History of Education

Journal of the History of Education Society

ISSN: 0046-760X (Print) 1464-5130 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/thed20

Insights on Education in Mid-Victorian Lancashire: An Analysis of Exercise Books from 1868 and 1870

Brandon Reece Taylorian

To cite this article: Brandon Reece Taylorian (30 Jul 2025): Insights on Education in Mid-Victorian Lancashire: An Analysis of Exercise Books from 1868 and 1870, History of Education, DOI: 10.1080/0046760X.2025.2527851

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2025.2527851

Published online: 30 Jul 2025.

HISTORY OF EDUCATION
https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2025.2527851

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Insights on Education in Mid-Victorian Lancashire: An Analysis of Exercise Books from 1868 and 1870

Brandon Reece Taylorian

School of Psychology and Humanities, University of Lancashire, Lancashire, UK

ABSTRACT

This article analyses two exercise books from the mid-Victorian period that once belonged to a pupil teacher named Joseph Prescott, who taught at St Mary's School, a Catholic educational institution in Chorley, England. The exercise books act as a case study for curriculum structure and educational practice in Lancashire by highlighting several themes, including the role of religion in the Victorian school day. After addressing the deficiencies in accessing education in the Victorian period, the article contextualises the analysis of the exercise books by recounting the development of the pupil-teacher system in Britain. Key pages of the exercise books reflect the Catholic nature of the curriculum at St Mary's School and show that educators of the period taught a range of subjects. The article addresses the role of the pupil-teacher system in mid-Victorian schooling, leading to a clearer understanding of the responsibilities and prospects of pupil teachers during the period.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 22 December 2024
Accepted 21 June 2025

KEYWORDS
British education system; Catholic schools; nineteenth-century education; pupil teachers; Victorian exercise books; Victorian school day

Introduction

When 13-year-old Joseph Prescott began filling in his green hardback exercise book with jottings and doodles using a quill pen during his lessons at St Mary's School in Chorley in the late 1860s, he would not have realised then that anyone else would view his schoolwork other than himself and his teacher. Yet, over 150 years later, Prescott's exercise books have survived through preservation by family members and are largely in legible condition, handed down through four generations until they reached Prescott's great-great-grandson in 2023. After a year of hesitating over whether Prescott's exercise books would interest historians of education, Prescott's descendant studied them in greater depth and realised that given their great age, they could act as the basis of a case study that might lead to several insights on the status of education in nineteenth-century Lancashire, especially regarding the role of pupil teachers.[1]

Of interest is not the quality of Prescott's work, but the content in his handwritten exercise books which will be analysed as historical sources to draw out insights on secondary education in Lancashire in the mid-Victorian period, given the importance

CONTACT Brandon Reece Taylorian brtaylorian@uclan.ac.uk School of Psychology and Humanities, University of Lancashire, 160 Cop Lane, Penwortham, Preston, Lancashire PR1 9AD, UK

of literacy to maintaining economic and social mobility.[2] The exercise books are mid-Victorian based on Michael Sadleir's periodisation that the term "mid-Victorian" refers to the period from 1851 to 1879.[3] By analysing the exercise books and displaying in colour some of the notable pages, the aim is to extract as many insights as possible about the pedagogies and world views of Lancastrian Victorians, especially to highlight education in a school endowed by the Catholic Church.[4] In applying thematic analysis to family and local history research, a secondary aim is to understand Prescott's role and responsibilities as a pupil teacher during a period when education was a scarce commodity.[5]

Status of Education in Victorian England

Before analysing the exercise books formerly belonging to Prescott, it is important to consider the status of education in nineteenth-century Britain, including in Lancashire specifically. Doing this will provide some necessary context to the exercise books studied in depth later. By the turn of the nineteenth century, a period of formal schooling for boys and girls belonging to the working class was unheard of, with children instead learning skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours through interactions with their family members and the local community.[6] This was the case across England, but, in Lancashire specifically, there was an enduring tradition of nightly fireside education, during which an elder, either an older sibling, parent, aunt, uncle or grandparent, taught children basic arithmetic, to read and sometimes also to write.[7]

Although literacy rates in Lancashire plummeted after the 1770s because of the requirement for all family members to work ever-longer hours, thus denying investment of time or money into education and schooling, towards the mid-nineteenth century some factory owners saw the value in ensuring that at least their male workers were literate.[8] At the start of the Victorian period in 1841, literacy rates in England and Wales were 67.3% for men and 51.1% for women.[9] However, this gender gap began closing by the mid-Victorian period, with literacy rates in 1871 having risen to 80.6% for men and 73.2% for women, and by the end of the century the gap had almost completely closed, with literacy rates for men standing at 97.2% and 96.8% for women.[10] Since the owners of cotton mills needed adults to be free to work as weavers, their sons, and sometimes their daughters, had quite a good chance of attending school if the factory owners supported them, some of whom were proponents of universal education, an example being Robert Owen (1771–1858).[11] The spread of industrialisation created a need for literate and compliant workers, leading to the eventual adoption of universal education in Lancashire by the late Victorian period.[12] However, several factors stalled the progress of education becoming universal in England more broadly. The first was the social opposition to state-provided mass education, with both Anglicans and Nonconformists hostile to the idea.[13] Those who campaigned for mass education found themselves up against vicious hostility. For example, when Hannah More and her sister set up Sunday schools in Cheddar, Somerset, in 1789,[14] they met "persistent and virulent opposition" from farmers and church dignitaries who believed that More's work was "undermining the natural and necessary ignorance of the poor and therefore the social order."[15] Several MPs (Members of Parliament) brought education bills before the Commons in the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, including Samuel Whitbread in 1807, Henry Brougham in

1820, John Roebuck in 1833, James Graham in 1843 and John Pakington in 1855.[16] However, these bills were defeated. Intertwined with the campaign for mass education was the growing opposition to child labour, which led Parliament to pass the Education Act of 1880 in order to reduce it.[17]

Another factor stalling universal education in England was the gender-derived values and divisions of labour, as well as class-cultural perceptions that significantly influenced the education system in the nineteenth century.[18] To prepare them for their dual role as housewives and supplementary earners, teachers taught girls spinning, husbandry skills and housework. Although boys also learned weaving and husbandry skills, this was to prepare them for their role as the chief breadwinner and the head of the household.[19] In this context, girls were at a significant disadvantage in accessing education as they were much less likely to attend school and the government predominantly directed its endowments for educating poor children towards the schooling of boys.[20] The curriculum of girls' charity schools focused heavily on acquiring domestic skills rather than improving literacy, owing to how illiteracy was far more common amongst women than men in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.[21] It was under these conditions that the owner of the exercise books due to be analysed, Joseph Prescott, attended school and later taught as a pupil teacher during the 1860s and 1870s, but that Prescott could attend school at all and for so long (until he was at least 16) is a testament to his natural academic ability and interest in scholarly work.

Since schooling for children aged between 5 and 10 was not compulsory before 1880 and the government had not standardised the education system, there are no official statistics on the number of schools in Lancashire during the Victorian period. However, highlighting attendance rates and the number of "school boards" established following the 1870 Education Act will give a sense of the strengths and weaknesses of education provision in Lancashire during the period. Attendance rates among children aged between 5 and 10 were still only reaching 82% on average by the early 1890s, highlighting the systemic issue of truancy and a continued lack of provision of schools by the late Victorian period.[22] According to a map developed by William Marsden, Lancashire school provision appeared well below the national average, with one school board reported for every 30,000 people in Lancashire in 1885 whereas surrounding counties like Cheshire had one school board for every 15,000 people and Yorkshire one for every 7,500 people.[23] A third map developed by Marsden on the distribution of school boards in Lancashire in the 1870s highlights that Bury, Preston, Southport, St Helens and Warrington were without school boards during this period.[24] The absence of school boards in these large Lancashire towns points to a lack of organised school provision in certain parts of the county.

In 1977, for her doctoral research, Mildred Young of the University of Manchester conducted an extensive analysis of school boards and education provision in Lancashire between 1870 and 1902 and described how by 1871 there were 11 school boards established in Lancashire.[25] Young included in her thesis the comments of a school inspector called Mr Brodie, who was assigned to one of the Lancashire districts, and determined that the education system first devised in 1838 was established "to promote four things; religious instruction, voluntary contributions, effective local management and the education of the poor, that is, of the 'manual labour' classes."[26] In the same 1869–70 report, Mr Brodie argued that two factors had caused "fundamental problems in

the development of elementary education in Lancashire. This district is a huge network of large towns and of large villages constantly growing into large towns; and secondly, the dependence of the people on one great industry, cotton."[27] Brodie highlights how the dominance of the cotton industry in Lancashire hindered education reform efforts because of the industry's reliance on child labour, coupled with the focus of factory owners on maximising profits, leading to the sentiment that investing in education for working-class children was a secondary concern and financial burden.

As for Catholic educational institutions, these were many in Lancashire, given the Catholic strongholds in Preston and the villages to its north after the Reformation of the sixteenth century.[28] The most prominent of these institutions was and remains today the Jesuit-run Stonyhurst College in Clitheroe, which transformed during the Victorian period to become England's largest Catholic college. During the Victorian period, the college expanded by constructing new buildings, establishing an observatory and meteorological station and developing a prestigious reputation, especially for offering students excluded from traditional universities a chance to access higher education.[29] Elsewhere, in 1825, a missionary named Edmund Rice founded a Catholic school on Fox Street in Preston attached to his religious institute, the Congregation of Christian Brothers.[30] Despite the isolated successes of these Catholic-run educational institutions and the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, anti-Catholic sentiment lingered in Victorian England and impacted access to education.[31] Fuelled by anti-Catholicism, the push for an "unsectarian" education system in England disproportionately impacted Catholic schools because of the prominent role of religion in the school day and the potential for losing religious instruction and the unique character of Catholic education under a secularised system.[32] Having said this, elsewhere in the political sphere, MPs like Lord John Russell spearheaded support for the rights of the working-class and immigrant Catholics. Despite being a member of the Church of England, Russell supported the emancipation of Catholics and policies that encouraged accessible education for all regardless of their religious affiliation, political initiatives that were instrumental to the practical provision of education.[33] Establishing this picture of both the advancements and lingering deficiencies of education in Lancashire in the nineteenth century provides the background to better understand Prescott's experience as a student and, later, a pupil teacher.

