



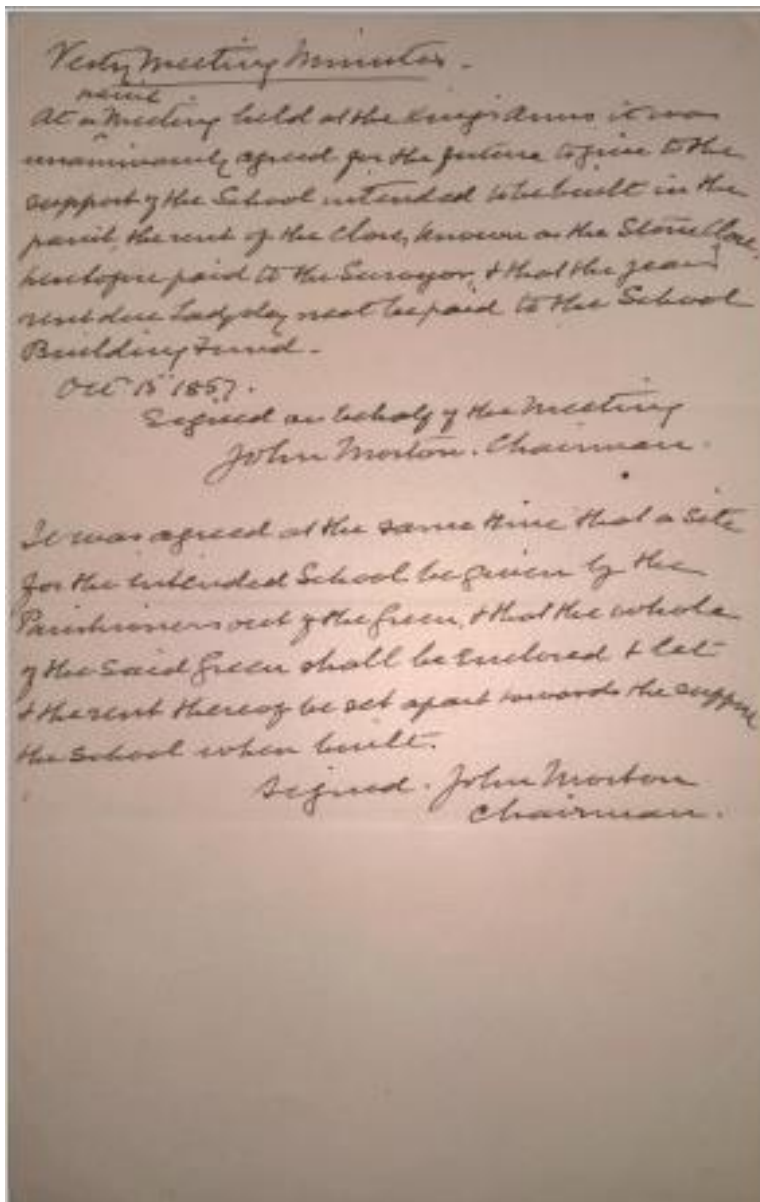
Cleeve Prior Chroniclers

The School and the Church

In England, until the 19th century, the parish vestry committee was in effect what would today usually be called a parochial church council, but was also responsible for secular parish business, which is now the responsibility of a parish council, and other activities, such as administering locally the poor law.

In 1857 there was a great concern about the lack of education & a school in the village and the subject was brought to the October meeting for discussion, chaired by the then Vicar of the Parish, John Morton.

We see from the document below & the transcript, the outline of the discussion & the decision taken on behalf of the village.



Meeting Minutes -
October 1857.PDF



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The document says

“At the parish meeting held at the kings Arms it was unanimously agreed for the future to give to the support of the school intended to be built in the parish, the rent of the closes known as Stone Close, henceforth paid to the surveyor, and the years rent due Lady day next be paid to the school for the building fund

October 15 1857

Signed on behalf of the meeting

John Morton Chairman

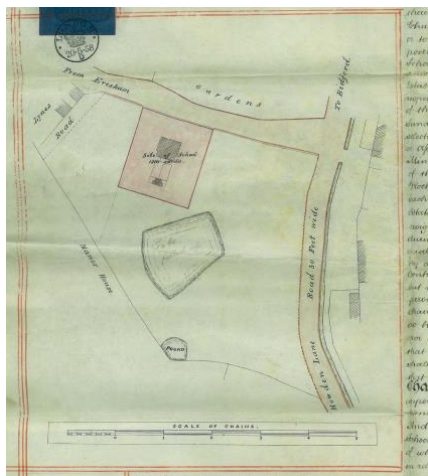
It was agreed at the same time, that a site for the intended school be given by the Parishioners out of the green, and that the whole of the said green be enclosed and let and the rent thereof be set apart to support of the school the school when built

