

**A HISTORY OF STAUNTON HAROLD SCHOOL
LOUNT CROSS ROADS**



Staunton Harold School and School House in 1938

BY SAMUEL T STEWART - OCTOBER 2021

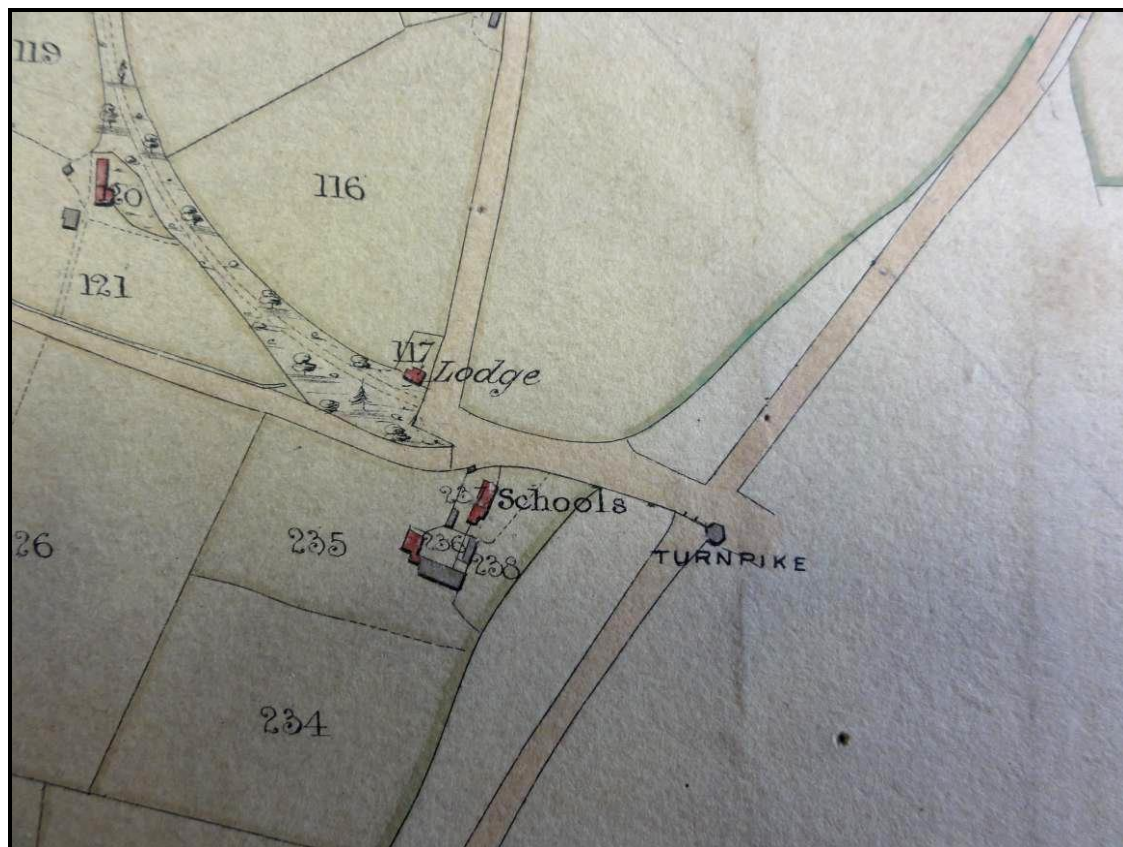
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STAUNTON HAROLD SCHOOL – LOUNT CROSS ROADS

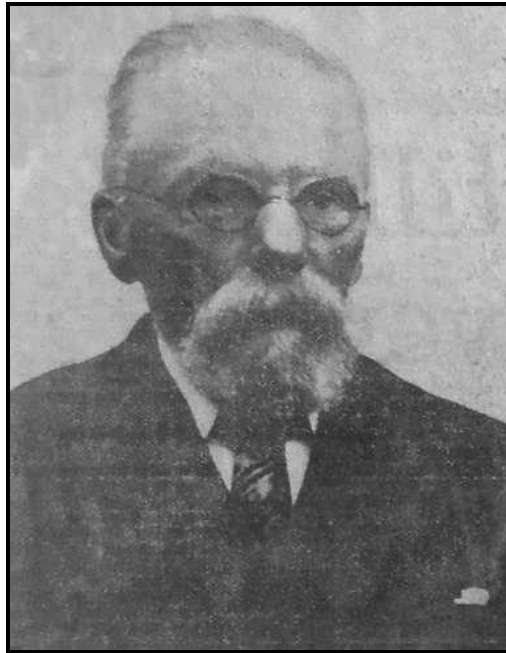
The School, which was attached to the old School House, was situated adjacent to Lount cross roads on the Melbourne Rd corner. This is next to Ashby Lodge which is the rear entrance to Staunton Harold Hall, formerly known as “Back or Coal Lane” which was used at one time as a tradesman’s entrance. In the photograph, the school is at the front, and the attached school house at the far end. The original school, a typical single storey red brick Victorian building, was just a basic rectangular construction with four arched windows and buttresses shown in the photograph on one side. A porch at the end, and the larger extension at right angles with the two arched windows, were added at a later date.

