Refs: Mary Macpherson

J. Burns Wood

N. W. Drummond

**EDUCATION IN CASSILIS PRE 1875**

In 1848 the Board on National Education was appointed to establish National Schools throughout the Colony, setting up a system of Government schools. At the same time a Denominational School Board was established to allocate Government Grants to various churches for their own schools.

Before this, any education in New South Wales was provided by a number of religious denominations, subsidised by the government.

There were sometimes fierce competitions between the National and Denomination school boards along with sectorian rivalries and jealousies, but despite this National schools were eventually established throughout the Colony. Many of them were in the Hunter ie: Merriwa in 1850.

Serious weaknesses were noticeable with this dual system, including some areas with competing small schools, and other areas dependent on one Denominational school, despite their religious beliefs. 1866 saw the demise of the two school boards, and in 1867, a Council of Education appointed to administer both Public Schools and Denominational Schools as they were both now known. At the expense of the Denominational schools, the Public schools increased, and in 1880, all government aid was withdrawn from the church schools, and the system that was put in place, remains today.

In 1850 the Cassilis residents, with an acre of land given to the National Board by John O'Reagan, for a school site, applied for a National School, but it was never established. Cassilis instead gained a Church of England school subsidised by the Denomination School Board through the Diocese of Newcastle.

The establishment date is not known, but it is believed to have had some sort of education from 1851, and operational in 1853. The majority of the population of Cassilis was Anglican, with the rest being Roman Catholic and a few other religions.

The earliest reference for a proposed estimate for a school in Cassilis is a letter dated 30th April, 1857 from the Bishop of Newcastle to the Denominational Board, of which part of the letter is quoted below:

"The following school buildings are urgently required, and half the contemplated cost has been contributed.

The buildings, however, are delayed, because it is deemed desirable not to expend the present contributions in erecting inferior buildings, but rather to wait until the Government may be persuaded to render the Denominational Schools the same support as it renders to the National Schools; in which case excellent, efficient buildings should be erected according to the following estimate:-

Cassilis £300 ".

As the residents' portion of the money had been subscribed and the vote to the Denominational School Board had increased in 1858, it is likely the school was officially opened in this year. The Roll Book was the only 'official" document in which all business was entered, until a system of statistical forms was introduced in 1865. However, Cassilis school is listed as a Certified Denominational School of the Church of England, Newcastle Diocese, and operational in 1863.

The teacher at the time was a Mr M Farrell, who remained there until 1866, with a salary of £72 a year!

Not much is known how the classes were conducted, but it seems likely, with it being in the Church of England building, the children sat on the pews with their slate boards resting on their knees, or using a flapboard attached to the pew in front of them.

The generally taught subjects were the three 'R's", Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography, History, Vocal Music, Mapping, Drawing, Needlework, and of course Scripture History and Church Catechism!

The school was under the charge of the local board (the first P&C ?) and the town's clergyman was usually the chairman. Pupils were charged fees that were supplemented by a state subsidy. It is hard to say what the fee for each pupil was as the total fees received in the 3 yr period of the document available varies according to the amount of pupils attending, which goes as follows:

1863 £53/7/6 31 pupils

1864 £39/0/0 49 pupils

1865 £37/8/0 52 pupils

Whether this does not include the subsidies paid, or some parents didn't or couldn't afford the fees is not known.

The monitorial system was commonly used by the Denominational Schools, and were organised into three divisions. These were kept as distinct classes, but placed so that they could easily be combined into two or one groups, and all pupils facing front towards the teacher.

"In working a school on this plan one of two courses is open, viz. Teaching with or without monitors or other assistants. With assistants, the teacher can station them on two divisions, while he himself takes each of the others in rotation. Without assistants, by so constructing the time table that the two divisions shall be doing silent work while he is engaged teaching the remaining one. The division of the school into classes is generally made on the basis of reading and arithmetic and the classes are the same for all subjects. If further division is wanted, each division may be sub-divided into one or more parts for which, however, more desks would be required."

With the combining of the two school boards forming the Council of Education in 1866, the Cassilis school was inspected regularly by a Government Inspector, although the school was still classed as a Denominational School.

There was also a change of teacher, a Mr Thomas Walker, from 1866 to 1870. The enrolments were stable, between 30-40 each year, but the attendance was another matter, the average being only 24 in 1868 for example.

The attendance of school children was required at 30, originally, to keep the school open, but this was reduced to 25 in 1867.