Signed John Morton Chairman”

This transfer was subsequently made in the form of a deed which put the land in trust with the Vicar & Church Wardens of Cleeve Prior as trustees. The trust deed resides today in the Church

The Plan 1 below indicates the proposed area of the school & the playground. Plan 2 indicates the area in blue, to be village allotments, the rent to be used to support the maintenance of the school. The rest was to be school fields.

Plan 1



Plan 2

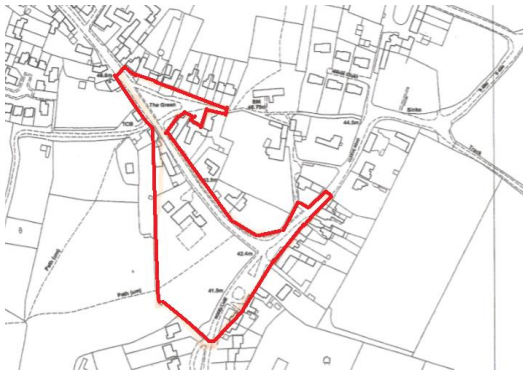




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The School and the Church

All this land was allocated out of the then common land, believed at that time to be the area outlined in red below



The Deed



Mr Lupton's Deed
(1).pdf

The school was well attended as can be seen from the early photograph below.



By 1928 the number of children were starting to drop



And life at the school was quite harsh, and Frank Vickeridge recalls:



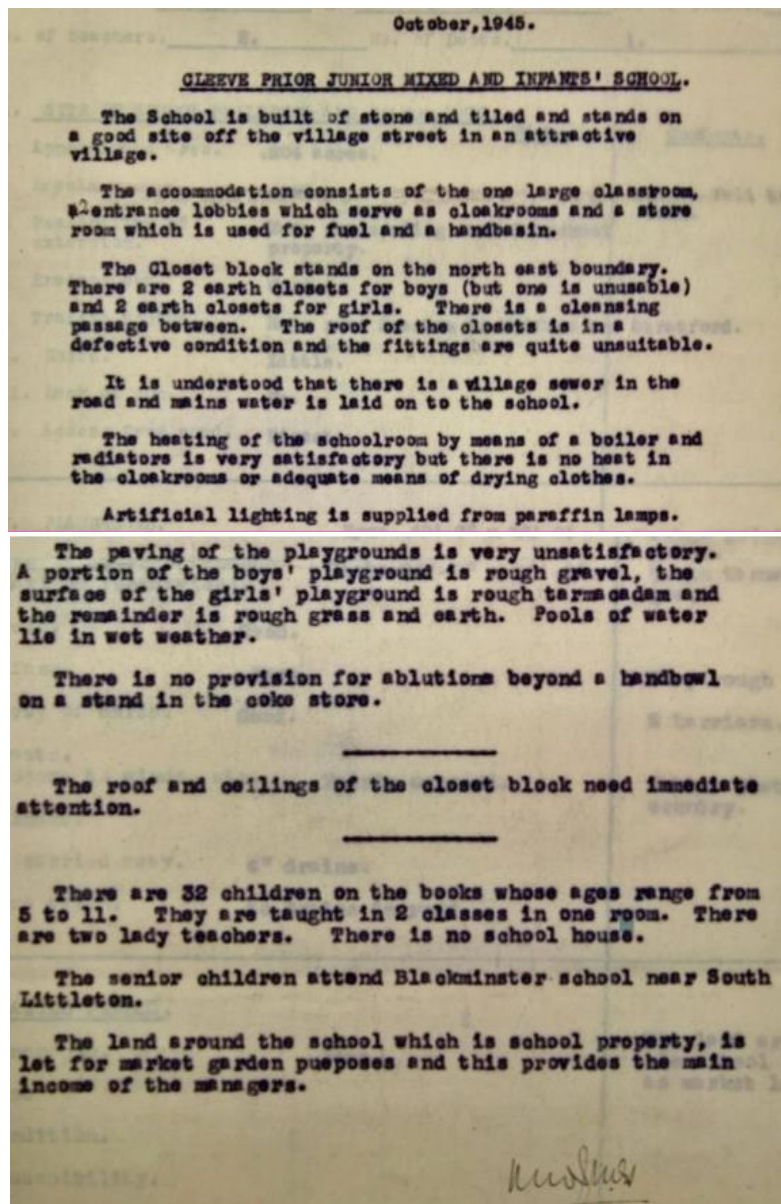
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The School and the Church