School Context

The origins of St Mary's School in Chorley trace to 1846 in the work of Reverend George Gibson, followed by Reverend Richard Gillow who purchased Mount Pleasant, a mansion owned by a local Catholic family called the Harrisons, with its dining room serving as the schoolroom in the early years for gifted children in the parish.[34] With it being impractical to continue using a dining room as a school, Reverend Gillow organised for a new building to be erected in the grounds of Mount Pleasant, ingeniously designed by John Hansom to serve the dual purpose of a church and a school by having extra floors inserted for the teaching of infants, boys and girls above the ground level where congregants gathered. The new church-school opened in 1853, but it soon became apparent that the church-school needed to be devoted entirely to religious worship and instruction, leading to the construction of a separate school in the late 1850s. By the time

Joseph Prescott, born in 1854, began attending the school in about 1860, Reverend John Hayward headed the parish from 1859 to 1865, followed by Reverend Nicholas Molloy who served until 1868, before being replaced by Reverend James Singleton until 1872.[35] The priests established a new and larger school building in February 1874, reflecting the growth in the number of children attending the previous school and the need to expand the educational provision.[36]

At the grand opening of the new school in 1874, the priests made the Catholicity of the school very clear. A contemporary, lengthy article in the *Chorley Guardian* described the opening event which was attended by over 1,000 locals and commenced with an address by Father James Nugent of Liverpool alongside several other priests from across Lancashire.[37] The article described how "the walls of the school were ornamented with shields containing the figures of saints" and one school banner had "as its subject the Saviour blessing little children."[38] During his opening address, Father Nugent criticised the contemporary movement to secularise the English education system, saying that it would be a sad day for England and for ourselves if a godless system, separating religion from education, should ever be established throughout the length and breadth of the British nation, which would be sowing broadcast the seeds of revolution and infidelity across the country.[39] Father Nugent recalled his experience of witnessing the secular American education system during a trip there and linked increasing rates of divorce, infidelity, crime and impudence of the youth to "independency" and "the godless system of education."[40] Father Nugent's bold address set the tone for the Catholic mission of St Mary's School, with Canon John Worthy of Euxton having approved the new school plans, and the Catholic mission closely overseen by Reverend John Hawksworth.

The Catholic mission of the school meant that Catholic children from poor backgrounds like Prescott could receive schooling, including children who might otherwise not have received it because of the limited spaces available in state-supported schools. Therefore, local parents had a vested interest in seeing the success of St Mary's School in Chorley, given the fundamental skills and knowledge that its clergymen teachers could impart to their children despite opposition from other portions of the population who favoured state-controlled, non-denominational education. St Mary's School's faith-based education would have shaped Prescott's world view, given that the curriculum incorporated many aspects of the Catholic faith, including Catholic social values and the teaching of Latin as the liturgical language, providing a holistic education for pupils beyond basic numeracy and literacy. Aside from education, the Catholic mission of the school would have provided a much-needed community hub, offering additional practical support and resources to pupils and families, including providing food and clothing.

Prescott, especially later as a pupil teacher, would have been acutely aware of the challenges facing Catholic schools during the period, including the lack of access to funding and resources, continued stigma against Catholics and their institutions in English society and broader opposition to church-funded schools. To circumvent some of these challenges, St Mary's School attempted to remain self-sufficient by hosting semi-regular concerts in its main hall to help raise funds to support the school's activities from at least the 1870s.[41] Despite the challenges with funding and ongoing discrimination, Catholic schools offered high-quality education. For example, an 1889 article in *The Chorley Standard* praised St Mary's School for its average attendance of 94% for the year 1888, which was claimed to be "probably the highest per centage of attendance in

England for any school under normal conditions, and as such is deserving of notice."[42] The same article quotes W. H. Brewer, Her Majesty's Inspector, who said that the attendance results of St Mary's School in Chorley "are quite unequalled in any school with which I am acquainted. I am glad to be able again to class the school as 'excellent'."[43]

Source Context

There are two items of interest in this article that once belonged to Joseph Prescott. These are a green hardback exercise book dated 12 January 1868 and a second green hardback exercise book dated 15 March 1870. In terms of its condition, the 1868 exercise book, although visibly worn with part of its spine missing, has remained intact, which is remarkable given its great age. The 1870 exercise book is the most worn, with half of its front cover cut off (intentionally, it appears) and many of its pages having fallen out over time while Prescott cut others out himself. Despite the damage the latter exercise book has sustained, its binding has not unravelled, allowing it to be opened and closed normally. These items belonged to Joseph Prescott, who was born on 14 October 1854 in a cottage on Brier's Brow in the village of Wheelton in central Lancashire,[44] one of 11 children of David Prescott, a finisher at a cotton print works, and Ann Prescott (nee Kirkham), described as a "hand loom weaver" in the 1851 England Census.[45] His parents raised Joseph as a Catholic, with his baptism taking place at St Chad's Church in South Hill, Wheelton, the day after his birth. By 1861, Joseph had moved with his parents and siblings to 14 Victoria Street in Wheelton, where he was listed as a "scholar" in the England Census of that year.[46] By 1871, the Prescott family had moved down the road to 6 Victoria Street, with Joseph, aged 16, described in the England Census as a "pupil teacher."[47]

Pupil teachers were senior pupils who trained to become teachers by working as apprentices to the headteacher, who supervised their work.[48] David Stow, a Free Church minister, developed the first pupil-teacher system in 1837, trialling the idea in Glasgow by establishing schools where headteachers trained older pupils to teach younger children.[49] Once the system appeared to work, a British politician and educationist named James Kay-Shuttleworth expanded and refined Stow's system and began applying it in England.[50] However, some people objected to Stow's system in Scotland because of its high cost, the shortened school life of the pupil teachers and the difficulty in obtaining pupil teachers in sufficient numbers.[51] Yet, when Kay-Shuttleworth began experimenting with the pupil-teacher model at a school in Norwood, London, in 1838, he improved it by introducing a programme of government inspectors for schools, paving the way for the monitorial system. Kay-Shuttleworth also introduced legislation to help regulate and standardise the system of pupil teachers to benefit both the pupils and the pupil teachers, also known as "probationers."[52] The system caught the attention of Lord Lansdowne, who helped appoint Kay-Shuttleworth as the secretary to the Education Committee of the Privy Council in April 1839.[53] This new role allowed Kay-Shuttleworth to promote his modified pupil-teacher system and have it become more widely implemented, leading to the opening of the second British pupil-teacher training school in Battersea in 1840.[54] By 1846, the British government launched a national pupil-teacher system for selected students who took part in five-year programmes, receiving a certificate at the end that allowed them to progress to further training. With the British

government having formalised a pupil-teacher system, the aim focused on training the middle class to satisfy the growing demand for teachers as the English education system expanded.[55] A key scholar in this specific area is Wendy Robinson, whose work has focused on the late nineteenth century, especially the period that saw a transition from the pupil-teacher system to the establishment of teacher training colleges.[56] Robinson has consistently suggested that a more nuanced understanding of this period is required, one that avoids oversimplifying the pupil-teacher system as tied into on-the-job training compared with formal education. Robinson's work highlights the need for a deeper comprehension of the specialised training centres for teachers that appeared more common starting in the 1890s.

In Lancashire specifically, one of the first mentions of pupil teachers in a regional newspaper was in the *Liverpool Standard* in November 1843 as part of a summary of grants afforded to schools in the district, with 116 allowances given to pupil teachers or monitors.[57] In February 1847, the *Lancaster Gazette* published a more extensive article on pupil teachers, explaining the recently proposed *Regulations for Pupil Teachers* by Lord Lansdowne.[58] Advertisements requesting pupil teachers were plentiful in Lancashire newspapers throughout the 1850s and 1860s, with the pupil-teacher system embraced across the county. By the 1870s, the School Management Committee started reflecting on the successes of the pupil-teacher system. For example, in December 1874, the Liverpool School Board held a meeting and published a report on the employment and instruction of pupil teachers, recommending that the remuneration for male pupil teachers increase to improve their efficiency, although the board notably omitted a pay rise for female pupil teachers during this committee session.[59] During the Manchester District Union of School Teachers' Associations' 1877 annual meeting, the incoming president, Abraham Park, gave the following address which provides several insights into the deficiencies of the system and the struggles faced by pupil teachers three decades after the system's initial establishment in Britain:

> The training and culture of our P.T.'s indeed to my mind is one of the greatest, if it be not the very greatest, problem that every association of teachers in the country should set itself about seriously to solve. As a general rule, [the inspectors] remark that it is no fault of the head teachers . . . but generally concur in blaming the system. The very liberality of school boards in supplying an abundant staff of pupil teachers has in some cases the effect of throwing too much of the teaching into the hands of these young people and too little into those of the head teachers. Over and above all this, there is no denying the fact that we have now the very greatest difficulty in procuring pupil teachers of the right stamp. The scarcity of boy pupil teachers we must all admit is on the increase. The opinion in general expressed by the members of this board is simply this: That pupil teachers are hardly worked, especially those who barely pass the first examination, and struggle with difficult through the successive years, and in the case of female pupil-teachers who, besides all their teaching work and private study, their case is even more pitiable, considering that, in many cases, they have much of the household work to do as well. Indeed, the case of the latter calls for much sympathy, as it has been clearly proved that the health of many of them greatly suffers during the period of their apprenticeship.[60]

After surveying advertisements for pupil teachers in Lancashire newspapers from the 1870s and 1880s and the letters sent in by readers, it was a common occurrence that several young people would apply for the job of pupil teacher at once, the vast majority of the applicants being female.[61] By September 1890, the comments of the diocesan

inspector, Mr A. T. Davidson, published in the *Preston Herald* revealed the inadequacies of the religious knowledge of pupil teachers.[62] Mr Davidson made the following assessment about the quality of the religious knowledge of pupil teachers, given that possessing sufficient religious knowledge remained a prerequisite for acceptance as a pupil teacher during the period:

> I would ask the managers to use their influence with the head teachers in their schools, so that the pupil teachers may be induced to acquire religious knowledge for its own sake, and that its quality among them may be satisfactory. It is very far from being satisfactory at present. And I am afraid that not only are the pupil teachers indifferent in the matter, but that they are even encouraged to be so by their head teachers. The pupil teachers wilfully absent themselves from the examination.[63]

The *Regulations for Pupil Teachers* published in 1846 established strict rules and demands of pupil teachers. Pupil teachers were required to be at least 13 years of age and expected to display no "bodily infirmity likely to impair their usefulness."[64] The regulations also state that the Church of England, the clergymen or managers of the school must certify that the moral character of the candidates and of their families justify an expectation that the instruction and training of the school will be seconded by their own efforts and by the example of their parents. If this cannot be certified by the family the apprentice will be required to board in some approved household.[65] Besides the initial requirements regarding their good reputation and moral character, candidates underwent an examination to ensure they possessed sufficient skills and knowledge to teach younger pupils. In the examination, the regulations state that pupil teachers must be able to read and write confidently, demonstrate good arithmetic, have an elementary knowledge of geography, be able to repeat the catechism and show they understand its meaning and acquaint themselves with the history of scripture.[66] The regulations also expected candidates to teach a junior class to the satisfaction of an inspector, and female candidates had to show they could knit and sew neatly. To maintain their status as pupil teachers, the regulations required all successful candidates to attend lessons for one and a half hours during each weekday, either before or after normal school hours. Finally, the rates of remuneration were determined according to the length of service and gender of the pupil teacher, with males paid between £10 and £20 and females between £5 and £12 10 shillings.[67] To give a sense of the number of pupil teachers during the Victorian period, in 1869 there were 5,569 male pupil teachers in England and 7,273 female, but by 1897 these figures had increased only marginally for males to 7,194, but exponentially for females to 26,335.[68] This proves that the discriminatory regulations that paid males more than females did not dissuade female pupils from applying to become pupil teachers and paved the way for new rules to be introduced in 1903 that improved the quality of teacher training, increased access to secondary education for aspiring teachers and offered pupil teachers grants worth 40 shillings.[69]

