

ALBURY SCHOOL, ALBURY HEATH

On a tithe map dated 1822 there is a school marked close by the Old Parish Church - as it is now known - at that time, of course, it was still the Parish Church, with most of the Village around it. I have been unable to find a further record of this.

According to the lists of tenures and trusts issued under the 1902 act of the Board of Education a school was founded in 1832. In 1833, this was the year in which grants became available for school buildings, Albury was one of the first to have this.

The then incumbent, the Revd. Hugh McNeile, applied to the National Society for help in building a School House as the School-room then being used for 41 boys at a rental of £10 p.a. was no longer available. At this time 53 girls were being taught in a barn on the glebe fitted up for this purpose.

The Bishop of Winchester (we were then in the Diocese of Winchester) gave permission for part of the Glebe to be used to build a school. The Lord of the Manor had control of all other suitable land.

This school was intended to receive 70 boys and 80 girls in two rooms. Spelling and reading were to be taught free, but on learning to write 4d per pupil per week was to be paid.

The new School building was built during 1833-34 as details of the cost and where the money came from is recorded in a log book of that date which I was able to read in the Archives of Guildford Museum. The school building referred to is now the Albury Village Hall which is built on the last bit of Glebeland (which Mr. W. Day kindly pointed out to me).

1834. Cost of School Building:-

	£	s.	d.
Bricklayers Bill	78.	10.	11.
Carpenters	48.	7.	-
Blacksmiths	2.	2.	6.
Thomas Ansell - making forms		14.	2.
Labourers Wages - 3 men for 4 weeks and 3 days		<u>3.</u>	<u>15.</u>
Total	£133.	9.	7.

Contributions to the building cost:-

	£	s.	d.
Congregational collection at Parish Church	35.	4.	9.
Donation from Bishop	10.	-	-
National Society	56.	-	-
Treasury grant	60.	-	-
From Risbridger Charity		2.	10.
The Incumbent		<u>20.</u>	<u>-.</u>
	£183.	14.	9.

Other contributions were received from Lady E. Beresford and Miss Malthus.

In 1834 all payments by girls ceased in the National Societies Schools.

His Salary per annum was	£40. -. -. .
The Mistress	30. -. -. .
Rent of Cottage for 1 year	5. -. -. .

it is not quite clear who paid this.

School holidays were:-

Christmas	-	1 week
Easter	-	1 week
Harvest	-	4 weeks

These are some interesting expenses.

Canes	1. Od.
300 Quills	5. Od.
Wood	9d.
1 doz. Brooms	2. Od.
2 bottles Ink	3. Od.
Water pail	3. 9d.

The brooms were for use by the boys to sweep out the room after school.

In 1835 it was thought advisable for payments by girls to be renewed at 2d per week with an additional 2d on learning to write - those under 7 were still to be taught free.

In 1836 Mr. John Higgins was engaged. The Masters salary was then raised to £50 per annum, his wife Zilpah still being paid £30 per annum.

1838 - 39.

In 1839 a letter from the next Incumbent, the Rev. John Hooper, giving the reason for the need to move the school buildings runs as follows:- "The present situation of the schoolrooms is low and damp and by no means central. It would therefore be highly desirable if the schoolrooms were removed to Albury Heath which is elevated, dry and central and which would be the means of adding at least 20 children to the school. I think it is likely that a Grant of Land would be obtained from the Lord of the Manor if the Society would be at the principal expense of removing the Building and which I find would be about £30". The Rural Dean's report to the Bishop reads:- "I have no hesitation in saying the proposed removal of Albury National School is highly expedient, if not absolutely necessary, and I am surprised Mr Hooper did not more fully explain the advantages. The present school room is literally built upon a Bog and when the Master goes into it in the morning he finds the floor sometimes covered in mildew. The children's feet are almost always on wet bricks and when I visited the school several children were absent with sore throats, which the master imputed to the damp floor. Albury Heath to which it is proposed to remove the school is a very dry and healthy place and placed between the south and western population, in which directions as I have before explained to your Lordship the whole population is placed. It will be at a convenient distance from the site of the Church proposed to be built, and the only objection that can properly be made to it is the distance from the Parsonage House. But another very great advantage to be derived from the removal has just occurred to me. Albury Heath is not more than half a mile from the Street, the most populous part of Shere. The present school is mor

than a mile. In fact at Albury Heath it would be as convenient to Shere Parish as to Albury Parish, and I feel confident the school would derive a great accession of support from the inhabitants of Shere by the removal. I think like wise the new Curate of Shere would hail the removal with great pleasure - and in every point of view it would be a desirable measure".

