

# BUILDINGS

*of interest*

## COLN MANOR

Coln Manor was the original manor house to the village before the Powle family at Williamstrip acquired large swathes of Coln St Aldwyns and Quenington.

It is an almost classic example of a grand manor house, built by the ambitious Quaker Fettiplace family during the heady days of late 16th century prosperity. The oldest part of the building is the central east-west range with a parlour block and an east wing being added in the early 17th century.

At this time many Quaker meetings were held in Coln Manor and it was known as a hotbed of Non-Conformity. One famous Quaker, John Bellers, married a Fettiplace daughter in 1686 and became 'Lord of the Manor' of Coln St Aldwyns. From 1695 to his death he was continually involved in writing progressive essays on social issues. Bellers advocated a national system of hospitals, which were to treat the poor and act as training schools for new doctors. This was enlightened thinking which anticipated the National Health Service. He also advocated the abolition of capital punishment. Bellers died in 1725, arguably one of the most cerebral men of his time.

In 1860 the Manor was bought by Sir Michael Hicks Beach (1st Earl St Aldwyn). He later altered and enlarged it as his country seat and it was lived in by the family until 1947 when it was rented to various tenants until 1967.

Hatherop Castle School bought and used Coln Manor as a sixth-form annex from 1967-1974. The sixth-form girls would walk up to Hatherop Castle for their lunch and one villager recalls that estate farm workers on their lunch break would gather and wait for the nubile procession to pass each day before they would go back to work. Eventually it was sold to a developer who converted it into six residential units.



Coln Manor, 1902



The Post Office, 1908



TELEPHONE KIOSK AT COLN ST ALDWIN'S PERSPECTIVE SKETCH



## THE OLD POST OFFICE

The Old Post Office was built in the 18th century and served as the village Post Office and sweet shop until 1993. In the early 20th century the local telephone exchange with a manual switchboard was located there with a wooden telephone kiosk inside the shop. This meant that when the Post Office was closed it was not possible to make a call until 1950 when a stone kiosk was built outside.

## THE SCHOOL

The School opened in 1856 having cost £762 8s 2d to build. At this time there were 73 children in the day school and 35 'lads' in the evening school which was run for older boys who were already working and could not attend the day school.

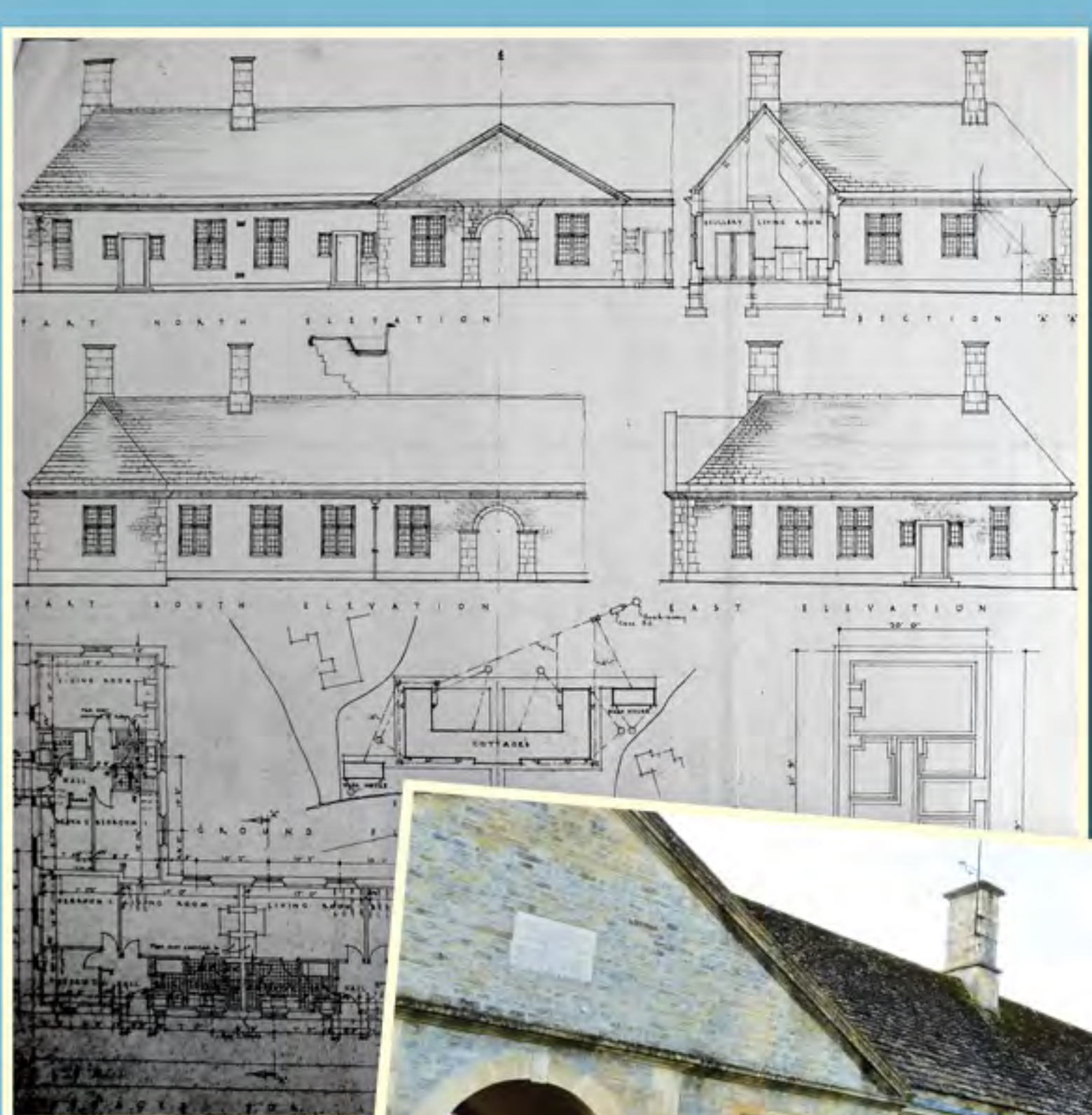
From 1889 the number of students attending the school started to drop and by the end of the First World War there were less than 30 children on the roll. Eventually, in 1929 three schools in the area amalgamated and Coln St Aldwyns became a Junior school.

At this time the schoolroom was heated by a large coke burning 'tortoise' stove. The 'desks' were tables in three sizes with chairs to match the various sizes of children and were covered in brown paper to protect them. Miss Knapp was the headmistress who ruled her pupils strictly but fairly but was not above threatening her charges with an 8ft cane which she kept it by her desk.

The last headmistress of Coln St Aldwyns School was Mrs Adeline Powell. She once enrolled a lamb called Sparky as a pupil of the school. Mr Ducker the shepherd and his daughter, Sarah, stayed up all night to deliver a lamb in 1968. The lamb became very attached to Sarah insisting on following her to school. Sparky was a success in the classroom and the children were encouraged to keep records of his growth, write essays and do art work about it. Sparky usually slept through it all at the back of the classroom. The school eventually closed in 1971.



The School, 1907



Plans for the Memorial Cottages, 1946



## THE SIX MEMORIAL COTTAGES

The six Memorial Cottages were built in 1946 by Michael John St Aldwyn (2nd Earl) in memory of his grandmother, Lady Lucy, using materials from the demolished Soane wing of Williamstrip Park. Before the war the field where the cottages were built was used to graze the Shetland pony that pulled the small carriage that Lady Lucy used to ride in.

