

Welford and Weston Local History Society

www.welfordandweston.org.uk

Newsletter 46 – January 2018

Our next meeting will be on **Friday, 23rd March**

The topic of this illustrated talk is 'Education & Schooling in Welford and Weston', and the speaker will be myself, Brad Plimmer. The meeting will be held in the Memorial Hall, at 7:30.

I will try to cover the roughly 500 year period from the mid 16th century to the present day, though clearly we have more archive material for the more recent past. Included with this newsletter are two items from our local archive which could give you a taste of the sort of thing that will be covered.

I live with my wife Anne in a house called The Hollies on the High Street. Just over 200 years ago, in 1809, James Mills and his wife, Mary, moved into this same house as a newly married couple. They were very productive in more ways than one, and their first five children were all girls:- Elizabeth born in 1810, Sarah born in 1811, Rebecca born in 1812, Mary Ann born in 1813 and finally Susanna born in 1814.

There was no village school in Welford in the early 1800s. That didn't materialise until 1851. However, James and Mary clearly understood the importance of elementary education for their daughters, and so they used the services of a Miss Mary Hodgkins who 'taught school' at a cottage next to The Yews on High Street. We have one of her beautifully written accounts from June 1823 in the local history Society archive, and it can be seen at Attachment 1. At the time Rebecca was almost 11, and doing the three 'Rs', Reading, Writing and Arithmetic and also Grammar. Her younger sisters, Mary Ann, aged almost 10 and Susanna who was nearly 9 were just given reading lessons. As you can see private education was relatively expensive even in those days. Although Miss Hodgkins' writing is perfect, the same cannot be said for her spelling.

You may be wondering what Miss Hodgkins was like. Well fortunately we have in the archive a photograph of Miss Hodgkins, which is believed to have been taken in the late 1850's. This shows her as an elderly lady of character, dressed in a voluminous black and white spotted silk dress, wearing a lace cap and with a lace scarf, seated in a higher than usual chair, with a crutch at her side. The photo was used in the Stratford Herald in 1936. (See Attachment 2)

If this taster has made you interested to hear more on the subject of the History of Education and Schooling in Welford and Weston, then come along to our meeting on Friday 23rd March.

Mr James Mills - to Mary Hodgkins June 1823			
Miss Rebecca Mills	L	s	d
Reading - - -	0	6	0
Writing & Arithmetec -	0	6	0
Grammar - -	0	0	0
Stationary	0	4	9
	1	4	9
Reading	L	s	d
Miss Mary Ann Mills	0	6	0
Miss Susanna Mills	0	6	0
	0	12	0
	L	s	d
	1	4	9
	0	12	0
	1	16	9
	settled		

Attachment 1.

The accounts submitted by Miss Mary Hodgkins in June 1823 for the 'schooling' of Mr. James Mills's three youngest daughters. Apologies for the fact that this is a bit difficult to read, but please remember that it was written almost 200 years ago.



Attachment 2.

This newspaper cutting came from the Stratford Herald, August 28th, 1936.

We hope to see you at the March meeting.

Kind regards,
Brad

Mike Banning-Lover 750480, Chris Harby 01926 490782, Sue Hook 751400,
Mike Kearsey 751383, Paul King 750123, Brad Plimmer 750716