Approval for a grant of £30 was given on several conditions, but there is no indication that this grant was ever paid, perhaps because the conditions were not fulfilled.

Noted by Mr. Day. On the Tithe Map of Albury Parish dated 1838 there is a house shown just inside the Warren between the Warren Gate and the reservoir. This was described in the Title Schedule as No. on Map - 234

Owner - Henry Drummond  
Occupier - Alexander Irvine

School House etc. Area Ac. O. 1 r. 1 p. Tithe Free.

During the 1920's it was reported to the Estate Office that some of the school children had discovered a hole in the Warren Wood, near the Warren Gate leading on to the Heath. Mr Bruce inspected this and reported that it was a well which had apparently been covered with a stone which had fallen in. Some of the Estate workmen were sent there and the hole was filled in.

This was evidently the well to supply water to the above "School House". This house was evidently pulled down as there is no house shown there on the first edition of the Ordnance Survey in 1872.

Other expenses recorded in 1839.

	£	s.	d.
Coal - $\frac{1}{2}$ chaldron (9 cwt.)	1.	1.	6.
Slates for writing		6.	-.
Cottons		5.	-.
Monitresses		6.	-.
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	£1.	18.	6.
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Monitresses were paid 6d - it is not recorded whether this was weekly. They assisted with the teaching in some way.

In 1843-44 more building was carried out on the school. The playground was drained and a bank was built and planted with a thorn hedge.

There is a gap in the records at this time, but there is a reference to a Night School in 1858.

In 1861 - 2 tons coal £2. 18. 0.

Mr. John Ledger, the local blacksmith, did repairs to the School and there are several references to the repair of broken windows.

1863. Materials were bought for work for entry in the Albury Show by a sale of drawings done by the children.

Alterations to washhouse cost	£2.	5.	0.
and of candles		4.	8.

In 1865 alterations were made to the School and holidays had to be extended by one week as building was behind schedule. The log book records that a great deal of confusion was caused as the workmen were still on the premises.

During the 1870s there was a Mr. Tommy Lovell and his wife - referred to as Dame Lovell - who were teaching here and lived in the School House (now the Old School House next to Albury Village Hall) the garden at the back of the School House was the school playground. No bell was needed or handclapping to summon the children back to school. Mr. Lovell placed his hand against the lower pane of the window palm outwards which was a sign for them to return and watched for by a boy! So much for 19th century discipline!

There is an old apple tree at the bottom of Miss Dodsworth's garden - still known as Tommy Lovell's tree - it was Miss Dodsworth who told me this story which was handed down from her grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Potter.

1876. It became illegal to employ children under 10 years of age!

The School carried on in the Village Street until the early 1890s.

October 1891. Free education was introduced by the School Managers.

1893. Her Majesty's inspectors reported that the present premises are very unsatisfactory for the following reasons:-

The boys and girls are separated only by folding doors.

The cloakrooms also dank and damp (no windows), approached by outside stairs. They were underneath the main building with an earth floor.

Wooden pegs and an old stone sink are still there (1976).

1895. Albury Heath School was given by the 7th Duke of Northumberland and built by the men of Albury Estate.

1895. Entry by Mr. William Dyson, on November 4th, first Head Teacher of Albury School on Albury Heath.

Began work this morning in NEW School.

In spite of inclement weather only 2 children absent when Roll was called.

The Schools are all that can be wished for teaching purposes. The Scholars settled down to work in real earnest.

Entries from School log books.

Jan. 23rd, 1901. A day of general mourning on account of the death of our beloved Queen Victoria.

Feb. 5th. Snow, fully 6 inches deep, and in some places where drifted, much deeper. Only 2 infants and 39 juniors absent. 146 on the Roll.

June 20th - 27th, 1902. Coronation. Week's holiday by order of the King, Edward VII.

Feb. 23rd, 1904. School assembled at 1 o'clock to attend the funeral of the Rector, Canon Dundas.

May 19th, 1904. School Prizegiving. At 3 o'clock the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland entered the School where a number of parents and friends

Her Grace gave a handsome set of prizes to those children who had gained them by regular attendance, good conduct and steady work.

