

NEWSLETTER

Colwall Village Society

JULY 2012

Revealing Our Heritage

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

To the 15th Annual General Meeting of the Colwall Village Society – 24th April 2012

I am pleased to report on another very successful year for the Society.

Following last year's AGM on 18th April 2011, Elizabeth Lloyd gave us a fascinating account of the history of the Bright family, complete with copies of old documents and photographs.

On 12th June 2011, a group of members braved a very wet and windy day to stroll round the gardens of Hope End - courtesy of Mike Lewis - it was well worth the effort.

On 10th August 2011, the Society put up its second commemorative plaque. This was in honour of Elizabeth "Betty" Snowball - an outstanding England test cricketer. Sue Redfern, National Development Manager for Cricket in England and Wales, unveiled the plaque at the entrance to Colwall Cricket Club Pavilion.

On 19th September 2011, our new committee member (now Vice Chairman), Rebecca Rossoff, gave us a splendid and well-researched presentation concerning Colwall Chase.

On 24th September 2011, the Society put up its third plaque. This was in honour of Bruce Bairnsfather - a nationally known and highly appreciated war cartoonist both in WW1 and WW2. Mark Warby, a fervent admirer of the cartoonist unveiled the plaque outside Colwall British Legion. Afterwards everyone enjoyed the Legion's hospitality and the chance to examine an amazing array of Bairnsfather memorabilia.

On 30th January 2012, David Lovelace gave us an insight into "The Social and Landscape Development of Colwall Park". The talk and presentation were first class and extremely interesting.

I record the debt owed to the late Joyce Ingledew our faithful archivist - she and her work for the Society will be much missed.

For the future - maybe another plaque and probably an illustrated booklet on Colwall's Historical Buildings. Ideas from members regarding topics and speakers for future talks would be appreciated, as would short articles for the Newsletter.

My splendid committee - John, Margaret, Derek, Graham, Marion, Susan, and Rebecca, plus Penny - deserve congratulations for all their hard work. The Society relies upon a very small group of people to keep up its high standards.

Finally, thanks to you, our members, for your constant support.

Michael Milne

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Has the Stone Shrunk or Sunk?



COLWALL STONE.

June 6th, 1876.

(Reproduced by kind permission of Barbara Eagles)

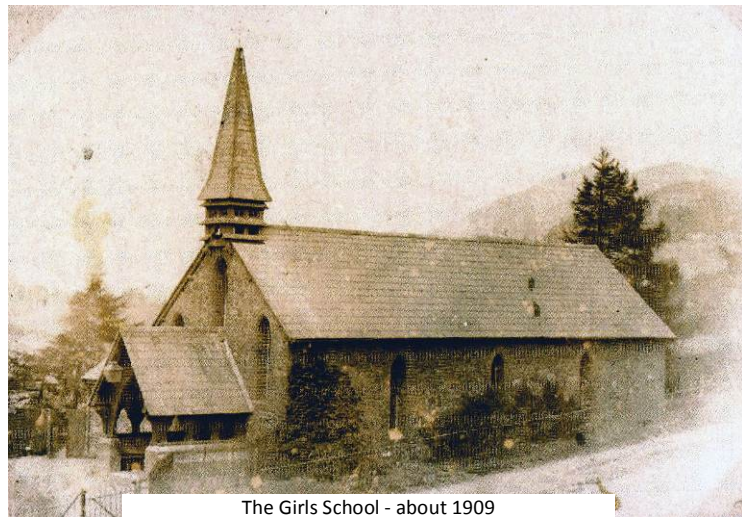


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There is some discussion about the current size of the Stone amongst locals; these pictures may help - or fuel the debate!

