

Education

and the Copperfield Road School

Ragged Schools for Ragged Children

'Ragged Schools' first began in the late 18th Century, when small tradesmen and members of the public began to start Sunday and day-schools for children who would otherwise be out in the streets. The phenomenon grew into a nationwide movement, leading to the foundation of the Ragged School Union in 1844.



Boys having dinner at Copperfield Road
Night And Day, 1879

Ragged Schools had several aims. Apart from educating children, they also often provided them with food and clothes, when many had neither. Many schools offered training in industrial and other skills, to help children in the labour market. Most had Evangelical aims.

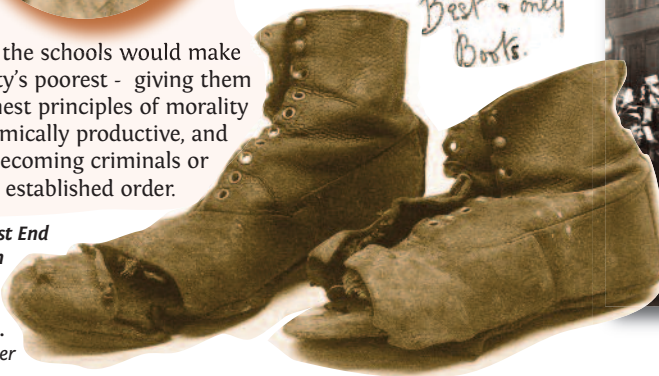


Lord Shaftesbury, the President
of the Ragged School Union

Shaftesbury hoped that the schools would make responsible citizens of society's poorest - giving them "some knowledge of the commonest principles of morality and religion", making them economically productive, and preventing them from becoming criminals or posing a danger to the established order.

A pair of boots belonging to an East End child, c.1900. Besides giving children breakfast and a hot lunchtime meal, the Free School also gave out clothes and footwear to children who needed them.

Photo: Horace Warner



The long road to free universal education:

- 1870** *The Forster Act*
 - Set up partially state-funded School Boards to administer education
 - Enforced compulsory attendance between 5 and 10
 - Established national standards and trained teachers to meet them
- 1880** *Elementary Education Act*
 - Established Attendance Officers to enforce the minimum leaving age
 - Required all children between 10 and 13 to meet a minimum standard of education before they could leave school or enter employment
- 1893** *Elementary Education (School Attendance) Act*
 - Raised the legal leaving age to 11, and later to 13
- 1902** *The Balfour Act*
 - Abolished School Boards and introduced Local Education Authorities
 - Fees progressively abolished

The Education Act of 1870 created the Board Schools that soon educated most of London's children: attendance was compulsory, and fees were usually a penny a week, although poorer children were sometimes exempted. But many of the children of the poor did not attend school, or attended patchily; and in order to attend, you had to own presentable clothes and shoes.



Hope Place (above) where Barnardo opened his first ragged school in 1868. He opened one in this building (below) in 1877.



Copperfield Road Sunday School children, 1909