

# **Rathmell School**

## **Extracts from papers lent by the vicar, April 1945**

George Clark, by will dated 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 1716, devised the profits of an estate consisting of five meadow closes in Rathmell towards maintaining a school-master in the town of Rathmell, to be elected and chosen by the vicar of Giggleswick, later five trustees. Stephen Carr of Swainstead, by will dated 13<sup>th</sup> April 1725, bequeathed £70 to be placed out for the advancement of the school at Rathmell. The yearly interest to the schoolmaster and also £10 to be applied for the repairs of the school.

The school is kept in a building belonging to the township. The master is to be appointed by the Vicar for the time being and receives the rent and interest as salary. He teaches as free scholars in reading and writing, all the children belonging to the township and he also instructs scholars in accounts but for these a charge is made according to usage.

## **Rathmell in the Parish of Giggleswick 1780 ref.no. Fax Bk2 P250 at York.**

The thirty first day of July on the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty a licence was granted to Thomas Holmes a literate person to teach the patelor ? English School of Rathmell in the Parish of Giggleswick in the County of York upon the nomination of the Rev. John Thompson Clerk Vicar of Giggleswick aforesaid pursuant to the will of the late George Clark in the room of the late Robert Iveson late school-master of Rathmell aforesaid deceased to the said Thomas Holmes having first duly subscribed all and singular the articles and taken all and every this oath in that behalf acquired before the Reverend Thomas Pickard clerk surrogate in the presence of me F.A. Wright.

Deputy Registrar.

## **Clapham and Geldard Charity**

Particulars of an indenture dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 1842 between John Geldard and Thomas Clapham of Stackhouse, Robert Geldard of Beauty House and Christopher Geldard of Settle.

Concludes = Upon trust for support of a free Sunday School upon principles of Church of England or for weekly school for instructing knitting and sewing with power to hire a room, to engage, pay or dismiss a teacher, to apply post for Sunday School and part fee sewing school.

In July 1880 the sum of £70 Stephen Carr charity for the support of the Parochial School was transferred by representatives of the late Rev. Morley who had charge of it, by the charity commissions.

In 1869 a new scheme for the school was approved and established by the charity commissions appointing the incumbent of Rathmell with three other trustees and directing that the school be conducted as a public elementary school.

Notice from the education department 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1873 NO 7945 notice B, stated under schedule 1 that there was no efficient school under schedule 2. that accommodation was required for fifty children.

If the existing school is at once built with accordance with the instructions contained in the letter from this department of the 10<sup>th</sup> May and 8<sup>th</sup> July 1871 addressed to the Rev.J.P.Sykes, no further accommodation will be required. A balance sheet dated Sept 1875 shows that subscriptions amounted to £185-12s, interest is £4-19-9d and government grant is £58-8-9d total £249-0-6d.

The contract by James Mansergh for the actual building was £219-10s

Other expenses, surveying, drains and furniture left the balance of £7-14-3d, available for repair of dwelling house or other purposes of school subscriptions.

£3-0-0d Architects Certificate 13<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1905

I hereby certify that I have personally inspected the school buildings of the above named school and that the enlargement for which plans and specifications were conditionally approved by the board of education on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 1904, have been in all respects completed in accordance, there-with.

### **Extracts from Rathmell School Logs.**

“ Life at Rathmell School can be glimpsed, by looking through the school logs and it was a delight to see old names cropping up with interesting snippets of what used to happen so many years ago.

For example, early in the year 1866, there was a cattle plague in the Rathmell area and on March 14<sup>th</sup> “The children went to church for a day of humility, in order that the plague might pass.” Our present local veterinary practice, suggested that the “plague” could possibly have been, Bovine Fluro Pneumonia, a highly contagious virus or Rinderpest, which was eliminated through slaughter.

August 6<sup>th</sup> 1866, James and Elizabeth Williams have left school, also Alice Fletcher, she being just nine years of age, apparently to go into service.

### **A report by the School Inspector for 1865.**

Mr Williamson has evidently worked hard during the past year, considering this is a very small rural school, the children have creditable examination”. Mr. Williamson was approximately 21 years of age at the time, having started teaching at 16 years of age. A sewing teacher should be provided if possible as Mrs. Aryton has now left.

**September 28<sup>th</sup> 1865**, Marie Whipp dead, aged 5 Years. “Marie was the grandchild of Richard and Sarah Whipp, Richard being a game-keeper at Gawthroppe, there being there being at least three dwellings there, excluding the present farm-house.”

