
JAN BRANSON
National Institute for Deaf Studies and Sign Language Research, La Trobe University, Australia
and
DON MILLER
Department of Anthropology, Monash University, Australia

The Farrar Collection
In the John Rylands University Library of Manchester in Deansgate, there is a priceless collection of books referred to as

1 Abraham Farrar was a very private person. He left no memoirs and no private papers. Tracking him down has been an intriguing adventure which could not have been accomplished without the help of the following people. First and foremost we thank the staff of the John Rylands Library in Deansgate who patiently helped us find our way through the Farrar Collection. In particular we would like to thank Anne Young, Alistair Cooper, Jean Bostock, Ann Crowther-Doyle and Sarah Lucas who all became intrigued by the collection as it emerged from the depths of the library and made the task both exciting and efficient. Dr Peter McNiven gave our project his full support. For her on-going support in our seemingly never ending research into the education of the deaf in Britain we also extend our sincere thanks to Mary Plackett, librarian of the Library of the Royal National Institute for the Deaf in London. We would also like to thank the staff of the following institutions in London: The Family Records Centre, Somerset House, and the Geological Society. Our thanks also to the staff of the West Yorkshire Archive Service in Wakefield and the Leeds Local History Unit in the Leeds Public Library, and the staff of the Local History Service in the Manchester Public Library. A very special thankyou goes to the Revd Malcolm Deakin, current Minister of 'the Doddridge Church', Castle Hill United Reformed Church, Northampton, who not only gave us open access to the church's papers, including those of Thomas Arnold, but also assisted us in tracking down the houses that Farrar had lived in with Arnold in Northampton. Our two months at Gallaudet College in Washington D.C. where we were examining the Baker Collection and associated archives also provided vital backup material. For their help in the archives our thanks to Ulf Hedberg and Michael Olsen and for their hospitality at Gallaudet our special thanks to Michael Karshmer and Sally Dunn. The librarian of the Volta Bureau in Washington D.C., Judith Anderson, also provided open access to valuable archives.
'The Farrar Collection', which has been neglected by researchers for decades. The collection focuses on the following fields:

- the education of the deaf;
- attitudes towards deafness and deaf people;
- the medical treatment of deafness;
- the philosophy of language — including the relationship between different linguistic modes and the acquisition of knowledge; the search for universal alphabets and languages; and ability of different languages to deal with philosophical issues;
- the study of sign languages.

Many of the items are primarily orientated towards other fields of knowledge but touch on the topics listed above. The collection contains an extraordinary range of material published between 1509 and 1950, items added after Abraham Farrar’s death in 1944 being purchased from a bequest of £1,000 left to the Library in his will. Many of the items are rare and some are unique, such as the manuscript materials relating to the work of Henry Baker in the early eighteenth century. The foreign language component of the collection is also high with original works by key theorists and educators from France, Spain, Italy, Holland, Belgium and Germany.

The collection embodies the lifelong work of an extraordinary individual, Abraham Farrar, a deaf man whose educational achievements and ambitions rewrote British attitudes towards the education of deaf people. Farrar became the model of the potential success of the ‘pure oralist’ tradition of deaf education, the tradition teaching not through sign language and the manual alphabet, but through the teaching of speech and lip reading.

Farrar’s own ‘oralist’ orientation has not however given the collection the slant that might have been expected. Farrar was first and foremost a scholar who believed in examining all sides of any issue. The collection therefore contains not only key works in the oral education of the deaf but a large and comprehensive collection of works dealing with sign language — linguistic and pedagogical. His fascination with early references to deaf people ensures that Roman, Greek and medieval references to deaf people are also well documented in the collection. Farrar’s fascination with debates about the relationship between language and knowledge also ensures that the work of the early British theorists and educators such as Wilkins, Bulwer, Wallis, Holder, Dalgarno and Henry Baker are available in their original form.

In 1936, in his own annotated catalogue of the books that had accumulated in the Library for Deaf Education at the University
of Manchester, the majority collected and donated by himself, Abraham Farrar wrote:

This catalogue has been compiled as a permanent record of my efforts for forty-five years in collecting books relating to the education of the deaf, especially those of early date, and with special reference to its history. It is a revised edition of my printed catalogue issued in 1932 and includes additions made since that date.

It should be explained that a Library was initiated by the National Association of Teachers of the Deaf (as it then was) after the death of Thomas Arnold of Northampton in 1897 as a memorial of his work as a teacher and writer, and called the Arnold Library. His collection of books on the education of the deaf was purchased as a nucleus, to which in 1906 I added a small collection of thirty rare books.

In 1919 the Library for Deaf Education was established in connection with the Department for the Training of Teachers of the Deaf in the Victoria University of Manchester, and in 1922 the Arnold Library was purchased from the National College of Teachers of the Deaf, and it then ceased to be known by that name. In 1928, I presented the Library with another and larger collection of books, including many rare ones, to which I have since made numerous additions.

It is hoped that this Catalogue, with its notes to many of the books, will be found an aid to a better knowledge and use of the Library. With some exceptions all the books either deal with the education of the deaf or contain references to it. These exceptions refer to books on other subjects by some of the authors and are included as interesting evidence of their versatility.

Reference may be made to my Historical Introduction to Bonet’s ‘Simplification of the Letters of the Alphabet’ and my ‘Arnold on the Education of the Deaf’ for further particulars of many of the books in this Catalogue. Gingot’s and Alings’s bibliographies, in the Library, will also be found useful.

Among educators of the deaf in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Abraham Farrar was known as the famous pupil of, and then assistant to, the great educator of the deaf Thomas Arnold, and as a scholar and collector of books. He was all those things and more, but has today been virtually forgotten. During his life he lived in the shadow first of Arnold himself and then of Arnold’s memory and reputation. While he was seen as extraordinary, his achievements were always qualified by his deafness — ‘extraordinary for a deaf man’ — and he was thus constantly marginalized by the attitudes of others towards deafness. Arnold was seen as the scholar; Farrar as the research assistant, collector and bibliographer. Here we explore the life of Abraham Farrar, a scholar in his own right, who has left a priceless legacy.

Abraham Farrar
Abraham Farrar was born on 23 January 1861 at Hyde Park in Headingley, Leeds, the first child of Sarah and Abraham. In 1865

his only sibling, a sister Blanche, was born. At that time Hyde Park Road was lined with parkland and Royal Park had yet to be subdivided for housing. The Farrar’s house was a large house which backed onto Royal Park. Across the road was Woodhouse Moor, a popular place for walking and sporting activities. The house is no longer there. By the mid-1880s Royal Park had been subdivided and roads and houses sprang up where there had once been twenty-eight acres of parkland, including recreation areas and a zoo. The Farrars’ old house was demolished in these developments, but by 1880, they had moved to peaceful rural surroundings at The Grange, Beech Grove, Harrogate. The property, set on over an acre of land, included not only the main house but also a cottage, greenhouse, stables, coachhouse and other outbuildings.