That year, the inspector noted reading, writing and arithmetic were the only subjects taught regularly, the school's morale was "very low", the children's proficiency "very bad" and Thomas Walker's methods "obsolete".

In 1871, Walker was replaced by Mr William Curtis, who appeared by all accounts, to improve the school, but not entirely according to the Government Inspector's report in 1871.

INSPECTION REPORT 18TH AUGUST 1871

1. The material condition remains the same, but the organisation has improved. The desks, which were formally fixed to the walls of the school, have been remodelled and are now arranged in parallel groups. Except as regards first books, the school the school stock is fairly sufficient and in good order.

2. Under the present teacher the attendance has increased more than 50% and the children are both regular and punctual. The order is but indifferent; the pupils talk aloud, and the various simultaneous movements are awkward and noisy. The discipline, however, is likely to become more effective.

3. All the prescribed subjects are taught, but the lesson programmes are not well arranged nor is the classification of the pupils correct. The teaching is energetic but unskilful.

1. The average efficiency is below indifferent, but there is reason to expect better results in the future. The present teacher has only been in charge two months.

The school was conducted in the same as was a Public school with the Rev. William Wilson (at the time the chairman of the local board) giving religious instruction to the Anglican students while the teacher taught secular instruction to the children of other religions.

The Government inspector's faith in improvement of the school seems to have been well founded as the next report in 1872 shows:

"A classroom for religious instruction has been provided, and the routine of the school is now, in all essential points, similar to that of a Public School. The clergyman gives religious instruction for an hour on specified days. On these occasions the teacher attends to the secular instruction of the children not belonging to the Church of England. As there is no other school in the town, this arrangement is rendered the more necessary. The pupils are fairly regular and punctual. The government is weak in promptness and firmness, but on the whole the children behaved well during examination...”

Although Public schools had relaxed the attendance to 25 pupils to keep the school open, the attendance required in Denominational schools was still 30, and in 1872, Cassilis School was unable to keep the minimum average, and looked as if its days were numbered.

This regulation of minimum attendance was not always enforced and many Denominational schools kept their certificate and government aid despite their low numbers. The Council of Education began to encourage the formation of Public Schools at the expense of the Denominational Schools.

Too small for more than one school, and with a melting pot of religions amongst its population, Cassilis was an ideal candidate for establishing a Public School. From 1872, the Council of Education kept demanding an explanation for the constant low numbers of the school from both the Teacher, Thomas Curtis, and the chairman of the board, the Rev. William Wilson.

Things came to a head when in 1874, Thomas Curtis was granted a transfer at his own request, and the Rev. William Wilson sealed the fate of the Denominational School of Cassilis, when upon requesting another teacher, also added on the reasons why there were low attendance figures. No doubt these reasons were justifiable. The points made were that the district's population was small and migratory, and the black soil country meant that rain made the roads impossible to traverse.

Wilson also stated, that with the property of which the private township of "Cassilis" had recently been sold, and the new owner was "offering inducements to fresh settlement", he was optimistic that school numbers would rise.

He ended by saying that if the Denominational certificate were to be withdrawn, and a Public School formed in its place, the Church would be willing to sell or rent the school premises to the Council of Education.

Consideration was given to the school's future with the appointment of Miss Amelia Nicholson in August 1874. Inspector O'Byrne reported that the Denominational School was unlikely to reach and maintain the required attendance, but there was a need for a school, as there were 18 families with school age children in the town alone. Thirteen were Church of England and five were Roman Catholic.

There was no other school within 20 miles, and with the attendance minimum being only 25 required, O'Byrne recommended that the Denominational certificate be withdrawn, adding that a Public School could "receive general support" in the district. His recommendation was adopted by the Council on September 21st 1874, resolving to withdraw the certificate from the end of October.

This decision understandably infuriated the good Rev. William Wilson, and at a public town meeting held in October, it was found that the town was united in protest at the Council's abrupt decision, and at the injustice to the newly arrived Miss Amelia Nicholson. They were determined to keep the school open until at least the end of the year, particularly, to guarantee her salary. Wilson in his letter, made it known that "the parents of Cassilis were satisfied with their Denominational School" and also stated:

"While the present unsettled state of opinion on the Education question gives ground for apprehension that bye and bye Public Schools will be of such a secular character as to prevent Christian parents choosing them for their children's education.