Work that year variable; new subjects being taught are geography and grammar with a great emphasis on religious education.

**April 4<sup>th</sup> 1871**, Mental arithmetic not so good in consequence of so many leaving the parish, “Does it mean children or families?” and the elder boys being taken home for spring work.

Thomas Robinson entered practice, did not say which.

**June 9<sup>th</sup> 1871**, Unexpected visit by Government Inspector this morning, results appeared favourable.

**July 31<sup>st</sup> 1871**, opened school after school holidays with very poor attendances, in consequence of the hay harvest being so late this year. The oldest inhabitants do not recollect having such continued wet and unfavourable weather, as we have had this summer and it still continues. This weather continued nearly through August and attendance was thin.

**November 13<sup>th</sup> 1871**, Mr. Mansergh arrived to fit a stovepipe. A carpenter in the village held an evening class for the first time, no one under twelve to attend. *The only carpenter recorded at the time was Mr. James Mansergh, though the Parson family had joiners among them, in fact William Parson, son of John (Joiner), married a Jane Mansergh daughter of John on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1841.*

*This I believe brought the Mansergh family from Bentham to Rathmell, a joining or merger of two carpentry families.*

**January 6<sup>th</sup> 1872**, Began school but with few scholars, therefore the usual progress was impeded. Examined the school "the children had gone back in several subjects and being so few in number, I am afraid I shall make a poor show when the Inspector comes". *Mr Major was certainly a worried man, obviously a lot of pressure put upon him.*

**February 26<sup>th</sup> 1872**, Thanksgiving for the Prince of Wales recovery.

**June 21<sup>st</sup> 1872**, Presented the children with nuts and sweets and Thomas Robinson with "John Haywoods, County Atlas of England and Wales".

**January 3<sup>rd</sup> 1873**, A party for the children, The Rev. Sykes provided prizes for scholars and Mr. Haythornwaite one of the teachers of Quarry House, provided tea. They then wended their way homeward, very much pleased with their rewards.

**March 1<sup>st</sup> 1873**, Money now due for coals from the children. The usual charge for winter was sixpence on the first of November and one shilling on the first of March, but owing to coals being raised double their former price, they have been compelled to charge one shilling and sixpence and the unfortunate Mr. Major had to pay nine shillings and nine pence out of his own pocket.

**March 24<sup>th</sup> 1873**, School now open to 4-30 now the nights are longer.

**March 31<sup>st</sup> 1873**, Robert and Mary Mansergh re-admitted, they spent a great deal of time out at home.

**April 25<sup>th</sup> 1875** Now have twenty-six pupils, but Elizabeth and Matthew Lister of Gawthroppe have Scarletina, John Mitton also sick.

**May 14<sup>th</sup> 1875**, Isabella Green of Black-Leach, has taken her book home, she is to stay there till her baby brother can walk, and an older sister has now gone out to work.

**August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1875**, School commenced after a month's holiday, thirteen children present, hay harvest not over on the moors yet.

**October 22<sup>nd</sup> 1875**, Robert Mansergh returned to school, after missing one quarter, find he has lost all he learned last quarter. Men have been employed in making the school grounds. Two new lamps have been suspended in the schoolroom.

**January 8<sup>th</sup> 1877**, Robert Mitton has been stricken with the paralysis and is rapidly sinking. L. Newhouse is still lame. (*What with?*)

**January 12<sup>th</sup> 1877**, Robert Mitton died, Wednesday morning, all children invited to attend the funeral and sing school hymns at his grave.





### Rathmell School and School House

**March 9<sup>th</sup> 1877**, Matthew Chamley is to stay at home, till he is cured of the ringworm.

**June 8<sup>th</sup> 1877**, The Lund family of Hesley Hall are absent, since they have Scarlet Fever in the house.

Margaret Mansergh is to be absent this quarter, she is to help her mother.

**May 21<sup>st</sup> 1878**, John Tomlinson of Hensly Hill, absent without leave.  
*Pressure now apparently put on parents to send their children regularly to school.*

**May 21<sup>st</sup> 1878**, Annie and Nellie Towler of Hollin Hall have left to go to another school, "Private" at Settle, the reason being alleged that the itch was in the school but on that being contradicted and both Mr. & Mrs. Sykes kindly speaking to their parents and then after promising to let them attend to keep the attendance up, they did not send their children after all.

**1879** Alan Lund is too lame to come to school and is now on crutches, it is feared that he will have to go to Leeds infirmary.

