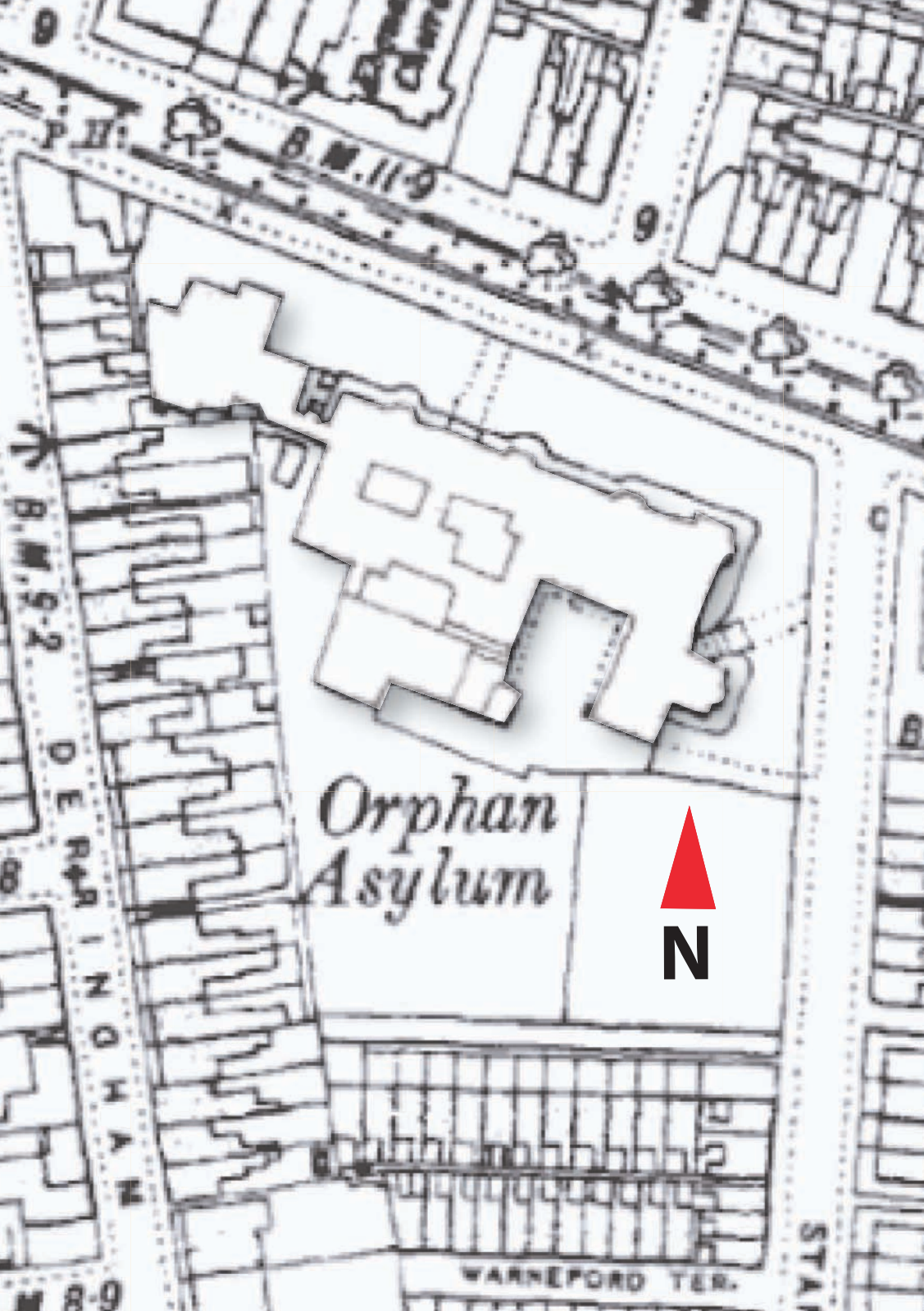


# **‘A Helping Hand’**

**The Hesslewood Children’s Trust**





Orphan  
Asylum



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## Introduction from the Trust

The aim of this booklet is to highlight the remarkable journey of the Hesslewood Orphanage from its historical foundations to the present day, as the Hesslewood Children's Trust.