At the time of his birth in 1861, the census returns record that the Farrar household consisted of his mother and father, a cook named Sarah Shaws, a nurse named Sarah Cuthbertson, aged fifteen, and Eliza Shaw, his mother’s younger sister. His mother was twenty-two years old and his father twenty-six. His father’s occupation was listed as ‘land owner’ and Eliza Shaw was listed as ‘owner of mining shares’. On his birth certificate his father’s occupation is given as ‘landed proprietor’. In the same census, his grandparents, Abraham Farrar aged sixty-six and Jane Farrar aged sixty-one, were listed as the occupants of Greenhill House and Lodge in Bramley. His grandfather was also listed as a ‘land owner’.

Abraham Farrar was born into a very wealthy family. He would never, in his very long life, have to work for a living. He, like his father, was to be a person of independent means. Farrar’s mother, the second of three sisters also came from a wealthy family. Her father Joseph Shaw left a sum of over £14,000 in his will despite having made handsome settlements on Farrar’s mother on her marriage. After his death his estate was handled by Farrar’s father.

Farrar writes how as a child he used to go hunting with his father on property the family owned in another part of West Yorkshire, land which now is part of the urban sprawl of Leeds. Farrar’s ancestors had in fact been the lords of the manor in Arnley and while they had sold the manor in the eighteenth century, they remained in the area as one of Leeds’s oldest and most prominent families.

Indentures held in the Deeds Office in Wakefield in Yorkshire are full of land dealings by Farrar’s father and grandfather. His grandfather, who had been born in Bramley in 1795, was a

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gentleman farmer, having inherited land from his father. He owned hundreds of acres of land throughout Bramley, Farnley and Arnley as well as numerous cottages and a mill. His income would have been very substantial. In 1830 he married a local girl Jane Bateson, five years his junior in St Peters, Leeds. His son, Farrar’s father, born in 1834, continued in the family tradition to manage family lands and to purchase holdings for himself. By 1875, the grandfather’s lands had been transferred to Farrar’s father.

When Farrar was three years old he caught scarlet fever and lost his hearing completely. This also caused him to lose the speech he had already acquired. His father was now faced with the problem of his deaf son’s education. At that time, deaf children from wealthy families were often sent as private pupils to board with and be educated privately by the headmaster of one of the charity institutions such as that in London in the Old Kent Road, the Doncaster Institution, the Birmingham Institution, and the Edinburgh and Glasgow Institutions. These schools taught largely using what has been called ‘the combined method’. Instruction and communication were through natural sign language and the manual alphabet, often through the agency of deaf teachers and teaching aides, with some speech training. But speech training was often provided only for the private pupils, or ‘parlour pupils’ as they were called, given the intensive one-to-one instruction required to generate any significant skills in speech or lip reading. In 1864, when Farrar became deaf, there were virtually no alternatives to the public schools. As far as private schools teaching through speech and lip reading alone were concerned, Miss Susannah Hull’s Private Oral School for the Deaf founded in 1863 in Bexley in Kent did not at that stage take profoundly deaf pupils. The Jews’ Deaf and Dumb Home in London, founded in 1863, was yet to recruit the Dutch oralist William Van Praagh, recruited in 1866, to introduce an oral system of education, and Gerrit Van Asch, also from Rotterdam, had been privately engaged by a family in Manchester in 1860 and was yet to open a private school for the deaf in Earls Court, London.

Farrar’s father did not choose to send him to any of the public institutions. Instead, he sought the services of a Revd Thomas Arnold, Minister of the Doddridge Chapel in Northampton, who had had experience with the teaching of the deaf earlier in his career. He eventually persuaded the Revd Arnold to take on the responsibility of educating his son. According to Farrar, Arnold took some persuading. This is hardly surprising. Arnold was fifty years old, had limited previous experience in teaching the deaf, and was the pastor of a busy non-Conformist congregation with a large and expanding ministry. To understand Farrar’s subsequent education and indeed his whole future, we must turn briefly to the life of Thomas Arnold.
Thomas Arnold

Possessed of very considerable intellectual activity and rare culture, a born thinker, philosopher, and teacher, he was a man of ideas and ideals.\(^5\)

Thomas Arnold was born in 1816 in the Moravian settlement of Gracehill near Ballymena in Antrim, the son of a cabinet maker. Arnold’s first contact with the teaching of deaf students occurred while he was master of the boys’ school at Gracehill. His brother agreed to take a young man by the name of James Beatty from the Claremont School for the Deaf as an apprentice. Arnold learnt to communicate with him using signs and the manual alphabet.

James Beatty had been taught at Claremont by signs, writing and the manual alphabet. My interest in him was aroused. I learned the manual alphabet and his mimic gestures ... I felt sorry for him .... Thus I was baptised to be a teacher of his class, though I knew it not till years afterwards.\(^6\)

But his role as a teacher of the deaf was to be very intermittent for many years.

While still at Gracehill Arnold sought out teachers and libraries to advance his own education:

A mathematical master was found in the settlement, but for Greek I had to go to Ballymena. Three lessons a week cost me eighteen miles on foot, and the lack of the accustomed tea. But I was young, robust, full of hope, and trust, and thought nothing of the toil. Besides, I could hum over the Greek verbs without interruption.\(^7\)

At the age of twenty, he left Gracehill to work as a missioner in the Manchester City Mission. For four years he worked among the mill workers in the slums of Manchester but in 1840 he applied for a job as an assistant teacher to Charles Baker, principal at the Yorkshire Institution for the Deaf and Dumb in Doncaster. He describes his arrival at the school as follows:

More than one hundred scholars were present, and as I glanced over them, I realised their sad privations. My sympathy was deeply moved, and for the first time the burden was felt of being their teacher. To instruct them would be difficult, trying, and make the greatest demands on patience and perseverance. In truth, such self-denial as was never required in teaching the hearing. But I was young, hopeful, and felt something of the enterprising courage which anticipates the pleasure of mastered difficulties.\(^8\)

The Doncaster school taught exclusively using the manual method but there was a growing interest in the oral method. Arnold explains:

\(^5\) The Times, 25 January 1897.
\(^7\) Ibid., 24.
As Mr Baker had expressed a wish that I should attempt the oral instruction of some of the scholars, he gave me a letter of introduction to Mr J. Hind, headmaster of the Liverpool Institution, who taught a class by this method. My visit was very short and limited to the hour given to the morning lesson. I heard some of them speak distinctly, and saw something of Mr Hind’s method, but their lip-reading was defective and they used the manual alphabet or signs with one another. However I saw enough to convince me that it would be an efficient method if exclusively employed. [At Doncaster] oral instruction had not been attempted, so I was anxious to have a class and give it a fair trial.\(^9\)

Despite considerable difficulties in introducing oralism so that progress was ‘slow and unsatisfactory’ the success of one student George Cockin, who developed good articulation and could lip-read to a certain extent convinced Arnold that given the right conditions oralism was the best method for teaching the deaf.