**1880 January**, Parents are now keeping the children off for the most trivial reasons; the teachers are appealing to the parents to send the children back to school.

**September 17<sup>th</sup> 1880**, J.A Chamley of Ragged Hall, returned after weeks of absence bringing his younger brother John. John who is eight years of age has not been to school before and can not tell any figure or letter and has no idea of reading and writing, it will be almost impossible to prepare him in time. The same with Fred Harrison and Robert Lund.

**March 4<sup>th</sup> 1881**, This is the worst week we have ever had; Monday just ten children came, Tuesday just seven. Ash Wednesday, five in the morning went to church, holiday in the afternoon, five present on Thursday morning and the weather was so tempestuous that no children came Thursday afternoon and none came Friday.

**June 16<sup>th</sup> 1882**, Saving scheme started by the Post Office Bank, the Rev. Sykes starting the idea at Rathmell, 2/6d was brought in altogether by the children in the first week.

**June 29<sup>th</sup> 1882**, Measles have spread all over the village, nineteen pupils absent.

**September 29<sup>th</sup> 1882**, Fred and Bertha Harrison played truant in the morning; this is the only case since I have been here. The children were punished, one stroke on the hand with the cane and kept in twenty minutes, they promised never to do it again.

**January 15<sup>th</sup> 1883**, Richard Ambrose and Margaret Agnes Taylor absent, the girls life is in danger *I think Margaret must have recovered; no more of her illness seems to have been referred to*

**1884**, Emma Clapham now Headmistress of Rathmell school. *Mr. Major retired or just left.*

**1885**, Our James Tomlinson is the greatest absentee of all times, what his excuses are we do not know, he is certainly a headache to his teacher.

**November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1888**, School flooded out and was unfit to use.

**November 30<sup>th</sup> 1888**, Workmen have been in to repair damage, the top end is in use but the bottom is still flooded.

**November 6<sup>th</sup> 1892**, Thursday afternoon, 2-55 – 3-20, lesson on mustard by Messrs Colman. Specimens shown, children greatly amused.

**April 11<sup>th</sup> 1894**, News received of the death of Mr. John Geldard; he died at St. Leonards on sea, where he had been staying for health reasons. The school was closed for the day and the children attended the funeral and afterwards decorated his grave with flowers and mosses. The funeral service took place at 3.00 pm Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> April.

**January 9<sup>th</sup> 1900**, The Taylors of Black Leach are absent having had two cases of Diphtheria, one fatal, *Nellie Taylor, daughter of James and Jane Taylor was buried Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> 1900, just 3 years old.*





**Rathmell School circa 1894-1900**

**May 13<sup>th</sup> 1901**, Stephan Harrison died this morning from some disease of the brain, he was eleven years old.

**May 24<sup>th</sup> 1901**, Mr. Geldard formed a society called the "The little Brothers and Sisters"".

**June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1902**, Holiday all day in commemoration of the end of the Boer War. Peace signed in Preston, 10-30 am May 31<sup>st</sup> 1902. June 6<sup>th</sup>, Party at Cappleside to celebrate.

**May 11<sup>th</sup> 1904**, Mary Ann (*Seems to be known as May*) and Frank Taylor from Black Leach absented themselves from school because their father was killing a pig.

**November 9<sup>th</sup> 1904**, Very stormy day, rain and wind, the lower Ribble in a flood, a number of sheep belonging to Henry Robinson have been drowned, attendance at school poor.



### **Rathmell School Children 1910?**

**Back row** L-R. Henry Walker, Earnest Preston, Norman Nelson, Joe Simpson, Roy Wolfenden.

**Third row** L-R. Madge Walker, Dimmie Tomlinson, John Shuttleworth, Robin Nelson, Charlie Moore, John Nelson, Jimmy Faraday.

**Second row** L-R. Lucy Moore, Molly Geldard, Nellie Simpson, Isabel (Sunny) Taylor, Florrie Moore, Evelyn Nelson, Marian Walker

**Front row** L-R Susie Garnett (Mansergh), Agnes Taylor, Joe Simpson, Tommy Nelson, Norman Simpson, Ella Tomlinson.

**January 25<sup>th</sup> 1905**, At last a new classroom has been built. Gertrude Pritchard is now the new headmistress of Rathmell School.

