

MALTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL 1547-1904

My early interest in the history of Malton School was kindled a couple of years into my new post as deputy head at Malton school, when I came across bound volumes of *The Maltonian* - the school magazine published from 1917 to 1971. I read a few snippets, and began to realise that the school had a long history, stretching back many years before the present day buildings. By 1998 I had started a Maltonians website to record the numerous photographs, texts and memories that were cropping up in all areas of my work. By 2008 I was finishing this book.

Malton School was founded by Robert Holgate, the Archbishop of York, on the 4th May 1547. For the first three-hundred and sixty years of its life it led a precarious existence in a small schoolhouse situated in the grounds of Old Malton Priory, what is currently St Mary's churchyard. The school building is still there today.

It was never a large school in this period, numbering not more than sixty boys, more commonly between twelve and twenty. Its history is not continuous - it moved to Norton for a brief period - and it closed in 1904 before re-opening in new premises on Middlecave Road in 1911. It was from this point onwards that the school prospered and grew, with scholars from Malton leaving to play significant roles in many walks of life, and in many diverse parts of the world.



THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL
*From a plate in Nigel Hudleston's
History of Malton and Norton,
published in 1962. The book does not
give the source.*



HENRY

Stephen Craggs and Hazel I'Anson in the leading roles of the musical Henry, staged in 1997.

THE EARLY DAYS

At Easter 1997, students and staff at Malton School staged a musical called, simply, *Henry*. A comic production rather than a historical play; an enjoyable excuse for song and dance, loosely based on the life of Henry VIII, owing more to the mythology which has grown up around Henry's six wives than any real facts. The cast knew little of the connection between Henry and Malton School four hundred and fifty years earlier.

King Henry VIII is a figure from the distant past, but iconic and still known to all through portraits, plays, TV documentaries and dramas. He reigned from 1491 to 1547. In the final year of his life he gave his approval to the founding of three grammar schools, at Malton, York and Hemsworth (near Barnsley).

The school's founder, 'Robert Halgate, alias Holgate', was Archbishop of York and president of the King's Council of the North. The school was built in the cemetery of the Gilbertine priory of Old Malton, where Holgate had once been a canon, but which had been dissolved a few years previously. The deed by which the school was founded is dated 4 May 1547, under letters patent dated 24 October 1546. It states that Holgate had the power to establish three free grammar schools at York, Hemsworth and Old Malton.

The original school building in Malton was built from stone removed from the dissolved priory buildings. There is evidence that education had been carried out at the site for many years before the establishment of the grammar school: records mention a schoolmaster as early as 1392. At that time Old Malton was the larger of two settlements, due to the priory's existence. The current town centre overtook it in size as it developed into the market town for the district.

Below, right:

OLD MALTON PRIORY

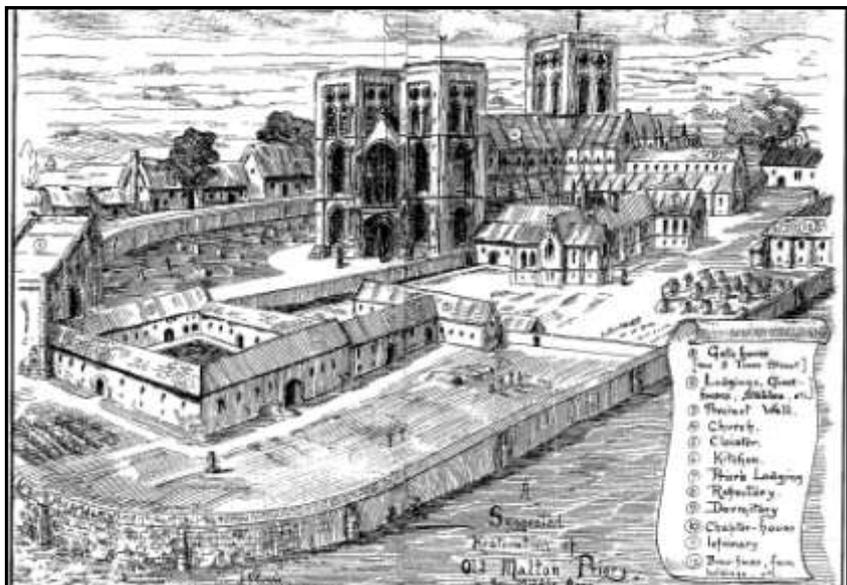
A sketch of what the Gilbertine Priory which stood at Old Malton until 1540 may have looked like.