Young Cockin’s progress was not merely encouraging to his teacher: it was converting. Previously I was led to believe that gestures were indispensable in the education of deaf-mutes. Now I was convinced that they were incidental to the age in which speech was not employed, and that if the oral method was initiated as early as an infant could be taught to utter and imitate articulate sounds, gestures would lose their hold and no longer be imagined as the original language of man.\(^10\)

Arnold was to wait almost twenty years before he was to be given a chance to try out his ideas. His reminiscences of the state of the education of the deaf at the time charts the gaps he would seek to fill through and with Farrar through the 1870s and 1880s:

The education of the deaf, I rejoice to think, is not now what it was fifty-five years ago ... Pure oral instruction was unknown in an English school. The training of the teacher was very much what he learned in conducting the different classes. No libraries with works on different methods were provided for him. The art was almost occult, and its study jealously guarded from those who could not pay or would not spend years in learning ... Dr Watson and Mr Baker published on the subject, but beyond their contributions there was nothing in our language on the history of methods, their exposition, or the lives of the great masters. Class books and lessons were either private property or the impromptu composition of the teacher.

Further, there were no lectures, no meetings of teachers, and no journals with reports of what had been done at home and abroad. America had broken the ice by teachers’ conferences and books of lessons, but we did not see them. There was a library in the [Bakers’] house, but its books were too precious to be lent.\(^11\) ... Signs had failed in the higher classes; clear exposition of substitutes, analysis

\(^8\) Ibid., 31.
\(^9\) Ibid., 39.
\(^10\) Ibid., 39.
\(^11\) This collection of books, ‘The Baker Collection’, is now in the library of Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. While many of its volumes are also to be found in the Farrar Collection, the two are very different, the Baker collection focusing on materials relating directly to teaching, while the Farrar collection is much broader with more philosophical works. The foreign language components of the two collections are also different, the Baker Collection containing a large German language component, while the Farrar Collection has a large number of French works.
of methods, and an impartial comparison of their respective merits, with an earnest striving to correct their defects and lead on to a higher development, ought to have followed. Hence I resolved, if time, means, and the knowledge could be acquired, to show what might be done, and supply a Manual of Methods for the assistance of teachers.\textsuperscript{12}

The view of the state of the education of the deaf at the time is in fact ill-informed and biased considerably by his later battles with those who favoured the use of sign language and the manual alphabet, but it does chart the territory that Farrar was to cover with Arnold. Libraries, the careful analysis of methods, and the writing of manuals for teachers, were all central to Arnold’s later career as a teacher of the deaf.

After two years at Doncaster Arnold was offered the Principalship of the newly formed Brighton Institution. This he rejected as he felt unable to comply with the condition of teaching the catechism as interpreted by the established church. For the first time he professed himself to be a Nonconformist. In 1843 he left the Doncaster Institution and entered Rotherham College to train as a Congregational minister. Here he studied theology under Dr W. H. Stowell and continued his studies of Latin, Greek and Hebrew. A stay in Hamburg towards the end of his training provided the opportunity to learn German.

After ministries at Burton-on-Trent and then Smethwick, Arnold was invited to Australia as minister of the Congregational Church at Balmain, a suburb of Sydney, arriving in 1858. While in Sydney, he was approached by Thomas Holt, a wealthy colonist and a member of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, to educate his son Frederick who was deaf. Holt had heard of Arnold’s earlier experience with teaching the deaf and persuaded him to take on his twelve year old son as there was no school for the deaf in the Colony.\textsuperscript{13} With the agreement of his congregation, Arnold accepted Frederick and his younger brother as day pupils.

In 1860 ill-health forced Arnold to return to England. Frederick Holt returned with him so that he could complete his education. On his return to England, Arnold was approached by the congregation of the Congregational Church on Castle Hill in Northampton to take over their ministry, left vacant more than a year earlier. And so Arnold began his ministry of the Church of Doddridge and settled in Northampton where he would stay for the rest of his long life. Frederick Holt stayed with Arnold for two years but when he left, Arnold’s role as a teacher of the deaf again

\textsuperscript{12} ‘Reminiscences’, 42–3.

\textsuperscript{13} The first schools for the deaf in Australia were in fact established in Sydney and Melbourne within months of each other in 1860. Both were established by educated deaf men, the Sydney school by Thomas Pattison formerly a pupil and assistant teacher at the Edinburgh Institution and the Melbourne school by Frederick John Rose, a former pupil of the Old Kent Road School in London.
had a short recess, although his note books\(^{14}\) show that he continued to read the international literature on the education of the deaf.

\textit{The Education of Arnold Farrar}

Six years after Frederick Holt’s departure, on 23 January 1868, a small boy arrived with his mother at 21 Primrose Hill, Northampton. Abraham Farrar was exactly seven years old. He was to provide the means for Arnold to put his ideas of teaching speech and lip-reading to the test. His arrival resulted in a life-long partnership, initially as student and teacher and then as colleagues and collaborators. Farrar’s success was to make Arnold famous, but not rich. More importantly, they were to have an enormous influence on the route taken by the British educational system for deaf children. Arnold and Farrar were of central importance in the eventual imposition of a particular form of deaf education, pure oralism, a form of education which has only recently been seriously challenged in Britain and elsewhere.

Farrar lived in the Arnold household as one of the family. Three years later at the time of the 1871 Census when Farrar was ten years old he is described as ‘deaf and dumb, now able to converse’. Arnold was fifty-six years old and his wife Sarah was fifty-two. The household boasted one servant, a young girl aged seventeen, called Selina Croyford. Farrar describes his memories of those early years:

Northampton at this time was a small, old fashioned country town with only half-a-dozen churches and only two or three boot and shoe manufactories of any great size. For the next few years I was Mr. Arnold’s only pupil, but life was by no means dull as his public position brought me into contact with many people of all sorts in both town and country, which, I may say, by the way, was of great benefit to me, as it gave scope for my speech and lip-reading.\(^{15}\)

Arnold led a very busy life as Minister for Doddridge Church, overseeing an extensive building programme, the opening of two branch churches and the extension of Sunday Schools. Arnold was an evangelical, with an evangelical fervour that he brought also to his support for the pure oralist method of educating the deaf:

And most of all, due to my God and Saviour, who called me to the work of a twofold ministry, who taught me from my youth by His chosen servants and made me an oral teacher of the deaf, by which they acquire the knowledge of sacred and secular truth, for He made me their missionary in vocation, sympathy, and self-consecration. They were sitting in the shadow of death and silence of the grave till I was enabled by the language of touch, the twin sister of sound, to

\(^{14}\) Thomas Arnold: handwritten notebook containing notes by Arnold on a range of sources on the history of the education of the deaf plus a description of his journeys to and from Australia and to the Holy Land. Held at Castle Hill United Reform Church, Northampton.  
\(^{15}\) Farrar’s letter to \textit{Spring Hill Magazine}, Northampton, no. 3 (1931), 5.
expel the gloom and by speech displace the silence. To Him belongs all the praise and glory who said 'Ephphatha to the deaf, and their ears were opened and the string of their tongues loosed, and they spake plain'.

