained its senior pupils and by 1945 was overcrowded, with about 580 on the roll. It was resolved that land should be acquired for the immediate provision of a new infant school and future primary school uses. In 1947 building started on five classrooms for the new Sundorne infant school at Corndon Crescent, off Sundorne Road, leaving Harlescott to be remodelled as a junior school.<sup>136</sup>

In 1952 the former Shrewsbury National School at Abbey Foregate moved to a new edge-of-town site on Wenlock Road with 220 places, planned to meet the demand created by local housing development. Renamed Holy Cross Church of England school, it was designed in the Modernist style by A.G. Chant, the county architect.<sup>137</sup> Springfield Infant School, a two-form entry infant school built in response to further large-scale housing development in the area, was constructed adjacent in 1965-6 under county architect Ralph Crowe using the SCOLA system of standardised steel framed components of which Crowe was a leading advocate.<sup>138</sup> In 2009 the two combined to form Mereside CE Primary School. The county took over the premises vacated by the former National School at Abbey Foregate in 1952 to create a new junior school. The short-lived Abbey County School closed in July 1957.<sup>139</sup> The old school was thence used as extra space for the Technical College pending its move to London Road, and latterly as an artists' studio.<sup>140</sup>

St Mary's Roman Catholic school on Town Walls was also overcrowded and in need of modernisation. New sanitation and heating was estimated to cost £4600 in 1956. The overcrowding

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<sup>134</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1946-7, 214.

<sup>135</sup> See *VCH Salop*. III, 203.

<sup>136</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1945-6, 32, 88; 1946-7, 109.

<sup>137</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1950-1, 146; 1952-3, 44; Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges*, 76.

<sup>138</sup> Newman and Pevsner, 77, 543; SCC Mins (Educ.) 1966-7, 128.

<sup>139</sup> SA, ED3106/7/1; SCC Mins (Educ.), 1955-6, 35.

<sup>140</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1956-7, 144, 165.



was to be eased by moving the infants to St Winefride's convent school in Belmont.<sup>141</sup> The Roman Catholic authorities had, however, in 1951 reserved land on New Park Road, Castlefields, to build a new primary school.<sup>142</sup> St Mary's school moved to its new premises in 1961 and was subsequently renamed Shrewsbury Cathedral Catholic Primary School.

In 1959 the Lancasterian School merged with All Saints Church of England School, the latter becoming an annexe used for the infants' school and dinner hall. In 1962 the 'seniors' were transferred to secondary modern schools. Both schools closed in 1988, being replaced by the Martin Wilson School on New Park Road.<sup>143</sup> The premises of the Lancasterian School were taken over by the adjacent HM Prison Shrewsbury.

St Giles Church of England school escaped the threat of closure and in 1966 moved to new premises in Portland Crescent, admitting boys in the junior school from 1967.<sup>144</sup> In 2000 it continued to thrive as a Church of England voluntary controlled primary school with 315 pupils aged from four to eleven.<sup>145</sup>

The Spring Gardens school proposed in 1946 was developed instead as Mount Pleasant junior and infant schools on Whitemere Road.<sup>146</sup> Later developments were Wilfred Owen School (Hearne Way)<sup>147</sup> and Radbrook Primary School (as part of the 1980s Radbrook estate).

### ***Secondary Education***

Reviewing secondary education in the early 20th century, the Education Committee minuted that Shropshire had been better supplied for secondary education than most counties in the 16th and 17th centuries.<sup>148</sup> The 18th-century foundations of Allatt, Bowdler and Millington were still leading providers of secondary education in the town. Indeed 'the area depended almost entirely on private efforts for the secondary education of boys'.<sup>149</sup> Shrewsbury School (the Royal Free Grammar) could hardly be considered as its roll was mainly non-local with only a small number of day boys.<sup>150</sup> There was a need for an adequate supply of secondary school places, with 'efficient' girls' schools in the county

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<sup>141</sup> The school had become council aided in 1955: SCC Mins (Educ.) 1955-6, 53, 279-80.

