



HISTORY OF KIRKBY GROUP

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BECKSIDE

VOLUME THREE

BECKSIDE ROOMS



Beckside Rooms was known as Beckside School for many years and was used as the Day School until Burlington School was built in 1877. It had been used as a Sunday School since 1852 and probably earlier. Records state that the first school was built about 1684. In 1879 when the new vicar, Rev. Charles Lowry took up residence, the Duke of Devonshire was asked if he would give a small piece of land adjoining the School for enlarging the room. In 1887 or 1888 that land was given and an appeal opened for funds. The old scholars of the school set up a committee and printed the following leaflet:

**“Re-building of the Beckside Sunday School, Kirkby
GRAND BAZAAR**

**Of useful and fancy articles in aid of the
BUILDING FUND**

To be opened by

LORD EDWARD CAVENDISH

On Friday August 2nd 1889

OLD SCHOLARS’ STALL”

"Dec 2nd.

At a meeting of Churchwardens & Synodsmen held in the Sunday School, Beckside, it was unanimously agreed, that the Duke of Devonshire be requested to grant an additional piece of ground for enlargement of the Sunday School – The present room being quite unfit for the proper teaching of 100 Scholars"

"The Parish Room was begun in March & is now in July nearly finished – it is to be opened in August by Lord & Lady Cavendish – a pleasing feature is the interest that Old Sunday school scholars take in this matter. The expense will be about £400 when furniture etc. is paid for -"

Extracts from the Kirkby Select Vestry Book

In February 1889 a letter of appeal was sent out which resulted in donations from £50 down to 6d, and the offer of labour for carting. Correspondence in the Barrow News referred to the appeal and the following paragraph is an excerpt from "Grieved But Hopeful" who replied.

"Sir, It certainly does seem monstrous that in Kirkby there should be no place of universal refreshment for body and mind, especially if you set against the fact that there are eight places for the enslavement of body and debasement of mind (public houses), not to mention the thievish corners of the streets and walls on which men perch like crows and croak."

The rebuilding work was completed and it was decided in 1892 that the room could be let for socials, concerts, missionary meetings etc.. It was let as a reading Room and Technical Classes were also held. On Christmas Eve, 1894, it was let for 4 shillings for a tea party for old people.

Reference "A History of Beckside School" by G. B. Craig

BECKSIDE SCHOOL
Kirkby Irellth

This floor was laid in
September 1931 by the
Voluntary work of the men
of the Parish whose names are
below under the Superintendent
of Mr William Moorhouse:—

William Atkinson
John Arthur Briggs
Harry Briggs (Churchwarden)
John Briggs
Noble Constant (Churchwarden)
Harry Gibson
Robert M. M.
Thomas Pittaway
Thomas Purlinson
Eric Purlinson
Edward Purlinson
Eric Seaward
Eric Seaward
Matthew Stables. Charles Sykes

Names of men who laid the
floor in Beckside School in 1931
Original document under the floor
Photocopy by F. J. Wayles.
Fair Breeze.
June 1944.

Memories from Mr. Tommy Walker.

"When there was a dance at Beckside we all went to the 'Commercial'. The dances were in the 'School'. It was always packed, a full house. The Parish Tea was held there and the Bell Ringers' Dance on New Years Eve. The ringers went to church to ring in the New Year. It was always a good tea and supper. The band was mostly from Ulverston called 'Oliver's Band'. And then there was Miss Bateman's from Broughton, that was quite good too. They had a piano, a saxophone, violin drums, no guitars but a banjo"

Memories from Mrs. Connie Tyson

"After school, once a fortnight, the girls would go to the 'Girls' Friendly Society' at Beckside School. Amongst other things they learned country dancing and went with Miss Harrison to a competition at the Victory Hall, Broughton. Other classes as well as a Male Voice Choir were held at Beckside."

My Memories are the Tennis Club Party which was great, the Drama Group and pantomime rehearsals and performances each night for a week. The concerts held in aid of local lads during the war and the Sunday School.

Phyllis Tyson

'RECTORY FARM'

'Rectory Farm' stands next to the old church in the centre of the hamlet of Beckside, Kirkby-in-Furness, and as the name suggests it was a church farm owned for years by the Dean and Chapter of York.

The earliest recorded tenant found so far is Roger James in 1840. He was succeeded by Margaret James in 1851, and Elizabeth James in 1882. At the turn of the 19th century William Coward (Mrs. Edith Farish's Grandfather) was the farmer. The next family to live there were the Blacketts. The Coopers worked the farm until the present owner, Mrs. Dorothy Muncaster and her late husband James, took over in 1968.

'Rectory Farm' was the principal farm in Beckside before all the barns and other buildings were demolished in 1982 and the land used to build modern houses called Beck Side Court.