But as far as Arnold was concerned, knowledge, whether sacred or secular, did not come easily. It required constant and painstaking study. He was first and foremost a scholar and it was this scholarship that he imparted to his pupil. While speech and lip-reading were seen as of central importance they were not an end in themselves but the path to knowledge. From the records of the Doddridge Chapel, it would appear that Arnold did not impose his religious views on Farrar. There is no record of Farrar attending the Chapel during his many years in Northampton and Farrar's own writings are completely lacking in the evangelical rhetoric that characterizes so much of Arnold's personal writing. Farrar's own marriage was to take place in an Anglican church.

For the next six years Farrar was the only child in the household. In addition to speech and lip-reading he was also given a good classical education. Through Farrar, Arnold developed the methods of speech training and lip-reading that were to be used by teachers for decades. Not only did Farrar have Arnold's undivided attention in 'class' but Farrar was ideal raw material — being extremely intelligent with a thirst for knowledge and having had no contact with sign language. Farrar was therefore in every sense the pure oral student. For Arnold, Farrar was the perfect test case of his method.

... I was greatly favoured in having the son of Mr. and Mrs. Farrar as my pupil. From the first day until the last of his education they confided in my sincerity and ability, patiently waited till the work was achieved that made him the first of deaf students in the Empire, rejoiced with me in my success, sympathised with me in struggling with difficulties, and gave not a few proofs of their liberality. The crucial test I had devised had all the time, liberty, and encouragement it required to make it perfect. ...

... I was happy to have him as my crucial test. He ended the contention.

The rarefied atmosphere in which Farrar was taught in fact proved little, for it bore virtually no relationship to the environment of the school classroom. As James Howard, head of the Yorkshire Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, Doncaster, was to write, in response to an article by Farrar.

Mr Farrar doubtless enjoyed exceptional privileges, inasmuch as expense was no object in his education. He was taught at reputedly the best private school for the deaf in the kingdom, and was permitted to remain under instruction several years; ... the very system advocated by Mr Farrar has been in operation in the Yorkshire County Institution at Doncaster for the last eight years ...

16 'Reminiscences', 'Prefatory'.
17 Ibid., 69.
18 Farrar, 'Speech for the deaf and dumb', Sunday Magazine, December 1883.
ABRAHAM FARRAR

... We labour, however, here under great disadvantages. Our pupils are for the greater part children of poor parents, who only allow them to remain at school an average of four years; and for lack of funds our teaching staff is not so numerous as it should be, the classes consisting of from 12 to 20 pupils, instead of the maximum number under one teacher being limited to ten — a *sine qua non* to success under the Oral system; ...

Howard still had great aspirations for the success of the oral system in schools, aspirations that were rarely fulfilled over the next hundred years, but Arnold's 'crucial test' did produce what the oralists needed above all else — a live success to be paraded before the wealthy and the powerful in the pursuit of a national oral system of education for the deaf. It was not until Farrar was thirteen that a second student by the name of Dixon, the brother of a future headmaster at the school, came to join Arnold's 'school'.

Arnold was beginning to make a name for himself lecturing on his art of teaching the deaf to speak. On 12 September 1874 he took Farrar with him for the first time. At the start of his lecture Arnold introduced Farrar to the audience as 'The son of a gentleman in Leeds who had been residing with him for about six years, and who had accompanied him tonight in order to make more evident to them the principles on which his education was constructed'. Arnold then explained his teaching rationale before demonstrating how he taught lip-reading. He argued that 'in every case the production of a vowel or consonant by the human voice was indicated by a change in muscle'. Farrar then demonstrated an ability to copy sounds made by Arnold before answering a series of simple questions. Farrar concluded by reading from the first Chapter of the Gospel of St John in Latin before repeating verses from a poem. The newspaper reported that he 'articulated with considerable accuracy' but that 'a want of flexibility was noticeable' in his voice.

The following year at a public exhibition both Farrar and Dixon were present. The usual presentation of following a dictation by Arnold was demonstrated before Farrar won the admiration of the audience:

With astonishing readiness and accuracy, and by an evident exercise of his reasoning faculties, not from memory, demonstrated a proposition from the second book of Euclid: gave the extraction of the square root from a number and the exposition of that extraction with algebraic proof. The pupil, in English analysis and Latin translation, as well as in mathematics, showed himself equal in intelligence and acquirement's to most boys of his age if not superior. ...

19 James Howard, Letter to the *Sunday Magazine*, December 1883.
20 *Northampton Mercury*, 12 September 1874.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
23 *Northampton Mercury*, 16 October 1875.
One impact of this demonstration was to gain the support of the local member, Mr Phipps, to lobby the government to provide education for all deaf and dumb in practice and not just in theory. The Elementary Education Act of 1870 had made education compulsory for all, including the deaf, but the means was not provided and the educational needs of thousands of poor deaf remained neglected. Farrar’s success provided added support for the extension of the School Board classes for the deaf which had begun in September 1874 under William Stainer, an experienced teacher of the deaf. The example of Farrar and the evangelical fervour of Arnold for the oral method were soon to result in the School Board classes following the oral method.

Farrar was by now showing so much promise as a student that in 1876 he entered and passed the local examination of Cambridge University just prior to his sixteenth birthday. This unprecedented success by Farrar brought Arnold a great deal of publicity. He was personally congratulated by both King Edward and the Prince of Wales. Farrar’s success was reported in many of the papers of the day including the Leeds Mercury in his home town of Leeds. Farrar’s success brought more students to the school.

It is not too much to say that the marked success of his [i.e. Arnold’s] pupil, Mr. Farrar, at the Cambridge Local Examination and at the London University made Mr. Arnold’s name famous throughout the length and breadth of this country, albeit he had been previously long and honourably known as a teacher of marked power and ability. 24

More parents applied to Arnold to educate their deaf children. The house in Primrose Hill became too small to accommodate everyone so Arnold moved to ‘Fair View’ in East Northampton.

Farrar was not yet sixteen years old. In 1877 accompanied by Mr and Mrs Arnold he toured Europe for two months meeting many eminent people. They visited Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France visiting several schools for the deaf including the Paris Institution. On their return home Arnold engaged a local science master and an Oxford scholar to prepare Farrar for the London University Matriculation examinations. In 1880 Farrar was awarded the Queen’s Prize at the South Kensington Science and Art Examinations in Chemistry and Geology. In 1881 he Matriculated from London University after sitting for exams which included Latin, Greek, French, Geometry, Algebra, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, English Language, History, and Grammar, with dictation.