<sup>142</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1956-7, 215.

<sup>143</sup> The headmaster's clock, chair and lectern were also removed from the Lancasterian School to the new school: <http://walkingpast.org.uk/the-walks/walk-2/>

<sup>144</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1963-4, 158; 1964-5, 117.

<sup>145</sup> Inspection Report, St Giles Church of England School, July 2000.

<sup>146</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1947-8, 23; 1966-7, 119.

<sup>147</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1968-9, 9.

<sup>148</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1907-8, 26.

<sup>149</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1905, 7.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

especially deficient.<sup>151</sup> Ironically, the only secondary school in Shrewsbury recognised by the Board of Education at the time was Shrewsbury High School.<sup>152</sup>

### *Shrewsbury High School*

The Girls' Public Day School Trust (GPDST) was formed in London in 1872 to promote public schools for girls. The Shrewsbury school commenced in May 1885 at Clive House, College Hill, with places for 115 pupils. In 1905, there were 160 pupils. In 1912, there were 103: 68 from the town, 31 from the the county, and 4 from the rest of England.<sup>153</sup> According to the GPDST model, as well as secondary education for girls, the school provided primary education for girls and boys (aged 4 to 11) in its Junior House, and accommodation for boarders in an associated, but separate, boarding house. The school building was constructed in 1895 at Murivance, the riverside site still occupied by the school (2017). Admission was by payment of fees, although many scholarship places were also offered. From 1902, county-funded scholarships were tenable at the school.<sup>154</sup> The GPDST also funded free places for 10% of the intake; in 1927-8 there were 25 such free place holders, costing the Trust £16 per pupil per annum; from 1928 this cost was shared between the school and the LEA.<sup>155</sup> With the abolition of secondary school fees, in June 1945 the LEA undertook to fund free places for up to 25% of the previous year's entry, while the school fees were raised from £30 to £39 per annum.<sup>156</sup>

In 1952, Shrewsbury High School was the only direct grant grammar school in the county; the Ministry of Education paid a capitation grant direct to the GPDST of £26 for each pupil in the upper school. Fees were increased again, to £45 per annum from April 1952, with the LEA paying the full fees for 35 Shropshire girls holding 'free' places.

### *The Priory County Grammar School*

The Secondary Education Scheme tabled in 1905 proposed that a new school be established for 200 boys and 150 girls, funded by utilising the endowments of Allatt and Bowdler for the purposes of secondary education.

The site for the Priory County School was purchased in 1908,<sup>157</sup> work began two years later,<sup>158</sup> and the school opened in 1911 with 46 boys and 40 girls<sup>159</sup> in separate departments. The school was also

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<sup>151</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1904, 8.

<sup>152</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1905, 25.

<sup>153</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1912. The decline in numbers may be due to the opening of the Priory Girls School in 1911.

<sup>154</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1904-5, 63.

<sup>155</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1921-2, 5; 1927-8, 25; 1930-1, 6.

<sup>156</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1945-6, 17-18; 1946-7, 5.

<sup>157</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1908-9, 113; SA, ED1541/1-5 and ED3162/1/1-9 (plans and elevations, 1909-12).

<sup>158</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1910-11, 53, 85; Pevsner, 544.

<sup>159</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1911-12, 44.

a pupil teacher centre.<sup>160</sup> Entry was by examination. Fees were payable at £2 13s 4d per term for the first child and £2 3s 4d for succeeding children, with a higher fee for those from outside the LEA. Preparatory pupils paid £1 10s per term. Pupils provided their own books.<sup>161</sup> In 1912 there were 85 children from Shrewsbury, 29 from the county and one from outside Shropshire.<sup>162</sup> In 1912 land at Port Hill was purchased as a playing field.<sup>163</sup> By 1914 there were 113 boys and 124 girls on the roll.<sup>164</sup> From 1917 to 1919 the school was taken over by the army; the girls were moved to the Coleham County schools and the boys to the Technical School.<sup>165</sup> By 1920 numbers had risen to 193 boys and 234 girls.<sup>166</sup> In 1925 the school received grants of £1400 for boys and £1000 for girls.<sup>167</sup> The school was overcrowded by 1924 with 500 pupils in accommodation designed for 350. Extra space was acquired by occupying two nearby houses, 1 The Priory and 5 Claremont Bank.<sup>168</sup> In 1937 another house, 3 The Priory, was taken into use for boys.<sup>169</sup> As numbers in secondary education continued to rise, the solution to 'serious overcrowding'<sup>170</sup> was for the schools to separate. In 1939–40 the girls' school moved to new premises on Longden Road<sup>171</sup> where an additional 10 acres was acquired for the boys' school playing field.<sup>172</sup>

