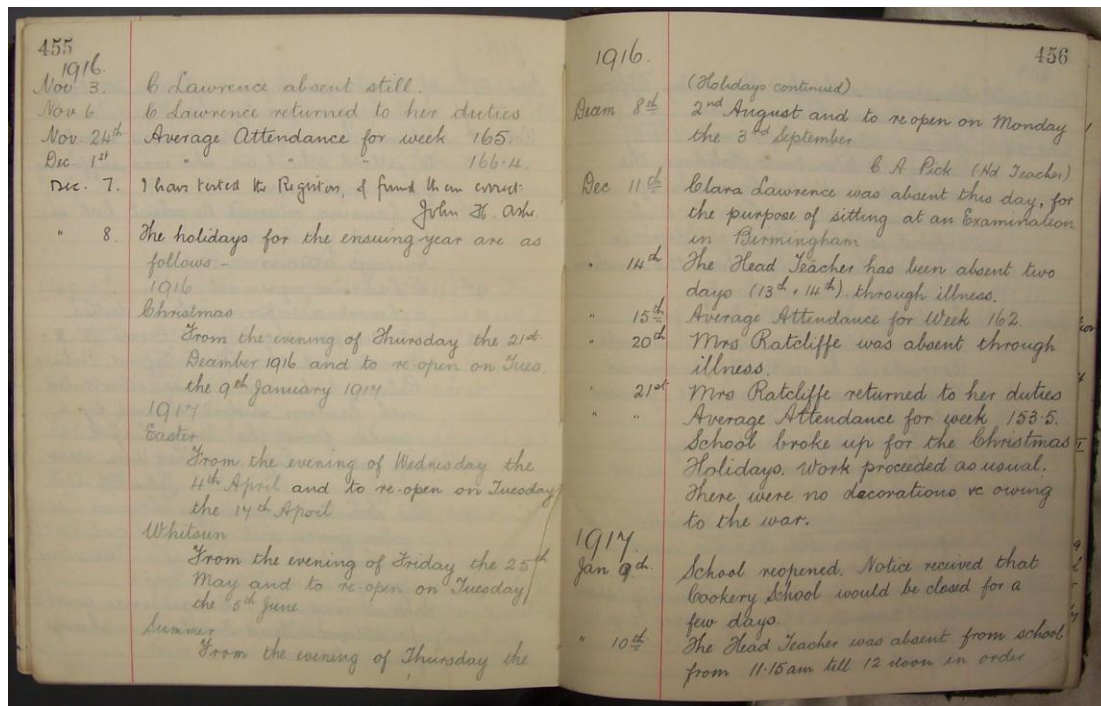


Document of the Month March 2012

Log Book for St. Paul's Church of England Primary School, Stockingford 1892-1921 (CR4466/1)



Log Books

The Government first required schools to keep a log book in 1862, in which there had to be a minimum of one entry made each week. The featured page is a fine example as to how the information contained within the books is factual rather than subjective. This was a deliberate policy, and not one driven by the outbreak of World War One. Answers as to the teachers' reactions to the war are not likely to be found within the school log books, nor is subjective opinion. The New Code of Regulations for 1872 states specifically that "no reflections or opinions of a general character are to be entered in the Log Book."

The First World War and the Everyday

We often think of World War One in terms of grand narratives, with grainy black and white pictures offering an insight into that past that generally revolves around images entrenched into the collective consciousness. These images tend to revolve around life in the trenches, and bloody conflicts such as the Battle of the Somme.

However the grand narratives often result in us overlooking everyday life within Britain itself. The school log book is an invaluable tool in seeing how life in St. Paul's Church of England Primary School, Stockingford (CR4466/1) progresses as normal during this period. Fleeting glimpses as to the impact of the war are offered up; a teacher enlists for military service, in April 19th 1916 the children bring in 322 eggs for wounded soldiers, and on April 4th 1917 the pupils are allowed to see the film *The Empire Fighters* [sic] at the cinema. Meanwhile on the featured page we can see that no Christmas decorations are put up due to the war. Beyond this, however, the content featured is more typical of the material to be found within the log book as a whole; we see that despite the brutal conflict elsewhere, here the concerns are very much of the mundane and the everyday. "Work proceeded as usual" is the entry for 21st December 1916, and this is the prevailing mood throughout the period of World War One. The average attendance and staff absences are recorded assiduously, whilst the setting of future holidays suggests a determination for this everyday routine to continue into the future.

Education in 1916

The *Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser and Leamington Gazette* reported the, possibly surprising, fact that bar coastal areas which were under threat of Zeppelin raids, more children were attending secondary schools than ever before (23rd Dec 1916, p.3). They offered the possible explanation that wages had risen in certain industries, thus allowing parents to send their children to High Schools where previously this was not possible.

Key Events, December 1916

Warwickshire news saw a discussion at the meeting of the Warwickshire War Agricultural Committee at Shire Hall. There, they debated the employment of Prisoner's of War in agriculture. The local newspaper was also dominated by Asquith's resignation as Prime Minister, and Lloyd George forming the British war government.