This 1942 drawing is by Reverend John Purvis, vicar of Old Malton 1941-5, and an energetic and enthusiastic historian. He was the inspiration behind the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research in York, where many of the documents relating to the early days of Malton School are held. The institute is now in a fine modern building on the York university campus.

Below:

ST MARY'S CHURCH 2007

The current church with its single tower is all that remains of the original grand front of the priory.





ROBERT HOLGATE

Robert Holgate was born at Hemsworth in the West Riding of Yorkshire, between Wakefield and Barnsley, and rose through church orders to become a canon. In 1524 he was a preacher at Cambridge University and later became a prior outside Lincoln. After a move to London, he was appointed chaplain to Thomas Cromwell. Holgate then moved to Watton in East Yorkshire, before becoming Bishop of Llandaff. After the Pilgrimage of Grace, Holgate became a member of the Council of the North. In 1539 he was at Old Malton and took part in the surrender of the priory, as part of the dissolution of the monasteries. In 1545 Holgate became Archbishop of York. Amongst other records, it is noted that he directed the dean and chapter to place the works of the reformer, John Calvin, in the library.

When Mary came to the throne, Holgate's time of power was almost over. He was arrested, put into the Tower and deprived of his see. He was released, on payment of £1000, and lived in retirement until his death in 1555. One portrait of him is still in existence. It hangs in the Governor's room of Holgate Hospital at Hemsworth, where I viewed it in August 2006, escorted by the hospital 'porter' (a historical title) Mike Thorley.

Left:

ROBERT HOLGATE 1481-1555

*Archbishop of York 1545-54
A painting that still hangs in Holgate Hospital, Hemsworth. 'Hospital' is used in its older sense of hospitality - it provides accommodation for up to twenty-four pensioners. Holgate was reputedly one of the wealthiest men of his day.*

Below:

MIKE THORLEY

I met Mike in 2006, when he was good enough to show me around Holgate Hospital, including viewing and taking the photo of the picture above.

A small museum at the hospital has documents and artefacts relating to Archbishop Holgate's past. Mike is curator of the museum and manager/gardener/caretaker of the hospital - he holds the traditional title of 'hospital porter'.

Mike is holding a copy of the History of The Archbishop Hospital 1555-2005





Above:
FOUNDATION DEED 1547
The foundation document for Malton Grammar School, (and two other grammar schools in York and Hemsworth). The document is signed 'Robert Ebor'.

THE FOUNDATION DEED 1547

The foundation documents still exist in the archives of the Borthwick Institute in York; they record in Latin the foundation of the school all those years ago. I went to view these in March 2003. The original scroll was in need of some repair—the archivist decided to fix the document onto board to prevent further deterioration where corner folds had been. A facsimile was purchased by the school at this time, which now hangs in the school entrance. The document begins:

To all men to whom this present quadripartite indented of the Foundation of our Free School within the Town of Old Malton in the North Riding of the County of York shall come: Robert Halgate otherwise Holgate, by the grace of God Archbishop of York, and President of the King's Majesty's Council established in the North Parts of England sendeth Greeting in Our Lord God Everlasting.

and ends with the archbishop stating that he has

set my seal and subscribed my name the fourth day of May in the first year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord Edward the Sixth by the grace of God, of England, France, and Ireland, King, defender of the faith, and in earth of the Church of England, and also of Ireland the supreme head, and in the year of our Lord fifteen hundred and forty seven..