The vacated girls' school was 'remodelled' for use by the boys.<sup>173</sup> In 1945 the ground and top floors of the Priory Lodge were used as unfurnished residences for staff.<sup>174</sup> In 1956 there were 547 boys on the roll and a new Physics laboratory was opened.<sup>175</sup> From 1958, the Priory Schools were to be maintained as three-form entry grammar schools for boys and girls, respectively. In 1960 there were 579 boys on the roll including 131 in the sixth form.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1911-12, 66.

<sup>161</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1911-12, 77. After ten years, fees were raised to £10 per annum in 1921, and to £12 in 1922: SCC Mins (Educ.), 1921-2, 4; 1922-3, 7.

<sup>162</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1911-12, 107.

<sup>163</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1912-13, 32.

<sup>164</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1914-15, 6.

<sup>165</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1917-18, 74.

<sup>166</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1920-1, 9.

<sup>167</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1925-6, 25.

<sup>168</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1919-20, 92; 1921-2, 31; 1924-5, 97.

<sup>169</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1937-8, 41.

<sup>170</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1934-5, 28; 1937-8, 21.

<sup>171</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1939–40, 44; SA ED2782/20, Priory County Schools Governors Minutes 1940–53, 91.

<sup>172</sup> SA ED2782/20, 1; Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges*, 107.

<sup>173</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1939-40, 44, 60.

<sup>174</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1946-7, 25.

<sup>175</sup> SA ED2782/19/21, 101.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 25; SCC Mins (Educ.), 1958-9, 126.

The girls' school, designed by the county architect, A.G. Chant, was built in 1937–9 in a modern style.<sup>177</sup> The 'spacious edge-of-town site' near Bank Farm on Longden Road was inconvenient for many of the pupils.<sup>178</sup> In 1947 The Limes, in Longden Coleham, was purchased as a residential hostel for girls at the Technical College, the Priory and other schools.<sup>179</sup> By 1951 it was exclusively for the use of Priory girls with accommodation for 30 boarders.<sup>180</sup> The hostel closed in 1966.<sup>181</sup>

In 1941–2 the 317 girls were joined by 43 evacuees from Liverpool.<sup>182</sup> The sixth form grew from 20 pupils around 1947 to 80 in 1962, when the total on the roll was around 550, rising to 689 by 1978.<sup>183</sup> New buildings and extensions failed to keep pace and demountable classrooms were installed in 1967 and 1968. In particular, the number of pupils progressing to A-levels grew rapidly, from 35 in 1949 to 104 in 1963.<sup>184</sup> A new sixth-form block was built in 1970.

#### *The Technical High School, later the Wakeman School*

Since the late 19th century, the Technical College had offered continuing formal education to school-leavers, aged 12 and over, of sufficient means and ability. As the school-leaving age rose to 14 and then 15, all young people became entitled to at least two years of secondary education. By the time the Technical College was planning its move to London Road (see below), it was no longer deemed an appropriate institution for educating pupils aged under 16. Radbrook College, the former county domestic science college for girls, also ceased to admit the 13–15 age group in 1956.