The objectives of the Trust are to help people in need or hardship who are either:-

Under the age of 25 and resident (or have parents resident) in the former Humberside County Area or district of Gainsborough or Caistor

OR

Former residents of the Hull Seamen's and General Orphanage.

The trust is actively seeking to re-establish contact with ex-scholars.

For further information please contact:

The Secretary, Hesslewood Children's Trust,  
62 The Meadows, Cherry Burton, Beverley, HU17 7SD.

Tel: 01964 503392

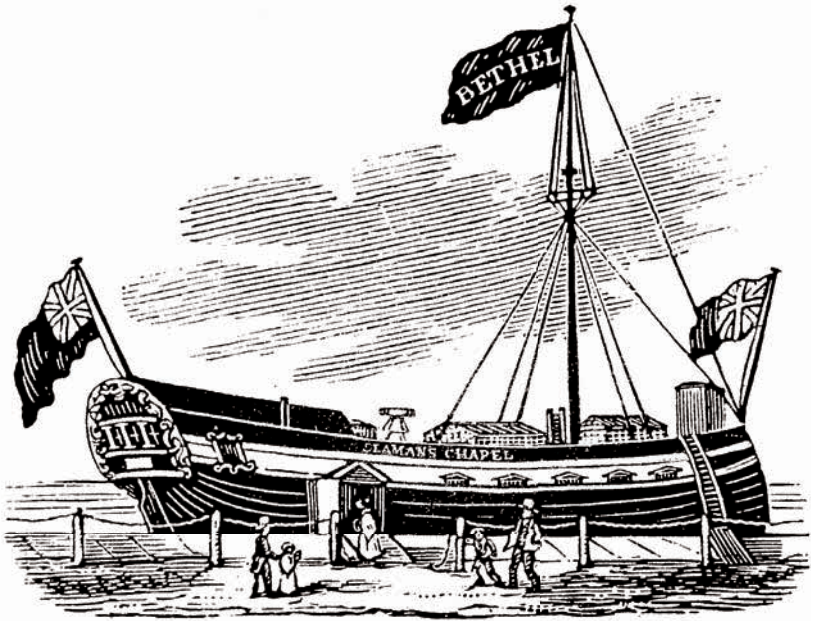
Email: [misslynneb@aol.com](mailto:misslynneb@aol.com)



Inside front cover - plan showing location of the orphanage on Spring Bank, Hull

## Early Origins - How it all began...

The foundation of the Hesslewood Children's Orphanage followed some years after the 'Port of Hull Society' instituted religious instruction for seamen in a 'floating chapel' in Princes Dock in 1821.



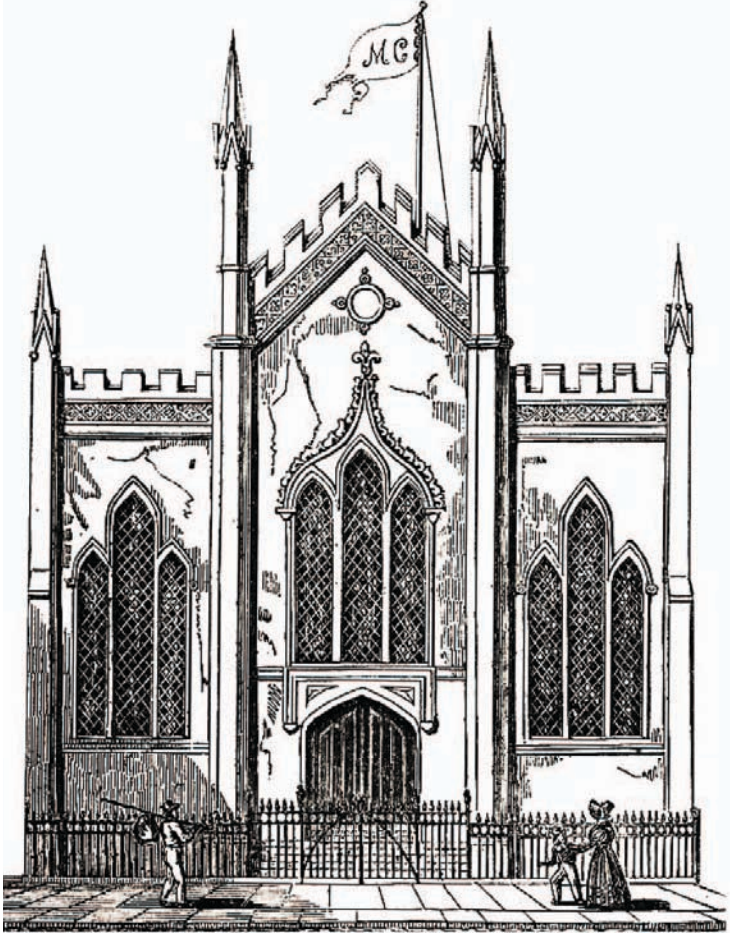
**The Valiant - the first floating chapel in Hull.**