A NOTE ON DAVID LLOYD AND THE HISTORY OF MALTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Before moving on I feel I must mention a key source of information for the early chapters of this book. Having created the Maltonians website and started the search for information around Christmas of 1998, I was delighted to hear from former teacher David Lloyd, who visited the school in February 1999. I was able to have a long conversation about the book he had written back in 1965: *The History of Malton Grammar School*. He was clearly an inspirational teacher in his time at Malton (1958-63), as remembered by one of his pupils, Tony Kirby:

'I'm going up to school to speak to that David Lloyd' was one of my mother's favourite expressions. It usually followed my enthusiastic recounting of what we'd done in 'RE' that day and it didn't mean that she was equally enthralled by the new perspectives DJL had offered: that the world might not have been created in seven days, that the Apostles were probably not the authors of the Gospels that bore their names, and that there could even be grounds for suspecting the historical truth of the Virgin Birth. So far as I know, she never did (if she had, it would have been an encounter I would have given a lot to have witnessed) and she was actually very fond of him. For the rest of her life, she followed his career with interest, and was delighted when he was honoured for his services to Shropshire local history.

David Lloyd was, perhaps, exceptional in his enthusiasm, the range of his interests and his ability to put cats among pigeons. Few of my contemporaries will forget the episodes of the motor scooter, or the 'offensive weapon'. His dramatic productions were the talk of the town, especially Macbeth, which - inadvertently - starred Mr Dowding, the school caretaker. But he typified the best qualities of all MGS staff: encouraging pupils to question received wisdom, to take nothing for granted and - crucially - observe the School motto (*Audi alteram partem* : hear the other point of view).

(from a letter passed to me in 2003)

The booklet David Lloyd produced traced the history of the school back over 400 years. He acknowledges significant help from 'two old Maltonians, Howard Fox, B.A. (1952-59) and Antony Kirby (1956-64), who had special responsibility for the periods 1941-50 and 1931-40 respectively.' Mr Rolls and Mrs Taylor were also noted as helping. I must give credit to David Lloyd - he started his research in 1960, and produced the book by 1965. It has taken me eight years since starting this project to provide the sequel, though I could claim creation of the website along the way! A full transcript of the former history is available on this website, and copies of the booklet remain in the school archive.

I have re-visited much of the source material David Lloyd, Howard Fox and Tony Kirby used for this early history, adding to it where I could with the advantage of cameras and scanners. Their work informs much of the current book.

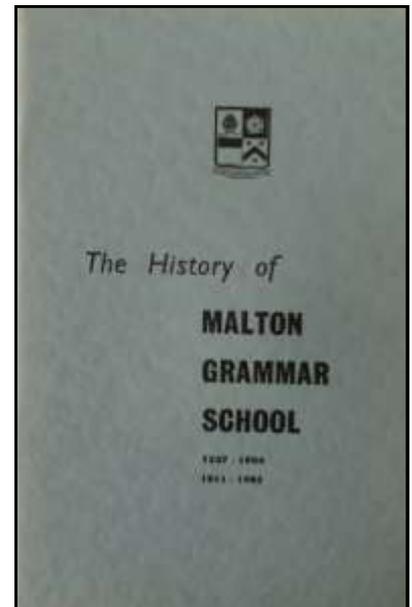


DAVID LLOYD MBE

David Lloyd pictured when I met him in February 1999. Sadly only this low resolution photo remains. David was a teacher of RE and history at Malton 1958 – 1963, and published 'A History of Malton Grammar School' in 1965.

THE HISTORY OF MALTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

A slim volume of 78 pages, but packed with interesting facts about the school's long history. We still have copies in our archive, including a fully bound version.



