

Opunake School – Opened 29 August 1881

Hawera and Normanby Star 30 Dec 1881 Opunake School

On Friday last, the 23rd instant, the distribution of prizes to the Opunake school children took place in Mr Courtney's hall. Present – The Chairman (Mr Breach) and secretary (Mr Coffey) of the Opunake school district. The number of children assembled were forty-six, all of whom were neatly dressed, presenting indeed a very satisfactory appearance, and reflecting great credit on the teacher, Mr Williams. After the annual report was read, the secretary arose and said – Mr Williams, I have much pleasure in complimenting you on the creditable way you have presented your pupils to us today, taking into consideration the comparatively short time you have had charge over the Opunake school, and the unfavourable circumstances you have had to contend with. You have bestowed great care and attention towards the advancement of the children under your care, and I am sure you deserve the thanks of this community. Mrs Crowthers, who was chosen to distribute the prizes, then delivered, according to the competitor's relative merit, the awards. The names of the prize-takers are as follows:- Master Andrew Cruickshank, Misses Louisa Coffey, E. Crowthers, Aileen Coffey, O. Hill, Flora McLeod, A. Collins, and Henrietta Simeon. Prizes were also given to Alfred Coffey and Charles Geary. On closing the proceedings, the Chairman addressed the children, thanking them for their exemplary conduct on the occasion, which he attributed, in a great measure, to the great interest taken by Mr Williams in their training. The report set forth, among other things:- The two obstacles chiefly instrumental in retarding the progress of the school work, are, first, the small size and insufficient accommodation of the building used as a school room; and, second, the very irregular attendance of the scholars, mainly owing to the recent lengthy visitation of sickness. The school was opened on the 29th August. Since that date, 76 children have been admitted. Of these 11 were withdrawn during the term, leaving a total of 65 now on the roll. This number includes 5 native children and 3 half-castes. With an average attendance of 50, it will be impossible to continue working in the present building. The following are the numbers receiving instruction in each subject prescribed by the Act:- Reading, 28 males, 21 females; arithmetic, 28 males, 21 females; English grammar, 4 males, 9 females; geography, 4 males, 9 females; history, 4 males, 9 females; elementary science, 1 male, 3 females; drawing, 17 males, 14 females; vocal music, 17 males, 14 females; object lessons, 28 males, 21 females. Grammar and geography are not taught in the 1st standard. From the class list it will be seen that the school is as yet young – that is to say, the majority of the scholars are only receiving primary instruction; yet the actual range of work is extensive, commencing with instruction imparted to the youngest children, and continued through a course of lessons in each of the standards up to the highest. As soon as a more suitable room can be obtained, the attention of the parents or guardians of children should be directed to the subject of attendance. Irregularity in this respect not only impedes the progress of the absentees themselves, but of the whole class to which they belong, and the teachers' labor thereby greatly increased. Regular and punctual attendance is absolutely necessary, to enable the scholars to advance in each of the standards year by year. The examinations which have been held this week are in all respects satisfactory, the average marks earned being 70 per cent on the total allowed. In awarding the prizes, many circumstances have had to be considered before an impartial decision could be arrived at, keeping in view the fact that some of the scholars have had the advantages of good teaching for various terms, whilst others have not been so benefited.

Taranaki Herald 09 Oct 1882 Opunake

Mr Crompton, School Inspector, has been holding an examination here during the past two days. The result is highly satisfactory, and the number of "passes" is a long way above the average. Certainly there are not many in the higher standards. In a new district there are few parents who can afford to leave their children at school very long, and Opunake is no exception to the general rule. Mr Williams has had many difficulties to contend with, and seeing that the inspection does not usually take place till November, and that the visit of the Inspector was quite unexpected until a few days ago, the examination must be regarded as very satisfactory, and highly creditable to the teacher. On the evening of Mr Crompton's arrival he was met by four members of the local committee, consisting of Messrs Breach (chairman), Coffey (secretary), Galvin and McLeod, the other Committeemen being absent from Opunake. The charges (or rather insinuations) contained in Mr McLaughlan's letter to the Education Board were fully gone into; and certain rumours of the "village-gossip" style, which had been in circulation, were also investigated. Those present (including the Inspector) were strongly of opinion that they had nothing to do with what may have or have not taken place years ago; the rumours that were going about were proved to have no foundation; and testimony was borne to the able manner in which Mr Williams conducted his scholastic duties. Mr Williams was found to have erred on one point, and for that he received a very severe admonition. But purists should remember that young men, even though they be teachers, are but human after all; and the said purists ought to remember that young men, in new settlements, are generally away from all home influences, have but few amusements, and little chances for sociality. It is easy for those who have comfortable homes, and a nice family circle around them, to smack their lips in a sanctimonious manner, and thank their stars they they are not as other folk. The departure of Miss Mary McLaughlan is much regretted. She was a great favourite with the children, and had improved very much as a teacher since she came to Opunake. At a meeting of the School Committee, held on Wednesday evening last, a resolution was unanimously passed regretting her departure, and recommending her to the Education Board for a more remunerative position. It may be remembered that when Miss McLaughlan first came to Opunake, the Committee, acting on the advice of the Inspector, recommended that a more experienced teacher should be sent to replace her. I am in a position to know that this was done with extreme reluctance, and only as an act of duty. It was therefore a real pleasure to the Committee to bear testimony to the improvement in teaching capacity evinced by Miss McLaughlan during the short period she was in Opunake: and one and all regretted her departure.

