

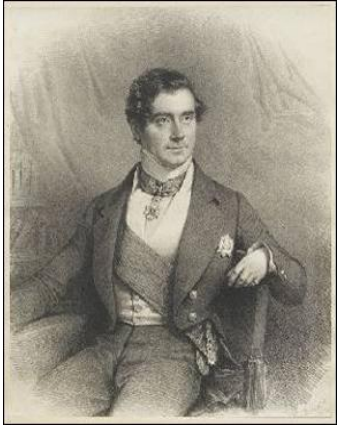


160 years at Braywood



1857 - 2017

The Braywood Estate



Two hundred years ago most of the land around Braywood CE School was covered in forest. Joshua Bates, a founding member of the Baring Brothers Bank, owned a large part of the Braywood Estate. In 1839 his daughter Elizabeth Anne Sturgis Bates married the recently appointed Belgium ambassador, Jean-Sylvain Van De Weyer. Mr Bates's new son-in-law was an important figure in his home town. He had previously been the Belgium prime minister; he was one of the architects of Belgium's independence and the country's first foreign secretary. A statue of him overlooks the town square of Louvain.

The couple had two sons and five daughters who were all brought up on their parent's country estate at New Lodge on Drift Road. New Lodge was fully refurbished in 1857 by Jean Van de Weyer into the grand Jacobean manor it is today. During this time he also commissioned a church to be built nearby their home together with a small village school. It is widely written that Queen Victoria gifted the land on which New Lodge was built. Van de Weyer and his family knew the Royal family well. Their eldest daughter was Queen Victoria's god-daughter whilst Elizabeth's sister was the Queen's friend and maid of honour. Queen Victoria offered £100 to help Van de Weyer build the school and it is rumoured that she visited Braywood School to take tea.

Life at Braywood in 1857



Jean-Sylvian Van de Weyer wanted to build a school which served both as a mortuary chapel and as a place to educate the working class. The Headmaster resided in the front part of the school and there was a service held in the chapel at weekends. Whilst the school dates from 1857 the first service was held in the chapel on 21st February 1858 and the school officially opened on Monday 22nd March 1858. At this time the school educated children from 4 to 11 years old and had 140 children on role.

History in the log books

RELIGION AND THE THREE Rs

ONE hundred years ago, most of the poorer folk of Bray and Braywood could neither read nor write. Like the good Church of England folk that they were, the parishioners of Bray (which then included Braywood) decided that something must be done about it and they began to build a school.

This year, the school—still standing on its original site and still using the original building and extensions added during the years—celebrates its centenary.

Little church schools like Braywood's were the pioneers of the vast state system of education that we have today.

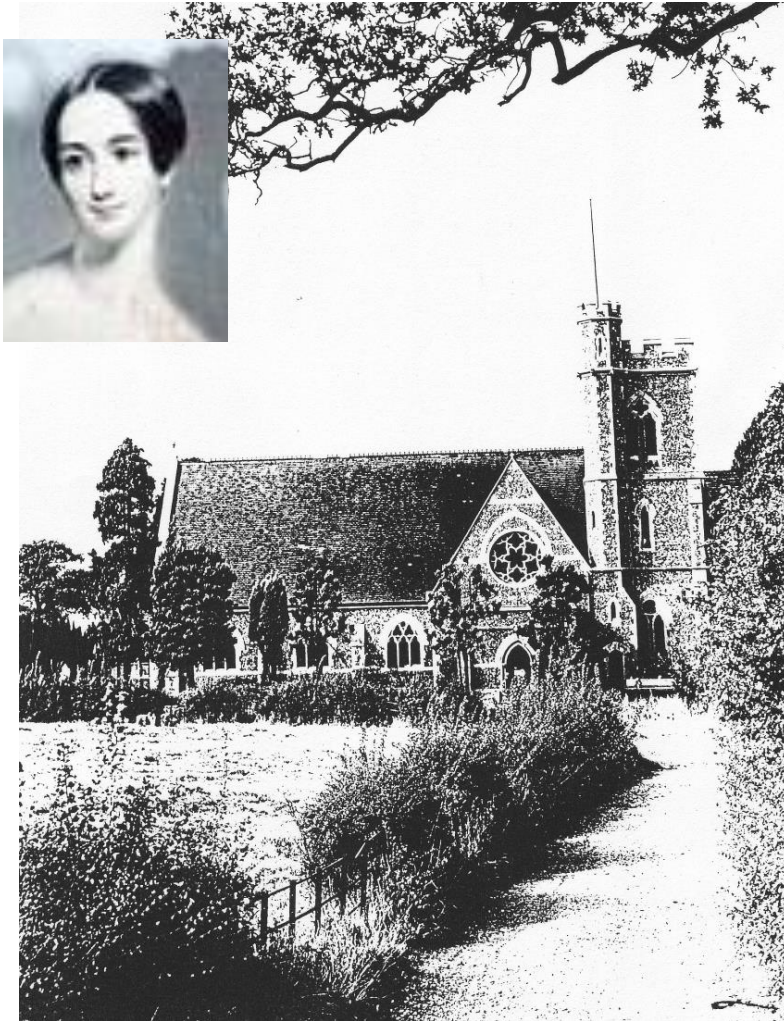
By the time the school was built, the fight against the prejudice of those people who thought the "lower classes" should be kept illiterate had been partly won. Braywood's battle was to be one against the ignorance of the working people themselves, against poverty and sickness.

Worship and lessons

When the building was planned, the aim was to build a schoolroom with a teacher's residence, which



Life at Braywood Church



Braywood Church was erected in 1866 with the help of Elizabeth Van de Weyer (pictured opposite) as it was too far to travel to Bray Church. It was later consecrated on June 8th 1867 at a cost of £15,000. The church was named “ All Saints Church of Braywood”. It was a cruciform church which provided the focus for worship on the Braywood Estate. “All Saints” church was later demolished but the ‘white gates’ on Oakley Green Road and the remains of the church yard still survives together with tombs of the Van de Weyers. The church community later built Church House (pictured below) in the Braywood Churchyard to serve as the local place of worship.

1986 Domesday Record:

*The school was built in 1857 and Queen Victoria gave £100 towards the cost of it. 65 **children of 5-9 years of age** go to the school and when they leave most of them attend schools in Windsor. There are three classes, four teachers, one helper and one welfare assistant. School starts at 8.55am and ends at 3.15pm. Most of the pupils travel to school by car as they live in Fifield, Bray and Oakley Green. The new wooden church which was built nearby is now used as the school hall. The mortuary chapel which adjoins the school has now been deconsecrated so that extra space will be provided. All the pupils have lunch at school and there is a detached cafeteria. This room is also used for gymnastics and showing films. The uniform is green, white and grey. There is a playground and field and a swimming pool heated by solar panels.*

