

Back Tracks

Local historian Peter Turner journeys back to our people and places of yesteryear

The St Anne's silver medal

A couple of months ago I was wondering if any of the above medals were still on the village. One resident has come forward to tell me that she has one. I am not sure how many were struck but a quick check of the 1841 census says that about only 12 people were aged 70 or more so they were quite rare even when they were struck. So it's nice to know that at least one survives.



Silver Medal St Anne's Church

More about the Church

The Rev Lawtons book of 1944 mentions the vault.

At the North side of the Churchyard there is a somewhat mysterious Brick Vault, of unusually large dimensions—the origin of which it has not been possible to trace locally, and there is no mention of it at the appropriate Diocesan Office at Lichfield. It measures about ten feet, by fifteen; and contains eighteen recesses for interments, but only one coffin, Details of this interment may be read on a Stone opposite the South Porch.

Local tradition has it that the first coffin placed in the Vault was later removed to London. The probable explanation of the origin of the Vault is that it was intended to be a family Vault of one of the original benefactors of the Church ; and later the idea was given up. The cover consists of massive slabs of stone, The entrance is by a flight of steps at the West end—not included in the foregoing measurements. Some day it will be necessary to bring the Vault into use again, under some carefully considered scheme of special Fees ; and it could be reserved for Parishioners only.

Clearly this idea of our former vicar was never taken up.



During the early 1970's the churchyard was restricted for burial space and Bob Cumberlidge told me that he knew of a grave without a body which he was "saving". He took me to the grave of Mrs Pearson a former Vicars wife and he told me she was in fact buried in the Vault and not in the grave under her headstone

A few years ago Philip Durber and Tony Dunn opened the vault and sure enough Mrs Pearson's coffin was the only coffin present. They then placed her headstone near the vault where it can be seen today.

The Church Schools

Mr Lawton records the following about the schools

Very little, in the way of a connected story, can be said about the Day Schools. The Parchment Deeds connected with their establishment and endowment are many, and long. The principal one is dated 2nd, December, 1854. Most Parishioners are aware that the original Infants' School was situated between "Heath's Row" and a small field-plot now a part of the Vicarage land, and used as a Vegetable garden. The Infants' School buildings consisted of the small School, and a Cottage adjoining for the Mistress.

This block was enlarged, and made into two Cottages, when the new Council Infants School was built. (1912) The last Head Mistress of the old School—Miss Alcock—is still remembered by the older inhabitants of the village

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A note signed by Mr. C. Adderley on 8th November, 1855, states that "the large School" (now known as the "Mixed Junior School") was built upon land which formerly belonged to Mr. John Boon, and consisted of three roods, thirty and a half poles. Another note dated 15th March 1865 states that Sir George Chetwynd, and Miss Sparrow gave twelve plots of land to the School Trustees; amongst them being "Brown Edge Church and Yard—two roods, twenty-five poles, Parsonage House, Pleasure Grounds, Outbuildings and Garden, three roods, three poles. Infants' School House and Garden—four poles."

In the year 1909, by means of a Mortgage for £900, at 4 per cent. Interest, the School was enlarged, to about double its original size. At the same time, a Cottage and garden at Norton-in-the-Moors, belonging to the Trustees, and in the occupation of Mr. James Jarvis, was sold. The repayment of this Mortgage, together with the necessary expenses for the upkeep of the School premises and repairs to the Properties which formed the security of the Loan, has been a heavy burden; but the last installment, completing the repayment of the Mortgage was paid in 1941. From now onward the School premises, and the Trustee Properties can be better cared for. The School especially will claim a heavy expenditure when the present World War ends. The School became a Junior one when the new Endon Senior School was opened.

We now only educate the children between the ages of seven and eleven. Further and more far reaching changes for all Schools are now under consideration by the Government—with the professed object of better qualifying the rising generation for the world competition they will have to face in the, coming years and to strengthen them spiritually to face and successfully resist the subtle and unknown temptations that may lie ahead. Thus fitting them for the many responsible positions of authority, and leadership, needing not only intellectual but moral and spiritual stamina ; fitting them to become workers together with God in the establishment of His Kingdom in the hearts

and lives of thousands of men and women with whom they may more or less come in contact. Thus are we naturally brought back to our starting point—those endless generations (or shall we not rather say, spiritually, (guided by the Holy Spirit) which "praise the Name of the Lord." AMEN.

Amongst other things this is a remarkable statement, in that it states that the land for the Church, Churchyard, Vicarage and pleasure grounds actually belonged to the school trustees not the Church. The School Trustees were always the Vicar, the Squire and another notable person. This trust is still in existence and owns the land the present school occupies.

James Jarvis lived in the house opposite the Vicarage known as Rose Cottage.



Sunday School Aniversaries

When it was a boy this was a great village occasion. but seems to have died out in the seventies.

Mr Lawton writes about it in 1944.

It Was In 1922 that the practice of perambulating the district on the two Sundays preceding the Sunday School Anniversary. Services was inaugurated on the recommendation of the Church Council; a practice which proved to be a real help to the Sunday School Funds, and which has been continued annually up to the present time.

If you can remember these services please contact us.

Community Display

Brown Edge first won the Best Kept Village competition in the 80's and at the time, the Village Hall was just a concept. The Parish Council suggested that in the future this would be the place to display the community owned prizes. It does seem the best place to display other artefacts and documents of interest also.

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