

A National School founded on trust was opened on 29th September 1837, £30 was contributed by National Society towards the building. An application was sent to the Board of Education on 3rd December, 1873. Forms were sent to the rev. H.W. Edwards containing regulations to be observed. The first meeting of the School Board was held on Thursday, 14th May 1874.

~~xxx~~ Document dated 11th September 1875

Notes from the minutes 1st June 1874

The present trustees of the Parish School of Hickling agreed to transfer the same to the School Board for the term of 99 years at an annual rent of 1/- (one shilling). It was resolved to accept the same on above conditions. Proposed by Mr. Wm. Collishaw, seconded by Mr. H. Merriman that a meeting of the freeholders and ratepayers be called for the purpose of transferring the land adjoining the present school-room to the Board.

Minutes 11th March 1875 It was agreed to accept Mr. Burnetts contract for altering and fitting up the school and fencing around but he was requested to specify more particularly what was to be done. It was also agreed that the clerk should make application to the Educational Department for the borrowing of £300 to complete the work.

Minutes 23rd March 1875

Some difficulty having arisen out of the National Society claiming certain rights in reference to use of present schoolroom, the clerk was requested to lay before them conditions of transfer and also the deeds.

Minutes 12th April 1875

The Clerk received a reply from the National Society imposing certain conditions to which the Board decidedly objected. It was proposed and seconded that the Clerk write to the Education Department that they decline to accept the transfer on these conditions.

Minutes 24th June 1875

Certain reasons assigned to be forwarded to the Department in reply to their enquiries 'Why' a lease of 99 years.

Minutes 26th July 1875

The Clerk to inform the Education Department that the Managers and School Board agree to modify the proposed terms of arrangement for transfer in accordance with the suggestion contained in their letter of the 20th July 1875.

Letter 10th August 1875

The Education Department returned the plans having been submitted to their architect and reports as follows: there would only be accommodation for about

80 children. Plan should be enlarged to accommodate 14 more children. Classroom should not be a passage room. There should be two external doors to the principle schoolroom.

Minutes 4th October 1875

It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk write to Mr. Booker of Nottingham, architect authorising him to draw plans of intended enlargement of present schoolroom to meet the government requirements.

Minutes 7th February 1876

It was unanimously resolved to accept Mr. Burnett's tender for enlarging and completing the school subject to approval of Education Department ... £442 fittings etc. to be £30 extra.

Log Book 20th November 1876

This school was opened this morning when 72 children were present and in the afternoon 78 were present. The headmaster was Mr. B. Wilkinson, headmistress Mrs. Wilkinson.

Mr. & Mrs. Wilkinson stayed until their retirement in 1902. Mr. Harry Sleighthome of London was then appointed headmaster but he only stayed 15 months and left in 1903. The school then became a Council School. Mr. & Mrs. J.L. Laws followed as headmaster and mistress in July 1905 until 1911. Mr. Charles Taborn of Carlton came in November 1811 until 1913, he was followed by Mr. John G. Pepper who joined the army in 1917, was discharged and moved away in January 1918. Mrs. Scott came as a temporary headmistress for a few weeks and lodged with Mrs. Albert Burnett at Yew Tree House until the arrival of Miss Violet Lydia Hilliard in March 1918 who stayed until January 1921. Her friend Miss Francis Jane Hinge was then appointed headmistress until leaving in 1924. Next in line was Miss Hart who came in June 1924 until 1926 when a supply teacher took charge until the arrival of Miss E.A. Proudman in September 1926 who stayed until her retirement in 1963. Miss Halford - a relief teacher - followed for a short while then came Miss B.E. Hatton who stayed until the closure of the school in 1966.

Over the years there were a number of assistant teachers some of whom are listed below:-

Miss Hilda Mary Brooks who came from Ilkeston (and later married Mr. Harold Burnett) was mainly an infant teacher during the period 1911 - 1919 along with Miss Maud Camm from Widmerpool. Miss Amy Croft - February 1923 until

August 1924 when she left to get married. Miss Hart lodged at Mrs. Harriman's home at 'The Wharf' - 1924 Miss Dorothy Power - October 1924 until April 1935 - lived at 'The Wheelhouse'. Miss Wakerly from Willoughby came in 1935.

Two teachers came with the evacuees from Yarmouth during the early 1940's. Miss Howe stayed at Mr. & Mrs. Whittaker's home - Beech House. Miss Singleton at Hartshorn's, Chestnut Farm then to Miss Daisy Wakelin. Miss Croster from Nottingham also stayed at Beech House. Miss Oven stayed with Mr. & Mrs. Albert Rose, Chapel Lane during the war.

Through the late 1940's and until Harles Acres was built in 1966 the number of pupils on the school register stood around 12 children. In view of this the Board of Education decided to enlarge Kinoulton school to take the children from Hickling and also Upper Broughton.

