

## Historical sources : Excerpts from 1925 Report

By 1844, we learn, this School had so raised itself in the scale of schools that it had become beyond the means of the ragged and unkempt and unwashed children of the most destitute.

**RAGGED  
SCHOOLS  
INSTITUTED.**

The Schools called Ragged Schools were instituted to meet this difficulty, by introducing a new educational mean, which should solely embrace the children of the mire and gutter.



DUNCAN YARD SCHOOL.

For many years the Deptford Ragged School was generally called Duncan Yard School. It was commenced in 1844 in a small room in Flood Street. In November, 1847, it was removed to Giffin Street, and in June, 1848, to Duncan Yard. The School was held in a brick building, part of which was formerly used for a skittle alley and part as a refreshment room to the bowling green.

The same building was in use in 1853, when we read that "the Sabbath evening schools continue to be numerous attended. The orderly and attentive conduct of the children has of late been a source of great satisfaction, the average attendance in the winter being 63 boys and 41 girls."

At that time the Girls' Needlework Class had 25 girls and the School's total receipts for the year amounted to £101 13s. 4d. It is interesting to compare the average attendance at the Sewing Classes for 1925 of 76, and the Balance Sheet on page 13. Also in 1853, the Provident Clothing Fund received £8 4s. 7½d., and 141 garments were sold at cost price to the children. The garments were made at a monthly meeting of ladies in Brockley, just as is still carried on to-day.

It was in 1854 that the lease of a building to accommodate 250 children was acquired. This building was known as Giffin St. Chapel and occupied the same site as our present school which was erected in 1884.

Three personalities in particular among our present supporters serve to link us with the early days. These are firstly our distinguished patron H.R.H. Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll. Her Royal Highness, who graciously opened the Deptford Ragged School, Giffin Street, on 12th March, 1886, and also the Institute in Hales Street, on 10th January, 1914, has maintained her interest now for 40 years, and consented to the two buildings being named after her—hence our title The Princess Louise School and Institute. Secondly our president Mr. Edwin Dodd, who has

The whole family joins in investing its savings in the Penny Bank, upon the books of which are no less than 960 names. The success of the Bank in encouraging thrift among our people is proved by the fact that at the close of the year a balance of £849 14s. 7d. was due to the depositors.

The work of the School and Institute is primarily spiritual—the care of souls, but hand in hand with this is necessarily social work—the care of the body.

Perhaps the most active of our agencies in this connection is the Infant Welfare Centre, held weekly with an average attendance of 70 mothers and babies. We co-

**MOTHERS AND BABIES.**

operate here with the Deptford Boro' Council whose Medical Officer and Health Visitor are always in attendance. This Centre, like most others, had a hard struggle to gain the confidence of the mothers, but the numbers show that this has been secured. Excellent work is being done by the Medical Officer and his assistants, the results of which are already apparent in the health of the rising generation.



Social work among the young men includes the running of two cricket and football teams. Through the generosity of one or two friends each of these teams has been able to play matches on its own ground—the seniors at Avery Hill, Eltham, and the juniors at Southend, Catford.

**SOCIAL WORK.**

Clubs are held at the Institute on two nights each week when billiards and other games are provided, and ample opportunity is afforded the workers of really getting to know each lad and something of his every-day life and interests. A gymnasium class is held on Thursday evenings and some of the members are capable of quite advanced gymnastics.



Holidays are important amongst our activities, and during the past **HOLIDAYS.** year 249 children and 60 mothers were given a day in the country and 130 younger children were taken for a half-day.



Girl Guides and Brownies to the number of 30 had a week's camp in Epping Forest, 10 Scouts and Cubs camped at Whitstable for a fortnight, and a few of the elder lads camped in Norfolk. Besides all this 507 children and 199 mothers were present at the various New Year tea and entertainments.

**P** RINCESS LOUISE  
SCHOOL & INSTITUTE

(DEPTFORD RAGGED SCHOOL).

FOUNDED      DECEMBER 1st, 1844.



**REPORT,**  
**1925.**

# HOW TO REACH THE SCHOOL & INSTITUTE.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.

See within for times of Meetings.