Pupil teachers like Joseph Prescott earned a small salary by teaching younger children and learning from observing their superiors and through practical application, with some having their sights set on becoming full-time teachers after completing their studies.[70] Given the widespread criticism the pupil-teacher system received throughout the 1870s and 1880s for the inadequacy of the professional preparation it granted to apprentice teachers, the government started offering pupil teachers instruction at specialised centres

designed to improve their training.[71] Most pupil teachers who took part in the new specialised centres spent one half of their training on theoretical pedagogy and the other on hands-on teaching in schools.[72] Although the new centres provided professional training by some of the best teachers in the English elementary school system, the training went without standardisation.[73] The typical length of training for teachers as apprentices was five years, emphasising high-quality standards in reading, grammar, arithmetic and geography skills.[74] Despite receiving criticism for its mechanical and dry teaching style, the pupil-teacher system helped bridge the gap between elementary schools and training institutions during the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The success of the pupil-teacher system ought not to be undervalued for its success in increasing literacy (i.e. literacy rates from 1851 to 1900 increased by 27.9% for men and 42% for women)[75] and establishing a pathway for teachers to gain practical experience, leading to the employment and training of an aggregate 33,529 pupil teachers recorded in 1900.[76]

Joseph Prescott moved away from his passion for academic work and his teaching apprenticeship, perhaps because of lack of opportunity or the demands of family life. For example, his 1877 marriage certificate described Prescott at the age of 22 as a "line keeper," an alternative term for a manager. Prescott followed in his father's footsteps by working at the Denham Springs Old Print Works in Lower Copthurst near Wheelton, first as a cashier and later working his way up the ladder to become a manager.[77] On 2 May 1877, Prescott married at St Mary's Church in Euxton a young woman named Elizabeth Moon, who came from a farming family as her father owned and ran Daisy Hill Farm.[78] By the following year, Mr and Mrs Prescott were living on Harpers Lane in Chorley,[79] but by 1880 had moved to Sandy Lane in Whittle-le-Woods. By 1881, when he was 26 years old, Prescott listed himself as a farm labourer living at 115 Whittle Springs in Whittle-le-Woods, having abandoned his occupation as a teacher.[80] By 1884, had Prescott moved away to 12 Plymouth Houses in Chorley, where his wife[81] and children joined him a year later at nearby 2 Plymouth Cottages, with the family moving again in 1886 to Eaves Green in Chorley, at which point Prescott described himself as an outdoor labourer.[82] With a growing family by 1890, Prescott, with his wife and children, occupied Miry Fold Farm,[83] near his birthplace in Wheelton, where the 7 youngest of his 14 children were born. However, five of the Prescott children did not survive infancy, dying of illnesses typical of the Victorian period, including bronchitis, whooping cough, measles, meningitis and pneumonia.[84]

Why Prescott initially abandoned his teaching profession is unclear, but it appears he returned to teaching later in life. For example, when education became compulsory for all children up to the age of 11 by the Elementary Education (School Attendance) Act of 1893,[85] Prescott applied to return to St Mary's School in Chorley as a teacher, riding three miles to and from Wheelton to Chorley on horseback each day. However, the knowledge passed down orally from his descendants suggests that despite Prescott being registered as a farmer or farm labourer on official records, including on censuses and his death certificate, it was instead his wife Elizabeth who ran the farms they occupied, given her background and experience as a farmer's daughter. The lack of recognition Mrs Prescott received for her working role was probably because wives during the Victorian period could not be seen as taking on work associated with men or otherwise appear as the breadwinner. Mrs Prescott's occupation was always left blank on official records, suggesting that the records relied upon for making conclusions in family history research

can be misleading, highlighting a limitation in using family history as the basis for historical inquiry. The Prescotts remained at Miry Fold Farm until August 1909,[86] when they bought Wilson Nook Farm in Whittle-le-Woods[87] at auction, including seven acres of land. Prescott lived and worked there until his death at 75 on 11 April 1930 from myocarditis, arteriosclerosis and chronic interstitial nephritis.[88]

1868 Exercise Book

Given that it was 156 years old when this article was written, Prescott's first exercise book is in relatively good condition, albeit a fragile item. One of the principal insights of the exercise book is the types of lessons teachers taught children in the late 1860s and the methods they used, with Prescott's original source material acting as evidence to support these findings. First, on the inside cover of the exercise book displayed in Figure 1, under the heading "Arithmetic by," Prescott writes his name and that he attends St Mary's

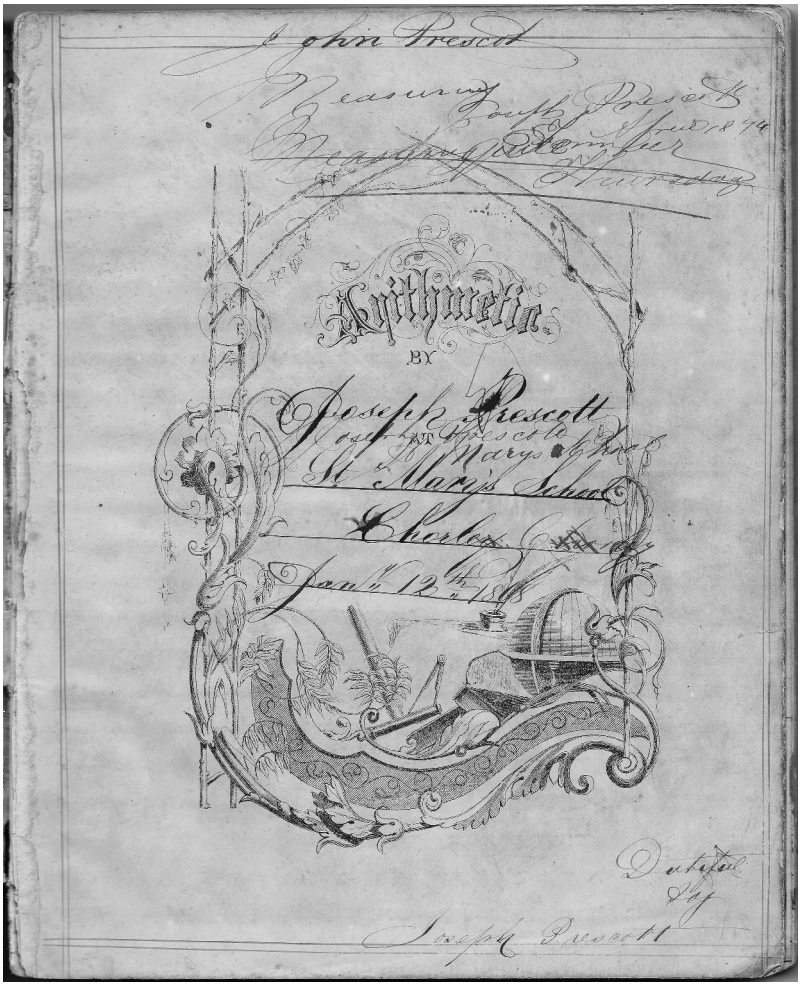


Figure 1. Inside cover of Joseph Prescott's exercise book, 12 January 1868.

School in Chorley, scribbling the date 12 January 1868, making him 13 years old. Despite writing the year 1868 on the inside cover, Prescott dates all the remaining pages in the exercise book to 1869, suggesting he owned the exercise book a year before he began making jottings inside it. Either Prescott had another exercise book that did not survive that he used during the school year 1868 or, perhaps because of the difficulties the priests were having in organising consistent schooling, there might have been a delay in him receiving schooling, which would explain the time lapse between Prescott receiving his exercise book and beginning lessons.

Featured in the exercise book are Prescott's jottings on a range of subjects, including arithmetic, grammar, compound proposition, cartography and geography, composition, local history, rules for simple proportion, interest, commission, purchasing of stock, brokerage and vulgar fractions. It is notable that Prescott's exercise book originates from before the Elementary Education Act of 1870, also known as the Forster's Education Act, which set out a framework for the schooling of all children between the ages of 5 and 12 in England and Wales.[89] When Prescott received his elementary education during the early 1860s, only a small proportion of children received schooling in England, with opportunities limited to grammar schools, charity schools and "dame schools."[90] Besides this, the Church of England ran most schools and focused the curriculum on religious education, and although the government provided grants to the British and Foreign School Society, it had limited practical involvement.[91] In 1833, the government began developing grants for schools, with the Factory Act of that year requiring employers to provide half-time education to children under the age of 13.[92] In April 1844, during a meeting of four evangelical Anglicans who had gathered to pray for London's destitute children, they established the London Ragged School Union to provide free education, food, clothing, lodging and other home missionary services for poor children.[93]

Prescott's exercise book comprises 102 pages, featuring jottings on all but one page, with notes from grammar lessons the most frequent, taking up 25 of the pages, closely followed by jottings from arithmetic lessons filling 24 pages. The rest of the pages feature jottings from compound proportion lessons with 19 pages, cartography and geography lessons with 15 pages, lessons on composition with 2 pages, one page on local history and the rest a mixture of jottings on finance-related lessons, including on interest, brokerage, commission and the purchasing of stock. Beginning with a consideration of the jottings from the grammar lessons, Figure 2 shows an example of Prescott's jottings, the earliest about grammar found in the exercise book. The grammar lesson appears as a combination of spelling and geography, with Prescott asked to write twice a list of male forenames, names of towns, rivers, mountains, seas or oceans, countries, counties and "divisions of the earth." This is an early example in the exercise book of the use of repetition as a pedagogical tool, with Prescott directed to spell some of the place names twice to improve spelling ability and encourage memorisation.