Image is from the publication 'Our Orphans' by J.D. Hicks.



## The Mariner Church

The first Mariner Church to be established in England was formed from the breakaway from the 'Port of Hull Society' and led to the foundation of the old Dagger Lane chapel.



The Mariners' Church, Hull.

Image is from the publication 'Our Orphans' by J.D. Hicks.

## Journey to Mariners' Church Sailors' Orphan Society

### The Pease Family

The first association with the Pease Family is through Joseph Robinson Pease II who, at the formation of the Mariners' Church Sailors' Orphan Society in 1853 became the society's first Chairman.

Joseph Robinson Pease II's main business interest was in managing the Pease Bank but he had many other diverse interests and roles in the local community such as being a Justice of the Peace and promoting the Hull and Selby Railway, (which passed over his land) of which he was Vice Chairman. Joseph was one of the first to set up allotments for workers and he was a prominent member of the church. He married Harriet Walker of Beverley and they had six children who survived and several others who died early. He was also something of a hypochondriac and records much of his medical history in his Journal; several times he spent the winter on the south coast on the advice of his doctors. Much of his Journal also records his love of travelling the country, though he never went overseas. He was also a man of very exacting standards when it came to his employees. Servants failing to match up often found themselves seeking a new position elsewhere.

*The Hull Packet* wrote of him, "he, the least obtrusive of men, has occupied a foremost place in every movement for advancing the material prosperity of the town, for furthering the education of the poor, for promoting religious knowledge, and for extending the influence and increasing the usefulness of the Church".



# The Pease Family of Hesslewood

**Joseph (1688-1778) m Mary Turner (in 1717 in Hull)**  
(Robert, Joseph, Hester, Mary)



**Mary (1727-57) m Robert Robinson (in 1751)**  
(Joseph)



**Joseph Robinson 1 (1752-1807) m Anne Twigge (in 1778)**  
(Joseph, Joseph, Clifford, George, Anne, Mary, Charlotte)



**Joseph Robinson 2 (1789 -1865) m Harriet Walker (in 1818)**  
(Joseph, George, James, Arthur, Harriet, Emily)



**Joseph Walker (1820-82) m Barbara Palmer (in 1842)**  
(Henry, Charles, Francis, Edward, Barbara, Eleanor, Charlotte)



**Henry J R (1843-92) m Dorothy Boulderson Barkworth (in 1869)**  
(Joseph, Dora, William, Barbara, Godfrey)



**Joseph Robinson 3 (1873-1915) m Nony Isabel Colville**  
(Dora, Barbara, Nony, Humphrey, Heyrick Colville)

## Ringing the Changes....

In 1866 the Mariners' Church Sailors' Orphan Society changed its name to the Hull Seamen's & General Orphan Asylum, a charity entirely reliant on voluntary contributions – endowments, subscriptions, legacies and investments plus collecting boxes, flag days, concerts and galas.

Fundraising included bazaars (organised by a ladies' committee), church sermons and regular annual giving. Those who gave annually were asked to vote for the scholars who would be admitted each year.