By **1910**, a piano had been installed in the school, also for gardening, the crofts opposite being used. *The photograph shows the efforts of the boys, but a photograph of the girls' efforts also exists.*





#### **Rathmell School garden 1914**

1.Frank Harrison 2.Edgar Harrison 3.Walter Lister 4.James Sutcliffe 5. Frank Gray 6.Norman Simpson 7.Eddie Nelson 8. Mark Lister 9. Charlie Moore 10. Ernest Preston 11. Tommy Nelson 12. Fred Lister 13. Jack Gray 14. Maurice Walker 15. Joe Simpson 16. Dick Walker 17. Tom Gray 18.Charlie Sutcliffe 19.Roy Wolfenden 20. Thomas Miles Pawson 21.Mark Frankland 22. Christopher Sutcliffe 23. Off-side John Dobson.

**1916**, twenty-one children went to Settle for dental treatment. *Mrs. Alice Cowking, who was at school at that time, says they all walked in, then back.*

**1921**, Mrs. Charnley the caretaker ceased work and Mrs. Kirby commenced

**February 28<sup>th</sup> 1922**, Whole days holiday granted to celebrate the royal wedding of H.R.highness Princess Mary and Viscount Lascelles. 46 children now at Rathmell school.

**May 6<sup>th</sup> 1926**, Admitted Frank and George Holmes from Dob-Dale, which is four miles away and never been to school before. *(Still have children from remote farms that are late scholars and there is a strong possibility that some children never went to school at all.*



**Rathmell School circa late 1920's**

Bob Brennand front left, Ivy Sutcliffe back row middle.

**September 28<sup>th</sup> 1926**, Nation-wide coal strike, coal and coke getting scarce.

**1927**, First mention of a motorcar, used to take two girls to Giggleswick, the boys went on bicycles.

**September 9<sup>th</sup> 1929**, Most children went to see Bostock's circus at Settle.

**February 7<sup>th</sup> 1931**, At a gathering of older folk of Rathmell, held in the reading room, particulars of some old local dances were obtained for the English folk dances. The dances were Black Joke, Butter and Peas, Turn off, Swinging six, Darsoviana, Brass nuts and Steal my lady, which proved to be the triumph of the evening.

**November 15<sup>th</sup> 1931**, Mr. Barker, 1st to Edward Lamb, 2nd Robert Brennand, 3rd Norman Sutcliffe and 4th John Hartley, awarded the gardening prizes. Girls, 1<sup>st</sup> Ivy Sutcliffe, 2<sup>nd</sup> Audrey Garnett, 3<sup>rd</sup> Minnie Deny and 4<sup>th</sup> to Elsie Kenyon.

**April 12<sup>th</sup> 1932**, Kenneth Robinson aged 7 ½ years fell in the playground and hurt his shin. I examined the area but could see no injury, so painted the spot with Iodine. Kenneth was unable to walk; so two boys carried him home. He was brought to school in the afternoon and carried home later by the farm worker, still in pain. The doctor came and pronounced inflammation of the bone.