SCHOOL LIFE

The pupils, all boys, received a free education, but were expected to be able to read. They would be aged between eight and fifteen. For bad behaviour a pupil would be excluded and then punished; almost certainly by caning. David Lloyd's book, *The History of Malton Grammar School*, notes:

Most of the teaching was of Latin, essential at that time for entry to the professions. Many boys, however, left early, to be apprenticed to a trade, but others, probably a small minority in a country district such as that round Malton, stayed longer, intended for the university and a career as a clergyman, physician or lawyer. Boys who lived further than a walk or pony ride from school were forced by the long school hours to be boarders, in the master's house or in the village. But the majority of the scholars would have been the sons of the parishioners and burgesses of Old and New Malton.

The school day started with the reciting of a psalm and the principal lessons were Latin, Greek and Hebrew, with some grammar and religious instruction. In summer the school began at six o'clock in the morning and ended at six o'clock in the evening, with a two hour break in the middle of the day. In winter the hours were seven o'clock until five o'clock. Six weeks holiday were expected during the year. There were three weeks holiday at Christmas, and another shorter break at Easter. On Sundays the boys had to go to Old Malton Church, the master having to sit near them to keep good order.

The boys would most likely have sat on two rows of benches, or 'forms', with the master at one end of the room, nearer the older boys, and the usher closer to the younger pupils. There could have been two lessons held at the same time and it must have been especially difficult for the boys sitting in the middle of the bench who could hear both equally well. Many boys would leave early to be apprenticed to a trade, but a small minority would stay longer, intended for the university and a career as clergyman, physician or lawyer.



FORM GROUPS

The old system of sitting on benches – from where the modern term ‘forms’ comes – was still in practice in the 1940’s.

This picture is of Malton National School, and was loaned by Alf Williamson for copying in 2002.

EARLY STAFF

Robert Holgate appointed Thomas Norman, who was to become his brother-in-law, as the first master, and who was to serve in this post from 1547 to 1564. He, and his successors, could only be removed by the Archbishop of York for neglecting to perform their duties. Later masters were appointed by the archbishop or by the Dean and Chapter of York. Papers surviving in the Borthwick archives tell us a little about what was required of a schoolmaster in the early days. The master should be proficient at Greek, Latin and Hebrew. He could be a priest or layman, though most holders of the office were in holy orders. The master was to receive £20 a year, plus a load of hay. From this he had to pay the usher, or assistant teacher, £5, and a small sum to the organist at Old Malton Church. The usher was responsible for teaching the younger children.

Although we have a list of the schoolmasters, we have details of very few. David Lloyd mentions nine in his book. Dr Purvis notes others. The fullest list I have is given on the next page.

There was considerable discontent in the town at the actions of some of the masters: George Mill was described as 'irregular and immoral' in a petition, sent to the Archbishop in 1702, but it should perhaps be noted that the petition was instigated by the schoolmaster of Hovingham, who was eager, apparently, to secure the job at Old Malton for himself, together with its superior salary! There was a counter petition asserting that Mill was 'a person of sober life . . . well qualified to be able to discharge his office.'

Joseph Kerr was criticised in 1764 for refusing to teach the children of the petitioners, not keeping an usher but taking the wages for himself, and that his dialect was not suited to his position. Records do not say what dialect it was that was so offensive, but he rode the criticism and continued as master for thirteen years.

William Lonsdale in 1835 was subjected to much abuse, as a result of which 'twelve of the principal parties in the late riots' were bound over to keep the peace. The trouble appears to stem from a move to keep New Malton children from

Below:

ADVERTISEMENT POSTER

An advertisement for the Grammar School. In 1747, the new master, Joseph Kerr announced that education would include: 'Navigation, Merchants Accompts, and Writing in very great perfection.'

From a collection of historical documents made by Dr JS Purvis

This is to give NOTICE,

That at Old Malton

Free Grammar School,

YOUTH are completely qualified for any Manner of
 Buſineſs, in Latin, Greek, &c. Alſo Arithmetic in all
 its Parts, Navigation, Meaſuration, Merchants Accompts, &c.
 and Writing in very great Perfection, by

JOSEPH KERR, *Maſter.*
 WILLIAM HALL, *Aſſiſtant.*

N. B. Old Malton is pleaſantly ſituated upon the River Derwent in the North-Riding of the County of York, in a fine plentiful Country: Board at Seven Pounds per Annum; Board and Learning, at Nine Guineas; Learning, Board, and Cloaths, found in a neat decent Manner, at the Expence of Twelve Pounds. Thoſe who are pleaſed to encourage this School, may depend upon ſuch Exactneſs and Care, as will, in every Reſpect, be conſiſtent with this publick Notice.