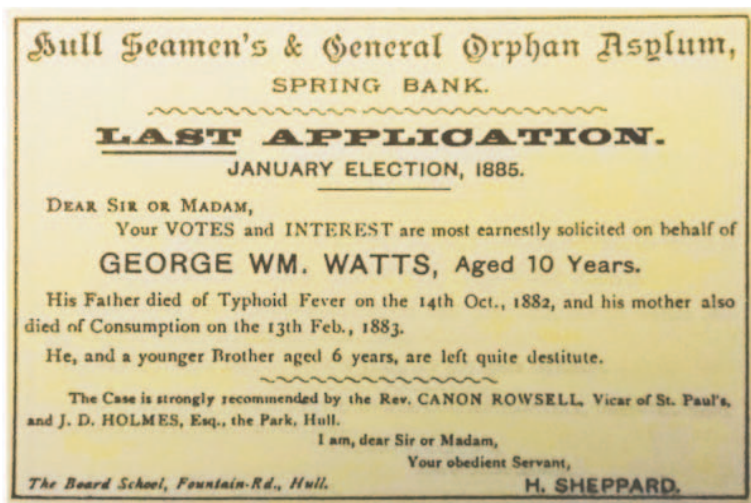


Image from the publication 'Our Orphans' by J.D. Hicks.

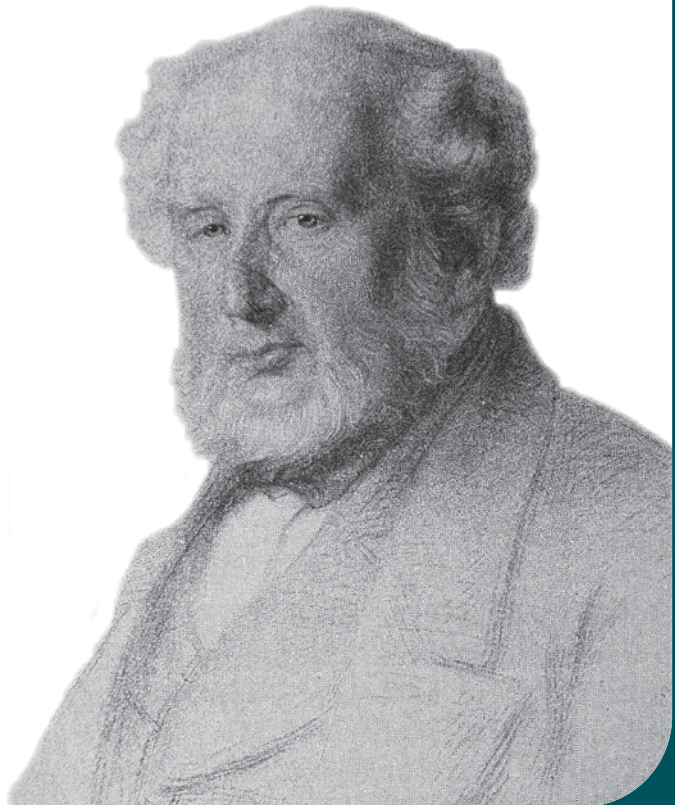
## Did you Know?

In 1864 Joseph Gee made a gift of £100 to the Hull Mariners' Church Sailors' Orphan Society to start the fundraising for the Hull Seamen's and General Orphan Asylum in Spring Bank, Hull.



## Hull Seamen's and General Orphan Asylum

The Founders, including the Wilson family, provided for the buildings and a liberal endowment. The Corporation of Hull Trinity House gave an acre of land. Orphans had to be elected for admission – those of seamen had precedence. Connection, or birth, within Hull, Bridlington, Grimsby, Gainsboro', Goole, or within seven miles of the Trinity House was required.



**Thomas Wilson,  
Chairman 1866-1869.**

Image from the publication  
'Our Orphans' by J.D. Hicks.

## Opening the Orphanage

The foundation stone for the new, Elizabethan style, building was laid in March 1865. The official opening followed a year later on 24 October by the Archbishop of York.

*'It is of red brick, with stone dressings, and four stories in height. The style is Elizabethan. The edifice stands 50 feet from the roadway, and is raised for the purpose of getting a basement story. There is a frontage on Springbank of 120 feet, and on each side of the main entrance is a bay window. On the basement floor are the day and work rooms, kitchen, offices, &c.; on the ground floor, school-rooms, class-rooms for both sexes, matron's room, waiting-rooms, stores, refectory, and corridors'*

Excerpt from James Sheahan's 1866 History of Hull.

### Did you Know?

Mr John Torr MP, a Liverpool merchant who previously lived in Hull, laid the foundation stone and offered £2,000 toward the Spring Bank building.

HULL  
SEAMEN'S & GENERAL ORPHAN ASYLUM.

---

*SPRING-BANK.*

---

OPENING OF THE ASYLUM.