The geography lessons appear confined to studying the British Isles, with the maps in Figures 3–5 demonstrating examples of cartography lessons that appear to be repeated during the school year as Prescott redraws the same maps, showing again an example of repetitive pedagogy. Prescott jots a question-and-answer exercise on the following pages of the exercise book, answering basic questions about Scotland, including listing its 33 counties. In subsequent lessons on geography, Prescott includes jottings on the seaport towns of England and provides brief descriptions of the south and west coasts of Britain,

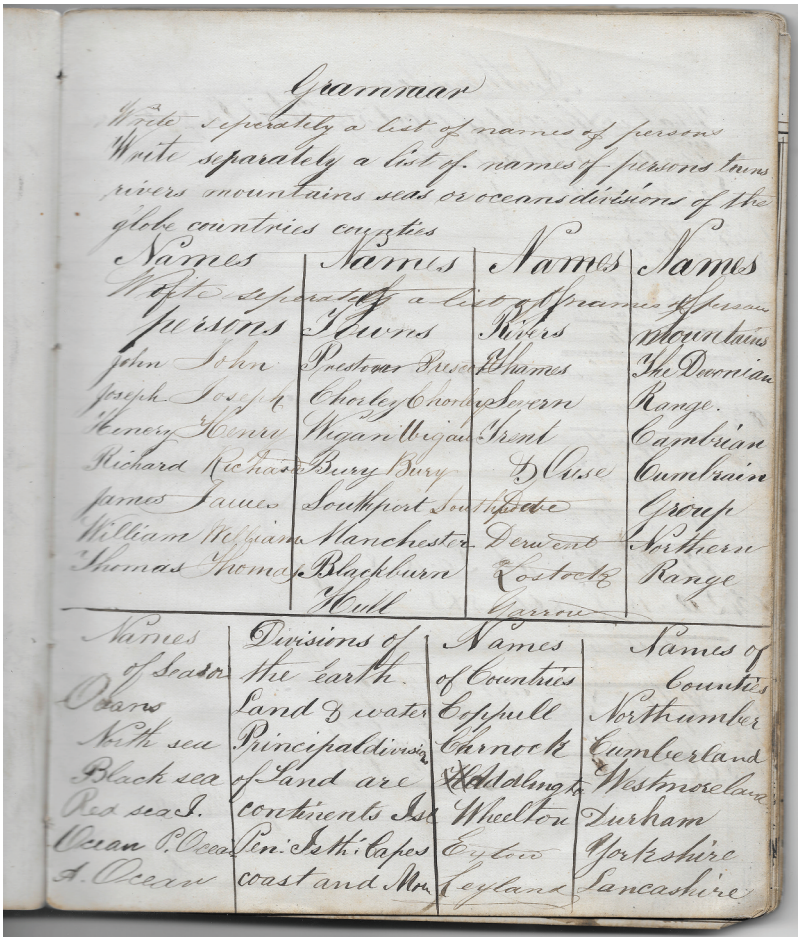


Figure 2. Grammar jottings by Joseph Prescott, 18 January 1869.

often coinciding with the repetition of sentences that appear to have been part of the lessons rather than as forms of punishment, as has become customary in contemporary education settings.[94]

Figure 6 is an example of a lesson that Prescott titles "Composition," during which he writes a story called "The Dutiful Dog" and then answers a question about the story at the end. The story is interesting because it uses language commonplace in the Victorian period that has now become outdated, such as the term "sovereign," referring to a former British gold coin worth one pound sterling and the phrase "had occasion," meaning to have the opportunity or need to do something. During the composition lesson, Prescott will have developed skills in description, narration, exposition and argumentation, and it will also have been a chance for him to practise his spelling and grammar. Following the composition lesson are more lessons on grammar, cartography, compound proportion and a further lesson on composition followed by the single lesson on local history. During this lesson, his teacher tasked him with writing about a local landmark. He chose Whittle Spring,[95] a hotel and gardens in the village of Whittle-le-Woods next to Chorley, built

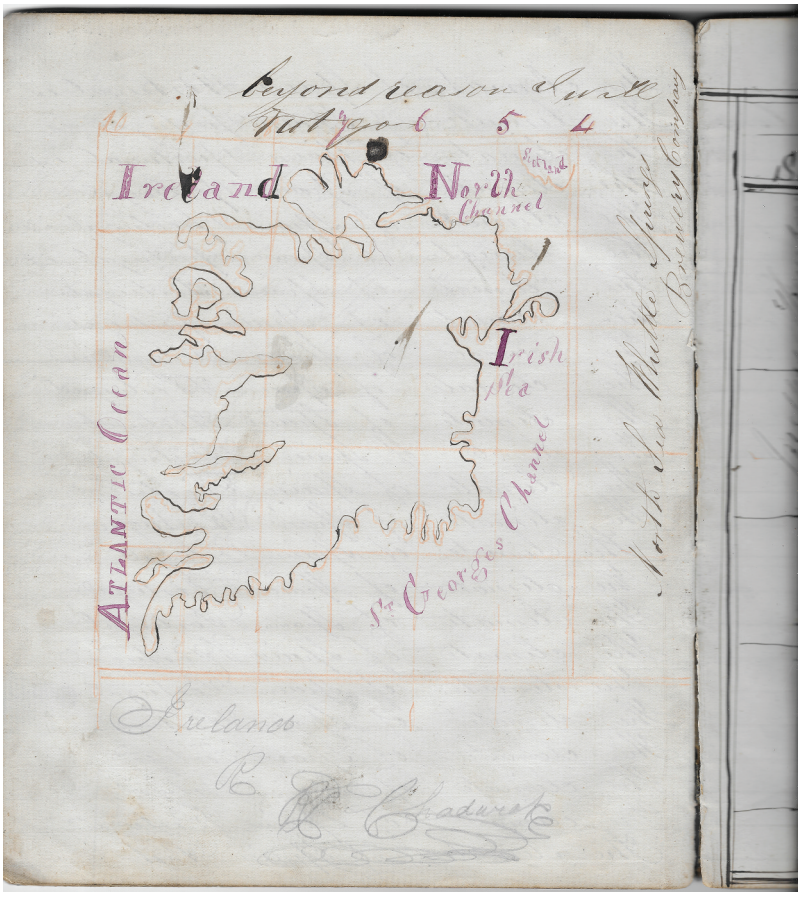


Figure 3. Map of Ireland by Joseph Prescott, 18 February 1869.

there in 1847 to accommodate the tourists who came to taste the water at the nearby alkaline springs that were discovered in 1836.[96] Figure 7 shows Prescott's description of Whittle Spring, showcasing his natural writing ability and his learned capability of composing coherent sentences in a period when literacy was still not universal, especially to a high standard.[97] The following is a transcription of Prescott's description of Whittle Spring taken from his exercise book:

> Whittle spring is situated about 2 miles from the town of Chorley. The owner of the gardens and Hotel is Mr Settle. It is beautifully decorated with trees, shrubs and plants of a very beautiful nature. There is also very beautiful flowers of different sorts. I could not describe all the different sorts not if I had to write all night. There is also a very beautiful bowling green, hothouse, Baths, tower, a fountain of clear cold water, swings. And lodges of water with a very great quality of all sorts of fish. And nothing is more joy to the spectators than to throw a piece of bread into one of these pools of water and see the fishes how eager they are to each get a little. Whittle Springs is famous for its Breweries the owners of the breweries are Holt and Stansfield.

Following the lesson on local history, Prescott continued with lessons on cartography and grammar, including many pages filled with repeated sentences, a question-and-answer

Figure 4. Map of Scotland by Joseph Prescott, 18 February 1869.

task on geography focusing on England and Wales, and arithmetic practice which covers several pages in the second half of the exercise book. Figures 8 and 9 show examples of Prescott's work towards the end of the exercise book: first is the stylised title "Rules for Simple Proportion," including jottings taken from his teacher on how to find the proportional in different instances. Figure 9 features another stylised title, "Vulgar Fractions Rule," with a short description of the rule and some examples jotted below it.

1870 Exercise Book

Less well-preserved is another of Joseph Prescott's exercise books, with the earliest legible date being 15 March 1870. Figure 10 shows that Prescott had cut half of the front cover of his exercise book, with the item in worse condition than its older counterpart. This second exercise book is also considerably shorter than the first at only 42 pages because of a combination of wear and Prescott having torn out pages purposefully. Prescott's

Figure 5. Map of England and Wales by Joseph Prescott, 24 February 1869.

jottings in the exercise book cover much the same subjects as the first but with some new additions, altogether including arithmetic, grammar, composition, paraphrasing, geography, adverbs, vulgar fractions, brokerage, geometry and definitions of magnitudes. What is most interesting about the second exercise book is that on the inside of its back cover, Prescott scribbled his weekly class schedule, which provides further insight into a typical week at St Mary's School in Chorley in 1870.

The weekly schedule reads that every morning from Mondays to Thursdays, Prescott received Latin lessons. When Queen Victoria ascended the throne in 1837, it was the norm to reserve classical subjects such as Latin and Greek for the children of the wealthy who went to fee-paying schools.[98] However, the lesson schedule in Prescott's exercise book proves teachers gave Latin lessons to working-class children by the mid-Victorian period.[99] A grasp of Latin was a mark of a refined education and considered essential for university admissions, highlighting the ambitions of St Mary's School to see at least some

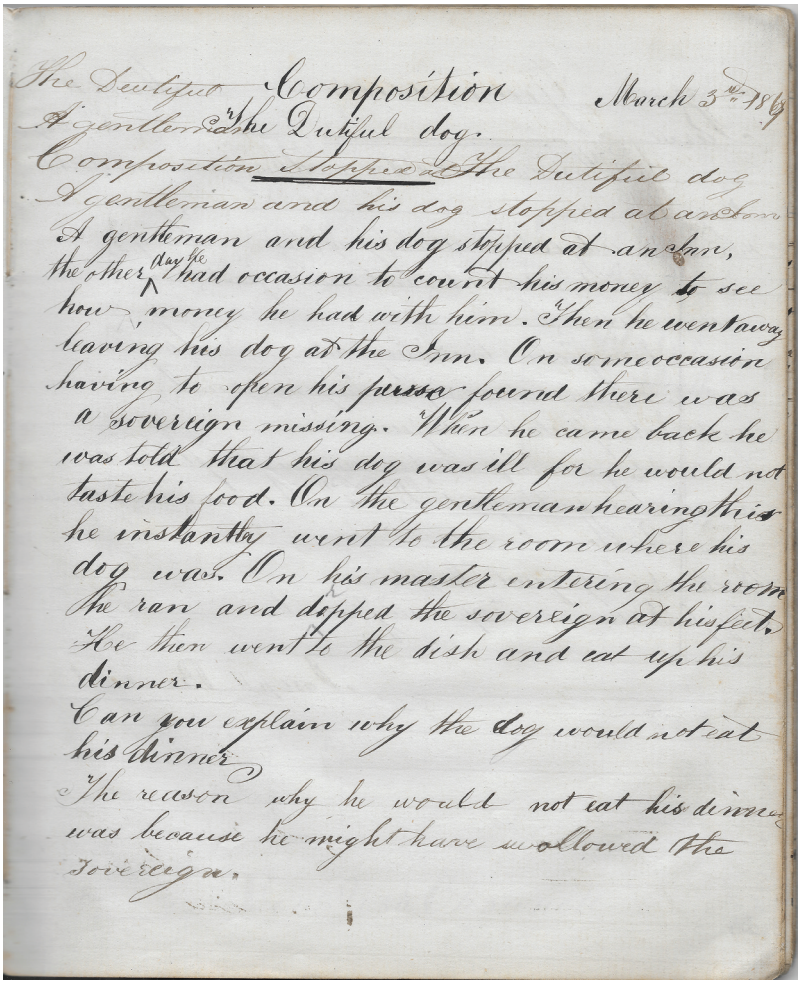
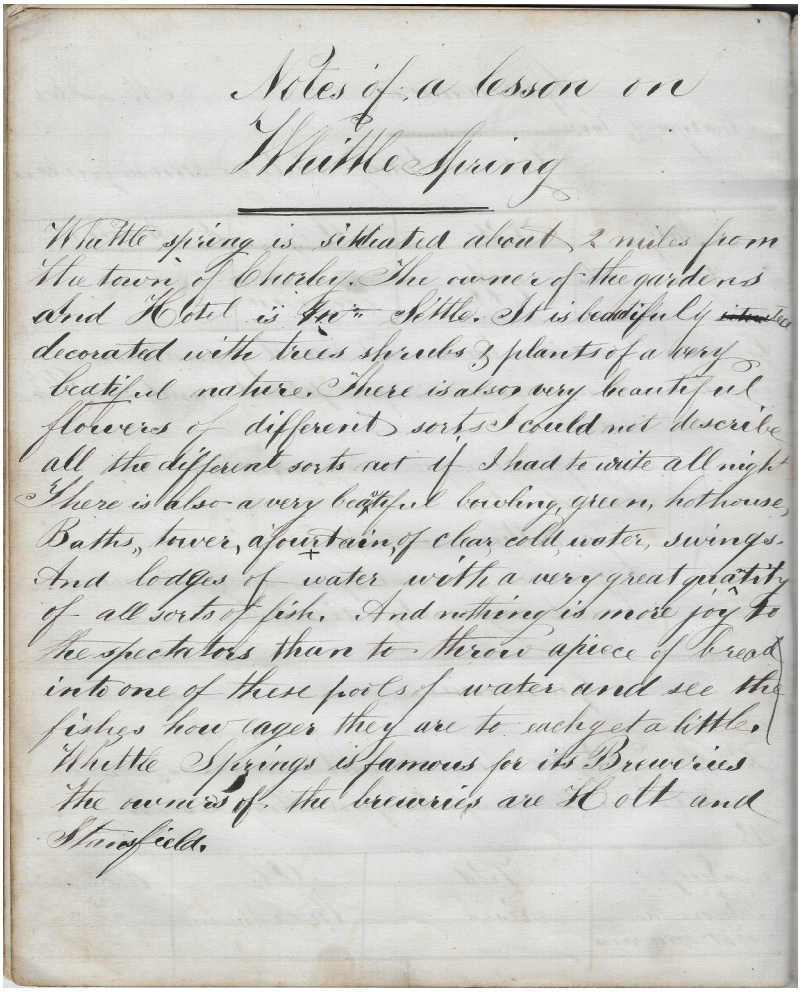