Hawera & Normanby Star 10 Oct 1882 Opunake (From our own correspondent)

The Inspector of the Taranaki schools, Mr Compton, has examined the scholars of the Opunake School. The examination lasted two days, and resulted in the highest success as yet achieved in the Taranaki education district. 93 per cent of the pupils presented passed, only two having failed, and the failure of those the Inspector attributes to nervousness. Certificates granted in each standard, from I. to V. were distributed on Thursday afternoon. The Inspector expressed himself highly satisfied with the working of the school and the cleverness of the scholars. He complimented Mr Williams, the teacher, who deserves much merit, considering the large attendance and being unassisted (Miss McLachlan having resigned.) The Inspector considered the necessity of a sewing mistress being appointed as pressing. The salary of assistant teacher being only £40 per annum, and he having to come from a distance, the local committee brought the matter under the notice of the Inspector with a view of getting the salary increased. The Inspector replied that he thought no increase would be allowed. As a suggestion, would it not be advisable that if a person is found competent in Opunake, to give her the appointment, thus tiding over the difficulty in the meantime, to make the appointment. In conclusion I have much pleasure in stating that, although Mr Williams, since his appointment as teacher to the Opunake school, has been labouring under very great difficulties in the way of accommodation and assistance in teaching, he has given such a good account of himself. Recently there has been a very neat cottage erected for him, but hitherto he was compelled to reside at an hotel. It is to be hoped that a master possessing so much ability will in the future receive a higher salary.

Hawera and Normanby Star 12 Oct 1882 Taranaki Education Board

Opunake – The Inspector considered that there was no foundation whatever for the malicious rumors lately put into circulation to damage Mr Williams' character, except as regards matters of a trifling nature. It was resolved that the local committee be recommended to take steps to supply the vacancy made by Miss McLauchlan's removal. The report of the Architect was read, stating that the residence at Opunake is not completed, on account of the difficulty in obtaining bricks and lime, but it is expected to be finished at the end of this week.

Taranaki Herald 25 Oct 1882 Opunake

The School Committee has decided to recommend Miss Louisa Coffey as assistant mistress of the Opunake school on probation for six months only. The other application received was from Miss Olga Hill, one of the foremost pupils attending the school.

Hawera and Normanby Star 01 Sep 1883 Opunake Grievances – To the Editor of the Star by Iconoclast

Sir, The inhabitants of Opunake have several grievances that your own correspondent never seems to speak about. There are two grievances in particular that the people feel very indignant about, the first being the dismissal by the Education Board of the schoolmaster (Mr Williams). The people here are very anxious to keep him, fully believing that we shall not get another one as good, or as capable, as Mr Williams. We sent a petition to the board praying them to reinstate the teacher, the petition being signed by nearly every man having children attending the school; but the answer from the board was that they were unable to grant the request. What does that mean? It seems to me that they have supreme power and can do just as they like as regards any school, as witness their action *re* Stratford school, and the way that they treat the parents of the children attending Opunake school. If there is no remedy for this, there ought to be; and the sooner the Government grant one the better. I should also state that the local school commissioner told the writer of these lines that he believed Mr Williams to be the best teacher of his class in the island, and that he (the commissioner) was not consulted by the board as to dismissal or otherwise of our teacher...

Taranaki Herald 17 Sep 1883 Opunake

There are three candidates for the vacancy caused by Mr Williams' retirement from the Opunake School, viz., Messrs. Evans (Omata), Tegnier (Urenui) and Garland (Auckland). It is considered probable that Mr Tegnier will receive the appointment.

Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/1 Examination Schedules 1879-1883 - Opunake

Examination 17 and 18 Oct 1883: This school has wholly deteriorated in discipline and order. A general feebleness has shown itself in the results of the examination, a consequence of lax supervision and mode of teaching. I hope for better results hereafter. William M. Compton.

Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/2 Examination Schedules 1884 – Opunake

Examination Dec 1884 W. Murray, Inspector

Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/3 Examination Schedules 1885 – Opunake

Examination 07 Nov 1885. William Ebbett - suffered from a dislocated wrist; Rose Carter - taken situation as nurse; Isabel C. Prosser - nursing baby; Thomas Lloyd - left district; James Young – sick; May Stewart - left district.

Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/4 Examination Schedules 1886 – Opunake

William Pettigrew, Esq., Chairman Opunake School Committee, Opunake 01 Nov 1886. Sir, At the Inspector's examination which takes place tomorrow, I have to request you to hand this statement to that gentleman, in order that he may be made aware of some of the circumstances of the school during the past year and to account in some measure for the inevitable failure of the higher standards. **Attendance** – This has been so completely irregular since the last examination, that it has been impossible in some standards to get through the set work. The total times school has been open has been 413 of which the average in Second standard is 200 times per child, third standard 244, fourth standard 196 and fifth standard 210. Of individual children but 4 (306, 309, 304, 310) reach $\frac{3}{4}$ of the number, while several are less than half. This irregularity has been caused mainly by sickness and bad weather but had the compulsory clauses been in ... the children would have attended much oftener, and with more punctuality. Children arrive late and leave early to attend to home duties and the people generally do not take as much advantage as they might of the advantages of the school. **Books** – Throughout the year great want of books has been felt, it is only within the last month that composition Books & histories have been obtained, while but very few children have a full supply, even now. They constantly bring statements of poverty and disinclination from parents. **Home Lessons** – I have experienced the utmost difficulty in getting the home lessons done, every excuse, and in some instances an absolute refusal on part of the Parents to allow them to be done, is brought day after day.