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The Committee have the pleasure to announce that the Asylum will be  
OPENED BY  
HIS GRACE THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK,  
*On WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24th, 1866.*

---

The Opening Ceremony will take place at Half-past Twelve o'Clock,  
And will be followed by  
LUNCHEON, AT THE PUBLIC ROOMS, AT HALF-PAST ONE O'CLOCK,  
AT WHICH HIS GRACE WILL BE PRESENT.

---

THE LUNCHEON TICKETS WILL ADMIT THE HOLDER TO THE OPENING CEREMONY.

*TICKETS, including Wine—Gentlemen, 5s; Ladies, 3s. 6d.*

May be obtained, after the 16th inst., of Mr. Leng, Saville-Street; Mr. Harvatt, Whitefriargate; Mr. T. Reynoldson, Queen-Street; or of the Secretary, until Monday, the 22nd, at Five o'Clock. Subscribers, Donors, and Lady Collectors, will be admitted to view the Building on Friday, Saturday, and Monday, the 26th, 27th, and 29th inst., between the hours of Ten and Four, by Ticket, to be obtained of the Secretary, after the 22nd inst.

R. MIDDLEMISS,

12th October, 1866.

Hon. Sec., 11, Parliament-Street, Hull.

## Living at the orphanage

The home opened to the first intake of orphans in 1866.

As well as receiving orphans to the establishment, the Orphanage assisted those residing at home with their relations by providing them with clothing and educating them at Board Schools.

Like many establishments of its type, the home had its own boys' band that performed at local events.

In 1869 an additional acre of land was purchased for a large schoolroom at the west end of the building, which was opened in 1871.

An east wing was added in 1874 with a further extension in 1881.

By 1891 two hundred and two children were resident, 103 boys and 99 girls.



Mr George Johnson lived in Spring Bank Orphanage from age 6 to 14. *'Living in Spring Bank was just like living in a jail. Even the teachers lived in just like us'*

Image from the Hull Seamen's and General Orphanage Archives, housed at the Hull History Centre.





Scholars at Spring Bank Orphanage, brother and sister Alfred and Ada Hunter aged 11 and 13. Image is from the publication 'Our Orphans' by J.D. Hicks.

Spring Bank Orphanage, Hull. The boys pose in the band with their instruments and conductor. Date: 1920. Mary Evans Picture Library.





## **Pastures New..... Leaving Spring Bank Orphanage**

By 1919 the House Committee had become aware that the Spring Bank premises were no longer suitable as an orphanage. At the same time the Government was looking for suitable premises to adapt as sheltered workshops for disabled ex-soldiers and sailors.

### **Did you Know?**

In 1900 there were 181 children in the orphanage  
- 94 boys & 87 girls.



Entrance gate pier for the perimeter fence of the former Spring Bank Orphanage.

© Copyright Bernard Sharp

## **Moving On.....**

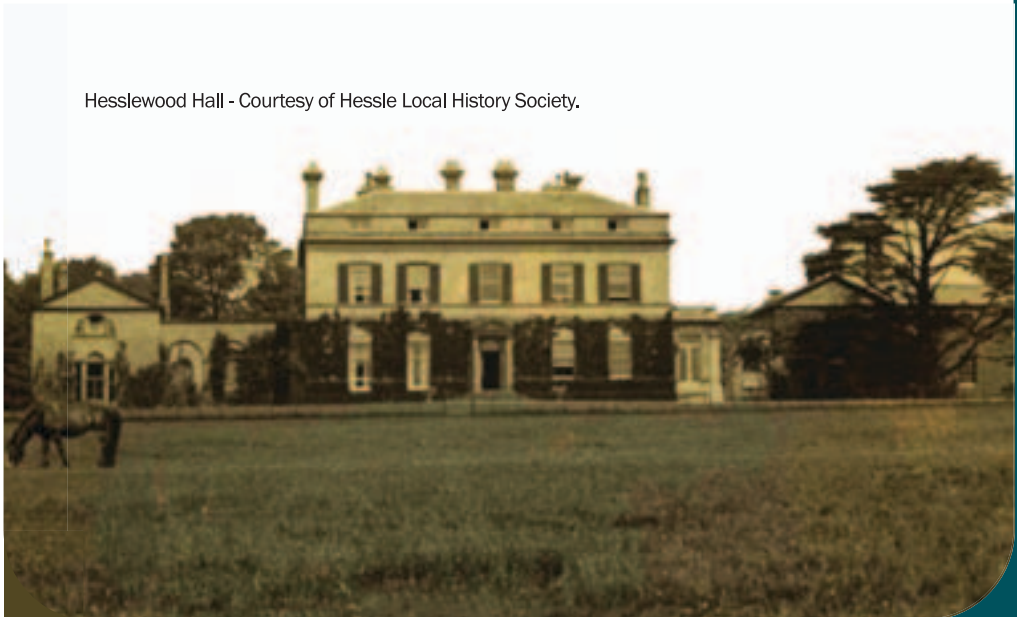
### **The Journey to Hesslewood Hall - The Pease Family Home**