The farmhouse has been enlarged once or twice over the years. It is possible that the wash house and dairy were the original long house with front door in the centre leading into a cross passage or lobby dividing the living quarters on one side and the byre on the other. The wall on the left of the passage is 4 feet thick and perhaps was then an old fire wall with maybe a chimney flue hidden within its interior. The stairs giving access to the upper floor are sited here in this oldest part of the house which was perhaps built in medieval times.

The present farm kitchen was most likely built in the 17th century as an extension from the long house when traditionally farmhouses needed large hall kitchens in which to accommodate the farmhands. A new front door would have been required as the old one was now enclosed inside the building. This door, that is now blocked, can be seen facing the road on an old photograph.

The next phase in the development of the building would possibly come sometime in the late 17th or early 18th century when the new front of the farmhouse was constructed in the form of a cross wing. It would have been built to face more towards the afternoon sun for light and warmth and possibly to have the living quarters more private, keeping the service rooms and offices to the rear of the house and adjacent to the farmyard. The only other addition to the building is an outshut constructed against the side of the house near to the road probably in the 19th century. Of the old chimneys there are only two remaining today. The one on the south side of the house has a projection at the base of its stack that could be hiding a side oven.

Summing up this old place we see that the building has undergone quite a few changes in its long history and, although the roof timbers of the older part have been renewed in recent times, the cross wing still retains its old adze hewed purlins, tie beams and king posts that all support later rafters. The fact that the old dog legged stairs are sited next to the thickest wall, the roof timbers have been renewed in this part of the building, and even a field name all help with the detective work. In conclusion this is a little stab in the dark and nothing is written in stone.

* outshut - small building constructed on the side of an existing building.



My warmest thanks to Mrs. Dorothy Muncaster who welcomed my wife and I into her farmhouse and shared with us her knowledge of the farm. Also to Mrs. Edith Farish who gave me information and photographs of when her grandparents farmed at 'Rectory'.

George Woods.

'Rectory Farm' from Front Field c. 1906

NOTES ON BECKSIDE AND SETTLEMENTS

PLAN OF LOWER BECKSIDE SHOWING SITE OF PROPOSED NEW VICARAGE.

1841	1851		
Farmers	2 Farmers	2	
Miller	1 Miller	1	
Agric. Labr.	5 Assist.	1	
	Servant	1	
	Agric. Labr.	3	
Serv/Faem.Son	4 Serv/Farm Son	4	
Slate Merchant	1 Slate merchant	1	
Servant	1 Slate River	4	
Slate River	3 Slate Dresser	1	
Quarry Labr.	2 Quarry Labr.	4	
Innkeeper	1 Innkeeper	1	
Master Saw Mill	1 Master Saw Mill	1	
	Apprentice	1	
Joiner	2 Joiner	2	
Butcher	1 Grocer	1	
Tailor	2 Tailor	1	
	Apprentice	1	
Shoemaker	1 Shoemaker	2	
Apprentice	2 Dancing Mstr.	1	
Stonemason	1 Highway Lab	1	
	Charwoman	1	
Carrier	1 Constable	1	
Basket maker	1 Dressmaker	4	
Servant(Female)	10 Servant(Female)	5	
	Housekeeper	1	
Clerk in Holy Os.	1 Clerk in Holy Ords.	1	
Schoolmaster	1 Schoolmaster	1	
Solicitor	1 Solicitor	1	
	Schoolmistress	1	
Independent	4		
	Aged Annuitants	3	
Children under 14	52 Children under 14	49	

Peter Bennett

Dated 24th August 1882



Winifred Harris, Jill Baines and Dorothy Procter

REMINISCENCE

Saturday evening - a perfect day -
 A longing came o'er me to stray
 O'er the ground where, when I was a lad,
 I lived along with my Mother and Dad.
 Passing the church with its old grey tower,
 The elm tree forming a shady bower,
 The Punch Bowl where they retailed ale,
 (But now a wee shop with goods for sale),
 I strolled along the village street,
 The surface of which was smooth and neat,
 For now it's covered with grit and tar,
 And not loose pinnel with stones to jar.
 A sidewalk too has been built I see -
 (Not much help for a fellow on spree!) -
 The electric wires now overhead
 Tell that the days of oil lamps are sped.
 Musing the while as I wended my way,
 My thoughts grew sad on this bright May Day,
 For, passing cottages one by one,
 I thought of friends who have now passed on.
 Matthew Deason - a joiner was he,
 Sexton, Verger - jobs he had three.
 William Coward of rectory Farm,
 Old Tom Knight with his ready yarn -
 How 'Lortons were shorn when I were little,
 Wi' neah machines and nobbut a sickle' -
 How they garnered their crops would run his tale
 'Then threshed on t' barn floo-or wi' a flail'.

Extract from a poem by the late Matthew Stables