Though I have constantly worked to induce some enthusiasm in school matters, I have been quite unsuccessful, even members of Committee constantly requiring their children's assistance at home and one stating that people do not care on the West Coast for Education. I would point out that the Standards require a full years' work to enable them to be overtaken, and that as the school has been situated this has been utterly impossible. I have the honour to be Sir, Your obedient servant, James J. Elwin, Headmaster.

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/4 Examination Schedules 1886 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 03 Nov 1886 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Marks (0 to 100) | Subject | Marks (0 to 20) |
| S7 | - | - | - | - | - | Drawing | 30 | Repetition and recitation | 12 |
| S6 | - | - | - | - | - | History | 60 | Drill and exercises | - |
| S5 | 10 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | Geography | 65 | Singing | 10 |
| S4 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | Elementary Science | 30 | Needlework | 13 |
| S3 | 7 | 2 | - | 4 | 1 | | | Reading-lessons | 14 |
| S2 | 17 | 1 | - | 5 | 11 | | | Extra drawing | - |
| S1 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 | | | | |
| P | 41 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 92 | 9 | 3 | 17 | 22 | Total | 185 | Additional marks | 49 |
| Percentage of Passes: 23.92 | | | | | | Percentage | 46.25 | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 43.58 | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>The preparatory class, P², is fairly well conducted and the work intelligent. Throughout the school Arithmetic is very weak, causing most of the failures. Geography also is scarcely creditable. A number of the papers shew a want of neatness and method. The instruction has been much hindered by bad attendance through sickness and other causes. Marks 56.3%. William Murray, Inspector.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/5 Examination Schedules 1887 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 15 Nov 1887 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Marks (0 to 100) | Subject | Marks (0 to 20) |
| S7 | - | - | - | - | - | Drawing | 41 | Repetition and recitation | 14 |
| S6 | 2 | - | 1 | - | 1 | History | 67 | Drill and exercises | - |
| S5 | 4 | - | 1 | - | 3 | Geography | 35 | Singing | - |
| S4 | 5 | - | 1 | 2 | 2 | Elementary Science | 20 | Needlework | 12 |
| S3 | 16 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 8 | | | Reading-lessons | 13 |
| S2 | 12 | 1 | - | 6 | 5 | | | Extra drawing | - |
| S1 | 14 | - | - | 6 | 8 | | | | |
| P | 32 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 85 | 2 | 4 | 20 | 27 | Total | 163 | Additional marks | 39 |
| Percentage of Passes: 31 | | | | | | Percentage | 40 | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 42 | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>The results are about the same as last year's. There is a want of accuracy in many of the papers, to some extent this may be excused as the attendance had been irregular owing to the recent sickness. A great deal of the work of the junior classes was below the average, especially the writing and spelling, while the drawing also was not creditable. The instruction here has not been efficient. Marks in pass subjects 59%. William Murray, Inspector.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/6 Examination Schedules 1888 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 23 Oct 1888 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Marks (0 to 100) | Subject | Marks (0 to 20) |
| S7 | 1 | - | - | - | - | Drawing | 15 | Repetition and recitation | 17 |
| S6 | 2 | - | - | 1 | 1 | History | 70 | Drill and exercises | - |
| S5 | 2 | - | 1 | 1 | - | Geography | 85 | Singing | 12 |
| S4 | 11 | - | 3 | 6 | 2 | Elementary Science | 65 | Needlework | 15 |
| S3 | 9 | - | 1 | 5 | 3 | | | Reading-lessons | 15 |
| S2 | 6 | - | 1 | 1 | 4 | | | Extra drawing | - |
| S1 | 9 | - | 3 | 4 | 2 | | | | |
| P | 21 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 61 | - | 9 | 18 | 12 | Total | 235 | Additional marks | 59 |
| Percentage of Passes: 19 | | | | | | Percentage | 58 | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 60 | | | | | | | | | |

The scholars did fairly well in the Class and additional subjects. The greater number of the papers in pass subjects were not creditable either to master or pupils. Altogether the examination in these subjects showed the school to be in a very low state and that the instruction wanting in carefulness and diligence. Inspector's Marks in Pass subjects 51%. William Murray, Inspector.

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/7 Examination Schedules 1889 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 04 Dec 1889 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Marks (0 to 100) | Subject | Marks (0 to 20) |
| S7 | - | - | - | - | - | Drawing | 20 | Repetition and recitation | 10 |
| S6 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | History | 60 | Drill and exercises | 13 |
| S5 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | Geography | 30 | Singing | 10 |
| S4 | 13 | - | 3 | 4 | 9 | Elementary Science | 50 | Needlework | - |
| S3 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 7 | | | Reading-lessons | 11 |
| S2 | 7 | 1 | - | 2 | 4 | | | Extra drawing | - |
| S1 | 9 | - | - | - | 9 | | | | |
| P | 37 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 82 | 3 | 2 | 11 | 29 | Total | 160 | Additional marks | 44 |
| Percentage of Passes: 35 | | | | | | Percentage | 40 | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 27 | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>The preparatory class is backward but the teacher can now arrange to give some personal assistance with this class. The work of the standard classes is much improved. Under the present master's efforts the school should take a good position next year. Inspector's Marks 64%. William Murray, Inspector. Annie McSweeney – employed as nurse – leaves early; Rose Carter – absent 12 weeks (Aug, Sep, Oct)</p> | | | | | | | | | |