The English Bridge site vacated by the Technical College became the Technical High School, admitting boys and girls aged 11 for a four-year 'full secondary technical course', starting with an intake of 60 in September 1957.<sup>185</sup> From 1963 a sixth form was added and it became effectively a grammar school.<sup>186</sup> In 1965 the Technical High School was renamed the Wakeman School after Sir Offley Wakeman, chairman of both the County Council Education Committee (1937–40, 1944–67) and the management committee of the Technical College.<sup>187</sup>

#### *Monkmoor Modern School*

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<sup>177</sup> Pevsner, 543-4; deficiencies of the design: TNA, ED109/9502, November 1963, 2.

<sup>178</sup> TNA, ED109/9502, November 1963, 2.

<sup>179</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1946-7, 92.

<sup>180</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1951-2, 11; SA ED2782/19/21, 240.

<sup>181</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1964-5, 227.

<sup>182</sup> SCC Minutes (Educ.) 1941–2.

<sup>183</sup> SA ED2782/23, Governors Minutes 1957–62; TNA, ED109/9502, November 1963.

<sup>184</sup> TNA, ED109/9502, November 1963, 2.

<sup>185</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1956-7, 144; 1957-8, 154.

<sup>186</sup> TNA, ED185/66.

<sup>187</sup> *VCH Salop*. III, 203; R. Jones and C. Jones (eds), *The Wakeman School and the old Technical College, 1938–1988. Souvenir magazine* (Shrewsbury, 1988), 9.

The first, and for over 20 years the only, 'secondary modern' school in Shrewsbury, Monkmoor County Secondary School, opened in 1930 as an initiative of the Church of England, offering secondary education to children aged 11–14 from Shrewsbury and Bicton primary schools, with places for 360 boys and 320 girls.<sup>188</sup> The new educational principle was matched by a contemporary open-air design 'dressed up in Tudor array'.<sup>189</sup>

The increase in the school-leaving age to 15 in 1944 soon caused acute overcrowding. From April 1947 HORSAs were provided as temporary accommodation, the adjacent infant school was taken over, and 'the Abbey Hall' on Tankerville Street used as an overflow dinner hall.<sup>190</sup> In April 1951, there were 473 boys and 445 girls on the roll. Numbers were larger still each September, but some 10% of pupils would leave for the grammar and technical schools. This exit of the more able and motivated students had a detrimental effect on the standard of work and the school ethos, especially in the third and fourth years.<sup>191</sup> Nevertheless, in 1951 HM Inspectors were warm in their praise for the leadership and efforts made by the staff and the positive response of the pupils.<sup>192</sup>

### *Secondary Modern Schools*

The acute overcrowding of Monkmoor was largely due to delays in putting into effect the county development plans for the education of all pupils aged 11 and above in separate secondary schools. Proposals for the reorganisation of schools were prepared in 1931 and 1937, including a plan for a new senior school at Broom Hall, Greenfields.<sup>193</sup> In 1939 the Education Committee's decision that pupils at St George's school aged 11 and over should transfer to Monkmoor was met with protests from parents. When the school-leaving age was raised to 15, however, it was no longer practicable for St George's to accommodate all the 'senior' pupils and from 1947 boys at 13 and girls at 14 had to transfer to Monkmoor.<sup>194</sup>

The 1947 plan had emphasised the need for new secondary schools, but the even greater need to construct new primary schools rapidly and on a limited budget initially took precedence.<sup>195</sup> Notices for the construction of Harlescote Secondary Modern School, a mixed school for 360 on Meadow Farm Drive, were published in April 1951. The school opened in September 1954, with three additional

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<sup>188</sup> SA, ED3106/9/11; TNA, ED185/66. The number of feeder schools increased from four in 1930 to seven in 1951; TNA, ED109/9053.

<sup>189</sup> Pevsner, 592.

<sup>190</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1946-7, 110; 1947-8, 183; TNA, ED109/9053.

<sup>191</sup> TNA, ED109/9053, inspection reports on Monkmoor County Secondary School, Boys' and Girls' Departments, July 1951.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> SA, ED3106/9/7, 3, 5; ED3106/9/8–10; ED3106/3/1: ED3106/8/2 (20 May 1937).

<sup>194</sup> SA, ED3106/8/2, 10 March 1939, 28 April 1939, 23 July 1947.

