

ROUNDBOUT VERWOOD

PAST and PRESENT

Verwood Church School

Photographed in the 1920's after the Schoolhouse had been extended to over double its original size



The first school in Verwood was built in 1847 by the Anglican "National Society" on land at Church Hill donated for the purpose by Squire William Rolles Fryer. It was a brick building designed to accommodate 120 children with a teacher's house attached and served as one of the village primary schools until 1985 when the staff and pupils moved to new premises in Howe Lane.

The school opened its doors on 7th October 1847 under the headship of Mrs Elizabeth Sims, wife of Stephen, a Rail-

way Gateman from Manswood near Moor Crichel.

Over the years there was a succession of teachers many of whom stayed only a short time as they climbed the career ladder or became despondent at the numerous difficulties presented in trying to educate rural children according to various government dictates!

The first recorded examination of Verwood National School in 1854 was by the Reverend D. Tinling who commented that *"the attendance of the children in this wild district is very good and reflects great credit on the teacher and apprentice"*.

On the day of inspection 141 children were present despite accommodation provided for only 120. One wonders if some sort of inducement had been offered to the children to guarantee their attendance when the inspector called!

Today the school is only just visible from the same location in Manor Road and the adjacent church has disappeared from view completely!



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