A gentleman by the name of Mick Sheath wrote a book entitled “The Old School House” in 2002. This contains information on the School and the School House, and for anyone interested in reading this, there is a copy held at Coalville Library.

The 1851 census confirms the school was in existence then, and presumably built, run and managed by the 9th Earl Ferrers. The 1851 census also lists William Harris as the schoolmaster, living at “The Lodge” (shown on map below) and Thomas Richards the school assistant, living in Lount.



The above 1859 Staunton Harold Estate map shows the location of the school at the time when the turnpike road was there



William Briggs

The 1861 census shows that William Briggs who had moved to Staunton Harold from Melbourne was the school master and was living in the School House with his sister Sarah. His aunty Hannah Newbold, who was aged 71, was also living at the School House and was listed as a stocking framework knitter. William, at the age of 28, married Emma Judd On the 2nd September 1861 at Melbourne Parish Church. Emma, who was also a teacher, was listed as a National School Mistress at the National Academy, Penn Lane, Melbourne in the 1861 census (this school is now a listed building). She was born in Cubbington c.1836, and was an apprenticed school teacher in the Kenilworth area according to the 1851 census.

William Briggs, the son of Samuel Briggs, an agricultural labourer and a stocking frame knitter, was born in Melbourne, Derbyshire in 1833. William will have spent his early years with his family in Melbourne, and in the 1841 census we find the family living at Church Close, Melbourne, his sister Mary was also living at home. By 1851, he was living at the Melbourne Rectory where he was a house servant to the Vicar of Melbourne, the Rev. Joseph Deans.

This appears to have been a critical move for William, and we can speculate that it was the vicar who would have sponsored him when he decided to move into teaching. Unlike his future wife, William had no formal teaching qualification. It is likely that during his stay at Melbourne Rectory, his musical abilities were developed. We know that he was active in church bell-ringing, and it is possible that it was during this period that he may also have been an apprenticed organist. William Briggs would go on to become a very significant figure in Coleorton society, and became the head teacher at Coleorton's Viscount Beaumont School from 1868 to 1900 during which time he became the church organist for forty years. William is one of very few Coleorton individuals who have been honoured with a stained glass window in St John's Chapel, commemorating the contribution he made to this parish.

William and Emma Briggs moved to Viscount Beaumont School, Coleorton in the summer of 1868, by which time they had two children, Agatha and Francis John, both of whom had been born at Staunton Harold.

William Briggs started his working life in service as a servant to the Rev. Joseph Deans, he had progressed in both his education and developed his musical ability. It is almost certain that at the time William moved to Coleorton he was an accomplished church organist, as he almost certainly started playing at St Mary's Church around the time he arrived there to live in the School House.

More interesting facts about William and his wife Emma are included in "**A History of Coleorton and the Locality**" by **Samuel T Stewart**.

For some reason, the trade directories which the author has studied up till 1870 do not make reference to Staunton Harold school and the school house, and the likely reason for this is that they did not have to be listed until the 1870 Education Act came into being.

According to Harrod's Trade Directory of 1870, the school was built to house 48 pupils and supported by Earl Ferrers; Mr George Luff was given as the master and organist and his wife Mrs. Luff the mistress. Mr. Luff was aged 28 at this time (as per the 1871 census).

In the Post Office Directory of Leics & Rutland 1876, the school was described as being supported by Earl Ferrers, and is referred to as Earl Ferrer's School. Charles John Jacobs was the master, and his wife Mrs. Betsey Jacobs was the mistress. This directory refers to the population of Staunton Harold in 1871 as being 288 including the hamlet / Township of Lount. In 1877, John Jacobs was still the schoolmaster.

Kelly's Directory of Leics & Rutland 1881, gives Samuel Calvert as the master, and Miss Minnie Calvert, the mistress of the school. Minnie was also given as the organist to the Ferrer's private chapel of the Holy Trinity. In Wright's Directory of Leics 1887-1888, Miss. Calvert is still confirmed as the organist at Holy Trinity Chapel and Samuel Calvert as the master of the "Parish School". In Kelly's Directory of Derby's 1891, Miss Minnie Calvert was given as the mistress of the school with an attendance of 48 pupils, and she was still the organist at the chapel (however, there is no mention of Samuel Calvert). In Wright's 1891 Directory of Leicestershire, there is still no mention of Samuel Calvert, so we can only presume that he had died. Minnie was recorded in the 1895 / 1899 / 1904/ 1908 and 1916 Kelly's Directories as still being the mistress at the school, and organist at the chapel, but the 1895 directory states the school was for 56(?) children and the average attendance was 48. It is possible that the school had been extended at this time. The 1908 directory gives the average number of pupils as 36.