COLWALL HILL NATIONAL SCHOOL (C of E)

The cutting of the road through the Wyche in 1836 encouraged the establishment of a "Hill" community in Upper Colwall. According to a note kept at the Church of England Records Office in London, a school was built about 1856 at the instigation of the Rector, Reverend Frederick Custance, on common land (classified as manorial waste on the Tithe Map 1840) on the Walwyn Road. In the 1863 the school was described as "one for boys and girls at "the Wytch". The building was built of local stone with an imposing belfry above the front entrance. It had a small playground to the side and at the rear; the ground sloped steeply to where the separate boys' and girls' lavatories were situated. The main building (44' 0" x 15' 10") was used as the Upper School and two ancillary rooms (30' 0" x 11' 6" and 12' 0" x 11' 6") were used for the infants. Prior to 1960 when electricity was installed, the school was heated by solid fuel stoves, and lit by gas lamps.



The Girls School - about 1909

The school was licensed by the Bishop of Hereford for use both as a church and a parish school. The main schoolroom was used as a chapel for Anglican worship, and called The Wyche School Church of the Good Shepherd. On Sundays the main hall was re-arranged with seating for 70 persons together with an altar and pulpit. Services included Holy Communion, morning and evening prayers and a Sunday school, with an additional evening service on a Wednesday. As the school was Church of England, regular weekly visits were made by the Rector and other clergy to teach the children scripture. In 1865 Henry Francis Limpus was licensed to be Curate at The Wyche at a stipend of £100 – the licence mentions "the Wyche Chapel School".

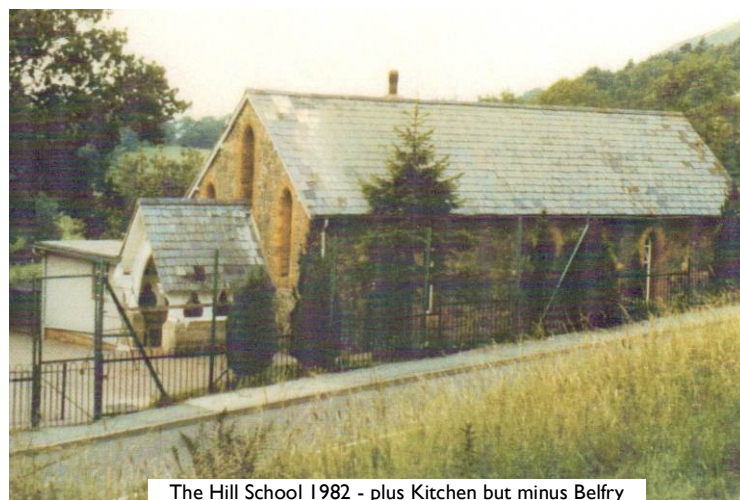
It appears that up to about 1900, there was a mixed entry (infants and upper school for boys and girls) with average attendances of about 70. Thereafter the "upper school" only admitted girls, although there was a brief period during the First World War when boys were again also admitted, but this did not continue after 1917. The curriculum was that to be expected of a Church school. Lessons included reading handwriting, composition, hygiene, arithmetic, history, geography and nature study. Attempts were often made to broaden the ambit of the lessons with the older girls learning cookery, sewing, needlework and doll dressing. Whilst there should have been a head teacher, plus one assistant teacher for the older children and one infant's teacher, this could not always be maintained. Generally, the teaching staff was all female.

Whether due to poor diet, housing, sanitation or other causes the children seemed to be prone to many illnesses. As well as common coughs and colds, there were annual outbreaks of infectious diseases including diphtheria, impetigo, measles, German measles, mumps, whooping cough, chicken pox and scarlet fever. One pupil unfortunately died of diphtheria. Attendances fluctuated considerably as a result, particularly in the winter months. Medical Officers of Health kept a watchful eye on these matters and closures of a week or more were ordered to prevent the spread of infection. School dentists inspected the children's teeth on a regular basis and it was not unusual for extractions to take place in the school – on one occasion seven children each had extractions.

The children mainly came from the Upper Colwall area and their attendance was also made difficult in the winter months by regular heavy snowfalls accompanied by icy roads, and often caused the school either to close or to abandon its timetable due to the low attendances.