The next event in my educational career was my success in matriculating in the University of London, the first real university test ever passed by a deaf person Britain, and for me a pretty stiff one as the subjects included, among others,

24 The Northampton Herald, Saturday, 11 June 1881.
Latin, Greek, French and Mathematics. Earl Granville, the eminent Victorian Statesman and Chancellor of the University, referred to it in his address at the presentation of degrees, and Earl Spencer, another eminent statesman whose seat was near Northampton, also congratulated both Mr. Arnold and myself at a casual meeting nearby.

Of particular importance for the increasing numbers of teachers of the deaf who adopted an oral or 'German' approach, was that Farrar's success was reported widely in newspapers throughout the country including The Times, Standard, Daily News, Daily Telegraph, as well as a wide range of specialist and regional papers such as the Sunday School Chronicle, Hand and Heart, Northampton Mercury, Deaf and Dumb Magazine, Sheffield and Rotherham Independent, the Leeds Mercury, the Northampton Herald, and the Lancet. Arnold hoped that Farrar would continue to complete a B.A., which required a further two years study, but Farrar's father expressed the wish that his son should follow 'a professional career to give me worldly experience'.

By now Farrar had become the living proof of the pure oral method, and was called upon to give public exhibitions. For example at a Conference held by the Economic Science Section of the British Association in August 1879, Farrar demonstrated the success of the oral method after papers advocating its adoption in schools for the deaf and dumb were presented by David Buxton and Susannah Hull, prominent members of the Society for Training Teachers of the Deaf and Diffusion of the 'German' System in the United Kingdom. One of the outcomes of that conference was the passing by the committee of a resolution which argued for the introduction of a system of teacher training based on the oral rather than a manual system.

Instead of completing a degree, Farrar, was articled for four years to a leading firm of architects and surveyors in Northampton. 'The office staff readily adapted themselves to my speech and lip-reading'. He continued to live at the Arnold home as a boarder along with the students that now made up Arnold's 'Middle Class School for Deaf'. This was now a large household unlike the small one he had experienced as young child. By 1881 the household contained Mr and Mrs Arnold, two nieces, Charlotte Bell, and Ella Jackson who was visiting from America, Farrar who by then was twenty, a cook and a general servant and five young deaf scholars, four boys and one girl ranging in age from six to sixteen years old. Farrar was articled to the firm of the County Solicitor Mr Edmund Francis Law. Law, a contemporary of Arnold, was also a Borough magistrate. An ardent Church man he had been involved, amongst other things, in the building and restoration of a large number of

26 Ibid., 4.
27 Ibid., 4.
schools and churches in the area. He was a member of many borough committees, had been Mayor and he was also involved in a number of societies, including the Religious and Useful Knowledge Society. Working in such a large and important firm would have brought Farrar into contact with a very wide range of people. Law's close relationship with Farrar is indicated by Farrar's inclusion in the family mourning coach at Law's funeral.

Arnold was beginning to find it difficult to fulfil his duties as a pastor and devote the time he needed to the education of the deaf. He discussed the problem with the church deacons and on 1 December 1878 Revd John Oates accepted a position as co-pastor with Arnold, to commence on the first Sunday in 1879. Arnold expressed his gratitude to the church for relieving his burden. In December 1881 Arnold announced his decision to resign in July of the following year as Pastor and was sure that Oates would receive a, 'unanimous invitation as his successor'. Arnold's resignation was delayed until the end of 1882, 'due to the necessity to prolonging Mr Arnold's pastorale for six months in order that his claim on the Pastor's retirement fund might be fully established'. His official retirement on 15 June 1882 was marked by a public tea which 400 attended, followed by a public meeting in the Chapel. The platform was crowded with fellow ministers and friends of all denominations. Mr and Mrs Arnold were presented with many gifts including a timepiece and an illuminated address from the Deacons. The church presented them with a purse of £450 of which £50 had been donated by Farrar's father.

The school was expanding and despite his retirement from the ministry of the church, Arnold engaged Hugh Neville Dixon, a graduate of Cambridge University, a man of independent means — he was later to loan the church's bicentennial committee £1,200 at 3.5 per cent interest per annum — and the brother of a former pupil, as assistant teacher. In 1885 Arnold retired from the position of principal of the school and moved to St Pauls Road. With Dixon as principal the school operated from the house next door to Arnold before moving to larger premises in East Park Parade. An increase in numbers and the appointment of a new headmaster, Ince-Jones, saw the school move yet again to Spring Hill, close to Fairview. The school finally closed in 1943 and Ince-Jones moved to Australia where Arnold had taught his first private pupil over eighty years before.

Arnold continued as a strong and active member of the church although holding no formal positions after 1884 when the Reverend Joseph J. Cooper was appointed, beginning his ministry

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28 Minutes of the Castle Hill Chapel, December 1881.
29 Minutes of the Castle Hill Chapel, July 1882.
30 Northampton Mercury, 17 June 1882.
on the first Sunday of 1885. Ten years after Cooper’s arrival he and Arnold were to collaborate in writing a history of the church. In 1884 Dixon applied for church membership.

In 1885, after Farrar had completed his articles he left Northampton to return home to Harrogate. But he was very soon to return, albeit intermittently, to engage with Arnold in a major piece of research which was to mould his future and to result eventually in ‘the Farrar Collection’.

Research into the Education of the Deaf
The College of Teachers of the Deaf had been founded in 1885 to coordinate the examining of trainee teachers of the deaf. Arnold was a key member of the College. In July 1886 at a meeting of the examiners of the College it was raised that the College were in considerable difficulty as they were unable to recommend a book which students could use to help them study for the examination. Arnold agreed to compile such a book and submit it to the College for approval and publication. Four years earlier in 1881 Arnold had published *A method of teaching the deaf speech, lip-reading and language,* a volume which excited great public interest, but did not contain the detailed discussion of history and methods required of a student text.

Arnold invited Farrar to help him prepare his *Manual for teachers*. This he did, both by visiting Arnold and by correspondence over a two year period. In writing about that experience Farrar describes his contribution as follows,

> Although my experience as a deaf-mute was of service, my part in it was more as a builder’s hodman. In this connection I believe I may claim to possess the best private collection of original works relating to the subject from Agricola to Dr. Watson ...

Farrar had, at his own expense, collected key works on the education and general treatment of the deaf from throughout Europe and worked painstakingly through them to provide Arnold with the material needed for his *Manual*. Arnold had always possessed a fine library. Farrar’s life work became the collection of a comprehensive library of books on the early education of the deaf. He travelled widely over Europe seeking out rare books for over forty years. It was Farrar who scoured libraries and bookshops and ensured that Arnold’s *Manual* was far better referenced than any before it.