In March 1963 the Women's Institute sent a letter of protest to the Ministry of Education on the subject of the closure of the school. A petition was drawn up, taken round the village and the pastures and signed by almost all the inhabitants, but although new families had moved to the village and the school register now stood at around 33 pupils the school was closed in December 1966, the headmistress being Miss B.E. Hatton.

Mid and late 1940's :- milk was brought in third pint bottles to be drunk at mid-morning and cost half a penny a bottle. During the frosty weather the crate of milk was left outside and the pupils would 'eat' their frozen milk with teaspoons.

Hot dinners were brought from Ruddington by van, the meals kept hot in canisters. As Hickling was the last drop Mr. Howard the 'Dinner Man' stayed to have his meal here taking away the clean canisters. The small classroom at the back of the school on the South side was used as a dining room. Sylvia Smith who lived in the middle cottage down The Green came to help in the kitchen later helped by Mrs. Margaret Richardson. Cost of the dinners was around 2/- (two shillings) per week.

Miss Proudman came in 1926 as the new headmistress and stayed until her retirement in 1963. She was presented with a tea service by Mr. Wilfred Parr chairman of the school managers. Before the school broke up for the Summer holidays Christine Parkes and Richard Collishaw presented Miss Proudman with

a gift voucher and a retirement card signed by all the pupils.

In September 1964 Miss Proudman married local retired farmer, Mr. Robert
* Spencer of Bridge Farm, they both continued to live in the School House.
Due to ill health Mrs. Spencer retired from her work as clerk to the Parish
Council, a post she had held for nine years. She worked voluntary during
this time saying that she was 'doing her bit for the village'. She had
also been a member of the Council for five years.

* See photograph under 'people'

School Days.

For many children attending school meant a long walk from outlying farms and lodges and from the Pastures. During the Summer months often the children would take a short cut by walking across the fields but when the land was wet this was not possible. As these children could not go home for dinner they brought sandwiches.

The younger children used the small classrooms, older children being taught in the 'big room' where there was a piano. At the opening of morning school all the children joined together to start the day with prayers and hymns. During lessons pupils were required to sit at their desks, the teacher at a high desk and sitting on a high chair with a blackboard and easel nearby. A small wooden shelf with a narrow groove ran around the walls, this was used for pencils, chalk and displaying cards and books. The two bottom rows of window panes were frosted to stop children looking out. The school bell with the rope hanging through into the classroom was rung twice daily. Each room was heated by a coal fire around which stood a metal fire guard. The caretaker filled the large coal buckets early in the morning before school commenced.

A cloakroom with pegs round the walls stood at each end of the school, the South end being for the boys, North end for girls in which there was a wooden bar.

On wet days this provided scope for climbing and swinging.

Should any visitor call at the school, the pupils immediately stood and said "good morning Sir" or "good afternoon sir", any child misbehaving was caned, it was useless looking for sympathy by telling their parents as they were told that they must have deserved it.

A favourite lesson of many was 'nature' when the class would be taken walking two by two along the pavement then either up one of the lanes or over the hills. The following day a composition of all flowers, grasses, birds and anything else of interest seen during the walk would have to be written, with of course the correct spelling. During hunting season if the sound of the huntsman's horn or the crying of the hounds was heard in the dinner hour many of the children ran to follow over the fields quite forgetting the time. Eventually on arrival back at school, late and dirty there were met with the cane but the next time they would do it all over again, the enjoyment outweighing the disadvantages. The children who had remained at school sat at their desks tittering.

Before Christmas all the children took part in a concert in front of a packed audience on two alternate evenings. For these concerts a platform was erected and heavy curtains hung from a beam in the big room. A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'The Cratchel's Christmas Dinner' and 'The waterbabies' were some of the plays performed.

In the Autumn the children were given a weeks holiday from school to go potatoe picking.

Games

The boys and girls each had their own playground but did join together in one yard for rounders. The girls skipped or played hopscotch and ball games. Occasionally the ball would accidentally be sent over the wall into Mr. Edson's garden (at 'The Ruins') and the children very seldom were allowed to retrieve it, he was not a popular person with the children for this action.

Out of school hours many games took place along the road as there was no traffic except the odd horse and cart. Whip and top and bowling the hoop went well as the children ran along. The iron hoops were made in the village by the blacksmith, wooden ones had to be bought from a hardware shop. A game called 'lurky' was a great favourite. This was played by one child standing with his foot on an old treacle tin whilst everyone else hid. 'He' counted to twenty then tried to find the others before anyone managed to kick the tin. Many happy hours were passed lying on the canal bank with a long twig to catch mussels which once caught would be returned to the water.

All these activities provided excellent exercise and the children were never bored, they were too busy happily providing there own amusement.