

Opening of the new school

The new senior Public School erected by West Calder School Board at a cost of £2,000, was formally opened on Friday afternoon in presence of a large assembly of ladies and gentlemen. Mr W. McCutcheon, chairman of the School Board, presided.

There were also on the platform John Fyfe, Esq., managing director of Young's Paraffin Light and Mineral Oil Company Limited; Rev. T. Henry Jones, M.A., Addiewell; Mr John Watson, B.A., who was formerly headmaster in Addiewell School, and now head-master of Morningside Public School, Edinburgh; and Mr Jas. G. Fairley, Esq., Edinburgh.

The other members of the Board who were present were – Dr Young, Mr J. T. Mungle, Mr W. Rae, Mr W. Dalziel, Mr H. Young, Mr M. MacCabe, and Mr J.R. Brown. The dedication prayer having been offered by the Rev. Mr Jones, the Chairman introduced Mr Fyfe, who in the course of an excellent and instructive address, thanked the School Board for the honour they had done him in asking him to perform the opening ceremony, and, wishing the school every success in the future, declared the school open. (Applause.)

Mr Dalziel then presented Mr Fyfe, on behalf of the School Board, with a gold key bearing the following inscription: - "Presented to John Fyfe, Est. Glasgow, on the occasion of his opening the new senior school, Addiewell – 22nd October, 1897," to which Mr Fyfe made an appreciative acknowledgment.

A select company were entertained to luncheon by the members of the School Board.

The new building, along with the offices [i.e. toilets] and playground, cover about three-quarters of an acre, and are situated on the north side of the main road adjoining the present infant school. The school consists of five class rooms, and provides accommodation for 260 scholars, besides other conveniences. One of the class rooms on the north side of the corridor has a patent movable partition, which can be folded back against the wall, enabling the two rooms to be utilised for a hall. The walling is of red brick, and the roofing of Ballachulish slates. The school is heated with open grates, and the class rooms are lighted with Young's patent lamps. All the rooms have a plentiful supply of fresh air, and the vitiated air passes through the ceiling and turrets. The offices are very complete, and the shelter shed afford ample security against rough weather.

The architect, from whose designs and under whose supervision the school has been satisfactorily completed, is Mr James G. Fairley, F.R.I.B.A., Edinburgh. [He was resident at that time at Meadowhead House, Addiewell.]

After the opening ceremony and entertainment by the scholars attending the school was given in the New School, under the direction of the headmaster Mr Jack, and Miss Robertson, infant mistress, and assistants. The entertainment consisted of part songs, musical drill, and recitations, while the accompaniments were played alternately on the piano by Misses A. Stevenson, J. Rennie and H. Liddle, which were much appreciated. Dr Young proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Jack and the children for their enjoyable singing and nice musical drill, which was heartily given. On the motion of the Rev. Mr Taylor a similar compliment was accorded to Mr McCutcheon for presiding. The proceeding were brought to a close with the singing of the "National Anthem".