

William Phillips

(headmaster at Cally School, Ann Street)



William Phillips was headmaster at Cally School in Ann Street, Gatehouse of Fleet from 1873 until 1914. This was a school for the children of Cally Estate workers, but other local children were also allowed to attend. The school was renamed Rusko School in about 1913, but it closed shortly after William retired - the Fleetside School Logbook on 25th August 1914 refers to 7 pupils joining Fleetside because Rusko School had now closed.

William Phillips was born c.1850 in Coleshill, Warwickshire, the son of Charles Phillips (farmer) and Anne Wetton. (*William's parent's names come from his death certificate, 09/11/1920 Anwoth*).

In the 1861 Warwickshire census, he was living with his parents Charles (agricultural labourer) and mother Ann. (ex www.ancestry.co.uk)

He was a choirboy at the parish church at Coleshill where Mrs Anne Eliza Murray Stewart's father, Rev. John Wingfield Digby was the vicar (*ex KA 12/11/1920*). Mrs Murray Stewart was wife of Horatio Murray Stewart, owner of Cally House, Gatehouse. William Phillips was known by the Murray Stewart family before he came to Gatehouse.

In the 1871 Gloucestershire census, he was living at Ashleworth - William Phillips (21, born Coleshill) with his sister Anne (28, a school mistress). (www.ancestry.co.uk)

He married Sarah Cross on 10/04/1871 at Bryanstone, Dorset. Sarah's father was a farm grieve, and her mother was Mary Ann Blake. The family lived on the Bryanstone estate which included the villages of Bryanstone and **Durweston** (*a name which is entered on daughter Mary Louisa Phillips birth certificate 27/03/1874 in Gatehouse*).

William and Sarah had one daughter, Edith Anne, born c. 1872 in England, before they arrived in Gatehouse in 1873. A report in the Kirkcudbrightshire Advertiser after William's death says he came from 'Ash-el-Worth' in Gloucestershire.

William and Sarah's other daughters Mary Louisa (born 1874), Emily (born c.1875) and Alice (born c.1879) were all born in Gatehouse (*1881 Girthon census*).

Mrs Sarah Phillips also taught at the school (1891 census - sewing teacher). Daughters Mary Louisa and Emily Sarah were pupil teachers in the 1891 census. By the 1911 census, Mary Louisa and Alice were both teachers in the school. Mrs Phillips died of heart failure at Ann Street on 18/06/1903. She is buried in Girthon Cemetery along with her husband William Phillips, who died in 1920 at Planetree, Gatehouse (possibly where his daughter Alice lived).

William Phillips' obituary in the Kirkcudbright Advertiser (12/11/1920) says that he led a full life in Gatehouse in the years he lived there. 'He endeared himself to the community and he was known for his bright and cheery disposition.' He was organist and choirmaster at Cally Chapel for 32 years and then at St Mary's Episcopal Church.

He was the treasurer of the Cally & Rusko Clothing Club and auditor of both Oddfellows and of the Moor Tent of the Rechabite Society (*a religious group who abstained from alcohol*).

He was a successful teacher and was proud to put the initials F.E.I.S. after his name. (*The Educational Institute of Scotland is a teachers union who were allowed to award the 'degree' of a Fellowship to certain teachers*).

He also taught music. After he retired he may have moved to Planetree to live with his daughter Alice and her husband Thomas Goldie Scot.

Eldest daughter Edith Anne is also remembered on the family gravestone at Girthon. She married Gilbert Henry Nicholl and died in 1908 in Manitoba, Canada.

The Fleetside School Log (1st September 1914) mentions Miss Alice Phillips joining the staff. Alice left Fleetside in October 1917. Alice Phillips married Thomas Goldie Scot from Dumfries at Cally Chapel in 1918. This was Thomas' second marriage. He was a doctor and had 3 children by his first wife Evelyn.

The Kirkcudbrightshire Advertiser has a birth dated 10th February 1920, at Planetree, Gatehouse of Fleet, of a son to the wife of 'T. Goldie-Scot, M.B.'

Mrs Goldie Scot's name appears in various Kirkcudbrightshire Advertisers as a pianist at various events in Gatehouse. Miss Mary L. Phillips bought the old school house in Ann Street from the Trustees of the Cally Estate in 1920 and named it **Durweston**. She sold it back to the Cally Estate in 1933.



William Phillips is standing at the back.

Others in the photo are probably his 4 daughters plus son-in-law Thomas Goldie Scot