The Dutiful Composition March 3rd 1869
A gentleman & the Dutiful dog.
Composition Stopped The Dutiful dog
A gentleman and his dog stopped at an Inn,
A gentleman and his dog stopped at an Inn,
the other day he had occasion to count his money to see
how money he had with him. Then he went away
leaving his dog at the Inn. On some occasion
having to open his purse found there was
a Sovereign missing. When he came back he
was told that his dog was ill for he would not
taste his food. On the gentleman hearing this
he instantly went to the room where his
dog was. On his master entering the room
he ran and dropped the sovereign at his feet.
He then went to the dish and eat up his
dinner.
Can you explain why the dog would not eat
his dinner
The reason why he would not eat his dinner
was because he might have swallowed the
Sovereign.

Figure 6. Jottings of a composition task titled "the dutiful dog" by Joseph Prescott, 5 March 1869.

of its pupils proceed to further education. Latin was a powerful tool for intellectual training, a means of accessing the great works of European literature and a way for pupils to improve their understanding of English, given that approximately 60% of English words derive from Latin.[100] Learning Latin was a kind of intellectual currency that elevated one's status and prestige, given its association with being well educated and belonging to the middle and upper classes. The high frequency of Latin lessons in Prescott's schedule also reflects the Catholic nature of the curriculum at St Mary's School. By the nineteenth century, Latin was still the universal, liturgical language of the Catholic Church used in the celebration of the Mass, with vernacular languages only sanctioned during the Second Vatican Council from 1962 to 1965.[101] Although the Church did not expect lay Catholics to learn Latin necessarily, they would come across it frequently in hymnals, prayer books and devotional literature, and teaching it to children held a religious function not only to foster a deeper understanding of their faith but as a sign of their piety.


Notes of a lesson on
Whittle Spring

Whittle spring is situated about 2 miles from the town of Chorley. The owner of the gardens and Hotel is Mr. Settle. It is beautifully decorated with trees shrubs & plants of a very beatiful nature. There is also very beautiful flowers of different sorts I could not describe all the different sorts not if I had to write all night. There is also a very beautiful looking, green, hothouse, Baths, tower, a fountain of clear cold water, swings. And lodges of water with a very great quantity of all sorts of fish. And nothing is more joy to the spectators than to throw a piece of bread into one of these pools of water and see the fishes how eager they are to catch at a little. Whittle Springs is famous for its Breweries the owners of the breweries are Holt and Stansfield.

Figure 7. "Notes of a lesson on Whittle Spring" by Joseph Prescott, 8 March 1869.

The weekly class schedule in Prescott's exercise book also reads that on Mondays, Latin was followed by arithmetic, geography, history and essay. Teachers taught geography to broaden the curriculum beyond the core subjects based on numeracy and literacy. Receiving lessons on geography gave pupils an understanding of the world beyond their immediate locale and contributed to their broader development, including by encouraging critical thinking and acting as an avenue for further study of different cultures and environments. On Tuesdays, Latin was followed by Euclid, algebra and English grammar. On Wednesdays, Latin was followed by arithmetic, analysis and geography. On Thursdays, Latin was followed by Euclid, algebra, (illegible) and English grammar. On Fridays, English composition was the morning lesson followed by arithmetic, paraphrasing, history and English grammar. The Euclid lessons refer to the geometry of the ancient Greek mathematician conveyed in his seminal work *Elements of Geometry*, which was the standard until geometricians began theorising alternative approaches to geometry in the

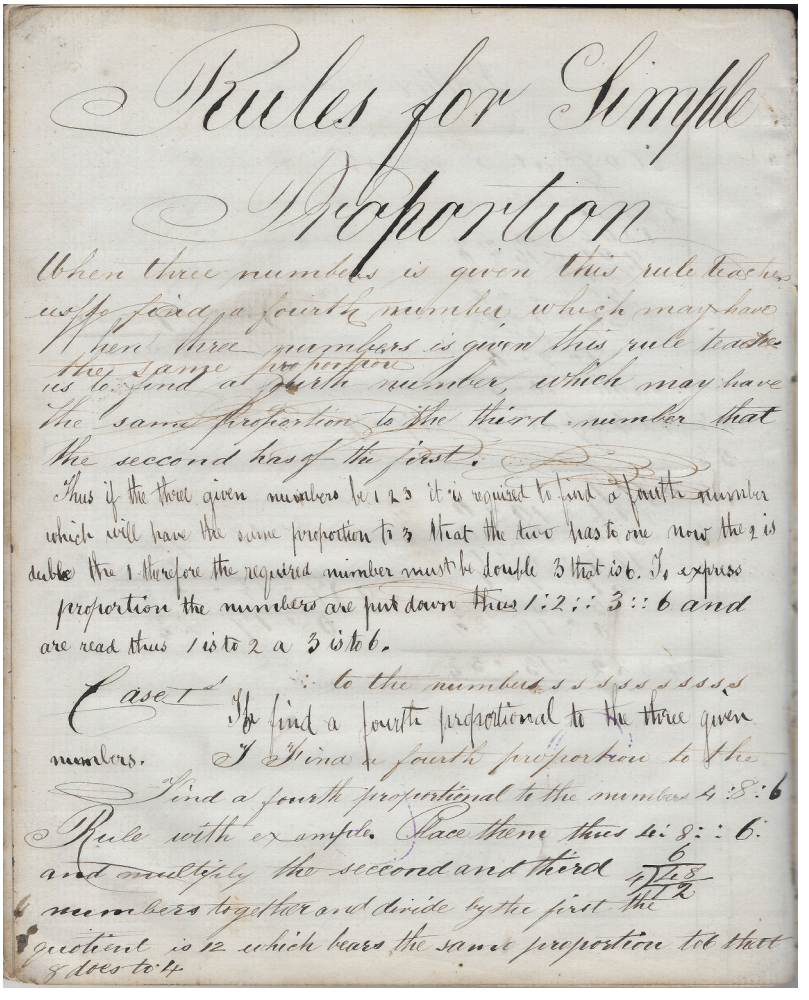


Figure 8. Jottings on "Rules for Simple Proportion" by Joseph Prescott, 1869.

nineteenth century. Although Euclid's Elements was the primary textbook for geometry instruction in Victorian schools, modern geometricians started challenging its dominance in favour of other texts and teaching methods, but it took until the early twentieth century before the dominance of Euclidean geometry waned in British education. Since no jottings of Latin or history lessons and religious instruction appear in either of the surviving exercise books, Prescott must have owned at least one other exercise book that has not survived.

The focus on knowledge transmission rather than pedagogy in the source material provides key insights. First, the reason for emphasising knowledge transmission may link to the utilitarian focus of Victorian education in providing practical skills and instilling basic literacy and numeracy to prepare most pupils for the workforce, with more in-depth intellectual training and development reserved for those pupils in whom the school leaders saw promise of greater academic ability.[102] The utilitarian approach led to a

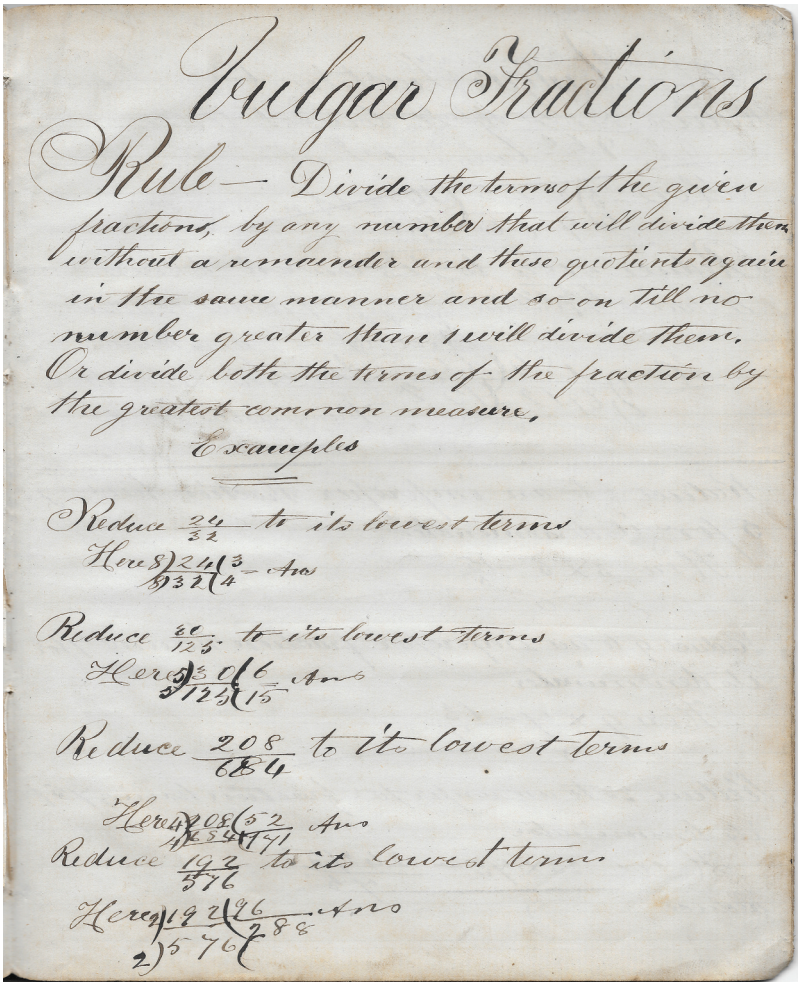


Figure 9. Jottings on "Vulgar Fractions Rule" by Joseph Prescott, 1869.