The above contrasts with the situation c.1956/7 when there were only fourteen pupils in the school, all taught by one teacher Mrs Jean P Hartley and her assistant Mrs E. B. Brabam-Smith:-

David Ison, Roger Stevens, Joy ?, Barbara Granger, Richard Stanley, Lesley Elliot, Philip Bexon, Linda Williams, Carol Dowell, Janet Stevens, Robert Williams, Christine Dunncliffe, Susan Dowell, Henry Dowell.

Mrs. Hilda Wainwright was headmistress from 1920 to 1943 and she was followed by B. G. Marshall (headmistress) 1943-44, V. Rathbone (headmistress) 1944-52, Marjorie Wood (headmistress) and Rita Oliver (school teacher) 1953-55, and Jean Phyllis Hartley (headmistress) 1955-57.

On 7th Jan 1958, Ivy Thirlby took up duties as a supply teacher and was in charge of the school until June 9th when Jean Hartley resumed her duties as Head Mistress. On June 1st 1960, Eunice. B. Brabin-Smith took up the duty of acting Head Mistress whilst Jean Hartley was on 3 months leave, and on July 1st I. M. Rowley took over the post. Jean Hartley resumed her position on Oct 1st 1960.

In the Staunton Harold C. E. School log book, which ran from 1935 to 1964, the minimum number of pupils recorded on the roll were 8 and the maximum 18, but the average was probably about 12. At some point prior to 1935, the school became a managed Church of England School.

The auction for the Staunton Harold Estate took place in October 12th 1954 at which the School and School House were expected to be sold. The school and school house were described as being one brick building with partly tiled and partly slated roofs. The school comprised, a porch with tiled floor, school room about 20ft. square with fireplace and stove and sliding doors to a second room about 15ft by 11ft 6in., with stove. There was an outside playground with brick and tile children's lavatories. Apparently however, Earl Ferrers sadly died on the eve of the sale, and it was not until ten years later that the properties were actually sold by the executors of the 12th Earl to the then incumbent teacher, Jean P Hartley and her husband.

Several photographs of the teachers and pupils at Staunton Harold School are shown on the following pages. Those dated between 1920 and 1943 were taken when Hilda J Wainwright was the headmistress, and she features in the photographs.

Certain photographs have been scanned from Mick Sheaths book referred to earlier. Unfortunately, the author has not been able to get in touch with Mr. Sheath to seek his permission to use these photographs which were loaned by local residents at the time.

From the 1840's, there is evidence that the School House was used as the residence for Earl Ferrer's Chaplain for a period of time and then from c.1850, various chaplains are recorded as residing at the "Parsonage".

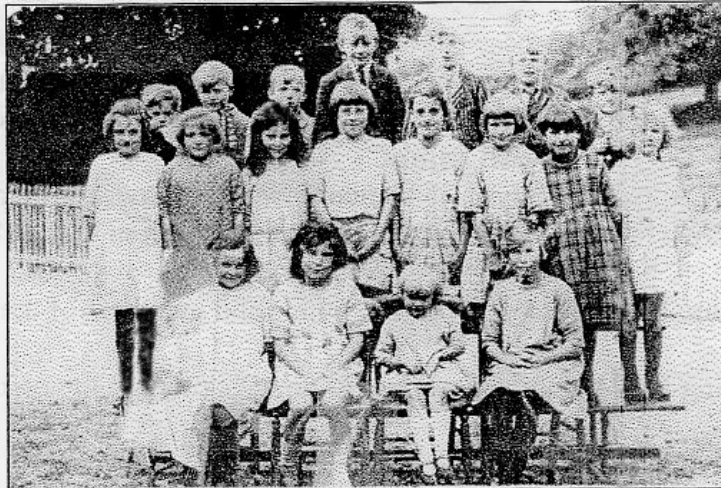


**Believed to have been taken 1880-1890
when the school master was Lawrence Calvert**



1923

	Hilda Wainwright		Clara Williams		Fred Jones		Ada Shaw		Cissie Garner		Gladys Martin		
	Winnie Joynes	??	Sam Poynton		??		Eddie Simmonds		??		Jim Starkey	Mrs Wainwright (Teacher)	
	Joan Bailey	Alleayne Bailey	May --		Ada Jones		Joan Stewart		Maggie Garner		??	Roland Holmes	-- Poynton



1925

	?	?	?	Eddie Simmonds		?		Percy Martin		Roland Holmes	
	?	Joan Stewart	?	Gladys Martin		Cissie Garner		Hilda Wainwright		---	Leda Shattock
				Ada ---		Gwenith Shaw		Edna Watson(?)		Clara Williams	



1928

??	Jim Starkey	Mary Starkey	Leda Shattock	Maggie Garner	Ada Jones	Sonny Joynes	Sam Poynton
	Percy Martin	Peter Riley	Joe Harris	Harry Harris	-- Chaffey		Mrs Wainwright
	??	??	Edna Watson	??	??		