The members of the Roman Catholic Church, and of the Church of England are alike opposed to secular schools, and therefore in such a place as Cassilis a Church of England School would stand a far better chance of obtaining general support than a Public School."

He also added that he was withdrawing the offer of the Church premises for a Public School, and warned that he felt it was his duty to oppose any movement for a public school.

Whether Wilson was a longwinded tyrant in fear of losing his very prominent place in the community, or genuinely concerned for the community, there is no doubt he was not a man to cross. The Council hastily replied, saying there was no intention of closing the school, but from Wilson's last letter, it was understood that there was no objections to converting the school to a Public one.

In November, given Wilson's attitude, it was decided that conversion was not immediately possible, and so deferred the withdrawal of the certificate until March 1875 unless suitable cause be shown that the school remain open.

There was no reasonable argument that the fact of low attendance was justified, nor that it would change in the near future, so without further protest, the Denominational School closed on March 26th, 1875.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ENROLMENTS 1863-1874 | | |  |  |  |  |  |
| YEAR | BOYS | GIRLS | TOTAL | YEAR | BOYS | GIRLS | TOTAL |
| 1863 | 21 | 10 | 31 | 1864 | 30 | 19 | 49 |
| 1865 | 30 | 22 | 52 | 1866 | (Council of Education forms) | | |
| 1867 | 24 | 13 | 37 | 1868 | 19 | 13 | 32 |
| 1869 | 19 | 12 | 31 | 1870 | 24 | 17 | 41 |
| 1871 | 26 | 19 | 45 | 1872 | 23 | 21 | 44 |
| 1873 | 20 | 20 | 40 | 1874 | 23 | 19 | 42 |

**Cassilis Public School, 1875 - 1900**

***Inspection report* - *24th June, 1875***

"This school was closed at the time of my visit. It had previously been a Church of England Denominational School, but the required attendance could not be maintained. It was converted into a Public School during the second quarter of the year. The number of pupils now enrolled is 42. The council has decided to erect a vested school in this town."

A local committee was formed in 1875 to obtain a Public School for Cassilis, comprising of William and Thomas Braggett (publicans), Robert Byfield (a storekeeper), Alfred Hinds (a carpenter, and the elected secretary), and postmaster at the time, William Lee. The latter wrote to the Council of Education on the third of June, informing them that a public meeting had been held in the town, and it was decided that a Public School be opened as soon as possible to replace the now defunct Denominational school. He also asked for immediate aid if the parents could find a teacher, since they were concerned at the loss of the school ground since the closure of the Church of England school.

This request was refused as the Council of Education had to appoint any teacher themselves.

Later in the month, an official application form was admitted stating that there were 42 school age children (25 Church of England, 17 Roman Catholic) within two miles. The following parents and guardians indicated their intention to send their children to a Public School in Cassilis.

Charles Whitby, James Mack, and James Miller one child each, James Hassard, E. Mulholland - two, William Noble, Thomas Braggett, Robert Byfield, Daniel Quinn, Alfred Hines - three, William Lee, Meredith Parker - four, and William Braggett and Edward Scully - six children each.

Lee also informed the Council that there were fourteen known school age children at Borambil, two and a half miles away, but had not had the time to visit the parents to confirm that their children would also attend. He also pointed out that the nearest schools were at Coolah in one direction, and Merriwa in the other, both over twenty miles away.

It was obvious that a school was needed. The timing was good. The Bishop of Newcastle agreed to let the school use the school house and residence for 12 months, the Council owned the land given to them by John O'Regan back in 1850, and fortunately, the Council's funds were in good shape, so had money to fund a school building. So the application was granted, and in August an architect was asked to draw up plans for the Cassilis school buildings.

Thomas Buchanan had fifteen years of teaching experience under his belt, and was in charge of Kelso Public school, when he was appointed as the first teacher for Cassilis Public School on the 16th of September, 1875. The school was actually opened on the 25th of October, with 31 enrolments on the first day, and by the end of the year, that number had risen to 41, with an even distribution of Church of England and Roman Catholic.

Below are the parent names, where they lived and their occupations, along with their children's names:

ARMSTRONG, Lucas - Green Hills - Innkeeper: William age 10

BRAGGETT, Thomas - Dalkeith – Publican:

Thomas - age 4, Anne age 9, M.A. age 10.