curriculum focusing on specific knowledge and skills, rather than exploring how best to facilitate or tailor learning to pupils who struggled with knowledge intake. Focusing on knowledge transmission also stemmed from teachers relying on rote-learning techniques because of limited resources, such as chanting times tables and memorising spellings.[103] The dominance of knowledge transmission is also likely to have stemmed from the strict order and control in the Victorian classroom environment that left little space for the development of a student-centred, pedagogical approach to learning.[104] While some educational theorists were becoming more prominent in the late nineteenth century, their influence remained limited in practical school settings until after the Second World War, leaving teachers without the theoretical framework or training necessary to implement more pedagogical approaches.[105] Besides this, the social expectations surrounding education during the period might have further diverted attention from the intellectual aspects of learning. The focus on character development and social conformity may

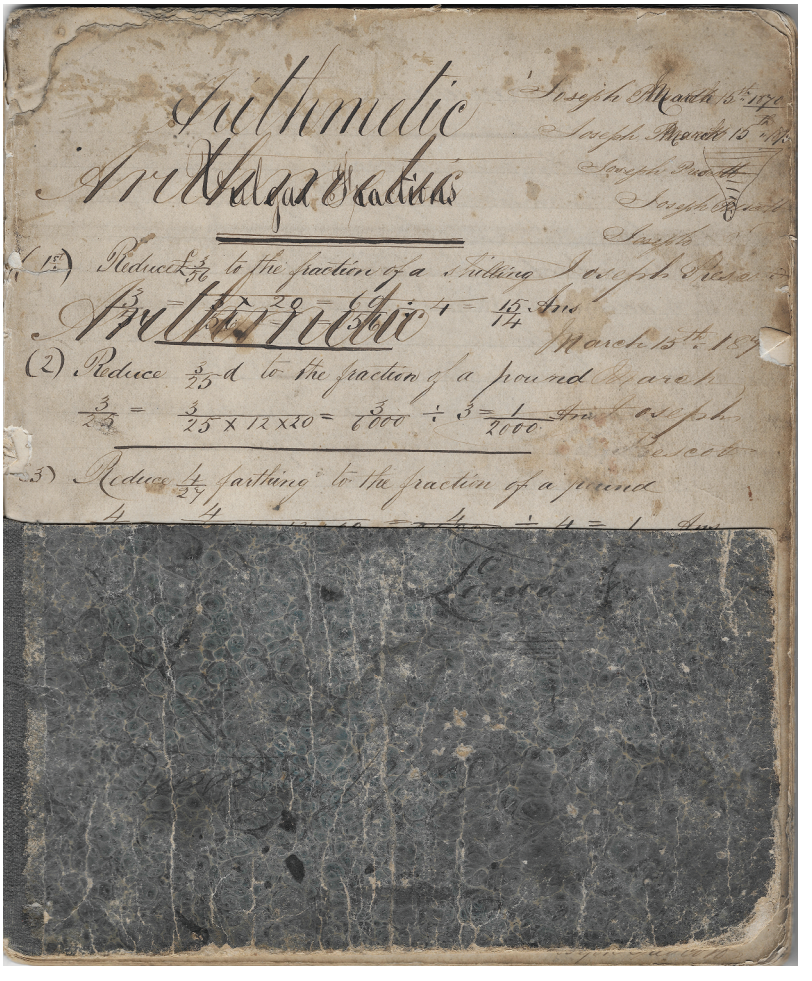


Figure 10. Front cover of an exercise book belonging to Joseph Prescott, 1870.

therefore have taken precedence over more individualised and engaging teaching methods.[106]

Prescott's second exercise book begins with jottings on a lesson on arithmetic, followed by notes from grammar, composition and paraphrasing lessons. Figure 11 shows an example of Prescott completing a composition and paraphrasing exercise. Following this are more lessons on arithmetic, grammar and composition, along with analysing and paraphrasing exercises, eventually coming to a lesson on geography halfway through the exercise book. The question the teacher posed for Prescott to answer during the geography lesson was to name the primary imports and exports of Russia, France, Germany and Austria. However, perhaps of greater note for insights on education in the period are Prescott's jottings during a composition lesson a couple of pages later, the task reading: "Write a description of your days work with the 3rd standard." Figure 12 displays Prescott's description of a typical day in the life of a pupil teacher in

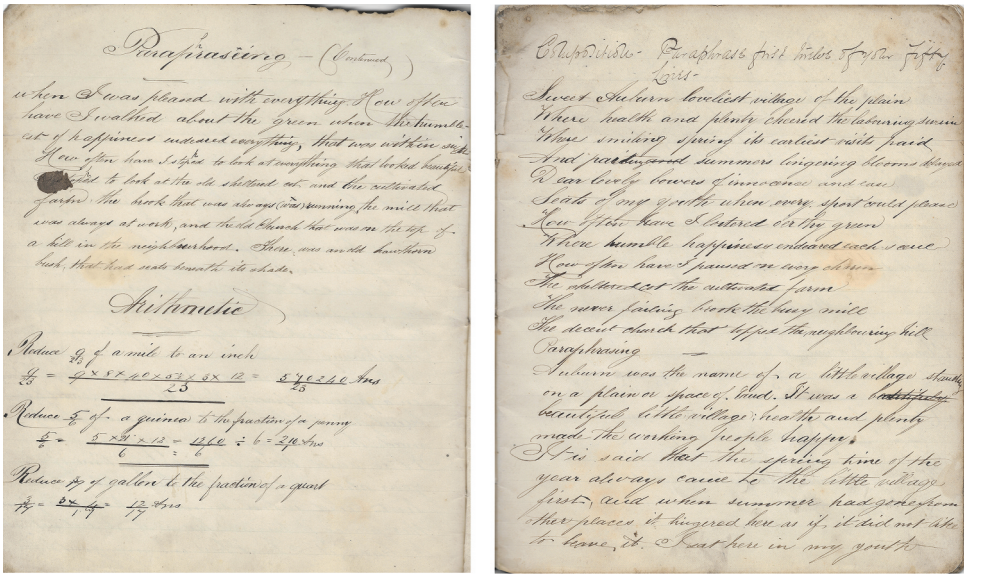


Figure 11. Jottings during a composition and paraphrasing exercise by Joseph Prescott, 1870.

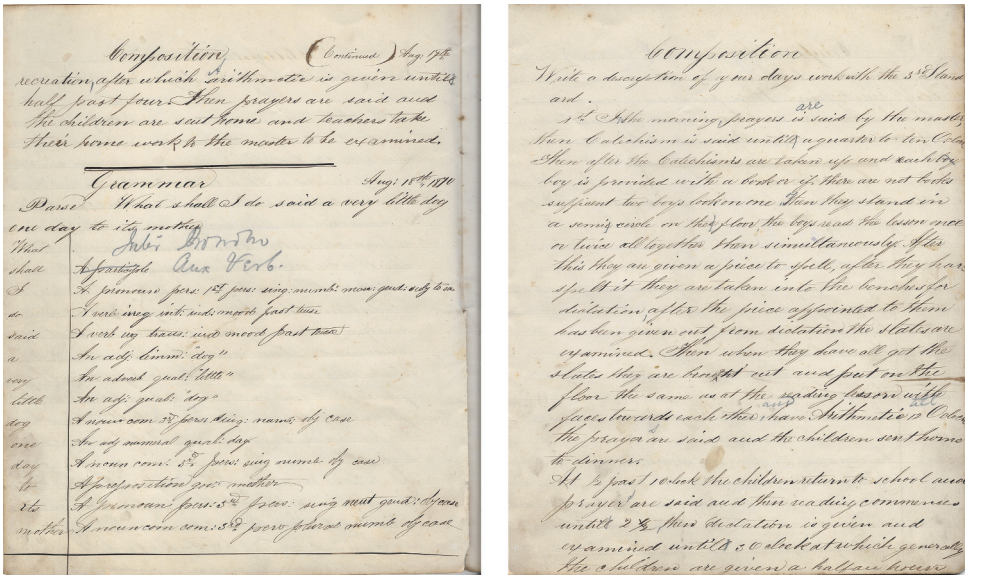


Figure 12. Joseph Prescott's description of a typical day in the life of a pupil teacher, 17 August 1870.

1870, and the following is a transcription of the original without the annotations and corrections made by Prescott's teacher, so some of his spelling errors are included:

> In the morning prayers is said by the master, then Catechism is said until a quarter to ten o'clock. Then after the Catechisms are taken up and each boy is provided with a book or if

> there are not books sufficent [*sic*] two boys look on one. Then they stand in a semie [*sic*] circle on thee [*sic*] floor the boys read the lesson once or twice all together then simultaneously. After this they are given a piece to spell, after they have spelt it they are taken into the benches for dictation after the piece appointed to them has been given out from dictation the slates are examined. Then when they have all got the slates they are brought out and put on the floor the same as at the reading lesson with faces towards each other have Arithmetic 12 O clock the prayers are said and the children sent home to dinner. At 1/2 past 1 o clock the children return to school and prayers are said and then reading commences until 2 then dictation is given and examined until 3 o clock at which generally the children are given a half an hour recreation after which arithmetic is given until half past four. Then prayers are said and the children are sent home and teachers take their home work to the master to be examined.

Prescott's description reveals that religious instruction shaped the Victorian school day, with the day beginning with religious instruction through reciting the catechism and structured by religious devotion through three sessions of prayer across the day, including in the morning, after lunch and at the end of the day. The primary insight is that participation in religious observance in Catholic schools was obligatory and two-dimensional in the sense that it was both devotional and instructional. While the saying of prayers was an opportunity for pupils to express piety, reciting the catechism served multiple functions, including intellectual and spiritual development, practice in memorisation, a deeper understanding of religious doctrine, sacrament preparation and moral instruction. From Prescott's account, teachers interwove religion throughout the Victorian school day, an insight that confirms that religion played a significant role in Victorian education, with the goal of instilling Christian values and morality in pupils.[107] Several pages after the composition lesson, Prescott finishes his essay, which is transcribed below:

> After the boys have been seated, in the benches and have been forwarded, with slates, and pencils, I should see that each boy is seated at a proper distance, from the next to him so as to prevent him from copying. After this I should give out the piece selected for dictation, about 3 words at a time, and see that every boy said it after one, when the piece was finished I should go round correct the errors, after this I should take out the boys & prepare for next lesson.