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/8 Examination Schedules 1890 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 17 Dec 1890 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Marks (0 to 100) | Subject | Marks (0 to 20) |
| S7 | - | - | - | - | - | Drawing | 30 | Repetition and recitation | 14 |
| S6 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | History | 70 | Drill and exercises | - |
| S5 | 9 | 1 | - | - | 8 | Geography | 84 | Singing | 10 |
| S4 | 7 | 1 | - | 3 | 3 | Elementary Science | 76 | Needlework | 14 |
| S3 | 11 | - | - | 6 | 5 | | | Reading-lessons | 13 |
| S2 | 14 | - | 1 | - | 13 | | | Extra drawing | - |
| S1 | 12 | 3 | - | 1 | 8 | | | | |
| P | 48 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 102 | 5 | 1 | 10 | 38 | Total | 260 | Additional marks | 51 |
| Percentage of Passes: 37 | | | | | | Percentage | 65 | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 20 | | | | | | | | | |
| The preparatory classes were backward owing to the weak methods of the pupil teacher. The school has made good progress during the year. In several subjects the senior classes had been well prepared both in pass and class groups. Inspector's Marks 65%. William Murray, Inspector. | | | | | | | | | |

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/9 Examination Schedules 1891 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 10 Feb 1892 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Marks (0 to 100) | Subject | Marks (0 to 20) |
| S7 | - | - | - | - | - | Drawing | - | Repetition and recitation | 14 |
| S6 | 4 | - | - | - | 4 | History | 73 | Drill and exercises | 14 |
| S5 | 4 | - | - | 2 | 2 | Geography | 69 | Singing | 12 |
| S4 | 7 | - | - | 1 | 6 | Elementary Science | 80 | Needlework | 9 |
| S3 | 17 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 8 | | | Reading-lessons | 16 |
| S2 | 8 | - | 1 | - | 7 | | | Extra drawing | - |
| S1 | 11 | 1 | - | - | 10 | | | | |
| P | 50 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 101 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 37 | Total | 222 | Additional marks | 65 |
| Percentage of Passes: 36 | | | | | | Percentage | 74 | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>The Preparatory classes were not far advanced but the work that had been prepared was fairly satisfactory and somewhat creditable to the pupil teacher in charge. Reading in Standards I to III was below average work. Standard III also was weak but the other classes have made good progress since last examination. The master is working his school very successfully with ability and intelligence. Inspector's Marks 60%. William Murray, Inspector.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/10 Examination Schedules 1892 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 21 Dec 1892 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Marks (0 to 100) | Subject | Marks (0 to 20) |
| S7 | - | - | - | - | - | Grammar | 42 | Repetition and recitation | 15 |
| S6 | 3 | - | - | 1 | 2 | History | 84 | Drill and exercises | 15 |
| S5 | 6 | - | - | 4 | 2 | Geography | 77 | Singing | 16 |
| S4 | 6 | - | - | 3 | 3 | Elementary Science | 75 | Needlework | Nil |
| S3 | 15 | - | - | 5 | 10 | | | Reading-lessons | 14 |
| S2 | 14 | - | 1 | - | 13 | | | Extra drawing | - |
| S1 | 12 | - | 3 | 1 | 8 | | | | |
| P | 44 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 100 | - | 4 | 14 | 38 | Total | 278 | Additional marks | 60 |
| Percentage of Passes: 38 | | | | | | Percentage | 69 | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 26 | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>The school is very backward in reading. This subject is not satisfactory. I direct attention to remarks under Standard I. Grammar was poorly answered. Arithmetic and Compositions were well prepared. Inspector's Marks 25% above pass marks. William Murray, Inspector.</p> <p>Standard VI Geography and grammar were weak subjects</p> <p>Standard V Class weak in writing, composition and geography</p> <p>Standard III Reading: poorly phrasing and weak in emphasis</p> <p>The instruction of Standards I and II is of a very weak character; in reading, especially, both classes are very backward in the subject. The fault is the outcome of too much work being entrusted to the pupil teacher who is unable to do it.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 2/11 Examination Schedules 1893 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 06 Dec 1893 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Marks (0 to 100) | Subject | Marks (0 to 20) |
| S7 | - | - | - | - | - | Grammar | 45 | Repetition and recitation | 11 |
| S6 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | History | 72 | Drill and exercises | 16 |
| S5 | 4 | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | Geography | 60 | Singing | 14 |
| S4 | 11 | - | - | 4 | 7 | Elementary Science | 68 | Needlework | 12 |
| S3 | 14 | - | 3 | 7 | 4 | | | Reading-lessons | 14 |
| S2 | 9 | - | - | 2 | 7 | | | | |
| S1 | 22 | - | 1 | - | 21 | | | | |
| P | 39 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 100 | 1 | 4 | 15 | 41 | Total | 245 | Additional marks | 67 |
| Percentage of Passes: 41 | | | | | | Percentage | 61 | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 26 | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>The preparatory classes are making good progress. The reading was accurate and fluent. Spelling was well answered, and the arithmetic and tables were very good. The attendance during the last quarter was irregular but the work was of a highly satisfactory character. The paper work was clean and painstaking in treatment. Inspector's Marks 22%. William Murray, Inspector. Remarks on Standard Classes & Subjects. Reading: This subject was too hurriedly treated in Standard II and weak in emphasis and expression in the senior standards. In Standard I the subject was much improved. Recitation requires more care in preparation; the pauses and inflection marks ought to be attended to. Spelling: Good only six failed. Writing: Not average work; the letters were in many of the specimens not well formed. Drawing: Very good, but the subject was weak in Standards IV and I. Arithmetic: several failed in Standard III. The work was well set out and the ciphering good. Composition: very well prepared, but a number were careless about punctuation. Grammar: Standard IV gave in good papers. This subject in the Class groupd was poorly treated. Geography: Not well answered by Standard III. In Class II the positions of places required should be known on the map. W. Murray, Inspector.</p> <p>The attendance in Standards III, IV, V & VI for the last quarter has only been 63%. This has been partly owing to sickness but is in a great measure due to the carelessness or indifference of parents, the dairy industry being of more importance than the education of the children. H. Eason, Opunake School 06 Dec 1893.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 2/13 Examination Schedules 1894 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 05 Dec 1894 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Comment | Subject | Comment |
| S7 | - | - | - | - | - | Grammar | Std III good; Stds IV, V, VI poor | Repetition & recitation | Std I good otherwise indifferent |
| S6 | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | History | Very good | Drill and exercises | Good |
| S5 | 8 | 1 | - | 4 | 3 | Geography | Fair | Singing | Fair |
| S4 | 4 | - | - | 1 | 3 | Elementary Science | Very good | Needlework | Not prepared |
| S3 | 18 | - | - | 6 | 12 | Mental arithmetic | Fair | Reading Lessons | Fair |
| S2 | 18 | 2 | - | 3 | 13 | | | | |
| S1 | 17 | - | - | 5 | 12 | | | | |
| P | 45 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 112 | 3 | - | 19 | 44 | | | | |
| Percentage of Passes: 39 | | | | | | | | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 28 | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>The preparatory classes are making good progress in their studies. They should make a very creditable appearance at their next examination. William Murray, Inspector.</p> <p>Standard I: The boys read hurriedly and the class reading was weak in emphasis. Spelling showed a slight weakness. Arithmetic was strong. The other subjects were satisfactory, the repetition highly so.</p> <p>Standard II: Reading was marked as satisfactory. In arithmetic the draft failed to do the easy problem I gave, its other work in the subject was good. Geography I could mark only as fair.</p> <p>Standard III: The boys were not equal to the girls in the work generally. Geography was very indifferently answered and the reading and writing of the class were not of average quality.</p> <p>Standards IV, V and VI: The pupil in Standard VI did fairly good papers in all subjects save geography. Standard V made a very indifferent appearance in nearly all subjects. In Standard IV the work was satisfactory excepting in writing which appeared to be the result of weakness in the instruction.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 2/15 Examination Schedules 1895 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|--|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 05 Dec 1894 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Comment | Subject | Comment |
| S7 | - | - | - | - | - | Grammar | Stds III & IV Poor; Std V moderate; VI very fair | Repetition & recitation | Moderate to fair |
| S6 | 3 | - | - | - | 3 | History | Stds III to V very moderate; VI satisfactory | Drill and exercises | (Inspection) |
| S5 | 3 | - | - | 3 | - | Geography | - | Singing | Fair |
| S4 | 13 | - | - | 7 | 6 | Elementary Science | Stds IV to VI Fair | Needlework | - |
| S3 | 26 | - | - | 8 | 18 | Mental arithmetic | Stds I to IV Poor | Reading Lessons | Very good except Std I |
| S2 | 13 | - | - | 6 | 7 | | | | |
| S1 | 23 | - | - | 7 | 16 | | | | |
| P | 44 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 125 | - | - | 31 | 50 | | | | |
| Percentage of Passes: 40 | | | | | | | | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 38 | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Instruction of Preparatory classes: Fair – more advanced tables might be taken and reading should be less hurried. Remarks: Oscar Nelson – Eltham, lefthand; Nellie Nelsen – Eltham; Arthur Wallis – Sydenham; Isaac Bishop – Oaonui, Maori; George and Fred Longney – Nelson; Mary Tidd – Nelson</p> <p>Standard I: The spelling was good – the rest of the work was fair. Six of the pupils who failed had been recently promoted from the Preparatory classes on account of being over eight years of age. In Standard II the pupils who failed had not made good attendances. The boys did moderate work. The girls did good work. Standard III: The work was much better than that of last year. Arithmetic was not strong, but drawing and geography were excellent, and reading and composition showed considerable improvement. Standard IV: The work of SIV was very disappointing. In Standard V the three pupils failed. One had recently entered and the other two had not attended well. In Standard VI the three pupils came up for examination the second time and all passed. Throughout the school the pupils are inclined to hurry through the reading and this is the cause of many of the defects noticed e.g. enunciation and articulation poor, inaccuracies – no attention to pauses, and so on. In the spelling of the upper classes there was a marked improvement. I am not yet satisfied with the discipline of the school, and I cannot speak favourably of the honesty and self-reliance of the pupils during the examination. The general quality of the work is better than it was last year, and had the pupils attended well the master would have had a better chance of passing more. In the Class subjects much of the work was inferior. W. E. Spencer, Inspector.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

| Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 2/19 Examination Schedules 1897 – Opunake | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------|---|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Examination Report on Opunake Public School examined 24 Nov 1897 | | | | | | Class Subjects | | Additional Subjects | |
| Standard Class | Presented | Absent | Excepted | Failed | Passed | Subject | Comment | Subject | Comment |
| S7 | - | - | - | - | - | Grammar | Std I poor | Repetition & recitation | Moderate to fair |
| S6 | - | - | - | - | - | History | Std III Satisfactory; Stds IV-V very moderate | Drill and exercises | - |
| S5 | 7 | 1 | - | 5 | 1 | Geography | Fair | Singing | - |
| S4 | 22 | 1 | - | 18 | 3 | Elementary Science | Stds I-II Satisfactory; Stds III-V moderate | Needlework | - |
| S3 | 16 | 2 | - | 6 | 8 | Mental arithmetic | Very poor | Reading Lessons | Fair to very good |
| S2 | 19 | 1 | - | 7 | 11 | | | | |
| S1 | 20 | 2 | - | 13 | 5 | | | | |
| P | 44 | - | - | - | - | | | | |
| Total | 128 | 7 | - | 49 | 28 | | | | |
| Percentage of Passes: 22 | | | | | | | | | |
| Percentage of Failures: 58 | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Instruction of Preparatory classes: The work is improving under the present teacher. I was please the order and discipline prevailing in the infant room.</p> <p>Standard I: Pupils should speak out better. Ventilation should be carefully attended to in the large room.</p> <p>Standard II Boys: Pupils should stand upright during reading. Transcription was good. Capital letters fair. Only a few pages of copy-book work were shown. Dictation – the punctuation of dialogue should be attended to – note also quotation marks, paragraphs and compound words.</p> <p>The results of the examination were most unsatisfactory, and as Mr Heenan had been in charge since the 2nd August he cannot be absolved from all share in the responsibility. The order and discipline had improved, and the pupils were better behaved and more amenable to control than at the previous examination. Mr Dickinson had been in charge of Standard P to Standard I since the first of September and an improvement in the discipline and tone of these classes was noticed. W. E. Spencer, Inspector.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