Later the same month Her Grace gave a treat to the schoolchildren of Albury and Chilworth in the grounds of Albury Park. A grand tea was provided for them and after a very happy afternoon of games Her Grace presented each child with a bag of cakes and an orange.

Girls at Albury School were provided with Red Cloaks given by the Duchess.

From 1913-1921 no logs books are available. There were no entries in log books during the 1914-18 war.

1921. Mr. William Dyson retired. Head teacher for 26 years - he was known by his ex-pupils as the "Gaffer".

In the Summer of 1922 the boys took part in a cricket match composed of sides captained by Earl Percy and Lord Hugh Percy.

In 1923 the School had a day's holiday for the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of York.

The Duchess of Northumberland financed a school trip to the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley.

In the 1920s and 1930s there were epidemics of contagious diseases, notably Scarlet Fever.

1925. Swimming classes started, the children walking to Shere Baths.

It must be understood that, although the school was in a wonderful position on the Heath, there were no amenities except piped water, bucket lavatories and very inadequate heating; no lighting.

During the winter months it was impossible to take bookwork in the classrooms owing to the darkness in the afternoon.

1932-1955. Including the War - 1939-1945. There were no entries accessible from the School log book.

During these years there was a lot of military activities. Machine gun practice in the sandpits. Ack-ack guns being dismantled, and drilling taking place on Albury Heath and surrounding woods. The children took it all in their stride, as they did carrying their gas masks.

1944 held a memorable day when Field Marshal Montgomery inspected Canadian troops, awaiting D-Day, who were quartered in Albury Park and the Warren etc. The parade was held on the Heath in front of the pavilion. There were several thousand men. Albury schoolchildren came up to see the parade and the Field Marshal.

1944. School dinners began, at 2½d per child, now 6p in decimal currency. Facilities for keeping the food hot from container to child were nil. Water for washing up had to be heated in a copper in an outer shed with wood gathered from

hot water carried in! The containers which the food came in also had to be washed before collection. From 1940 until 1944 a rota of mothers and some grandmothers made soup and sandwiches which were sold to the children at 2d a head. The soup consisted of mixed vegetables and dumplings plus stock made from a sheep's head, which was delivered by the Butchers, Miles Bros. of Albury Village. It was soaked and washed in the boys' cloakroom in the 50 year-old hand basins! The meat from the cooked head was made into Brawn and sold to the older boys in sandwiches.

Also in 1944 the Flying Bombs rumbled overhead. A few cut-out and fell in the surrounding countryside. There were no air raid shelters at the school. Windows in the Parish Church were blown out and also in local shops.

1945. Parents, chiefly mothers, began to feel that the school was rather crudely provided for in the way of sanitation, lighting etc - the lavatories were of the bucket type which were emptied weekly!

A deputation of mothers met the school managers: Mr. C. Botting, Mrs. Macindoe, Mr. G. Wells, Mr. Gilbert Coe and Canon Farquhar (Chairman) to discuss the possibilities of some improvement. A general meeting was arranged in the Village Hall which a representative from the diocese, Canon Hughes, attended and a discussion took place. It was explained that the school was low on the priority list and that no improvements could be made until the 1960s.

1957. Electricity was switched on by the Revd. E. F. Synge (Rector) on December 3rd 1957.

1962. Flushed lavatories were in action for the first time.

1963. Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A.) formed.

1964. P.T.A. raised £140 for swimming pool.

1966. P.T.A. raised £110 for swimming pool.

June 2nd 1967. The Bishop of Guildford, the Right Rev. George Reindorp, afterwards the Bishop of Salisbury, opened the swimming pool.

1968. The School received the Surrey Schools Swimming Shield. David Morris Trophy, and all children in the School were being taught to swim.

1974 saw the end of an era of 140 years of Village School Education. The school now known (in 1974) as the Albury C. of E. Primary School. The Village School was closed; the children were now to be conveyed by coach and mini-bus to Chilworth First School, Tillingbourne Middle School and Broadwater Comprehensive. A far cry from 1830 when parents paid 2d (twopence) a week for the privilege of their children learning to read and write.

There were, over the years, small private schools in Albury. Crossley House at Albury Heath; Northfield, Albury; three small ones in Brook Lane and for several years at the Rectory which was run by Mrs. Gray, wife of the Revd. Phillip Gray, Rector.

Cooks Place, Albury (LCC)

Wimbledon children. School dinners were served and the washing up done by a rota of ladies from the Village.

These records were compiled by Mrs. Winnie G. Browne for the Albury History Socie