

WYCHWOOD CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

School life in Victorian times

As part of a Victorian Topic, three classes have spent a day at the old school in Fringford, North of Bicester. It is now set up as a Victorian school, complete with a very cold classroom! The scene at Wychwood School on the mornings of the 2nd, 3rd and the 4th November was of teachers, classroom support assistants and a few parents dressed in Victorian garb alongside numerous children also (in the main) dressed as Victorians. The day was eagerly anticipated — the modern coach arrived and transported them geographically and historically.

The children in Mrs Toone and Mrs Bysouth's class have also been using an "Interactive Computer Programme" which enables them to "talk" (using the keyboard) to a 10 year old boy living in a Victorian village. They are able to guide him about his village and he can describe places and happenings. This modern technological innovation has been another of the highlights of the topic work for many of the children.

They have also been looking at the school logbooks to find out about our schools back in Victorian times; the following entries are from one of our logbooks:

August 14th 1891. The attendance is beginning to fall off as the Harvest approaches. The recent rains have found out some weak places in the roofs and the water comes in great abundance. (Some things don't seem to have changed in over 100 years!)

October 17th 1891. The school re-opened on Monday, the holiday having been lengthened by the Board to 7 weeks instead of 5 on account of the backwardness of the harvest. Several children have not returned either having left the place, or having finished their school course. Some who should be at school having been playing about the roads apparently with no reasonable excuse for absence. (And then again some things do seem to have changed)

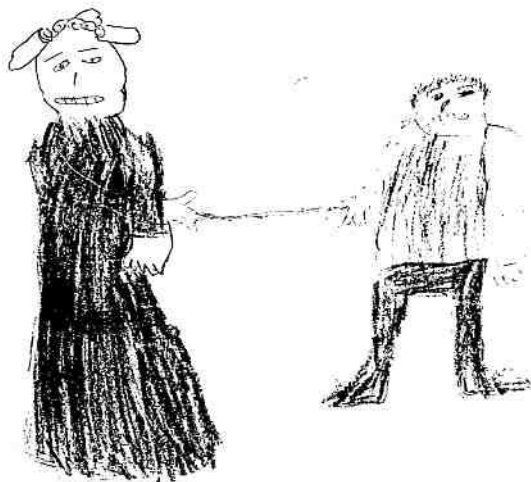
November 3rd 1893. Fires were commenced on Wednesday the frost being too severe to put them off any longer. The stove does not draw so well as it used, and the grate in the classroom is a thorough nuisance, the smoke always coming out through the openings in front. (I shall never complain about our boiler again).

March 2nd 1894. Some boys absented themselves on Wednesday afternoon to follow the hounds and received a thrashing the next morning. (No comment!)

(continued over)

A DAY AT FRINGFORD VICTORIAN SCHOOL

Yesterday we went to a Victorian school. It was in Fringford. We got on the coach and we were dropped off about half a mile from Fringford. We walked to the school. We walked through the playground. When we were at the classroom door the teacher who was called Mrs Crabbottom said to put our



dinner down and go to the toilet. First we did singing. I liked it a lot. After that we had bible study then reading practice. Reading practice was really good. We did spelling practice after that. We had quite hard spellings. Then we said our prayers. After that we went to get out our lunch. Next we had playtime. After that we had photographs. Next we had a drill. We did a lot of star jumps. At last Mrs Crabbottom told us to go inside and we were given a sheet of paper. We had to write

what was on the sheet about five times. After that we had another sheet of maths. I only got to my four times tables. Next we did some more Bible study and then singing. The teacher told us that we could go home now so we all got on the coach.

Chloe Madeley, age 8

OUR VISIT TO FRINGFORD

On Wednesday, 3rd November our class went to a Victorian School. We were dropped off about a mile from school and we walked there. Mrs Toone went to the new school and got the key. We went into the Victorian School. We walked in and said Good Morning and then we read out of the Bible. We did spellings and maths. After that it was time to go out and play and have our lunch. We went in and said Good Afternoon and then we did writing practice. We wrote on slates but I thought it was difficult and not very comfortable. I did not enjoy reading round the class or singing doh, ray, me. The bits that were good about the Victorian school were that the desks were in rows. If you wanted something you just lifted the lid of your desk up. I thought it was good that we worked in silence. What is better now is that we have P.E. and we have lots of other equipment. Overall I prefer our school now.

Ben Pauling, Age 10

VICTORIAN TRIP



On Thursday we went to a Victorian School. We all dressed up like they did in Victorian times. When we got to school we had the register taken. We called Mrs Bysouth, Miss Chuzzlewhitt, Pat was called Miss Hepplewhite. They dressed up as Victorian teachers. They had canes to smack us with if we were naughty but they didn't really use them. We said prayers first and then we did reading out. We had to write on slates with slate pencils. I found the slates difficult to use. Then it was lunch time and we had a Victorian lunch and we played with hoops, skipping ropes and a whip and top at playtime. In the afternoon we had little books to read and we did some maths work. Then school finished. I enjoyed my day.

Hannah Little. Age 9



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