The book was finally published in 1888. It received rave reviews. Almost every one of the many reviews referred to Farrar as the proof of the success of Arnold’s method. In 1891 Arnold published

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12 Letter of Farrar in the *British Deaf Mute*, August 1894.
a second and much larger volume featuring more substantial historical material than the first. Again, Farrar had provided the research assistance and a substantial portion of the funds required to access the available literature. As an offshoot of his work with Arnold, and as proof of the scholarship that he brought to their endeavour, Farrar collaborated with Hugh Dixon in 1890 to publish a translation of the work of the key seventeenth century Spanish educator of the deaf Juan Pablo Bonet. Farrar’s substantial historical introduction surpasses Arnold’s Manual in its thoroughness and insight.

Meanwhile, after an initial interest in science and botany as a boy, Farrar had begun to focus on geology. In his very brief memoir ‘My story’, he explains that he took up the study of geology for which he had expert ‘guidance’. Who provided that guidance we do not know, but a paper presented before the Leeds Geological Association resulted in him being elected a fellow of the Geological Society of London in 1887. At that time individuals who had demonstrated an interest in geology were nominated by two members. The nominated persons name, interest and nominators’ names were displayed around the meeting room wall. Other members were invited to add their support for the nomination by also signing their name on the nomination form. On 15 December 1886 he was proposed as a member. On 12 January 1887 notice of the forthcoming ballot was circulated to members. Finally on 25 January 1887 he was elected, membership number 3532. Farrar’s qualifications were given as, ‘attachment to the study of geology’. He was nominated by three members who knew him personally, S.W. Sanders (LL.D, F.G.S.), B. Thompson (F.C.S., F.G.S.), and Thomas Laurie (?), (F.G.S.). His application was supported by four other members — A.H. Green, James Adamson, Thomas Tate and Benjamin Holgate. Farrar continued to give papers at the Leeds Geological Society, often providing detailed geological descriptions of an area, such as a paper he read on ‘The Coast between Eastbourne and Folkstone’. He also contributed to current debates on geological theory. His paper ‘A remnant of pre-glacial England; or Holiday notes on the Cromer Forest bed’ which argued for caution in accepting the interpretations of Mr Clement Reid and Professor James Geike in which several landforms were attributed to land-ice is a good example of the depth of the debate he engaged in. He was to continue this interest throughout his life. In his will he bequeathed £5,000 to the Geological Society of London:

33 Juan Pablo Bonet, Reduction de las Lettres, y artes para enseña a aclar los mudos (Madrid, 1620); Juan Pablo Bonet, Simplification of the letters of the alphabet and method of teaching deaf-mutes to speak, translated from the original by H.N. Dixon with an introduction by A. Farrar (Hazell, Watson and Viney, 1890).
34 Farrar, ‘My story’.
To the Geological Society of London of Burlington House Piccadilly London W. 1. the sum of Five thousand pounds absolutely And I request that the said sum be invested by the said Society in approved securities to form an 'Abraham Farrar Fund' the income from which the Council shall use as they shall think fit in their absolute discretion ....

A year after receiving the funds, the money was incorporated into the general funds of the Society. There is therefore no 'Abraham Farrar Fund'.

Despite his contributions to geology it was in the education of teachers of the deaf that Farrar was to make a lasting contribution. After helping Arnold compile this Manual for teachers, Farrar continued with his research and writing, in particular with the introduction to the translation of Bonet's Reduction de las Lettres .... He was a regular contributor to many journals, focussing either on historical subjects or on the debates between those in favour of pure oralism and those favouring the use of sign language and the manual alphabet.

From his teens, Farrar had contributed to the debates of the day on the best method for educating deaf children. One of his earliest known writings was a letter to the Deaf Mutes Journal published in America advocating the oral method when he was sixteen years old:

I experience great happiness in the possession of speech, and would much rather have been taught thus than by the French system. This possession of speech has opened to me a wide field of usefulness. ... I have no wish to see the French system done away with; on the contrary I would let the German system speak for itself and people will perceive its merits in time and act accordingly.35

He was a regular contributor to newspapers. For example, The Times of Sunday 4 June 1882 carried a letter from Francis Maginn, a prominent deaf man, on the naturalness of signs and their importance in the education of the deaf and dumb. Farrar replied arguing for the superiority of spoken language and offering to continue the discussion by corresponding privately with Maginn. In 1883 he wrote an article entitled 'Speech for the deaf and dumb', which was published in the Sunday Magazine. This brought the response from the headmaster of the Yorkshire Institution for the Deaf and Dumb quoted above.

In 1889 Farrar wrote to The Times, again in reply to another letter by Francis Maginn. Maginn was critical of the argument of the Royal Commission on the Deaf and Blind which stated that 'the use of signs and a language different from the bulk of the community undoubtedly creates a tendency to live apart as a class rather than mix with the world; as a natural consequence the deaf and dumb are not competent witnesses to the best system ...'. He

35 Farrar's letter to the Deaf Mutes Journal, April 1877.
felt that deaf people should have been consulted and wrote to The Times advocating the use of the combined system. Farrar replied:

Permit me, as one of the deaf educated by the oral system, to reply on their behalf ... Mr Maginn ... cannot claim to speak for 'us educated deaf-mutes', but only for a section, and I am sure all our friends will join in regretting that at a critical moment in our history he has thought fit to write in so hostile a spirit towards the Royal Commissioners. His letter is itself the best proof of their wisdom in declining to receive the evidence of deaf-mutes. They had to discover what system best enabled deaf-mutes to communicate and associate, not with one another, but with the speaking and hearing world, and the opinion of deaf-mutes educated by signs, which tend to the former rather than the latter result, is of little value as that of a patient would be at a medical consultation. We for our part are content to stand by and let competent men judge for themselves. 36

Farrar further argued that Maginn's view of speech as a 'purely physical and mechanical acquisition to the deaf', was mistaken.

If there is one thing that we oralists insist on more than anything, it is that speech, when taught under the proper conditions, is to the deaf as vital and intuitive, has the same mental relation, and serves the same ends as any other sensation. ... Hence they come to think in sounds, not as such, but as vibrations felt by touch. Thought and speech become as intimately associated as in those who hear. This habit once acquired we know to be strong enough in time to overcome their original tendency to use natural signs, and so speech becomes their vernacular, and not merely a substitute. 37

In 1897 his great mentor and colleague, Thomas Arnold of Northampton, died:

... there crowded into Doddridge Chapel yesterday afternoon old members of his church during his ministry, younger members who delighted to hear him when he occasionally occupied the pulpit, personal friends, fellow ministers, former pupils, teachers of the deaf and dumb — all came in sorrow round his bier. All felt that a great man had gone to his reward. 38

Arnold had made a dramatic impact on the British educational system for deaf children. He had not grown rich on the education of the deaf, leaving effects worth a total of only £215 0s. 6d.

