

Bamford School Log Book

The Thirties and World War II (1931-1940)

These are the most recent log book entries that we have for the school. The syllabus was much more varied and included English, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Scripture, Cookery, Handicraft and Needlework. The school also had a workshop and gardens and children took part in activities such as football, gardening, chess and trips out. In 1937 the first swimming lessons were held at Hathersage Baths.

Whilst the minimum school leaving age was 14 years, some children won scholarships for free places at secondary schools; mostly to New Mills Secondary.

There was more healthcare for children. The School Dentist, Doctor and Nurse visited regularly. The school celebrated 'King and Country' with Empire Day lessons each year. In addition, holidays were still given for local wakes and fairs.

School premises saw many improvements. In 1934 electric lighting was installed and a radiogram arrived in 1937. In 1938 there were talks about introducing school dinners.

The school also saw an increase in pupil numbers over this period. By 1938 there were 130 on the books; due in part to work on Ladybower Dam.

However, the greatest change was the outbreak of World War II. 1939/1940 saw the arrival of evacuees. Numbers at the school shot to 153 in 1939 and the Institute was also used for lessons.

"Eric William Bloxham and Mary Hoggarth have been awarded Minor Scholarships, the former at Chesterfield Grammar School and the latter at New Mills County Secondary School"
(25 May 1932).

"The children were absent from school for twenty minutes lining the Green to see the Prince of Wales pass. The pleasure of the event was marred by the speed of the cars which did not give the children a chance even to cheer."
(2 June 1932)

"H.M. Inspector's report: This is a well organised and efficient village school. It contains 87 children and as it has a 4-teacher organisation all the advantages of small classes are apparent. ... the Senior Mistress deserves great credit for the progress in her own class (which unfortunately contains a large group of retarded children requiring special attention) and for the great success of the school Needlework. The school garden and workshop are centres of interest and industry and are a reflection of the Headmaster's personal enthusiasm and skills." (25 Oct 1933)

"Aubrey S Harman has won the Bamford Council School Chess Championship Cup. Prizes given for attendance. S Joan Ingham received a special prize for an essay on Healthweek, given by Derbyshire Health Week Committee. The usual Christmas tree was given by the Derwent Valley Water Board."
(21 Dec 1933)

"Usual Christmas party was held with a giant Christmas tree and presents, entertainers, fruit, tea etc". (21 Dec 1934)

"Radiogram arrived today."
(27 April 1937)

"The Senior Class was taken to the pantomime at Sheffield – their Christmas treat."
(15 Jan 1938)

"The school has been supplied with electric light. The power was switched on today."
(14 June 1934)

"Prizes for school gardens distributed. Edwin Arnold won a drawing competition."
(13 Sept 1939)

"The Director called this morning and again during the dinner hour with reference to the increase in numbers owing to work on the dam, new houses etc." (18 Nov 1937)

"Headmaster, Mr Bloxham, returned to school this morning, after an illness, influenza and tonsillitis. With the exception of one day, this is the first time in his teaching life, that he has ever been absent on account of illness."
(17 Feb 1936)

"Gas masks given out today. Dr. Andrews in charge." (6 Oct 1938)

"School still closed owing to war."
(4 Sept 1939)

"School re-opened on the double shift system. Our own children attended 9-12.30, St Johns R.C. School from 1-4.30. Headmaster remained at school during second session to take names and particulars of any unofficial evacuees.) (Sept 22)." (13 Sept 1939)

45 Southend children billeted in Bamford." (2 June 1940)

"Mr Towler called re evacuee school at the Institute." (2 June 1940)

"School reassembled on instruction by wireless. Gas masks examined and practice given in dispersal on air raid warning". (14 May 1940)