BRAGGETT, William - Dalkeith – Innkeeper:

William age 6.25, \* Helen age 8, Adolphus age 11

BA YLISS, C - Llangollen - Boundary rider:

Charles age 7 #

BYFEILD, Robert - Dalkeith – Storekeeper:

Amelia age 4, Arthur age 6, Herbert age 9

CONLIN, Pat - Dalkeith – Constable:

T.R age 4, Laura age 5.5, ## Joseph age 6

EVERETT, R - Cassilis – Groom:

Mary J age 4.75 #

HEAD, Robert - Borambil- Butcher:

William age 8 #

HASSARD, W - Dalkeith – Trooper:

William age 4.5 # Sarah age 6

HUTCHINSON. W - Dalkeith – Mailman:

?????age 10, ????? age 11.25, Elizabeth age 13

JUGRAIU ? Rice - Borambil – Carrier:

George age 8,# Charles age 10,# Chas age 11, James age 13

KENNlWELL, Thomas - Borambil – Shoemaker:

Sarah age 6, Margaret age 7,# Agnes age 9, Alex age 12

KENNY, John - Dalkeith – Saddler:

Dermis age 15#

LEE, William - Dalkeith - Tele- master:

Ed. Chas age 7, Harry T. age 9, William age 11.75

Mr MARSHELL - Dalkeith – Bootmaker:

Elizabeth age 4.5#

MACK, John - Dalkeith – Baker:

Ellen age 5#

MILLAR, Jas - Dalkeith – Storekeeper:

Edward age 7

PARKER, M - Dalkeith – Dealer:

Edith age 4, Teresa age 9, Teresa C. age 10, # Arthur age 6.25, R.J. age 10 PEARSON, Alfred. - Cattle Creek – Labourer:

Cath age 7#

PHILIPS, Mrs - Dalkeith - ????

W. age 4.5#

RY AN, Edward - "Bomera" Carrier:

Richard age 1 0#

SCULL Y, Edward - Dalkeith – Carrier:

Elizabeth age 4,## Annie age 6, Catherine age 8, Andrew age 9, Edward age 11, Ellen age 13.75

SHAW, Lancalot ? - Dalkeith – Carpenter:

William age 11 #

TROTTER, Thomas. - Borambil – Publican:

Isabella M. age 7,# Agnes age 9, Alex age 12

TUCKEY, Mrs, - Dalkeith – Charwoman:

Mary age 9.75, Albert age 11

WHITBY, Chas, - Dalkeith – Overseer:

John Noble age 11#

WHITBY, Robert, - Cassilis – Labourer:

?

ZUNIN, Dau? - Dalkeith – Contractor:

Mary age 4, # Andrew age 5.75, John age 8.25, Margret age 11

School fees were either -/6 or 1/-

* ages seem to have been recorded as to being ie; 5, 5 and a quarter, 5 and a half, 5 and three quarters

# enrolled in 1876

## enrolled in 1877

Although the enrolment figures were similar to the Denominational School, the attendance was higher, at an average of 35.

November 1875, plans for the new school were received, and tenders invited, but with Cassilis being a rather inaccessible place at the time, and the job being so small, no tenders were received. Only one tender was received with the second invitation, lames Pritchard of West Maitland. His tender of £1,406 was considered high, but with no other tenders forthcoming, it was accepted in March 1876.

In the meantime the Cassilis Public School was housed in the old Church of England school room. It was too small to accommodate the higher numbers, and was stifling in the summer months. Despite this, and the local board requesting permission to use the church instead, the Council wouldn't allow a Public School to be conducted in a church. However, they must have come to some sort of compromise, as the following report suggests:

INSPECTION REPORT 18th April 1876

"The school is conducted in the English Church; accommodation for it is very fair, and it is well supplied with working appliances. A new vested school is in course of erection..."

The new building was finished in November. It was a wooden building with shingled roof, consisting of a schoolroom 32 by 16 feet to accommodate fifty, four residence rooms each 12 square foot, and a verandah.

There was a dispute about the school furniture whilst the transfer of the school took place. William Lee claimed that the members of the Church of England had paid for it, and the Council of Education argued that it had been the property of the Denominational School, so therefore now belonged to the Council. There was no proof found and the furniture remained the property of the Church. So the school was transferred to the new building with the added bonus of new furniture.

Wednesday 15th November was the opening ceremony commencing at 11am. It was a big occasion, and a large crowd present, as the local school board had invited ''the gentry and people living within about 10 miles of Cassilis to be present". The board also gave every child at the school a book or toy to mark the event, then gave them the rest of the day off.