<sup>195</sup> VCH Salop., III, 203–4.

classrooms and a science room added soon afterwards.<sup>196</sup> In January 1962 the intake was changed to girls only.<sup>197</sup>

The long-delayed secondary modern schools were finally provided over the next ten years. Meole Brace opened in September 1956 as a mixed school with 600 places. Additional accommodation – a hall, nine classrooms, two domestic science rooms and a science laboratory – opened in September 1962.<sup>198</sup> In 1958/9 construction began on Harlescott Grange on Worcester Road with places for 450 boys.<sup>199</sup> In 1963 the boys' department of Monkmoor Secondary Modern moved to new premises as the Belvidere County Modern School for Boys.<sup>200</sup> Monkmoor then continued as a secondary modern school for girls until its closure in 1981, when Belvidere became a mixed comprehensive.

In 1963, the LEA could minute that 'Provision of secondary education for all is now in sight'.<sup>201</sup>

### *Comprehensive Schools*

In 1965, the Labour government required local authorities to arrange their secondary education on completely comprehensive lines. The comprehensive model worked in rural Shropshire, and was supported for Shrewsbury by parents and teachers. The Education Committee duly made recommendations for a comprehensive system in Shrewsbury in 1968 but it was rejected by the council.<sup>202</sup>

The resulting 1969 plan for reorganisation of the county's secondary schools recommended that three comprehensives be developed – at Baschurch, Church Stretton and Pontesbury – but that the selective system would remain in Shrewsbury with the provision of a sixth-form college and perhaps one additional comprehensive. The secretary of state objected to the proposals regarding Shrewsbury.<sup>203</sup>

In this impasse, and without the new school, additions to the post-war secondary moderns were formally authorised. With effect from 1974, Harlescott increased to 650 places, Meole Brace to 1200, and Harlescott Grange to 750; Harlescott and Harlescott Grange became mixed schools.<sup>204</sup> The need for a sixth-form college was to be addressed by expanding the sixth form at the Wakeman.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1951-2, 76; TNA ED185/66.

<sup>197</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1960-1, 229.

<sup>198</sup> TNA, ED185/66.

<sup>199</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1956-7, 214; 1957-8, 139; TNA ED185/66.

<sup>200</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1960-1, 152, 169; TNA ED185/66.

<sup>201</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 166.

<sup>202</sup> *VCH Salop.*, III, 205.

<sup>203</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1968-9, 279, 281.

<sup>204</sup> TNA, ED185/66.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*; memoir by Geoffrey Marmion, headmaster 1977–85, in Jones and Jones (eds), *The Wakeman School*, 45.

The county council eventually bowed to pressure from the Labour central government. At the beginning of 1977 the Education Secretary, Shirley Williams, demanded plans for comprehensive schools in Shrewsbury be submitted to her by July.<sup>206</sup> On 7 July 1978 proposals were finally published for the Shrewsbury secondary modern schools to become mixed, five-year comprehensives with effect from 1981. The Priory boys' grammar school was closed and the girls' grammar on Longden Road converted to a mixed comprehensive. Initially there were 729 pupils aged 11–16 years on the roll; by 1990 this had dropped to 588. The Wakeman too became a comprehensive school in 1981. Declining demand for school places, especially in the town centre, led to closure of the Wakeman in 2012, leaving five suburban comprehensives: Belvidere, Meole Brace, Priory, Sundorne (formerly Harlescott) and The Grange (formerly Harlescott Grange). Sundorne and The Grange merged in 2016 to form Shrewsbury Academy, managed by the Shrewsbury Academies Trust.<sup>207</sup>

The vacated Priory boys' grammar school was immediately converted into a co-educational, selective sixth-form college for 500 students aged 16 to 19, from Shrewsbury and the surrounding areas, with effect from September 1981.<sup>208</sup> Demand increased rapidly; in 1986/7, the college admitted about 610 students.<sup>209</sup> The student intake had more than doubled when Shrewsbury Sixth-Form College acquired the Wakeman School premises and commenced operating from both sites in 2013.