On one of the later pages in the exercise book, Prescott's teacher asked him the following question: "How would you correct errors the shortest and best way?"

> The way that I should do is this I should let the boys sit in the benches, and go round and put a stroke under each error. Then I should give each boy a book and command him to learn how to spell the piece in a certain time.

Finally, after several more pages of lesson notes on grammar, arithmetic, vulgar fractions and geometry, the exercise book arrives at a task stating that Prescott is to "write an essay of the coalfields of England and Wales." The following is a transcription of what Prescott wrote in response:

> Coal is raised most abundantly in Northumberland, Durham and South Wales, iron is found mostly in South Wales and South of Staffordshire, tin is obtained only from Cornwall and Devon, these mines have been worked for a very long period, salt is obtained from the springs of Cheshire. It is from the North and West of England that nearly all the minerals see obtained these being mountainous and hilly parts metals being found mostly in the hilly parts.

Conclusion

The most notable aspects of the two exercise books belonging to Joseph Prescott displayed in this article are that they have provided valuable insights into the everyday activities of a pupil teacher from the mid-Victorian period. Having shared scans of some of the key pages in the exercise books, the items themselves are precious because of their great age and fragile condition, but also share insights on education in Lancashire and the pedagogies employed by teachers during the late 1860s and early 1870s. Perhaps most insightful was Prescott's description of a typical day in the life of a pupil teacher during the period working in a Catholic school,[108] his schedule of lessons and some of the schoolwork he produced. Reflecting on the analysis, the exercise books reinforce the notion that the 3 R's (reading, writing and arithmetic) dominated the Victorian curriculum to where teachers placed minimal emphasis on creativity or developing the talents of individual pupils. The cotton, coal mining and bleaching/printing industries shaped Chorley, where St Mary's School was located, during the nineteenth century, which is reflected in the curriculum found in the exercise books that emphasised basic literacy and numeracy, likely with the intention that most pupils would contribute to the burgeoning local industries. This points to a prevailing attitude towards education during the period; it was convenient in maintaining the social order by emphasising discipline and obedience among the young people to prepare them for their respective roles in industry and family life.

These insights from primary sources are valuable to historians of education, especially those interested in the mid-Victorian period, the history of the pupil-teacher system or the history of education in Lancashire specifically. What has also been essential in conducting the analysis of the exercise books is including family history research, which provided the context to the items, an approach that other researchers may find useful to gain a deeper understanding of the materials they study. Using family history as a vehicle for historical scholarship is inherently based on individual experience and brings challenges that historians need to either avoid or overcome, including the increased potential for biased interpretations, selective remembrance and romanticised narratives about the life facts of ancestors. Prescott's exercise books contribute an individual account of mid-Victorian education, with some context from family and local history used in this article to offer insights that shed light on broader social structures and large-scale trends. In particular, Prescott's jottings in the exercise books have produced insights on schooling in the mid-Victorian period, the role of religion in shaping the school day, the responsibilities of pupil teachers and the dominance of knowledge transmission over other pedagogies. While Prescott's exercise books are valuable items to preserve for family history purposes, they also serve as a case study of what Catholic schooling was like in England in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

Notes

1. Stephens, *Education, Literacy and Society*, 1830–70, 86–100.
2. Sanderson, "Literacy and Social Mobility," 75–103.
3. Sadleir, *Trollope: A Commentary*, 13–32.
4. Hamer, *Struggle for Catholic Education*, 107–26.
5. Roderick and Stephens, *Science and Secondary Education*, 125–29.

6. Sanderson, "Social Change," 1780–1840, 131–54.
7. Gomersall, "Schooling for Social Control?" 45–61.
8. Sanderson, "Education and the Factory," 1780–1840, 266–79.
9. Altick, *English Common Reader*, 171.
10. Ibid.
11. Leopold, "Education and Utopia," 619–35.
12. Midwinter, "Administration of Public Education," 184–96.
13. Gillard, "Education in the UK."
14. Hollingsworth, "Sermon on Hannah More," 212–23.
15. Lawson and Silver, *Social History of Education*, 235.
16. Klagstad, *Suitable Education*, 9–10, 19, 68.
17. Byrne, *Classification, Variation, and Education*, 42.
18. Gomersall, "Schooling for Social Control?" 45–61.
19. Field, "Occupational Structure, Dissent," 1841, 235–87.
20. Marsden, "Variations in Educational Provision," 15–30.
21. Gleadle, *British Women*, 18.
22. Gleeson, *School Attendance and Truancy*, 437–90.
23. Marsden, "Variations in Educational Provision," 15.
24. Ibid., 17.
25. Young, *Study in Public Administration*, 1870–1902, 79.
26. Ibid., 14.
27. Ibid., 15.
28. Hilton, *Post-Reformation Catholic Community*, 212.
29. Hewitson, *Stonyhurst College*, 105.
30. Keogh, *Christian Brothers*, 58.
31. Tenbus, *Defending the Faith*, 432–51.
32. Cottrell-Boyce, *Catholic and Protestant Conceptions*, 769–88.
33. Alexander, *Lord John Russell*, 395–415.
34. St Mary's Roman Catholic Church, "History."
35. Ibid.
36. "Opening of St. Mary's," *Chorley Guardian*, February 14, 1874, 3.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. "Grand Concert," *Chorley Guardian*, April 7, 1877, 1.
42. "St. Mary's School, Chorley." *Chorley Standard*, February 2, 1889, 5.
43. Ibid.
44. England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915, *Joseph Prescott* (Chorley, Lancashire, October-November-December, 1854), vol. 8e, 300.
45. 1851 England Census, *Ann Prescot* (Wheelton, Lancashire, 1851), piece 2262, folio 151, 21.
46. 1861 England Census, *Joseph Prescot* (Wheelton, Lancashire, 1861), piece 3114, folio 25, 3.
47. 1871 England Census, *Joseph Prescott* (Wheelton, Lancashire, 1871), piece 4193, folio 94, 2.
48. Bischof, *Making Good*, 41.
49. Cruickshank, *David Stow*, 205–15.
50. Ross, *Kay-Shuttleworth*, 275–83.
51. HM Stationery Office. "Hadow Report (1931)," 7.
52. Ross, *Kay-Shuttleworth*, 275–83.
53. Shutt, *From Manchester to Burnley*, 11–12.
54. Ibid., 115.
55. Cowan, "Higher Elementary," 37–42.
56. Robinson, *Pupil Teachers*, 241–52.
57. "Summary of Grant." *Liverpool Standard*, November 28, 1843, 1.
58. "Public Education," Lancaster Gazette, February 13, 1847, 1.

59. "Liverpool School Board," *Liverpool Albion*, December 19, 1874, 7.
60. "Training of Pupil Teachers," *Manchester Courier*, October 22, 1877, 6.
61. "Prescot School Board," *Widnes Examiner*, March 24, 1883, 8.
62. "Preston National School's Committee," *Preston Herald*, September 13, 1890, 2.
63. Ibid.
64. McNamara Family History, *Pupil Teachers*.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
67. Davies, *Teachers in the 19th Century*.
68. "Beginning of Knowledge," *Coalville Times*, August 6, 1897, 4.
69. Gardner, *Intending Teachers*, 425–45.
70. Heyck, "Educational," 197–215.
71. Robinson, *Teacher Training*, 19–36.
72. Bischof, *Making Good*, 101.
73. Young, *Study in Public Administration*, 178.
74. Bischof, "Pupil Teaching," 49–67.
75. Melia, *Edwardian Hegemony*, 135.
76. "Beginning of Knowledge," *Coalville Times*, August 6, 1897, 4.
77. Harris, "General Photographs by Boyd Harris."
78. England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915, Joseph Prescott (Chorley, Lancashire, April-May-June, 1877), vol. 8e, 647.
79. England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915, John Prescott (Chorley, Lancashire, January-February-March, 1879), vol. 8e, 556.
80. 1881 England Census, Joseph Prescott (Whittle-le-Woods, Lancashire, 1881), piece 4216, folio 14, 21.
81. England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915, Agnes Prescott (Chorley, Lancashire, January-February-March, 1884), vol. 8e, 504.
82. England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915, Henry Prescott (Chorley, Lancashire, October-November-December, 1886), vol. 8e, 497.
83. 1891 England Census, Joseph Prescott (Wheelton, Lancashire, 1891), piece 3419, folio 58.
84. Woods and Shelton, "Disease Environments," 73–82.
85. Ellis, "Influences on School Attendance," 313–26.
86. "Wilson Nook Farm," *Preston Herald*, July 31, 1909, 4.
87. 1911 England Census, Joseph Prescott (Whittle-le-Woods, Lancashire, 1911), piece 25190.
88. England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916–2007, Joseph Prescott (Chorley, Lancashire, April-May-June, 1930), vol. 8c, 491.
89. Mitch, "Elementary Education Act," 301–24.
90. Leinster-Mackay, "Dame Schools," 33–48.
91. Bartle, "Role of the British," 74–90.
92. Ward, "Education of Factory Child Workers," 110–24.
93. Clark, "Early Ragged Schools," 9–21.
94. Schaffner, *Writing as Punishment*, 9–25.
95. Bell, *Whittle as It Was*, 43.
96. Hodkinson, *Whittle-& Clayton-le-Woods*, 48–51.
97. Ingleby, "Charles Dickens."
98. Campbell, "Latin and the Elite Tradition," 308–25.
99. Ibid.
100. Jones, *Public School Education*, 26–31
101. Hollerich, *Second Vatican Council*, 421–40.
102. Alexander, *Still No Pedagogy?*, 8, 23, 27.
103. Korda, *Object Lessons*, 218, 219.
104. Larsen, *Training Institutions*, 132–56.
105. Carr, *Post-War Educational Epistemology*, 1–16.

106. Taylor, *Return of Character*, 399–415.
107. Cottrell-Boyce, *Catholic and Protestant Conceptions*, 769–88.
108. Jones, "Lancashire," 292–306.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes on contributor

Brandon Reece Taylorian is a research associate at the University of Lancashire whose doctoral research focused on the impacts of state recognition, registration laws and lack of legal personality on the freedoms and rights of religious communities. An alumnus of the Young Scholars Fellowship on Religion and the Rule of Law, many of Brandon's research interests stem from his family history, including early Mormonism and Quakerism in England and he specialises in the history of Lefebvrism.

ORCID

Brandon Reece Taylorian http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2632-5642

Bibliography

Alexander, J. L. "Lord John Russell and the Origins of the Committee of Council on Education." *The Historical Journal* 20, no. 2 (1977): 395–415. doi:10.1017/S0018246X00011122.