Thomas Buchanan was still the teacher, and despite disputes with Lee over responsibilities of the teacher and the school board, appeared to be fairly competent with his pupils attending regularly and punctual. But a reduced attendance occurred when the Borambil residents stopped sending their children to Cassilis, as they were trying to build up a case to have their own school established.

INSPECTOR’S REPORT 1877

"The organization is complete and suitable. The school is fairly supplied with working materials. The attendance has fallen off considerably, owing to a movement to have a school established at the village of Borambil, about two miles distant. Cleanliness, order, and attention are very fair. The classification is appropriate; the methods are of fair merit, and they are industriously applied. The proficiency is fair."

In 1877, plans were made to add a kitchen to the residence, and to ensure a water supply and protect the building from dampness and distortment, water tanks and spouting. Due to excessively high tenders for the kitchen, that plan was abandoned. And a drought in 1877 delayed the tanks and spouting until the following year.

The school was closed for a day in November to allow the children to attend a special church service on this "Day of Humiliation and Prayer for Rain". February 1878, the children were given a holiday on a day of "Thanksgiving for the break of the drought".

On the 6th of December, there was a holiday to celebrate the opening of the Cassilis bridge. Thomas Buchanan took ill that day, and died a week later.

William Swindlehurst took over Buchanan's position on the 7th of January 1879, for a mere nine months before resigning without explanation, and was succeeded by a young bachelor of twenty two years, Robert Harper on 1st October.

The quick change over of teachers weren't the only significant changes in 1879. Borambil School opened, affecting for many years enrolments to Cassilis school, the new young teacher married at the end of the year, and his new wife then taught the girls needlework. The death of two members of the local school board meant a change of members, along with the resignation of Thomas Braggett to join the new Borambil Public School Board. William Lee resigned in 1880 to be succeeded by Edwin Atkinson who also replaced Lee as postmaster. George Piper, publican, was briefly chairman of the board, before the disbandment of all school boards after the passing of the 1880 Act which set up the current Department of Education.

Robert Harper was an efficient and popular teacher, and attendance rose to 61, although dropped to an average of 40 to 60 in the following three years.

In 1880, a complaint was made by George Piper against the "Severity of Punishment" Harper had dealt to Piper's daughter. This was found to be unwarranted, and resulted in the parents writing a letter to the Minister for Education, along with a signed petition.

***"To the Honourable***

***The Minister for Public Instruction.***

***We the undersigned Parents of children attending the Public School, Cassilis hearing with regret that a complaint has been made against Mr Harper, Public School Teacher of showing partiality and undue severity, beg to state that we have every confidence in Mr Harper's method of education, and consider his mode of discipline not severe, whilst it materially******conduces towards the efficiency of the******School. Under his charge the roll has largely increased, no less than four children coming distances of ten miles and upwards on purpose. Under Mr Harper's tuition, their parents preferring the Cassilis School* to *their local institutions.* We *further add that local gentlemen and others who have never before taken any interest in the school, have this year shown their approval of the progress made by subscribing very liberally towards the Prize fund, amounting* to *£70, and our children are now volunteering a testimonial* to *Mr Harper. The complainant anticipated our intention of sending* a *letter* to *the Department expressing our approval of Mr Harper's conduct.***

***Names of Parents Number of children***

Robert Byfield three

(photo copy of signatures)

A Cassilis Progress committee was formed, and the then secretary, William Miller, requested a weather shed for the school, which was granted and built in 1882.

Robert Harper left on the 18th April 1883 and was replaced by William Coombes, who stayed for two years. In March 1885, John Butler took over. Apparently he was a poor teacher, and due to his unpopularity, the enrolments dropped to only 28 in 1886. However, due to a reasonable tender, a kitchen was finally built for the residence that year.

Butler was replaced by Henry Smith in February 1887, and he was to be the longest serving teacher at Cassilis retiring in 1920, after thirty three years at Cassilis. He was born in 1857, began teaching a scant two years before appointed to Cassilis despite being untrained. He was never an outstanding teacher, although his practical skills improved with experience, as the inspector's reports of his assessment went from "tolerable" to "fair" to "very fair". Smith, by all regards was very well liked, and considered a man of the highest character.