| <i>Archives NZ Reference ABDU W3570 1/1 to 1/10 and 2/12 and 2/15 Examination Schedules - Opunake</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Summaries of Standard and Preparatory Class Lists – Numbers of Boys and Girls in each respectively | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S7 | S6 | S5 | S4 | S3 | S2 | S1 | P | P | P | Total |
| 1886 | - | - | 6-4 | 1-6 | 5-10 | 3-5 | 6-5 | 15-26 | | | 92 |
| 1887 | - | 1-1 | 1-3 | 1-4 | 8-8 | 6-6 | 3-11 | 5-4 | 12-11 | | 85 |
| 1888 | 1-0 | 1-1 | 0-2 | 5-6 | 4-5 | 2-4 | 4-5 | 6-5 | 4-6 | | 61 |
| 1889 | - | 0-1 | 5-8 | 7-7 | 4-3 | 5-4 | 10-9 | 11-7 | | | 82 |
| 1890 | - | 0-1 | 3-6 | 3-4 | 3-8 | 9-5 | 6-6 | 10-7 | 17-14 | | 102 |
| 1891 | - | 1-3 | 2-2 | 2-5 | 7-10 | 4-4 | 8-3 | 4-5 | 4-9 | 15-13 | 101 |
| 1892 | - | 0-3 | 2-4 | 3-3 | 6-9 | 10-4 | 7-5 | 4-6 | 3-9 | 15-7 | 100 |
| 1893 | - | 0-1 | 2-2 | 5-6 | 11-3 | 4-5 | 9-13 | 7-7 | 9-5 | 6-5 | 100 |
| 1894 | - | 1-1 | 4-4 | 3-1 | 10-8 | 8-10 | 8-9 | 26-19 | | | 112 |
| 1897 | - | - | 2-5 | 9-13 | 7-9 | 14-5 | 9-11 | 22-22 | | | 128 |

Lists of the Public Schools, the Expenditure, Staff &c – Taranaki: Opunake 1882-1886
Annual Education Reports published in the Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives

1882: A school has been opened at Opunake, in a hired building, and there are at present 86 children on the roll. A new school is being built to accommodate 120 children, which the Committee consider will soon want enlarging. The Board has let ten town sections at Opunake, at an average rental of £44 12s 10d.

1883: New school and teachers' house built at Opunake.

1887: The Opunake schoolhouse was strengthened, and more convenient classrooms provided.

1908: Old residence replaced by a new one.

1909: Roman Catholic school at Opunake was inspected and examined.

1911: One Senior scholarship was awarded to an Opunake candidate.

| Year | Number of Teachers' or Custodians' Houses in each District | Number of Square Feet of Floor-space in School and Class-rooms | School Roll | | | | Average Attendance | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------------|-------|-------|------------|--|
| | | | Number belonging at beginning of Year | Number admitted during the Year | Number who left during the Year | Number belonging at end of Year | Strict Average | | Working Average | | | Whole Year | |
| | | | | | | | Fourth Quarter | Whole Year | Fourth Quarter | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | Boys | Girls | Total | | |
| 1882 | - | 600 | Not open | 76 | 11 | 65 | 38 | 39.5 | 24 | 16 | 40 | 40.5 | |
| 1883 | 1 | 1560 | 62 | 57 | 42 | 77 | 51 | 56.5 | 24 | 27 | 51 | 57 | |
| 1884 | 1 | 1560 | 63 | 34 | 20 | 77 | 52 | 48.25 | 32 | 31 | 63 | 52.25 | |
| 1885 | 1 | 1560 | 73 | 53 | 57 | 69 | 54 | 53 | 28 | 27 | 55 | 55.75 | |
| No further data | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Year | Expenditure for the Year | | | Teacher's Names, including all Teachers and Pupil-teachers on the Staff at the End of the Year | Position in the School | Annual Salary and Allowance at the Rate paid during the Last Quarter of the Year | Working Average 3 rd Quarter of the Year |
|------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|------------------------|--|---|
| | Maintenance | | Buildings, Sites, Furniture and Apparatus | | | | |
| | Salaries | Other Ordinary Expenditure | | | | | |
| 1882 | £36 15s 4d | £15 18s 10d | £14 5s 6d | Joseph W. Williams Louisa Coffey | M F P | £103 £4 | 41 |
| 1883 | £169 9s | £20 12s 1d | £730 7s | Joseph W. Williams Louisa Coffey | M F P | £131 4s £4 | 53 |
| 1884 | £187 1s | £30 8s 2d | £24 18s | Ferdinand Tegner Edith C. Goodman | M A F | £147 £45 | 45 |
| 1885 | £141 10s | £2 0s 5d | £5 4s 6d | Ferdinand Tegner Clara Tegner | M F | £141 £45 | 52 |
| 1886 | £279 7s 1d | £20 0s 6d | £15 15s 9d | James Jeken Elwin E. K. J. Elwin | M A F | £167 £45 | 68 |
| 1887 | £214 14s 4d | £23 18s 6d | £127 7s 10d | James Jekin Elwin E. K. J. Elwin | H M A F | £172 16s £50 | 59 |
| 1888 | £204 7s 6d | £20 13s 1d | - | James Jekin Elwin Minnie Pennington Ellen Capel | H M F P F P | £168 13s 4d £20 £20 | 64 |
| 1889 | £167 0s 5d | £48 7s 11d | - | Harry Albert Eason Isabella Young | H M F P | £123 5s £18 | 46 |
| 1890 | £154 13s 4d | £15 3s | - | Harry A. Eason Zoe Prosser | H M F P | £142 5s £18 | 57 |
| 1891 | £173 | £16 8s 4d | £2 | Harry A. Eason Zoe Prosser D. C. Duffill | H M F P S | £149 5s £20 £8 | 64 |
| 1892 | £179 17s 6d | £20 7s 9d | - | Harry A. Eason Jane McHardy Eliza Duffill | H M F P S | £153 10s £20 £8 | 72 |