Kerr was appointed Master in 1747.

**A LIST OF EARLY
SCHOOLMASTERS**

This list is compiled from the 'History of Malton Grammar School' by David Lloyd, plus the parish magazine notes of Revd J S Purvis (June 1942) Dates are not always known start dates, merely when a reference is first made in documents.

MASTERS OF THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Thomas Norman, 1547-1564

First master of the school; according to some sources a monk, 'ex-prior of the Gilbertine house of Mattersey'.

Thomas Hustler, 1564-1578(Histler in some texts)
(Stephen Jeyram is usher at this time)

John Atkinson 1578 - 1621

Revd. Samuel Stockton 1621 -2

John William Ashmore, 1622-4

From Ripon Grammar School, to where he returned

James Galloway, 1633 - 69,

Master and curate of Old Malton

Revd John Cartwright 1670 - 97

Fra. Holdsworth

(mentioned 1682 and 1685)

George Mill, 1697 - 1707

John Stockdale 1707 - 1721

Noted as being born blind.

Revd James Borwick 1720, 1722

Matthias Hardwick 1736

Revd Joseph Kerr 1747-1778

Curate of Barton le Street 1744.

Revd Samuel Jackson 1779 - 83

Master only in name, drawing his salary whilst holding another position, and paying the usher, at a reduced rate, to do the actual teaching.

Revd William Johnson 1783

Died 1805 at Barnard Castle.

Revd John Richardson 1806 - 1834

Revd William John Travis 1834

MA Trinity Coll. Cambridge. Declined to teach at the school.

Revd William Lonsdale 1834

Deserted the post in 1836.

Revd William Pound. 1836 - 66

He was appointed usher by Revd Travis, then Master by the Archbishop of York. He moved the school to Norton.

Revd Harry Garrett 1866-1904

He moved the school back to Malton. He died in 1904. A E B Soulby, writing in *The Maltonian* 1933, has 'grateful recollections of Mr Garrett's tuition and influence'. He was 'a useful citizen, who did good work, temporal and spiritual, ... in great request by the surrounding clergy for Sunday duty'.

THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Every day as I drive in to work, I pass an old cottage in front of The Priory Church of St Mary's, Old Malton. In May 2006 it was up for sale (at £450 000), and Stephenson's estate agent described the building as 'a four-bedroom grade-II listed period cottage, former ancient grammar school founded around 1540. Constructed principally of stone, the property was renovated during the late 1980s.'

The property of the school as listed in 1700 included the school house, a cottage beside the churchyard gate, a cottage opposite the river Derwent and the churchyard. Norman Hudleston, a former pupil of the school, wrote *A History of Malton and Norton* in 1962, and included a painting of the early grammar school, though he does not specify the source of the painting.

The school was not always located in this building. In 1835 the Reverend William Pounds moved the school to Sutton Grange in Norton. The old schoolroom was let and in Norton the master ran what was virtually a private school, though he kept to the letter of the statutes by 'admitting free those Malton boys wishing to study only the classics.'

The move was a flagrant disregard of the conditions of the foundation, as the master continued to draw his salary from the endowment income. But such disregard was by no means uncommon and was the consequence of the master's dependence on fees due to the poverty of the endowment under the financial conditions of the day.

The move did, however, engender a good deal of local opposition, and when the Reverend Harry Garratt was appointed to succeed the Reverend Pounds in 1866 the school was soon moved back to its original building.



TOWN STREET, OLD MALTON
Early 20th century. The white building behind the cyclist is the Old Grammar School.