"The school was one large room divide by a curtain. Within the two sections the pupils were split into groups according to age. Children received their whole education here and left at fourteen. The building was heated by an old coke stove and so was very cold in winter. Hands were washed under a cold tap in the coke store, and the elder children took it in turns to fetch a bucket of coke to keep the stove going. The lavatories were outside & were of the non-flush type. In the 20's the teachers were miss Roberts & Miss White"

[From the Cleeve Prior Chroniclers "Recollections of Frank Vickeridge"]

By 1945 things had not really changed much and from the annual inspection report the state of the school can be seen.





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The School and the Church

In 1947 Mrs M Garrett, Mrs A Bagley & Mrs Whittle, recollect that

“In 1947 the school comprised the original small single building and the infants & juniors were taught in the same room with just a curtain separating them. The second addition was in 1963. Mrs AB used to cook and serve school dinners from the Village Hall. As few as 28 children were known to attend the school until the age of 14. The original part of the school is 147 years old. Mrs Whittle used to work in the school office at the annual Christmas party Father Christmas used to visit with presents for the school children.

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[From the Cleeve Prior Chroniclers “Recollections of old Cleeve Prior by Mrs M Garrett and others”

Lin Hawkins recounts her memories

“When I started at Cleeve Prior School there was only the original Cleeve Stone Building. The infants and the juniors were divided by a curtain down the middle of the room. A coke stove was on the back wall and heated the whole room. There were two teachers, Miss Staff who taught the juniors and the infant teacher Mrs Smithin.





Cleeve Prior Chroniclers

The School and the Church

By the time I had moved to the juniors Miss Staff had died & Miss Garret had taken over. The boys & girls had different entrance doors into the school which opened into the cloak rooms and toilet. The infants had their desks around the edge of the classroom, while the juniors were in lines, according to their age group.



Our school day always started with a hymn and the Lord's Prayer with Mrs Smithin playing the piano. When it was dinner time Grace was said before you either went home or to the memorial hall for school dinner. At the end of the day there would also be a prayer. We always had a weekly hymn practice, and the vicar Mr Webb, would visit every Wednesday morning for a little talk.

Along with the usual lessons we would go on nature study walks, bringing back wild flowers for pressing. We had country dance lessons and always performed at the village fete. The juniors would make all the items for the Christmas fare, which included sewing and knitting egg cosies & dishcloths. The whole school would perform in the Nativity at Christmas and go on the school outing in the summer.

The pupils kept the school grounds tidy, boys mowed the grass and the others planted the flower beds and weeded the paths. After use the sets of garden tools and the mower had to be cleaned and then stored in the coke shed."



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The School and the Church

After the war the number of children attending the school was still low,



However they were treated to trips out as can be seen from this picture of the 1953 trip to Wixstead Park



Lin Hawkins recollects

“During my last year at the Cleeve Prior C of E School, I became one of the coffee & tea monitors. We would walk to the Mill House Tearoom at the start of the morning break with the coffee pot which was filled with the coffee for the teachers, Miss Garret & Mrs Smithin. After school Dinners in the War Memorial Hall we would go again, this time to have the teapot filled. I still remember the lovely smell of percolated coffee & the peat burning on the open fire. I found out later that the peat was delivered by the lorry load from a supplier in Birmingham.

At the end of the 1950's I joined the team of schoolgirls who worked weekends and holiday times at the Mill House Tearooms. These were run by the Misses Betty & Pat Lloyd, who lived at the Mill House with their parents Mr & Mrs Jack Lloyd. I waited at tables and sometimes helped in the kitchen toasting teacakes. We had to wear awful overalls made from the owners old summer dresses. There were antique tables and chairs and white porcelain china was used to serve the teas”

[From the Cleeve Prior Chroniclers “The Mill House Tea Rooms –Lin Hawkins”]