## Adult and Further Education

The large Sunday school at Coleham Manufactory welcomed adult learners; some parents of pupils attended reading lessons alongside their children. By 1816, a separate room was allocated for up to 70 adults, and evening classes were offered for adult workers.<sup>210</sup>

The Shropshire Mechanics Institution commenced in 1825, with purpose-built premises opened in 1833 in Howard Street.<sup>211</sup> In 1846 the Mechanics Institution relocated to the room above the (old) Market Hall.<sup>212</sup> The Church of England Literary and Scientific Institution was founded in 1850 under the patronage of the bishop of Lichfield, 'to afford young men of town the means of spending their leisure hours in a rational and profitable manner, and of acquiring useful knowledge on literary and scientific subjects'. Membership was by an annual subscription of 12s 6d, or a lump sum of 5 guineas;

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<sup>206</sup> *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 25 February 1977.

<sup>207</sup> <http://shrewsburyacademy.sat.coop/>

<sup>208</sup> TNA, ED185/66.

<sup>209</sup> '16–19 Education, Shrewsbury Area 1986–87', Shropshire Education Committee, 16.

<sup>210</sup> Hulbert, *Memoirs*, 217; Howell, *The stranger in Shrewsbury*, 125.

<sup>211</sup> Pidgeon, *Memorials*, 171.

<sup>212</sup> *P.O. Directory* (1856). Presumably because the excavation for the new railway station removed the southern side of Howard Street.

members elected by the committee paid the lower 'subs' of 6s per annum.<sup>213</sup> Lectures were held in the Music Hall and the Institution had premises in Dogpole.

### *Shrewsbury Technical College*

With the development of more formalised further education provision after the Great Exhibition, the Shrewsbury School of Art was founded in 1855 on College Hill, occupying part of the Vaughan's Mansion site. By 1883 it was Shrewsbury School of Art and Science and in 1891 had three rooms for drawing and one for science.<sup>214</sup> During the 1890s the Shrewsbury Borough Science and Art Committee received grants from the county council. Evening and Saturday classes were held in the four Board schools. These were for the continuing education of teachers, as well as vocational (shorthand) and recreational/improving (drawing, French) courses. In 1899 the Shrewsbury Technical Instruction Committee purchased premises to provide a centre for technical and commercial classes and a school of art.<sup>215</sup> The college occupied various premises in the vicinity, but its centre was the house and gardens John Carline had built for himself beside English Bridge.<sup>216</sup> Evening classes in academic and vocational subjects continued to be held in the Wyle Cop and St Alkmund's schoolrooms, as well as at the 'Borough Tech. School'.<sup>217</sup> A large part of the college's provision was as the Shrewsbury pupil teacher centre (PTC), effectively offering secondary education to able children who could not otherwise afford to continue in formal education beyond the age of 12. The poet Wilfred Owen was a student at the PTC from 1907 to 1911 and worked as a pupil teacher at the Wyle Cop Board School from 1909 to 1911.<sup>218</sup>

In 1922 responsibility for technical education passed from the borough to the county council. The 'Technical and Art School' was recognised by Birmingham University as an 'approved institution where preliminary work of a university nature can be carried out', enabling students to gain credit towards subsequent university courses.<sup>219</sup>

In 1925 the Art School had 130 students aged 13–21. Courses were offered for trainee art teachers, assistant teachers in elementary schools; house decorators and painters; also life classes; practical crafts and architecture. There were 648 'commercial and technical' students; 55 at Wyle Cop taking

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<sup>213</sup> Bagshaw, *History, gazetteer & directory of Shrops.*, 65.

<sup>214</sup> *P.O. Directory* (1882/3), 118; *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1891), 412; (1900), 203.

<sup>215</sup> SCC Minutes, Reports to Council, 1891–1892; 1899–1901.

<sup>216</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.) 1922-3, 20; website of Shrewsbury College:

[http://www.shrewsbury.ac.uk/college\\_life/college\\_history](http://www.shrewsbury.ac.uk/college_life/college_history)

<sup>217</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1904-5, 37; 1906-7, 51; 1907-8, 50; 1908-9, 52; 1908-9, 49.