After Arnold's death, Farrar continued to maintain a strong link with what had now become a school. As the school grew in size Farrar continued to support the school and attend all the old boy functions, where he always sat at the right hand of the Chairman. He was well remembered for providing a magnum of champagne for the top table. At one such reunion in 1931, after expressing his pride in the school (now under the headmastership of Ince-Jones), Farrar, in a speech read for him by Mr Bilibin another ex pupil (he had a life-long rule that he would never make a formal

36 Farrar's letter to The Times, Thursday, 3 October 1889.
37 Ibid.
speech), said that he wished he had been born later so that he could have enjoyed the amenities of the present school. He finished by saying that 'Spring Hill was among schools for the deaf what Eton and Harrow were among schools for the hearing'.

Farrar continued to live with his parents, first in Harrogate and then in a large house called Woodcroft in Jervis Road, Bournemouth. His time was occupied with research and writing and with his travels to enlarge his collection of books. Abraham Farrar Senior died on 19 September 1906 in Jervis Road Bournemouth at the age of seventy-two and his wife just over twelve months later on 15 January 1908. On the death of his parents Farrar inherited control of an estate worth over £136,000. After the death of his parents Farrar took a flat in London in Sloane Street. This enabled him to be close to the London libraries and second hand book stores as he continued to expand his collection of rare books. He used his considerable talents and money to further the interests of deaf education.

On 3 October 1912, at the age of fifty-one, Farrar married Evelyn Agnes Malita Smith, who according to the marriage certificate was also known as Evelyn Hardy. They were married by license in St Margaret's Church, Broadway with Evelyn's father and Farrar's sister as witnesses by Charles Mansfield Owen, Archdeacon of Birmingham. After the marriage the couple lived in Carrington House, Hertford Street, Mayfair, before moving to Chislehurst in Kent. We know little about Evelyn except that she was twenty-six years old when they were married; that she was born on 30 November 1885 at her parents home at 88 Delafield Road, Rotherhithe; and that her father was William Jacob Smith a railway worker who later worked as a musician. Prior to her marriage Evelyn lived at 92 Ebury Street. Her mother Sarah Ann Moore also seems to have come from a musical family. A newspaper report in Farrar's scrapbook contains a report of a concert in Wellington, New Zealand, in July 1889: 'Miss Katharine Hardy's first matinee ... took place on Saturday afternoon .... Miss Hardy was in excellent voice .... . The accompaniments to the songs were played with care and sympathy by Miss Katharine Hardy's sister'.

W.R. Roe, a teacher of the deaf who knew Farrar personally, provides a few more clues to Evelyn's background and a rare glimpse into Farrar's personal life. Roe wrote in 1917:

Mr Farrar married a hearing lady in 1912, who, it is interesting to note, is a connection of Admiral Sir Thomas Hardy, in whose arms Nelson died at Trafalgar, and Thomas Hardy the novelist.

They have a beautiful home with about three acres of garden at Chislehurst, Kent. Mr Farrar himself says that when they were married by the present Dean of Ripon, the service was entirely oral, and he had no difficulty whatever in lip-reading or in answering questions.

Then with regard to his home life, he says that Mrs Farrar does not even know the manual alphabet, that he can lip-read all she says, and that she can easily understand his speech.

Mr Farrar also has no difficulty in managing himself his considerable estate in Yorkshire. 41

Tragically Evelyn was to die on 16 May 1937 in St Rochus Hospital, in Vienna following a car accident while in Vienna on a motoring holiday in Europe. Her death was reported in The Times, she was forty-eight years old. She left behind an estate worth almost £16,000 which went to Farrar. After his wife's death Farrar lived in the Rembrandt Hotel in Kensington. He maintained close contact with Evelyn's family.

**Farrar's Arnold, The Arnold Library, and The Library of Deaf Education**

Following Arnold's death, the College of Teachers had the opportunity to improve on Arnold's two volume manual without offending the grand old man of pure oral education. In 1897 the College of Teachers asked Farrar to prepare a new edition of Arnold's *Manual for teachers*, as it was felt that the original one was difficult for students to use. He produced a revised, condensed version of the two volumes which became known as 'Farrar's Arnold'. 42 The history sections in particular were substantially revised and updated and the two volumes severely edited into one comprehensive volume. This book was a masterpiece and became the standard work used in teacher training for over fifty years. Susannah Hull, editor of the journal *Teacher of the Deaf*, wrote in connection with additions to the Arnold Library:

> The Library has been enriched this month by the gift of Mr. Farrar's revised edition of Arnold. It is rather more than a revision, and Mr. Farrar, without any fear of plagiarism, might have taken the sole credit for this excellent text-book and *vade mecum* on the subject of deaf-mute education. The style is quite different, the arrangement is better, the historical part is brought down to date, the printing is clearer and the size handier, so that in every detail the book more than deserves any praise given it here. 43

And yet Farrar's extraordinary scholarship remained hidden in Arnold's shadow. He remained Arnold's pupil and his book was 'Farrar's Arnold'.

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43 Susannah Hull 'The Arnold Library', *Teacher of the Deaf*, vol. 1, no. 5, September 1903, 151.
In 1897, the National Association of Teachers of the Deaf started a library as a memorial of Arnold’s work as a teacher and writer, called the Arnold Library. The library was to become a focus for much of Farrar’s intellectual activity. Arnold had always treasured books and insisted on the importance of free and open access to libraries for students. His own access to Kirkpatrick’s library and then to the libraries at Rotherham College had been high points in his own intellectual development. Arnold’s own library was purchased by the National Association of Teachers of the Deaf, to which Farrar added thirty rare books in 1906. In contrast to Baker’s earlier collection, with ‘books ... too precious to be lent’, the Arnold Library was a lending library. Farrar threw himself into the development and cataloguing of the Library. He provided constant bibliographical information for teachers of the deaf and for researchers into the history of deaf education, especially through the pages of the journals Teacher of the Deaf, American Annals of the Deaf and Volta Review. Through the pages of Teacher of Deaf, the library’s books were advertised and made available to teachers and trainee teachers. Between July 1903 and November 1904, through the pages of Teacher of the Deaf, Farrar also published a ‘British Bibliography of the Education of the Deaf’. The bibliography was far more comprehensive than anything published previously and was a preview of his own Catalogue.