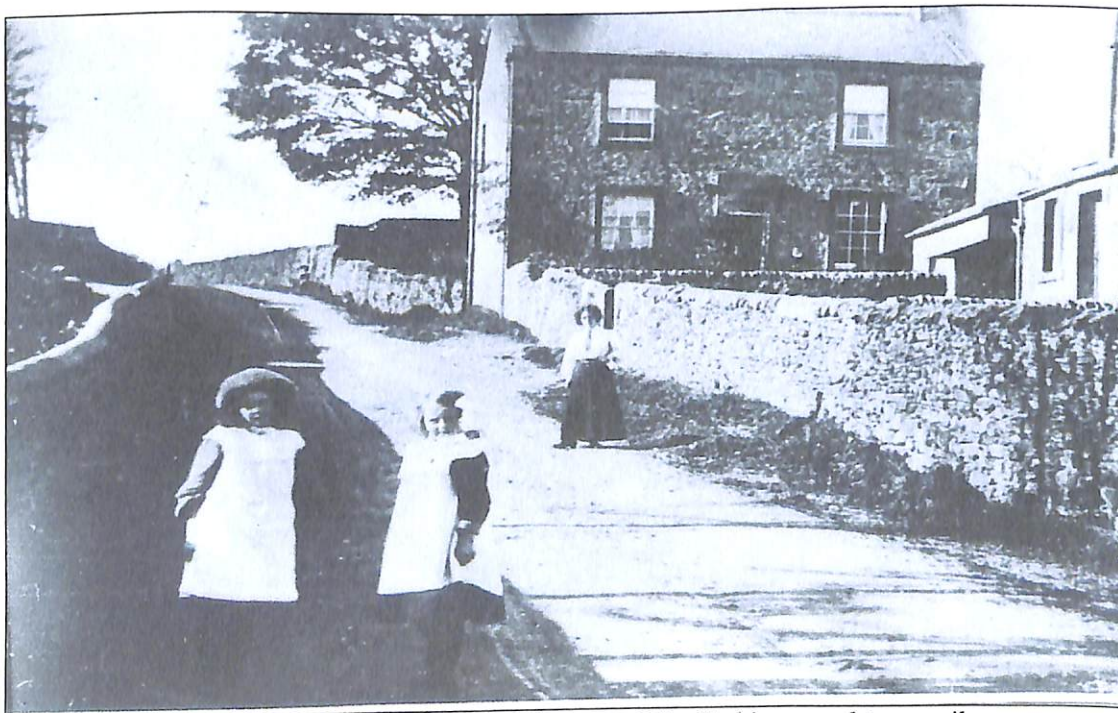




**Rathmell School July 1954, Miss D.M. Brooke, Schoolteacher at the schoolhouse.**

**January 6<sup>th</sup> 1933,** Mrs. Jane Taylor handed her resignation on January 1<sup>st</sup>. The wages have been reduced from £26-8-0d to £18 per annum, which is usual amount paid to a school of this size.

**January 31<sup>st</sup> 1933,** No other people have applied, so Mrs. Taylor has agreed to stay on at 10/- per week.



**Rathmell School, circa 1900, Headmistress Miss Parkinson and two pupils.**



**May 8<sup>th</sup> 1933**, Mrs Charnley began as permanent caretaker at £18 per annum.  
**938**, Free milk at school, six parents have applied, three pints now delivered to school.

I have come no further, perhaps memories will suffice.

All through these logs, I found that they were based on the happenings of the village and what happened in the community, greatly affected the school life. Indeed most of the logs referred to anything but the actual school, as though the school life became second to the teachers.

But having read other school logs, I have come to the conclusion that this was not unusual, in fact to the local historian it is a great advantage, as so many local and nationwide events were recorded. i.e. types of illness, weather extremities, farming calamities etc.

Some more wealthy families preferred to educate their children at the local grammar school and University and examples from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, taken from the Giggleswick School Registers are shown below.

William, son of Charles Nowell of Cattleside, Rathmell, entered Christ's College Cambridge, May 1666. B.A. 1669-70, M.A. 1674, Ordained Deacon, Ely May 1670, Rector of Berwick, Sussex January 1672/3-94, also Vicar of Fettleworth, September 1677, Rector of Brightling, December 1681, Vicar of Alciston, June 1686, but he held Berwick throughout his life. Died before 1695.

Henry, son of Oliver Bradley of Littlebank, Rathmell, March 1667, B.A. 1670, Ordained Deacon of Litchfield, September 1671, Vicar of Great Ness, Salop 12/4.1676, buried there 9/7/1706.

Charles Nowell of Cattleside, Entered Trinity Hall Cambridge 1670, Christ's College March 1670-1.

George son of Henry Clarke of Rathmell entered Christ's College Cambridge May 1702, scholar by March 1704/5, B.A. 1705/6, Ordained Deacon at York June 1706, Priest June 1707. *George baptised of Rathmell 9/2/1682*

Thomas, son of Christopher Tatham of Rathmell, Entered Christ's College Cambridge in April 1684. A Thomas Tatham of Rathmell was incumbent of Colne, Lancashire 1694-1708/9 and Vicar of Almondbury near Huddersfield from 26/3/1706, where he died before June 1716. *Thomas is given as from Otterburn, but it is possible he was born there.*

Thomas, son of Thomas Settle of Swainstead entered Christ's College Cambridge in November 1747, scholar 6/7/1748, B.A. 7/6/1752. Ordained Priest at Norwich September 1757, Curate at Wangford Suffolk. *Robert is the grandson of Thomas Settle Snr. Of above, this family was very keen to have its young men well educated.*

It is possible that these young men or boys as they would be educated at Giggleswick Grammar School, even though I believe that there would be a teacher of sorts at Rathmell then and that these families would most certainly be more affluent than most of the other families of Rathmell, in order to pay there fees.

Also none of these young men seem to have come back to Rathmell to live, all appearing to enter the church as there profession and in these examples, ending their days away from the area.