| Year | Expenditure for the Year | | | Teacher's Names, including all Teachers and Pupil-teachers on the Staff at the End of the Year | Position in the School | Annual Salary and Allowance at the Rate paid during the Last Quarter of the Year | Working Average 3 rd Quarter of the Year |
|------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|------------------------|--|---|
| | Maintenance | | Buildings, Sites, Furniture and Apparatus | | | | |
| | Salaries | Other Ordinary Expenditure | | | | | |
| 1893 | £195 18s 4d | £24 0s 11d | - | Harry A. Eason Jane McHardy Mary Cross Emma Tait | H M F P F P S | £153 5s £20 £20 £8 | 74 |
| 1894 | £217 3s 9d | £22 19s 0d | - | Harry A. Eason Martha E. Grainger | H M A F | £160 6s £69 | 81 |
| 1895 | £232 16s 9d | £39 14s 3d | - | Harry A. Eason Ella Barron | H M A F | £161 10s £65 | 84 |
| 1896 | £238 17s | £36 1s 1d | - | Harry Eason Mrs J. E. H. Manson | H M A F | £164 16s £65 | 96 |
| 1897 | £220 17s 2d | £26 17s 9d | £42 7s 6d | Harry Eason J. E. H. Manson | H M A F | £163 £70 | 85 |
| 1898 | £234 13s 8d | £25 8s 7d | - | George C. Heenan Mary Dickinson | H M A F | £163 10s £71 5s | 94 |
| 1899 | £260 4s 10d | £38 14s 7d | £12 1s 6d | George C. Heenan Mary Dickinson Mary Hickey | H M A F F P | £166 18s £71 5s £25 | 98 |
| 1900 | £235 7s 10d | £21 14s 6d | £6 14s 3d | George C. Heenan Mary Dickinson | H M A F | £164 16s £70 | 92 |
| 1901 | £257 17s 3d | £21 7s 9d | £44 16s 3d | George C. Heenan Mary Dickinson Mary Hickey | H M A F F P | £163 13s 6d £70 £30 | 91 |
| 1902 | £270 0s 10d | £20 18s 9d | £8 14s 10d | George C. Heenan Mary Dickinson | H M A F | £154 4s £70 | 85 |
| 1903 | £309 9s 11d | £25 18s 9d | £5 3s 3d | George Heenan Emily May Simpson | H M A F | £208 15s £95 | 71 |
| 1904 | £286 5s | £18 13s | £126 13s 1d | George Maginness Mary Loudon | H M Mis. | £191 5s £95 | 66 |

| Year | Expenditure for the Year | | | Teacher's Names, including all Teachers and Pupil-teachers on the Staff at the End of the Year | Position in the School | Annual Salary and Allowance at the Rate paid during the Last Quarter of the Year | Working Average 3 rd Quarter of the Year |
|------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|------------------------|--|---|
| | Maintenance | | Buildings, Sites, Furniture and Apparatus | | | | |
| | Salaries | Other Ordinary Expenditure | | | | | |
| 1905 | £270 | £29 16s 3d | - | George Maginness Mary Loudon | H M Mis. | £185 £85 | 66 |
| 1906 | £267 6s 8d | £20 | - | Alfred Gray Mary Loudon | H M Mis | £185 £85 | 70 |
| 1907 | £283 5s 5d | £30 16s 3d | - | Alfred Gray Ethel W. Bent | H M A F | £195 £85 10s | 83 |
| 1908 | £312 10s | £453 0s 2d | - | Alfred Gray Ethel W. Bent | H M A F | £215 £100 | 77 |
| 1909 | £315 | £24 7s 5d | - | Alfred Gray Ethel W. Bent | H M A F | £215 £100 | 84 |
| 1910 | £375 | £33 1s | - | Alfred Gray Ethel W. Bent Isabella A. Stitt | H M A F F Pt3 | £220 £110 £45 | 102 |
| 1911 | £395 | £22 18s | £35 11s | Alfred Gray Ethel Bent Isabella Stitt | H M A F F Pt4 | £225 £115 £55 | 96 |
| 1912 | £395 | £26 | £8 15s | Alfred Gray Ethel W. Bent Annie Stitt | H M A F F Pt3 | £230 £120 £45 | 93 |
| 1913 | £364 15s | No data | No data | Daffyd P. Evans Mary Herlihy Annie Stitt | H M A F F Pt4 | £210 £99 15s £55 | 89 |
| 1914 | £399 15s | No data | No data | Dafydd P. Evans Mary Herlihy Elizabeth Fleming | H M A F A F | £210 £99 15s £90 | 83 |
| 1915 | £424 | No data | No data | Daffyd P. Evans Mary Herlihy Elizabeth Fleming | H M A F A F | £220 £114 £90 | 92 |