Cassilis was a one teacher school throughout Smith's time there, although the inspector in 1893, with enrolments at 70, with attendance average of 54, suggested an appointment of a trained teacher, who "would exercise a good influence" over the many untrained teachers in the district, including Cassilis. At the time, there were other small schools at Cattle Creek, Cooba Bulga, Turill and Wagoribil Half-Time school. However, a suitable teacher was not to be found, so things remained as they were.

Inspector Flashman was the inspector at the time, and was staying in Cassilis to make his report when the great flood of March 1893 occurred, which affected the whole eastern portion of the colony. He gave a graphic account of the river suddenly rising in the night while the residents slept. A policeman and publican woke up and/or rescued most of the citizens.

"Mr Smith the teacher, his wife and family were literally taken out of their beds and removed before they had time to properly clothe themselves. The children were with great difficulty rescued."

The water rose five feet in the schoolroom, damaged most of the furniture, covered the outhouses, demolished the fences and deposited mud and debris all over the school and grounds.

The inspectors during Henry Smith's early years may have had reservations about his teaching ability, but the Cassilis residents had none, and that was reinforced when George Piper, in 1896, again complained about the teacher. He withdrew his complaint, as he found he had been misinformed, but a number of residents, with a petition of 23 signatures, had already written to the Department, again expressing their satisfaction with Smith, and their desire to keep him on as possible.

In 1895 a bathroom was added, and a modern kitchen and extra bedroom in 1898, as well as the whole building repaired and painted. Enrolments had reached 70, and the inspector that year, Rooney, agreed with parents that better accommodation was needed. The school was now "very old" built close to the ground with a low roof, so very hot in summer. Officially though, the schoolroom provided adequate space for just over 50 students, and the matter was raised and "stood over" several times until it was finally dropped in 1903.

1903, enrolments had again declined, and in 1904 were fewer than 50. 1906 the only improvement was replacing the old shingle roof with iron.

That same year, Inspector W. Reay argued that Cassilis needed a trained teacher, and recommended Henry Smith's wanted transfer to the Maitland district, and that he deserved this after being at Cassilis for 19 years.

"He is a man of estimable character and is thoroughly trustworthy. His practical skill, however, is not more than "Fair", and his work though zealous and painstaking does not meet modern demands.

Cassilis is a comparatively isolated township. There is no nearer school than Mudgee - 50 miles by road - for the many older children (13 to 15 years) to attend for further instruction."

But it came to zilch. Cassilis continued as before for the next decade, apart from new fencing, and a combined effort from Smith and his pupils to sink their own well in 1915 to augment the water supply affected by another drought in that year.

1917 Henry Smith turned sixty, and Inspector James reported on whether his services should be retained. His report on Smith was commendable:

"Mr Smith is a gentlemanly person of a nervous temperament; a methodical, reliable, steady and industrious teacher; doing good work in a comparatively isolated position and exerting a far reaching influence for good. He is a good citizen."

However, Henry Smith stayed at Cassilis. But by 1919 his teaching was "old fashioned" and the older children suffered from the isolation and his lack of teaching skills. In his 33 years at Cassilis, when many schools suffered from constantly changing unskilled and incompetent teachers, Smith was always there for thirty three years. And to have any inspector, regardless of no qualifications, give him good reports every time, he must have been an exceptional man!

By his own choice, Henry Smith retired on the 15th November, 1919. (must have been a turn out, look further).

The replacement for Henry Smith, had big shoes to fill, as Smith had made the Cassilis Public School an institution, definitely no doubt to the locals who had been taught by Smith, and had their children taught by them, and maybe a grandchild or two.

William Bronger, 44 years old, had been in service since appointed a pupil teacher in 1890. It seems he settled well in Cassilis as he stayed for 16 years. Like Smith before him, he faced few difficulties, and produced few files in the departmental records during his time there. (try to find?)

Cassilis School was still on the one acre in the 1876 building, and although considered very old fashioned and unsuitable in the 1920's, the only repairs were carried out in 1921 and 1929, and the basic school remained with the" old 'galleries' " or stepped platforms, on which stood uncomfortable log desks.

