

The King's School, Grantham

An Outline History



10. W.R. Dawson and the staff sackings

William Hutchings left in late 1898. The masters on the staff under **William Hutchings** were **Samuel R. Brooke, Vincent Marindin and George Wooler Preston**. They arrived at school after the Christmas holiday, 1898, to be told that they were no longer required at the school. They were told that the previous Head Master had appointed them and their own appointment terminated with his.

It seems likely that had **William Hutchings** served out his contract and left at Easter 1899 he would have given the assistant master one terms notice in January 1899 and they would have left with him or been re-engaged at Easter. These masters, however, were not given notice of termination of contract. At their next meeting the Governors passed a resolution regretting the masters' situation and in compensation voted that "*there be given to them an Honorarium of £80 to Mr Brooke, £25 to Mr Marindin and £50 to Mr Preston*".

The Assistant Masters' Association and the Association of Head Masters contacted the Charity Commissioners for clarification on the position of assistant masters when a Head Master left or died. The Charity Commissioners set up a public enquiry to be held in the Guild Hall, Grantham, in May 1899. The teaching associations regarded this as an important enquiry from a national viewpoint. [The full transcript of the enquiry was published in the Grantham Journal].

In August the Commission declared that the engagements of the assistant masters were not *ipso facto* terminated with the resignation or death of the Head Master. They also declared that the Governors had no authority to award honoraria and that the surplus over the one term salary in lieu of notice given to the masters should be returned to the Charity Funds. The Governors objected and the matter lingered on until late 1900 when the Commissioners let the matter drop.

George W. Preston took a post at Sedgebrook School until it closed in 1919, he then moved back to this school until he retired in 1923.

William Rogers Dawson 1899 to 1906 Ushers F V C Serjeant; W A Renwick; J L Lister

281 applicants replied to the advertisement for the post of Head Master in 1898. The Governors selected six for interview and offered the post to **William R. Dawson** who had been on the teaching staff for a short time a year earlier.

William Dawson was a Manxman who had graduated at Dublin University. He was undoubtedly the most dynamic Head Master to hold the post.

His first act was to appoint four younger, more active teachers, leading to the dismissal of the old staff. Within a year he had rented a building as a gymnasium. He appointed a Welsh Rugby Union International and Cambridge Blue, **Charles B. Nichols**, to the staff. He strengthened the cricket team by appointing a member of the Grantham Cricket Club as a professional during the summer.

The numbers of pupils increased, as did the wealth of the foundation and with it the salary of the Head Master. His salary was fixed at £150 p.a., as it had been for the last 20 years, but there was a capitation allowance of £2 per pupil for the first 50 pupils, £2 10s for the next 50 and £3 thereafter. Within two years there were 120 pupils and in two years 240.

The Governors permitted **William Dawson** to rent houses in town for boarders in Gladstone Terrace, Welby Gardens, North Parade and two in Avenue Road. In 1901 he started the Old Boys' Society and in 1904 equipped the Cadet Corps with a fife, bugle and drum band.

A Boarding House was built along Castlegate. He persuaded the Governors to build on the site of the British School and the "Brook Street" block was opened by **Sir Oliver Lodge** in December 1904. The entrance to the school changed again, from Castlegate to Brook Street.

In 1906 the Old School was converted to a Chapel.

The school's resources, both financial and accommodation, were stretched, despite the government grant as a school to teach Science, and the Inspectors warned "*The Governing Body estimate they will just be able to meet their expenses but with the present fees and rate of grant . . . it is likely to be a matter of some difficulty.*" And so it proved to be.