In 1920 the decision was made to move to a country site. Hesslewood Hall was chosen, the family home of Joseph Robinson Pease II (the first Chairman of the Mariners' Church Sailors' Orphan Society).

Although the Hull branch of the Pease family can be traced back to the 1500s they do not have a connection with Hesslewood until the mid eighteenth century when Joseph Pease and his son take an interest in the house and the nearby chalk quarries. In 1788 Joseph Robinson Pease had negotiated to buy Hesslewood outright (which included swapping land in Cottingham for part of the Hesslewood estate).

It is to the second Joseph Robinson Pease that we owe a great debt for our knowledge of the family and the estate for he kept a journal from 1822 - 1865 which records in great detail life at Hesslewood and the family businesses up to his death in 1865.

Hesslewood Hall - Courtesy of Hessele Local History Society.



## Pastures New.....

### Hull Seamen's and General Orphanage

An appeal was started before the move: £25,000 was needed on top of the purchase cost of £11,500 to fit out the house and erect the necessary additional buildings. The accommodation in the old house was limited, and suitable huts had to be erected in the grounds.

The fundraising was ambitious, and was aimed partly at the firms connected with shipping and fishing in the city. The recently amalgamated Ellerman Wilson Line gave generously, and Mrs Arthur Wilson gave £1,000, while her son, Captain Stanley Wilson MP, was President of the fundraising campaign. There were the usual concerts and galas. £6,325 had been raised by Christmas Day 1920, although the appeal fell short of the target amount.

#### Hull Daily Mail - 20 Jun. 1920, p2

Hessle's population will receive a substantial addition before the summer is far advanced. It has been known for some time that the transfer of the family of 170 orphans from the Hull General and Sailors' Orphanage on Spring-bank to the pleasanter country surroundings of Hesslewood, the well known Pease's mansion to the west of the village, would very possibly take place. I understand the various formalities have been completed, and the business of making the house ready is proceeding....

**Hesslewood Hall** - Courtesy of  
Hessle Local History Society.



## Home for Scholars.....

### Hesslewood Hall from the 1920s to the 1960s

The various Masters and Matrons at Hesslewood Hall were Mr and Mrs Matthews in 1922, Mr and Mrs George Ernest Charlton from 1923, Mr and Mrs E. R. C. Roberts from July 1941 and in May 1946, Mr and Mrs Anderson who stayed until May 1977. In 1983 the Superintendent was Mr. Richardson and the Senior Housemother was Mrs. Adams. The orphanage closed in 1984.

*JB. who grew up in the orphanage recalls:*

*'In addition to attending the Hessle schools, the children were instructed in domestic work, handwork, music, gardening etc. Girls stayed in the orphanage for two years after reaching school-leaving age, and boys for one year. The Orphanage officers found work for them and no one left without a job to go to and somewhere to live.*

*Children were not allowed to use the main staircase with its great polished banisters. The only exception was when a girl was to be married from the Orphanage.*

*Founders' Day saw celebrations and a special tea. A hymn was always sung, and the oldest child at the time would receive a Bible and Prayer Book, leather-bound".*



Above are a selection of photographs showing activities at Hesslewood Hall from the 1920s through to the 1950s.

Image is from the publication - 'Our Orphans' by J.D. Hicks.

## Home for Scholars

### Hesslewood Hall from the 1920s to the 1960s

The distinctive uniform worn by the scholars at both Spring Bank and Hesslewood went through a major change in the 1940s as reported by the Hull Daily Mail.