Source: John Stone



Above:
THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Pictured from the road in 2007, with a new porch, and a garage built into the old stable block.



Middle:
THE GANNOCK
Front and rear views. The house currently occupied by the vicar of St Mary's, Old Malton, a post held by Canon John Manchester for the last thirty years. This house used to be the headmaster's residence. John Manchester considers the front of the house to be facing the church: certainly the door and stair arrangements justify this view. Above the 'front' door is a carved Latinised inscription noting extensions made by 'Gulillmus Johnsonus' (William Johnson) in 1783-6



Below:
THE CROFTS
John Manchester with Howard and Fiona Croft, the current owners of the school buildings when I visited them in February 2008.



THE FINAL DAYS

The school's success depended largely on the efforts of the master. It seems to have flourished until the eighteenth century when financial problems grew: currency was losing its value but the income from rents of the lands left to the school at Norton, Yedingham and Ebberston was fixed. It was also felt that the emphasis on the classics in the curriculum should be changed but the statutes made this difficult. Some new subjects were introduced, but fees had to be paid for their teaching.

In 1902, The Charity Commission decreed that the future administration was to be by governors, who were to use all the moneys and assets the school held. The school was still to cater only for boys who lived in or near the parish of Old Malton, but when funds became available, the North and East Riding county councils should provide proper buildings for the school. It was agreed that the headmaster need not be in holy orders, and that he could be dismissed by the governors, without them having to 'assign cause'. The governors were to decide the curriculum, holidays, fees, the number of teachers and their salary. The headmaster was to choose the books, the methods of teaching, the school hours, and to decide on the policy of discipline. He was also to appoint and dismiss all staff. He was to be paid a fixed stipend: so much for each pupil. The minimum age for pupils was to be eight and the maximum eighteen. The school was to be open to all boys 'of good character and sufficient health'; applications were to be to the headmaster, who was to keep a register of them, and then an entrance examination in reading, writing from dictation and sums in the four simple rules of arithmetic had to be taken. Tuition fees of between 6/- and 12/- were to be paid, whilst boarding fees were limited to £2-10-0 a year. No other payments were to be allowed.

THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL
An alternative view of the old school buildings, taken in 2007, and showing the full length of the stable blocks.



The principles of Christian religion were to be taught, though exemptions could be sought from prayer and religious worship. Other subjects to be taught included: geography, history, natural science, drawing, manual instruction and the use of tools, vocal music and drill.

The governors were to appoint an examiner to conduct annual examinations. He had to report to the governors. The headmaster had to write an annual report to the governors, who could award prizes of books. There were to be six scholarships, which exempted the payment of fees and which could be taken by any boys who had carried out three year's education in Malton or Norton. If finances were to permit, exhibitions for higher education could be established.

The lands of the school were re-defined: the school building; the master's house, stable and garden; the field by the side of Ryton Lane; the right of eatage on the north side of Old Malton churchyard and rents from Sutton House, Norton, land at Heselton and Ebberston, Grove House near Old Malton and land at Ryton.

When the old school closed, local people, led by Mr William Copperthwaite, pressed for its revival, though they wanted it to be sited in New Malton. Under the authority of an order of the board of education 14 June 1906 the site and buildings of the old school and the master's house and premises adjoining the churchyard of the former priory church were sold, together with arable land abutting on Eden House Road, for £860.

In 1910, the rules of the Charity Commission were revised: girls were to be admitted, which was a relatively new idea in English education; mention was made of mistresses as well as masters being appointed; the number of pupils was no longer to affect the master's pay; the school was to follow no specific religious denomination; no school subjects were specified; mention was made of foundation scholarships; a preparatory department was sanctioned and mention was made of a new site in Middlecave, the land being given to the governors by Earl Fitzwilliam.

Thus the scene was set for the opening of a new grammar school, which carried forward some of the old, but which was essentially new in buildings, curriculum, funding and ethos.

ROBERT HOLGATE'S ARMS

From a painting held in the Holgate Hospital Museum in Hemsworth.