1932

??	??	Jim Starkey	Sonny Joynes	Eric Pepper	William Ward	Peter Riley	-- Riley
??	Betty Watson	Jessie Martin	Edna Watson	??		Audrey Roberts	
	??	Harry Harris	Joe Harris	Gordon	--		



STAUNTON HAROLD SCHOOL 1936

Top Row L to R

Raymond Williams Dennis Dunncliffe Haydn Roberts Betty Warsson Audrey Roberts Mary Shattock Walter Lovatt Peggy Martin

Bottom Row L to R

Donald Elvason Jackie Williams Cyril Elvason Herbert Hurst William Bailey



STAUNTON HAROLD SCHOOL 1938

Dennis Dunncliffe Walter Lovett Ray Williams Mary Shattock Eric Elvastone Peggy Martin Donald Elvastone

Herbert Hurst Ken Thornley Betty Dye Kathleen Harrison or Vivienne Kemp David Bignall

Tommy Holt Haydon Roberts "Bill" William Bailey Jo Cooper Reg Thornley Jackie Williams Cyril Elverson



STAUNTON HAROLD SCHOOL 1939

David Bignall Herbert Hurst William Bailey Dennis Dunncliffe Peggy Martin Betty Dye Jo Cooper Tommy Holt

John Topliss Ray Hurst Eileen Dunncliffe Kathleen Harrison June Holt



1948

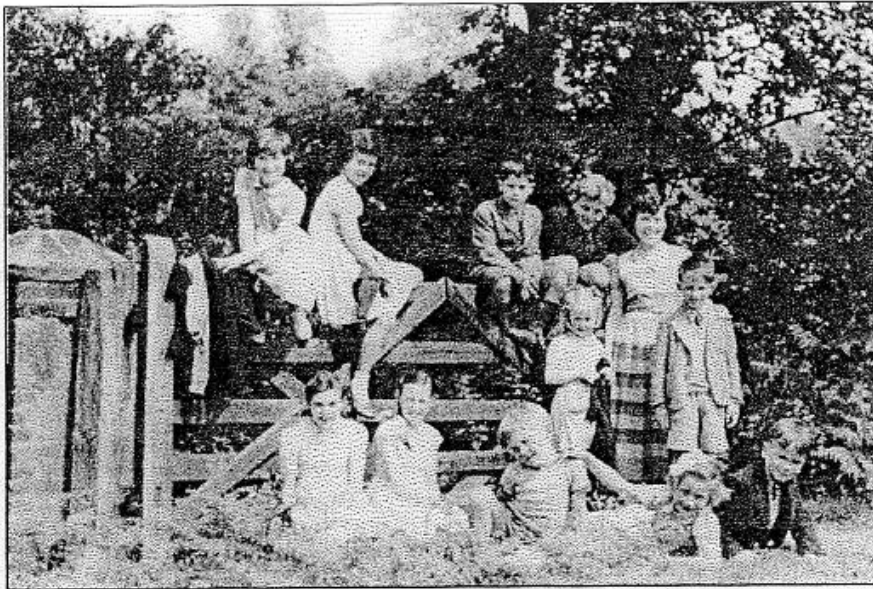
? John Beryl Brian
 Davies Davies Berrington Stevens

? Pamela Dorothy
 Davies Smith Saddington

Michelle Edna Silvia Christine Patricia Grace Kathleen Patricia
 Rathbone Topliss Davies Saddington Elliott Boulton Topliss Saddington



STAUNTON HAROLD SCHOOL 1949 ??
V. Rathbone teacher??



1955

Joyce Dunnicliffe	Diane White	David Ison	Anthony Holt	Marjorie Wood (Teacher)
			Joy Haynes	Robert Haynes
Betty Harris	Jill Watson	Roger Stevens	Elizabeth Baker	Mark Shaw



STAUNTON HAROLD SCHOOL 1959
Teacher Mrs. Jean Hartley

Top row L to R

Richard Stanley Lesley Elliot Roger Stevens Joy Haynes Philip Bexan

Bottom Row L to R

Robert Williams Janet Stevens Colin ? Linda Williams Henry Dowell