#### Hull Daily Mail 28 Oct. 1942, p. 3,

...the Committee of the Hesslewood Orphanage have decided to abandon the uniform and clothe the children in such a way that they will not be distinguishable from other children, though they will still wear a badge and the band will keep the uniform when fulfilling engagements“...



Flag Day Poster. Image courtesy of Debbie Barbor.



## Stately Home

### Hesslewood Hall from 1970s to the 1980s

JB. who grew up in the orphanage in the 1970s recalls:

'We lived like gentry... We lived in a stately home. There were portraits on the walls, fine rugs and furniture, and massive skirting boards and coving, and there were the huge grounds and three or four gardeners as well as a handyman and cleaners.

People felt sorry for us, living in an orphanage, but we were properly brought up. The tables were always beautifully laid, with real linen, and you never put a bottle of milk or a jar of jam on the table: milk came to the table in good jugs and jam in a nice dish. The bedsteads were like hospital beds but the sheets were starched and were changed every week. There were huge portraits of the Pease family and the children thought the Pease's haunted the house'.



*'Always happy memories of Hesslewood. Even though we were 'Staff Kids' we were all one big 'Happy Family'. Kay, Elaine & Trish*

*'Christmas Eve midnight parties'. Nigel*

*'Our house mother was a lovely, wonderful caring lady who treated us well, made us who we are today'. Bob, Nigel, David and Paul*

*'So many good memories, learning to swim in the open pool, Gymkhanas, playing tennis and the beautiful walled garden'. Marjorie 1979*



The 'staircase' in the entrance to Hesslewood Hall.  
Courtesy of Ross Allenby



Children enjoying activities at Hesslewood.  
Image courtesy of John S. Anderson.

## The future of the Hesslewood Orphanage...

From the late 1950s onwards, there was a gradual change of government policy relating to the treatment of children in institutional care. The emerging view on child care practice deemed it more appropriate for these children to be looked after in private homes by either adoption or fostering, effectively signalling the end for orphanages and other similar institutions.

It was clear that the Management Board of the Orphanage would have to make difficult decisions in considering how it would best meet this challenge.



Hesslewood Children's Home sign.  
Image courtesy of John S. Anderson.

## The closure of the Orphanage and the foundation of Hesslewood Children's Trust

The impending closure of the Orphanage was formally announced at the AGM held in January 1985. As part of the closure process the Board ensured the remaining seven children were found suitable foster homes, made the remaining staff redundant, and arranged for a sale of the contents.

The first sale in April 1985 realised a gross figure of £24,121 and a net figure of £20,699. A later sale realised a further £1,711 net, with an additional £300 being paid for garden equipment by the buyer of the land. The site was sold by public auction and realised an amount of £380,000, which was in excess of expectations. The transaction was formally completed on 28th June, 1985.

### The historic hall that provided a home for hundreds of children



**FOND FAREWELL** - Residents of the orphanage say goodbye to Mr and Mrs A. Anderson who retired as superintendant, secretary and matron in May 1977. The couple had been at Hesslewood since 1946.

Newspaper Article -  
Courtesy of Hull Daily Mail.

## The Hesslewood Children's Trust

The Hesslewood Children's Trust was set up to invest the proceeds of the sale and distribute the income on terms similar to those by the original founders of the Hull Seamen's and General Orphanage. The Charity Commission sealed the formal terms of the Registered Charity, Number 529804, on 20th May 1986.

Since then, and through cautious management of the funds, the Trustees have been able to distribute in the region of £70,000 per year. About 40% of this amount goes in Voucher Payments to young people, referred by local care agencies, trying to set up a new home.

