

Macefield Boys' School in Old Hill was built in 1891 (for 460 pupils) with Mr George Brown as the Headmaster. Harry may have attended this school, or another similar school in the neighbourhood.

These entries from the School logs give an insight into the life of children at school from 1903-1912.

Ref: ES/RM 1/1/1 [1875-1906] (Sandwell Archives)

1892

5th Dec 1892 Visited by Mr Fry, School Officer, who took list of absentees for surprise visit.

13th Dec Attended at Board Office to meet Mr Meredith, the architect to the board and Mr Green to inspect plans for a new school at Cradley Heath.

16th Dec Average for the week 472.7. On books 538. Present at all 522. Half-timers present - 12.

Percentage in actual attendance 89. [89%]

1896

27 Aug 1896 There has been a falling off in the attendance owing to several boys having gone hop picking and to a few cases of scarlet fever.

1903 *"Only a very few boys remain after reaching 13 years."*

[Following the Education Act 1902, the Rowley Regis Urban District Council became the Local Education Authority from 1st May 1903. The Rowley Regis School Board ceased to exist on 30th April 1903]

1905

- 10th Feb 1905 *I have received a letter from Mr Deakin, Headmaster of King Edward's School, Stourbridge informing me that Jos. C Barnsley who gained a Minor County Council Scholarship from here in 1899, has obtained a Mathematical Scholarship at Jesus College Oxford of £100 a year for 4 or 5 years subject to passing responsions.*
- 3rd July 1905 *Commenced the new school year by entering 95 boys from Old Hill and Wrights Lane Infants Schools.*

1906

- 18th June 1906 *Sent return of number of Labour Certificate Candidates to the Council Officers. The examination to take place at Wrights Lane School at 10.00 am. On Saturday 14 July 1906.*
- 2nd July 1906 *Entered 81 children from Wrights Lane and Old Hill Infants departments.*
- 28th July 1906 *Boys and Girls School - H M Inspectors Report :-*

The inspector said that the playground surfaces were covered with ashes and in dry weather rise in clouds of dust - in wet weather changed into mud. Drill and recreation in the playground are injurious rather than beneficial. A covered portion should be provided in each playground. Inlets for fresh air in the classrooms to be improved.

Boys School

Nos 3 & 4 Rooms would be much better for teaching if they were divided by movable glazed partitions. The 3 classes occupying these undivided rooms work at times in unnecessarily difficult conditions. Standard 4 Room accommodating 60 was occupied by 69 boys on 19th June 1906.

Attention is directed to Article 19 of the Code

_____ signed

31 August 1906

1907

25th March 1907 *School closed today being needed as polling stations for the District Council Elections.*

1st July 1907 *Commenced a fresh school year. Entered 101 boys from Old Hill & Wrights Lane Infants departments. Re-organised the classes.*

5th July 1907 *During the week 18 boys have left here to attend Wrights Lane School These boys are from the Upper Standards 5, 6 and 7.*

1908

19th May 1908 *Visited by Messrs Fry and Chilton to inspect damage to school furniture done at a political meeting held here on Friday evening last 15th inst.*

25th July 1908 *Received Notice that it has been decided by the Education Committee to send the 6th and 7th and ex-VII standards from this school to Wrights Lane on and from 1st July next.*

1908 (*continued*)

- 1st July 1908 *Entered 98 boys from Wrights Lane and Old Hill infants departments.*
- 17th July 1908 *School closed this afternoon the boys having earned a half-holiday by regular attendance...*
- 23rd July *Received a weighing machine and measuring rod for use in the medical inspection of the children.*
- 31st July *Closed school at 12 o'clock for the summer holiday to re-open on Monday 17 August.*
- 21st Aug *Received notice from the Secretary that the Schools are to be closed for the hop-picking season holidays from Friday noon 28th [August] till 21st September.*
- 26th Aug *School closed this afternoon, the boys having earned a half-day holiday for their regular attendance during the past month.*
- 27th Aug *This morning 16 boys have absented themselves in order to start hop-picking. This in spite of the warning issued by the Education Committee against absence from School for this purpose.*
- 28th *School closed at 12 noon for hop-picking season holidays. Attendance has fallen off this week.*
- 21st Sept *School opened again. Ewart Ashman Stand V left having obtained a Scholarship at Halesowen Grammar School. Several boys have not returned from Hop-picking.*

[By 2nd Oct all boys had returned from hop-picking.]

1908 (*continued*)

- 5th Oct *Medical Inspection of boys who will leave before Christmas. (2 boys)*
- 11th Oct. *Fire drill taken this morning. On the cry of 'Fire' the whole of the boys were marched out of school in an orderly manner, without caps, and all were safely in the playground in 30 seconds.*
- 20th Nov *Several boys have very bad foot wear. This has caused a falling-off in attendance owing to bad weather on one or two days.*
- 27th Nov *Stone laying ceremony at Free Library in Cradley Heath.*
- Dec 1908 *Reports of poor attendance by children owing to being badly clad and shod and show signs of being scantily fed. A list of such has been supplied to the attendance officer for enquiry.*

1909

- Jan 7th *Headmaster attended a meeting of the Education Committee of the head teachers - re providing foot wear for the children requiring such. A committee was formed to deal with the matter and a collection was made to start the work at once.*
- 22nd Jan *Handed £3.2.2 ½ to Mr Fry, the treasurer of the children's boot fund being contributions collected by the boys during this week.*
- 29th *Eleven boys have been provided with boots and stockings provided by a fund.*
- 12th Feb *Distributed boots to 6 boys.*