<sup>218</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1905-6, 62. The Pupil-Teacher Centre in the Technical College at Abbey Foregate had links with Wyle Cop Board School (D. Hibberd, *Wilfred Owen, a new biography* (London, 2002), 45–7, 65).

<sup>219</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1920-1, 64; 1922-3, 7, 20.



engineering, pharmaceutical, building and commercial courses.<sup>220</sup> A new full-time Junior Commercial Course was introduced in 1932/3, mainly for 14-year-old school-leavers.<sup>221</sup>

Improvements and extensions being recommended, in 1931 the adjacent house with its land was purchased.<sup>222</sup> This arrangement was temporary, however. Carline's mansion and other buildings on the site beside English Bridge were demolished and construction of new purpose-built premises commenced in 1935 to a design by A.G. Chant – 'large and ambitious but in tame neo-Georgian style' – incorporating the Art Deco ornamentation of the era. The new college opened in 1938.<sup>223</sup>

In 1947 the college acquired the adjacent premises at 3 and 4 Abbey Foregate and Merevale Garage. In 1943, Nearwell, a timbered house on Abbey Foregate, was leased as a hostel for the accommodation of 25 male students, and open ground at the rear became the college's playing field.<sup>224</sup>

Within less than two decades, the Shrewsbury College of Further Education outgrew the English Bridge premises, which also proved vulnerable to flooding.<sup>225</sup> A green-field site was acquired at Beckbury on London Road and a new campus designed by C.H. Simmons, the county architect, 'a good example of his quiet Modernism'.<sup>226</sup> The move to London Road coincided with the redevelopment of the site of Nearwell Hostel, which was demolished in 1961 for the construction of the new Shirehall. A new hostel for Technical College students was provided at the London Road campus, along with extensive sport facilities.<sup>227</sup> Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology opened in September 1960. In the five-year period around the move, from 1958 to 1963, the number of students doubled and the number studying full-time increased fourfold.<sup>228</sup>

The original site, and to some extent, the purpose of the Shrewsbury School of Art and Science, was revived in 1966 with the establishment at College Hill House of an adult education centre, to be used by the recently formed District Arts Association and also to support the University of Birmingham Extra-mural Department.<sup>229</sup> In 1984 the centre moved to new, purpose-built premises on Chester

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<sup>220</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1924-5, 85; 1925-6, 11-13.

<sup>221</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1932-3, 88.

<sup>222</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1925-6, 8-10; 1930-1, 73.

<sup>223</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1938-9, 74; Newman and Pevsner, 544.

<sup>224</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1942-3, 29; 1944-5, 51; 1946-7, 107; 1951-2, 11.

<sup>225</sup> *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 28 September 1990: the move to London Road was prompted 'when the Severn, in high flood, covered the windows of the basement machine shops at the English Bridge site'.

<sup>226</sup> Pevsner, 544.

<sup>227</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1960-1, 205.

<sup>228</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1962-3, 164.

<sup>229</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1965-6, 187; 1966-7, 199.

Street named The Gateway Education and Arts Centre, generously financed by the Roy Fletcher Trust.<sup>230</sup>

### *Shropshire Technical School for Girls, Radbrook*

Vocational education for girls aged 13 and over was provided by the county college for domestic science and agriculture, opened in 1901. The red-brick building was in a rural setting a respectable distance along Radbrook Road from the town.<sup>231</sup> In 1912 there were 116 students, with a county council grant of £300. An inquiry of 79 recent graduates that year found 51 in service, 2 dressmaking, 4 in hospital training, one a sub-matron in a boys' school, one teaching and 12 'at home'.<sup>232</sup> The college's intake was not limited to Shrewsbury; in 1909-10 there were 16 County Council Domestic Economy scholars, 24 County Council Dairy exhibitors, 31 Shropshire fee-paying students and 14 fee payers from other counties. In 1950 students began to be admitted from other countries; in 1953 there were 17 'colonial' students.<sup>233</sup>