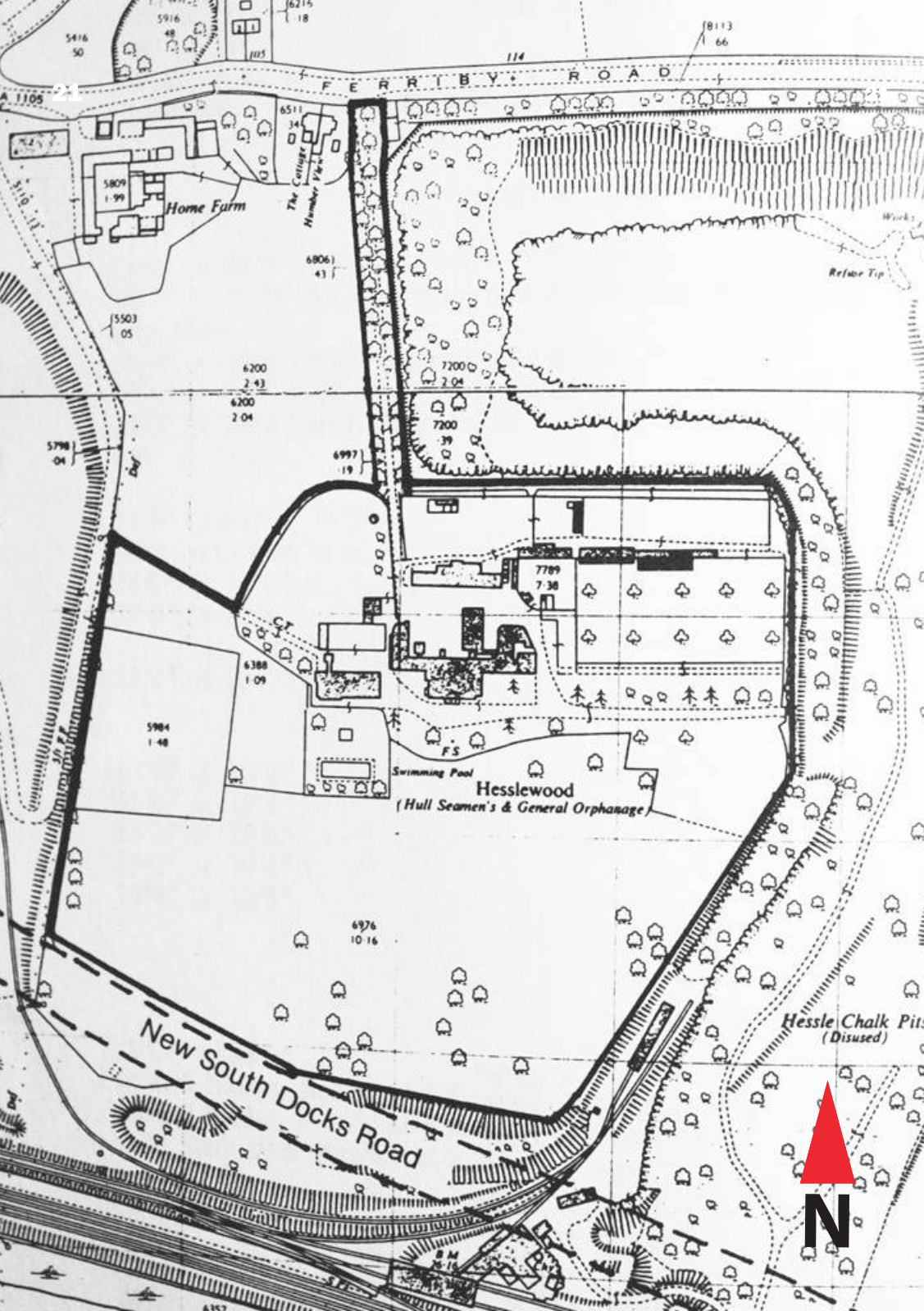
Grants have also been made for personal support for educational and training needs, including help for degree courses in dance. Funding is currently supplied for Bursaries to eligible students at Hull and Lincoln Universities. Many other individual grants have been made, including funding for computers especially during the Covid 19 situation.

The Trust has also supported other Charities supplying the needs of disadvantaged children.



Inside back cover - plan showing location of Hesslewood Hall.  
Courtesy of Ross Allenby





5416 50  
5916 48  
6215 18  
105  
114  
18113 66  
A 1105 21  
5809 1 99  
Home Farm  
The Cottage Number 14  
6806 43  
5503 05  
6200 2 43  
6200 2 04  
5798 04  
6997 19  
7200 2 04  
7200 39  
7789 7 38  
6388 1 09  
5984 1 48  
Swimming Pool  
Hesslewood  
(Hull Seamen's & General Orphanage)  
6976 10 16  
New South Docks Road  
Hessle Chalk Pits  
(Disused)  
N





Cover Image - Hull Seamen's and General Orphan Asylum, Spring Bank, Hull, 1865 -1921.