The normal school holidays at Easter, Whitsuntide and Christmas were taken. The summer holidays were rather unusually split into two periods with the second part extending well into mid-September to allow the children to go hop picking. It was not uncommon for several children to delay their return for several days if the hop picking season was extended!

Not much information is available for the first years of the school's life, but from 1906 until its closure, the Head Teachers' logbooks - meticulously prepared on a daily basis – provide basic facts of its history. Mrs Beatrice Allen, the Head Teacher in 1906, had 80 pupils on the roll, which appears to be the high-water mark of the school – the numbers slowly declined until 1922 when 44 pupils were present. The school was then variously described as "Girls with Infants" and as "Mixed (with Infants)" by H M Schools Inspector, with two mixed infants' classes and two divisions of older girls.



The Hill School 1982 - plus Kitchen but minus Belfry

In 1910, the new Church of the Good Shepherd was built on adjacent land, taking over part of the school playground. This meant that the school was no longer required to be used for Sunday services. The annual Wyche and Colwall Flower Show

used the Institute (in the Church) and the school for exhibits. A fancy dress procession came down from the Wyche and was judged in the school playground, whilst a brass band played.

On 1st November 1922 due probably to the illness of Mrs Allen, the current roll of 50 children was drastically reduced to 15. The majority of the older children were transferred to the Colwall Green Girls' School or to the Lower Wyche School. Thereafter the school was called by H M Inspector a "Junior School" but only took infants. Infants could attend from four years old, and upon reaching eight to nine years old, they were transferred each July to senior schools. Whilst numbers increased to 30 in 1926, thereafter only about 20 children were enrolled although in the 1960s this had crept up to the low thirties. As the local community was small, the school experienced great difficulty in attracting new entrants.

Generally, the life of the school was uneventful. Instances like a dangerously offensive stench from the lavatories (1910), the lavatories being blown down in a gale (1920), the roof being damaged and a window blown out by a German bomb (1940), the air raid shelter collapsing into a large hole in the playground (1941), coal house catching fire (1942), a visit to Colwall Station to see the Queen Mother depart in the Royal train (1960) and the collapse of the belfry were the exceptions. After the end of the Second World War, life at the school improved – annual trips to places like Barry Island and the Three Counties Show were arranged. Hot school meals were started (1946).

With the slow demise of the Hill as a distinct community, the existence of the school became under threat. In 1951 under the County Development Plan, the school was scheduled for closure. Mrs Fellowes, – who is remembered with affection as a very loving and dedicated teacher - was appointed Head Teacher in 1965 when there were 23 children only on the register. Numbers further declined and in 1980, Mrs Fellowes' assistant left and was not replaced. On 7th November 1980, the School Governors proposed the closure. The school closed on 23rd July 1982, with its 11 remaining pupils transferred to other local schools. The school and The Church of the Good Shepherd had always enjoyed a close relationship and it is sad to reflect that both are now closed – although the church does maintain a chapel for services every Wednesday lunchtime. After closure, the school was sold and the purchasers made extensive internal alterations and opened it as a nursing home, "Christmas Lodge". In about 2001 the nursing home closed and the building was converted into a private house. Today it is easier to get a feel of what the building may have been like when it functioned as a school – one relic of the past is the school bell, which has remained on the premises throughout.

Michael Milne

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Mr and Mrs Charles Pedlingham and Family outside 'Joyces' (Stowe Lane)



(Reproduced by kind permission of Barbara Eagles, granddaughter of Charles Pedlingham)

Transcription (modern spelling) of the Scory/Westfaling dispute over Colwall Park – Part II

E112/17/55

Date 28 Eliz [1586]

In front of: Sir Walter Myldmay of the Exchequer Court

Complainant: Herbert Westfaling bishop of Hereford [from 1585 to 1602]