Obituaries

Auckland Star 27 Jul 1936 Mr Joseph W. Williams

The death has occurred of Mr Joseph Walter Bernard le Caron Williams, of Northcote, aged 80 years. He was a well-known schoolmaster in Taranaki and North Auckland. Mr Williams was born at Penarth, Wales, on April 18, 1856. He was a cousin of the composer, Sir Arthur Sullivan. Mr Williams was educated at the St. Olave Grammar School of Queen Elizabeth, Southwark, and then entered the British postal service. He was employed on the London to Dover mail train every morning, and sorted the mail from Calais on the return journey. In 1877 he came to New Zealand in the barque 'Crown Thorpe', and was engaged in surveying at Palmerston and Manawatu, and was associated with the installation of the first telephone in Auckland. In 1881 Mr Williams was the first school teacher appointed to Opunake. He was later appointed to organise schools for the northern and central areas of the Chatham Islands, being transferred in 1904 to Matakana Island, Tauranga, and four years later to Ahipara, where he was also registrar of births and deaths. He remained there until his retirement on superannuation in 1922, and made his home at Northcote. Mr Williams is survived by his wife, who was the eldest daughter of Mr A. G. Saunders, of Christchurch, whom he married in 1899; and two daughters, Mrs John Dalmeyer (Singapore) and Miss Kathleen M. Williams, a teacher at the Avondale School.

Press 17 Mar 1915 An Old Canterbury Resident

New Plymouth, March 16. The death is announced of an ex-Canterbury resident, in the person of Mr J. J. Elwin. The deceased was educated at Morton Hall, City of London School, and Bruce Castle, and studied with his father, for the medical profession, but on account of delicate health, decided to come out to the colonies. He came to New Zealand in 1856, and joined the office of Messrs Cookson and Bowler, of Lyttelton, but again his health gave way, and he then joined Messrs Henry and Robert Skeet's survey party in Hawke's Bay, and was subsequently offered the headmastership of the Clive School, which he accepted. The Maori war breaking out, he took up an appointment in Canterbury at the Templeton School, and was later in charge of the Halswell School. After being there for seven years, he was offered the West Christchurch School. Severe illness forced him to leave town and accept the Southbridge School. The teaching profession, however, did not appear to agree with the late Mr Elwin's health, and he relinquished it and commenced farming. He was farming in the Canterbury district for about four years, and then came to Taranaki and took a West Coast Settlement lease at Warea. For a while he accepted a position under the Taranaki Education Board, being appointed to the Opunake School, and subsequently opened the first-school at Warea. He afterwards engaged in farming, and was always prominent in any matter that tended towards its progress. He was a director of the Warea Dairy Factory, and a prominent member of the Cape Egmont Horticultural Society. He had taken a keen interest in the oil industry, and was on the directorate of the Taranaki Company, and also that of the Inglewood Oil Prospecting Company. He married, at an early age, the second daughter of Mr F. Rossiter, of Christchurch, and leaves a widow and six children.

Press 08 Oct 1936 Obituary – Mr George Maginness

The death occurred on Tuesday evening of Mr George Maginness, well known as clerk and engineer of the Paparua County Council, and as an exhibitor of ponies at shows throughout Canterbury. Mr Maginness was 58 years old. Mr Maginness died at his residence adjoining the county office, Sockburn, after he had collapsed in the early afternoon. Mr Maginness first started as a school teacher, and for a time was employed at the Sydenham School. Later he was transferred to the North Island, and while he was working there he married Miss May Simpson, of Christchurch. In 1905 he returned to the South Island and became clerk to the Templeton Road Board. When, however, this road board became amalgamated with the Prebbleton Road Board, and merged into the Paparua County, Mr Maginness was appointed clerk and engineer to the county. Mr Maginness had many interests outside his work, and was well known in the city as a member of many public bodies. He was a vice-president of the Canterbury Justices of the Peace Association and was a visiting justice at the Paparua prison; he was president of the Riccarton Domain Tennis Club, a member of the New Zealand Society of Civil Engineers, a member of the Institute of Secretaries, secretary of the Canterbury Cob and Pony Society, and a former member of the council of the Canterbury Progress League. At any show near Christchurch, and principally at the Canterbury Agricultural and Pastoral Association's shows, Mr Maginness was a very well-known figure, and had won many championships with his ponies. Mr Maginness is survived by his widow and two daughters, Miss Dorothy Maginness, who is an assistant lecturer at Canterbury University College, and Miss Joyce Maginness, who is in England at present. The death of Mr George Maginness, late county clerk of Paparua County, was referred to with regret by the president of the Canterbury Progress League, Mr F. Coop, at a meeting of the league's executive last evening. Mr Coop said that Mr Maginness had given valuable service on the executive. It was decided to send a letter of sympathy to Mrs Maginness.