

BFSS Archives Info sheet No. 3

Stockwell College

The history of Stockwell College goes back to the end of the 18th Century, when Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, set up his first school in Southwark in 1798. Overwhelmed by the number of children coming to

During the 19th century the College made a distinguished contribution to the education of teachers. Degree courses and postgraduate courses were available as well as the normal course of training. A significant number of students attended as day students.

In 1935 another move was made. The BFSS bought the former Palace of the Bishops of Rochester at Bromley in Kent – a historic site as the Bishops had had a manor in Bromley since before the Norman conquest. The 18th C house was adapted and extended to provide accommodation for the 114 women students.

In 1940 the college was evacuated to Devon, to a mansion built by Brunel near Torquay. The return to Bromley in 1945 was to a scene of devastation. The Music House, craft rooms, PE hall, students' common room and caretaker's house had all been destroyed as a result of bombing, and enormous air raid shelters had built by the Borough Council on the east and west of the building for use by the townspeople. High blast walls obscured the windows and the grounds had been turned into allotments.

The next few years saw much reconstruction, and additional large houses were purchased in Wanstead Road, a mile away from the main site. By 1960 c. 200 students were following one or two year training courses leading to the Teacher's Certificate, plus small group of men and women following one-