Farrar was particularly involved with the development of teacher training for teachers of the deaf, the process of professionalization that was taking place at the turn of the century. He never saw himself as a prospective teacher and in fact supported the oralists in their exclusion of deaf people from teacher training, just as he had supported the Royal Commission in not consulting deaf-mutes about their education. As it was, he carved out a key role for himself in the development the education of the deaf in Britain. As an ardent supporter of the pure oral method throughout his life, his own writing ranged through the scientific discussion of teaching methods to reviews of key books in the history of the education of the deaf. The oralists had no more eloquent or hard working advocate. He was dedicated to scientific thoroughness in all his research, being limited only by the data available to him and the scope of his own experience of educational conditions. His eloquence and scholarship in arguing the case for pure oralism is particularly evident in his 1892 response to an address delivered by Dr Edward Miner Gallaudet in Glasgow in August 1891.46

44 ‘Reminiscences’, 43.
Gallaudet was the president of what was then the National College in Washington D.C., now Gallaudet University, and the son of the founding father of deaf education in the United States. He was an extremely eloquent advocate for the use of sign language and the manual alphabet, along with speech and lip-reading, in the education of the deaf. While Farrar’s response is based on premises with regard to sign language which have been proven wrong, in terms of the knowledge at the time, his argument is thorough and persuasive. With equally thorough scholarship, in 1896, in response to the founding of the National Association of Teachers, he applied his scientific mind to a review of the methods employed in the education of the deaf as a guide for the development of teacher training.  

But his energies were concentrated most heavily on his historical research and writing. His many ‘Literary Notes’ for *Teacher of the Deaf*; his frequent ‘Historical Notes’ for *Volta Review*, and his historical contributions to other key international journals, were brief but informed by careful and meticulous study of texts which were unknown or ignored by most of those involved in the education of the deaf. He provided students and teachers with informed commentaries on key works in Latin, Greek, French, Spanish and English through four centuries. And through his own collections, provided access to the original works themselves.

Farrar had long supported the development of a fixed ‘locale’ for the National Association of Teachers of the Deaf. In a letter to *Teacher of the Deaf* in 1909, he stressed, among other things, the need for such a locale to serve ‘As a home for the Arnold Library, with which a reading room might be conjoined.... [and] As a centre for collecting and diffusing knowledge in regard to the deaf, in this respect similar to the Volta Bureau [in Washington, D.C.]’.  

With the establishment of the Department for the Training of Teachers of the Deaf in the Victoria University of Manchester in 1919, the centralization and professionalization of teacher training for teachers of the deaf had been achieved, and effective library facilities could be established. And so in 1922 the Arnold Library was purchased from the National College of Teachers of the Deaf, and was integrated into the Library for Deaf Education. In 1928, Farrar presented the Library with a large collection of books, and continued to add to it for the rest of his life.

In 1934 the College of Teachers was to recognize his services to deaf education and make him a Vice-President:

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Mr. Farrar's election as a Vice-President of the College (i.e. The National College of Teachers of the Deaf) will be welcomed as conferring a much deserved honour upon one to whom the profession owes a great deal; much more than is probably realised.

Mr. Farrar was educated at the Northampton School for the Deaf Boys, under the late Rev. T. Arnold and soon became one of the best oral pupils of his time. At the request of the profession, he compiled the Teacher's Edition known as Farrar's Arnold, of the Rev. Arnold's two volumes dealing with the history and education of the deaf, and when this was re-printed a few years ago gave the copyright to the College. His gifts of books, concerned with the deaf, to the Arnold library and later to the Manchester University Library have been numerous and generous. The literature of the deaf owes much to his indefatigable research and not a little to his own original research. Every cause for the advancement of deaf education is sure of his interested and active, but not uncritical support, and we would assure Mr Farrar of the warm appreciation felt by the College for his ever-ready help, and the pleasure which his Vice-Presidency will give to the members. 49

Farrar died on 14 May 1944 at the age of eighty-three. His sister Blanche, who had never married, had died three months earlier in a nursing home in Bournemouth. He had left behind for the deaf community a treasure trove of history. Without his diligence and scholarship many of the early writings on deaf education and language would have been lost to future generations. His own historical writings bear the test of time. His high academic achievements brought deaf people into the spotlight and were seen as proof of the possibilities of oral education.

But 'he occupied an unique position in the world of deaf education'. 50 'He had intelligence, means, individual instruction for a practically unlimited period, and a prince of teachers; yet he admits that he cannot take in an average sermon or lecture by lip-reading, and that his speech is adequate only to the ordinary transactions of life'. 51 Farrar was the jewel in the crown of pure oralism and of its 'prince of teachers', but he never in fact gave pure oralism unqualified support.

Farrar's support for oralism was often misinterpreted by those around him and by the generation of teachers that followed. While deaf education increasingly focussed its attention on therapy — speech therapy and lip-reading — to make deaf children as much like hearing people as possible, Farrar remained focused on their education, not normalization. He was concerned above all with effective education and saw literate languages as the only effective media for such an education. So instruction in English was of prime importance, the only effective path to 'clear thought':

50 Quoted in Spring Hill Magazine, Northampton vol. XIV, no. 44 (July 1944).
I am a strong advocate of the oral method in all cases capable of being so treated, which I think, under the proper conditions, would comprise the majority of the deaf. At the same time I recognise that the practical, but not the mental, utility of speech and lip-reading is more limited with them than with hearing ....

The English language will be taught to the deaf either by the oral method or by the manual method, that is to say, fingerspelling and writing with a strictly limited use of simple gesture signs, ... 52

Farrar recognized the social limitations of speech and lip-reading for deaf people. He stated that for ordinary daily transactions his speech was generally understood but sometimes strangers needed guidance. Lip-reading was far more problematic and depended idiosyncratically on the person involved. He argued that his speech was not suitable for public speaking and that lip-reading was only possible in intimate conversation. He accepted the concerns of his time that deaf people should strive to be like hearing people. While he did not accept the extreme argument that deaf people should not mix with other deaf, he did caution against them preferring the company of other deaf to that of hearing people.

On his death he also provided financial support for some of the key institutions involved in deaf education. In his will he bequeathed £1,000 to each of the following organizations: The Yorkshire Institute for the Deaf, Doncaster, the school where Arnold had received his training as a teacher of the deaf under Charles Baker; The Royal School for the Deaf and Dumb at Margate; the National Institute for the Deaf; the Royal Association in aid of the Deaf and Dumb; and:

To the Victoria University of Manchester the sum of One thousand pounds to be used exclusively from time to time in the purchase of books for the Library for Deaf Education as the Librarian of the said University shall direct and for the repair and keeping in good condition the books in the said Library.

As our biographical sketch shows, Abraham Farrar was a dedicated scholar with the means and the will to collect key works on the education of the deaf for the use of scholars then and in the future. There are other sources for much, though be no means all, of the material in the collection, for example at The British Library, the library of the Royal National Institute for the Deaf, at the Royal School for the Deaf at Margate, at Gallaudet University, the Volta Bureau, and the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., and at the National Institute for Deaf Studies and Sign Language Research at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia. But the Farrar Collection is particularly comprehensive and tangible and has a very distinctive character which reflects the dedication and single-mindedness of Farrar himself. The Farrar Collection is a worthy and intensely rewarding pilgrimage for historians of the education of the deaf.

52 Farrar’s letter to British Deaf Mute, August 1894.