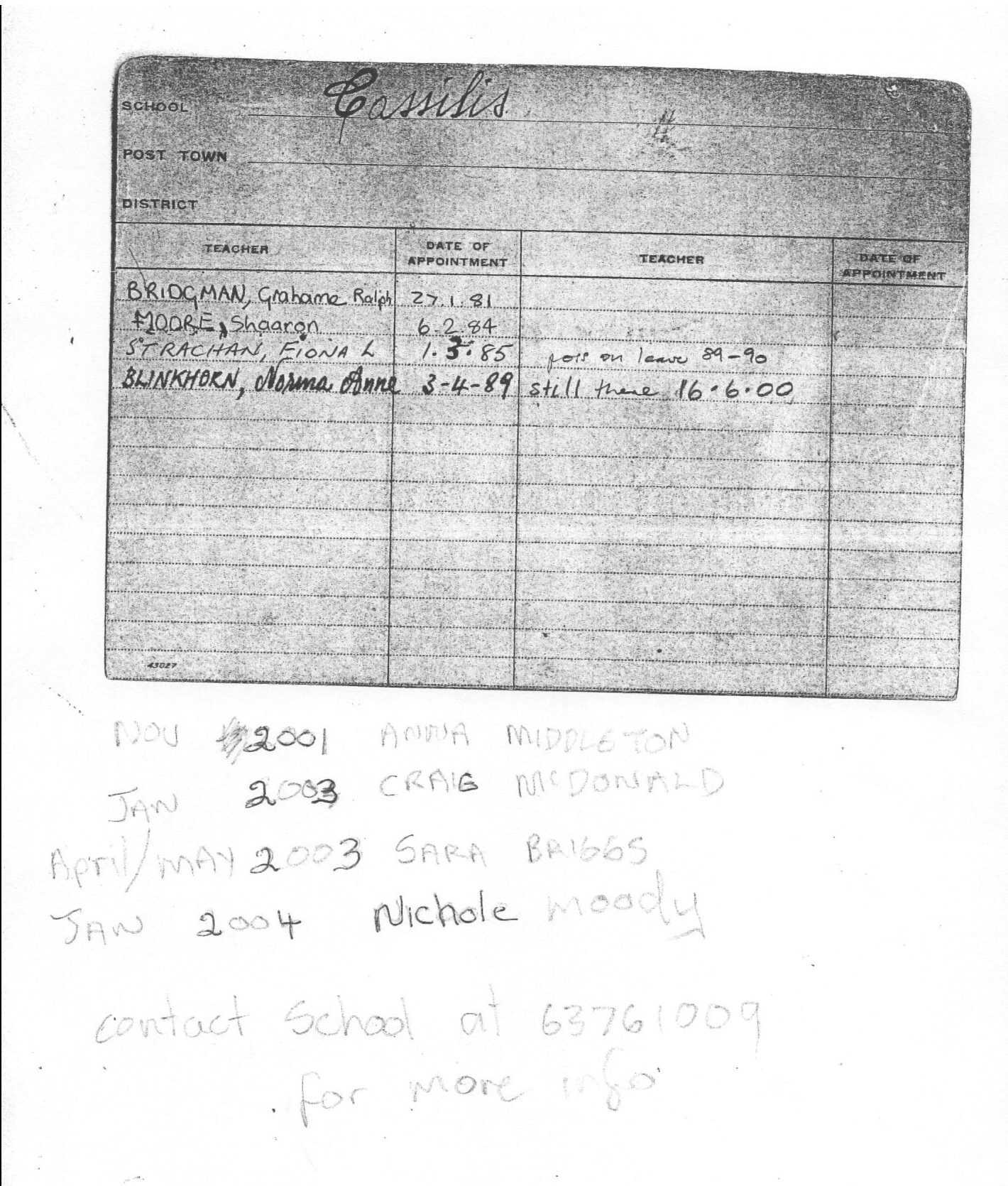
Before Bronger retired on January 1936, Eric Cains, 32 years old, and a trained teacher was appointed the day after Boxing Day 1935. He was a third teacher to remain at Cassilis for a many a year.

Cains took charge of the Cassilis School at the start of 1936, and was fortunate two years later to take possession of a new school building. (files for parents requests and departments agreement to new building not found).

Apparently by mid thirties, old building so dilapidated, dept decided to carry out renovations, but local community protests resulted in decision in April 1937 to build new school. Consisted of classroom acc. 52, with verandah and hatroom, built by J. C. Pickles of Waratah for £655. Enrolment about 40, 1st February 1938, Cains and students moved to new school.

(look for more info)

1957, flood prone site moved, with 1938 building, to current site acquired from F. D. McMaster Pty Ltd. Move in September 1958, enrolment 80.



Compiled by Kathy Sumpter.