The Rev. Edward Skippe sometime bishop of Hereford [1539-1552], as had his predecessors, held Colwall Park by right of his Bishopric being then empaled and well replenished with deer and containing 300 acres of meadow and pasture without leasing the park to anyone until the 14th July 29 Henry VIII [1537] when the Rev Edward by his seal, and confirmed by the Dean and Chapter of Hereford cathedral, leased the park to John Briggyes for the term of 40 years at a rent of £13 6s 8d. In leasing the park the bishop knew well that neither he nor his successors could nor should be able to maintain or keep hospitality in their houses without having in their own hands a great quantity of the park for keeping and feeding of cattle for the provision and maintenance of their households and housekeeping did provide and so reserved liberty to himself and his successors during the 40 year lease for the feeding of his and their own cattle for their proper household store such a quantity of pasture of the park as needed but not exceeding a half of the park's herbage allowing John Briggyes the moiety of the rent or according to such part as the Bishop or his successors should take into their own hands. About 2 Eliz [1560] the moiety of the park was leased to Edward Langford for the term of 70 years paying bishop John Scorey [from 1559 to 1585] £6 3s 4d. After John Scorey's death his son Sylvanus Scorey and Edward Trovell, pretended that the late Bishop John Scorey by an indenture of June 1572 had leased the whole park to him his son Sylvanus Scorey and his wife Alice and to John their son for the term of their natural lives for the yearly rent of £13 6s 8d, without providing any authorisation that successor bishops could take into their own hands a moiety of the park for the provision of their households as granted by the original lease [to Briggyes]. Your complainant [Herbert Westfaling] was installed bishop of Hereford on the 30th January this year [1586] and restored to the lands and possessions of the said bishopric by Queen Elizabeth including Colwall Park. Scorey and Trovell know well that the above lease of Colwall Park is void in law and never delivered by the late bishop Scorey and furthermore the moiety of the park at the time of supposed lease was in a 70 lease to Edward Langford which lease has not been yielded up by Edward Langford. At the time of bishop Skippe there was but one small lodge in the park but taking of the bishop's moiety of the park the late John Scorey did pull and take down two great halls, one kitchen, one brewhouse, one great barn and divers other edificies which were situate upon one great farm at Bosbury parcel of the possessions of the bishopric and did also pull up so many pales as did enclose the quantity of half one mile in length which were before situate upon part of the demesne lands belonging to the chief mansion house of the bishopric in Whitbourne and did likewise take all the slates and tiles which cover one malt house, one oxhouse, one millhouse, one slaughterhouse and certain other edifices in Whitbourne and all the same edifices pales tiles did cause to be carried into the park and therewith did erect build one great mansion house within the said park which said mansion house is also continued in the same supposed lease claimed by Sylvanus Scorey together with the whole park at for the only rent of £13 6s 8d. Yet Sylvanus Scorey and Edward Trovell together with Thomas Cave and Anthony Harford have now of late very wrongfully and forcefully entered into the park and have forcefully repulsed your supplicant ... who shall not by any means be able to keep any house or household within the county of Hereford by reason that he has not any quantity of lands meadows or pastures left unto him to feed or keep any beasts or sheep or other cattle for the provision or keeping of his house but shall be enforced to fetch and buy his provision daily or weekly in the market towns to the great trouble, loss and hinderance of your supplicant.....

Editor's Note: Unfortunately the transcription ends there but is so full of interesting detail I thought it worth reproducing.

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Future Talks

29th October 2012:

Tim Bridges: 'Coddington Church'

28th January 2013:

Mark Archer: 'The Restoration of Perrycroft'

22nd April 2013:

Dr Janet Cooper: 'The Work of the VCH (Victoria County History) at Eastnor'

16th September 2013:

Amanda Simons: 'British Camp'

Finally ...

After the **Colwall Diamond Jubilee** Celebrations there must be many photos taken that would be an excellent record for future generations. If you have any you are willing to have copied then please contact any Committee member. Hard copies will be scanned and those on memory cards copied, both will be returned quickly.

My thanks to our contributors. Articles on Colwall related subjects (however tenuous!) are always welcome.

If you are prepared to receive your newsletters by electronic means, please register with the email address below.

Corrections and additions to the information in newsletters are always welcome, as are **CONTRIBUTIONS!**

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