In 1948 the college was extended and adopted as a fully maintained county institution.<sup>234</sup> There were short courses for teachers of domestic science and one-year courses in general housecraft, needlework and rural domestic subjects. At the same time, provision for girls aged 13 to 15 was phased out; the last group of 'juniors' finished their courses in July 1956.<sup>235</sup>

The teacher training department was fully maintained from 1950.<sup>236</sup> In 1956 a new three-year domestic science teacher training course began. September 1963 saw the first intake of a new teacher training course to serve the whole country. The teacher training intake was to be increased in accordance with government demands.<sup>237</sup> In 1966 the college was renamed Radbrook College and in 1977 it merged with Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology.<sup>238</sup> Radbrook College closed in 2014, bringing all the students to the London Road campus.

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<sup>230</sup> <https://shropshire.gov.uk/news/2014/11/the-gateway-in-shrewsbury-celebrates-its-30th-anniversary/>

<sup>231</sup> Pevsner, 540. A green-field site purchased from the mayor and burgesses of Shrewsbury in 1898: SA, ED 6540/1/1, 6540/2/1.

<sup>232</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1911-12, 19; 1912-13, 8.

<sup>233</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1950-1, 93, 122; 1953-4, 57.

<sup>234</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1947-8, 189.

<sup>235</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1955-6, 147.

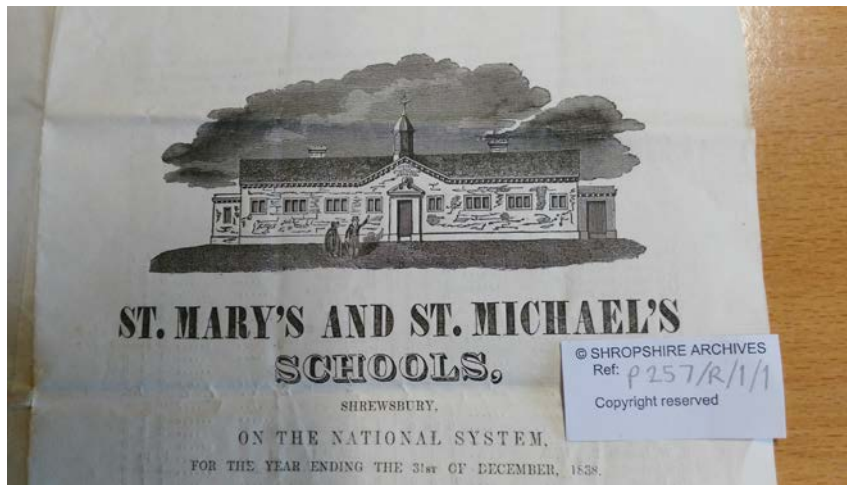
<sup>236</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1950-1, 93, 122.

<sup>237</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1962-3, 165; 1963-4, 17.

<sup>238</sup> SCC Mins (Educ.), 1963-4, 17; '16-19 Education, Shrewsbury Area 1986-87', Shropshire Education Committee, 3.

Suggested Illustrations

SA, P257/R/1/1: St Mary's and St Michael's Schools in 1838



SA, P257/R/1/4: St Mary's and St Michael's Schools in 1848



SA, PH/S/13/F/3/250. Millington's school group photo with dog, c. 1886



Group photo, Millington's School, Frankwell, Shrewsbury

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SA, PH/S/13/R/2/7: The Kitchen, Shropshire Technical School, Radbrook, Shrewsbury



The Kitchen, Shropshire Technical School, Radbrook, Shrewsbury

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or

SA, PH/S/13/R/2/6: The Laundry, Shropshire Technical School, Radbrook, Shrewsbury (early 20th C.)



The Laundry, Shropshire Technical School, Radbrook, Shrewsbury

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Monkmoor Senior School, c.1930s showing open-air design with Tudor decoration (now The Chase, Monkmoor)

Springfield Infant School, 1965-6, showing 'SCOLA' construction. (now Mereside School)