Alexander, R. "Still No Pedagogy? Principle, Pragmatism and Compliance in Primary Education." *Cambridge Journal of Education* 34, no. 1 (2004): 7–33. doi:10.1080/0305764042000183106.

Altick, R. D. *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900*. 2nd ed. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998.

Bartle, G. F. "The Role of the British and Foreign School Society in the Education of Poor Children of the Metropolis during the First Half of the 19th Century." *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 24, no. 1 (1992): 74–90. doi:10.1080/0022062920240106.

Bell, J. E. *Whittle as It Was: A Nostalgic Look at Whittle-le-Woods*. Brinscall: Countryside Publications Limited, 1984.

Bischof, C. "Pupil Teaching." In *Teaching Britain: Elementary Teachers and the State of the Everyday, 1846–1906*, edited by C. Bischof, 49–67. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Bischof, C. R. *Making Good: British Elementary Teachers and the Social Landscape, 1846–1902*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, 2014.

Byrne, S. *Classification, Variation, and Education: The Making and Remaking of the Normal Child in England, C. 1880–1914*. Oxford: Oxford Brookes University, 2013.

Carr, D. "Introduction: The Post-War Rise and Fall of Educational Epistemology." In *Education, Knowledge and Truth: Beyond the Postmodern Impasse*, edited by D. Carr, 1–16. London: Routledge, 1998.

Campbell, F. "Latin and the Elite Tradition in Education." *British Journal of Sociology* 19, no. 3 (1968): 308–25. doi:10.2307/588835.

Clark, E. A. G. "The Early Ragged Schools and the Foundation of the Ragged School Union." *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 1, no. 2 (1969): 9–21. doi:10.1080/0022062690010202.

Cruickshank, M. "David Stow, Scottish pioneer of teacher training in Britain." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 14, no. 2 (1966): 205–215. doi:10.1080/00071005.1966.9973157.

Cottrell-Boyce, A. "Catholic and Protestant conceptions of secular education in Victorian England." *History of Education* 51, no. 6 (2022): 769–788. doi:10.1080/0046760X.2022.2076930.

Cowan, I. R. "Higher Elementary, Secondary and Pupil-Teachers' Education in Salford, 1870–1903: Part II." *Vocational Aspect of Education* 24, no. 57 (1972): 37–42. doi:10.1080/03057877280000071.

Davies, G. "Teachers in the 19th Century." Pembrey & Burry Port Heritage. Last updated June 15, 2021. Accessed July 14, 2025. https://pembreyburryportheritage.co.uk/teachers-in-the-19th-century

Ellis, A. C. O. "Influences on School Attendance in Victorian England." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 21, no. 3 (1973): 313–26. doi:10.1080/00071005.1973.9973388.

Field, A. J. "Occupational Structure, Dissent and Educational Commitment, Lancashire, 1841." *Research in Economic History* 4, no. 1 (1979): 235–87.

Gardner, P. "Intending teachers and school-based teacher training, 1903–1939." *Oxford Review of Education* 21, no. 4 (1995): 425–445. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1050720

Gillard, D. "Education in the UK: A History." Education in the UK, 1998. Last updated May 1, 2018. Accessed October 18, 2024. https://education-uk.org/history/chapter05.html#:~:text=Silver%201973%3A235).-,The,-notion%20of%20state

Gleadle, K. *British Women in the Nineteenth Century*. London: Macmillan Education UK, 2017.

Gleeson, D. "School Attendance and Truancy: A Socio-Historical Account." *The Sociological Review* 40, no. 3 (1992): 437–490. doi:10.1111/j.1467-954X.1992.tb00398.x.

Gomersall, M. "Schooling for Social Control? The Early Nineteenth Century." In *Working-Class Girls in Nineteenth-Century England*, edited by M. Gomersall, 45–61. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997.

Hamer, D. S. "A Phase of the Struggle for Catholic Education: Manchester and Salford in the Mid-Nineteenth Century." *British Catholic History* 23, no. 1 (1996): 107–26.

Harris, B. "General Photographs by Boyd Harris." Boyd Harris, 2022. Last updated February 4, 2022. Accessed October 17, 2024. http://www.boydharris.co.uk/snap_blog22/snaps2202.htm#:~:text=Lower%20Copthurst%20Farm-,Denham%20Springs%20Old%20Print%20Works,-Chimney%20from%20the

Hewitson, A. *Stonyhurst College, Its Past and Present: An Account of Its History, Architecture, Treasures, Curiosities, & c*. Oxford: Oxford University, 1870.

Heyck, T. W. "Educational." In *A New Companion to Victorian Literature and Culture*, edited by H. F. Tucker, 197–215. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2014.

Hilton, J. A. *The Post-Reformation Catholic Community in the North of England*. Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University, 2016.

HM Stationery Office. "Hadow Report (1931)." Education in the UK, 1931. Last updated May 22, 2006. Accessed July 14,2025. https://www.education-uk.org/documents/hadow1931/hadow1931.html

Hodkinson, K. *Whittle-& Clayton -le-Woods: A Pictorial Record of Bygone Days*. Chorley: C. K. D. Publications, 1991.

Hollerich, M. "The Second Vatican Council in Context." *Christian Theological Tradition*, edited by M. Hollerich and C. Cory, 421–440. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Hollingsworth, P. "Extended Sermon on Hannah More." In *Hannah More in Context*, edited by K. Andrews and S. Edney, 212–23. London: Routledge, 2022.

Ingleby, M. "Charles Dickens and the Push for Literacy in Victorian Britain." Queen Mary University of London, 2020. Last updated June 10, 2020. Accessed October 17, 2024. https://www.qmul.ac.uk/media/news/2020/hss/charles-dickens-and-the-push-for-literacy-in-victorian-britain.html

Jones, D. K. "Lancashire, the American Common School, and the Religious Problem in British Education in the Nineteenth Century." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 15, no. 3 (1967): 292–306. doi:10.1080/00071005.1967.9973197.

Jones, F. H. *Tirocinium Imperii: Public School Education in the Victorian Era, the Classical Curriculum, and the British Imperial Ethos*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University, 2008.

Keogh, D. *Edmund Rice and the first Christian Brothers*. Dublin: Four Courts Press Ltd, 2008.

Klagstad, D. J. *A Suitable Education: The Journey of A Reform*. Denver: University of Colorado, 1993.
Korda, A. "Object Lessons in Victorian Education: Text, Object, Image." *The Journal of Victorian Culture* 25, no. 2 (2020): 200–222. doi:10.1093/jvcult/vcz064.
Larsen, M. A. "Training Institutions as Sites of Disciplinary Control." In *The Making and Shaping of the Victorian Teacher: A Comparative New Cultural History*, edited by M. A. Larsen, 132–156. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
Lawson, J., and H. Silver. *A Social History of Education in England*. London: Methuen, 1973.
Leinster-Mackay, D. P. "Dame Schools: A Need for Review." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 24, no. 1 (1976): 33–48. doi:10.1080/00071005.1976.9973455.
Leopold, D. "Education and Utopia: Robert Owen and Charles Fourier." *Oxford Review of Education* 37, no. 5 (2011): 619–35. doi:10.1080/03054985.2011.621679.
Marsden, W. E. "Variations in Educational Provision in Lancashire during the School Board Period." *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 10, no. 2 (1978): 15–30. doi:10.1080/0022062780100203.
McNamara, D. "Pupil Teachers." McNamara Family History. Last updated December 7, 2012. Accessed July 14, 2025. http://www.mcnamarahistory.co.uk/pupil-teachers/
Melia, P. "Edwardian Hegemony in Tressell and Sassoon." *English Literature* 9, no. 1 (2023): 115–146. doi:10.30687/EL/2420-823X/2022/01/007.
Midwinter, E. C. "The Administration of Public Education in Late Victorian Lancashire." *Northern History* 4, no. 1 (1969): 184–96. doi:10.1179/nhi.1969.4.1.184.
Mitch, D. "The Elementary Education Act of 1870: Landmark or Transition?" In *School Acts and the Rise of Mass Schooling: Education Policy in the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by J. Westberg, L. Boser, and I. Brühwiler, 301–24. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.
Robinson, W. "Pupil teachers: the Achilles heel of higher grade schools, 1882–1904." *History of Education* 22, no. 3 (1993): 241–252. doi:10.1080/0046760930220304.
Robinson, W. "Teacher Training in England and Wales: Past, Present and Future Perspectives." *Education Research and Perspectives* 33, no. 2 (2006): 19–36. doi:10.3316/informit.035790807611744.
Roderick, G. W., and M. D. Stephens. "Science and Secondary Education in an Industrial Area: Lancashire 1870–1902." *Vocational Aspect of Education* 28, no. 71 (1976): 125–29. doi:10.1080/10408347308000721.
Ross, A. M. "Kay-Shuttleworth and the Training of Teachers for Pauper Schools." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 15, no. 3 (1967): 275–283. doi:10.2307/3119458.
Sadleir, M. *Trollope: A Commentary*. London: Constable, 1945.
Sanderson, M. "Education and the Factory in Industrial Lancashire, 1780-1840." *Economic History Review* 20, no. 2 (1967): 266–79.
Sanderson, M. "Literacy and Social Mobility in the Industrial Revolution in England." *Past & Present* 56, no. 1 (1972): 75–103. doi:10.1093/past/56.1.75.
Sanderson, M. "Social Change and Elementary Education in Industrial Lancashire 1780–1840." *Northern History* 3, no. 1 (1968): 131–54. doi:10.1179/nhi.1968.3.1.131.
Schaffner, S. *Writing as Punishment in Schools, Courts, and Everyday Life*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2019.
Shutt, C. J. *From Manchester to Burnley: Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth and His Contribution to the Moral and Physical Welfare of the Poor in the Periods 1828–1835 and 1842–1877*. Preston: University of Central Lancashire, 2014.
St Mary's Roman Catholic Church. "Our History 1800–1900." St Mary's Roman Catholic Church, 2004. Last updated September 3, 2004. Accessed December 14, 2024. https://www.stmarys-chorley.org/about/history/
Stephens, W. B. *Education, Literacy and Society, 1830–70: The Geography of Diversity in Provincial England*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987.
Taylor, N. "The Return of Character: Parallels Between Late-Victorian and Twenty-First Century Discourses." *Sociological Research Online* 23, no. 2 (2018): 399–415. doi:10.1177/1360780418769679.

Ward, G. "The Education of Factory Child Workers, 1833–1850." *Economic Journal* 45, no. 1 (1935): 110–24. doi:10.1093/ej/45.Supplement_1.110.

Woods, R., and N. Shelton. "Disease Environments in Victorian England and Wales." *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History* 33, no. 2 (2000): 73–82. doi:10.1080/01615440009598951.

Young, M. E. *A Study in Public Administration: The Lancashire School Boards 1870–1902*. Manchester: University of Manchester, 1977.