

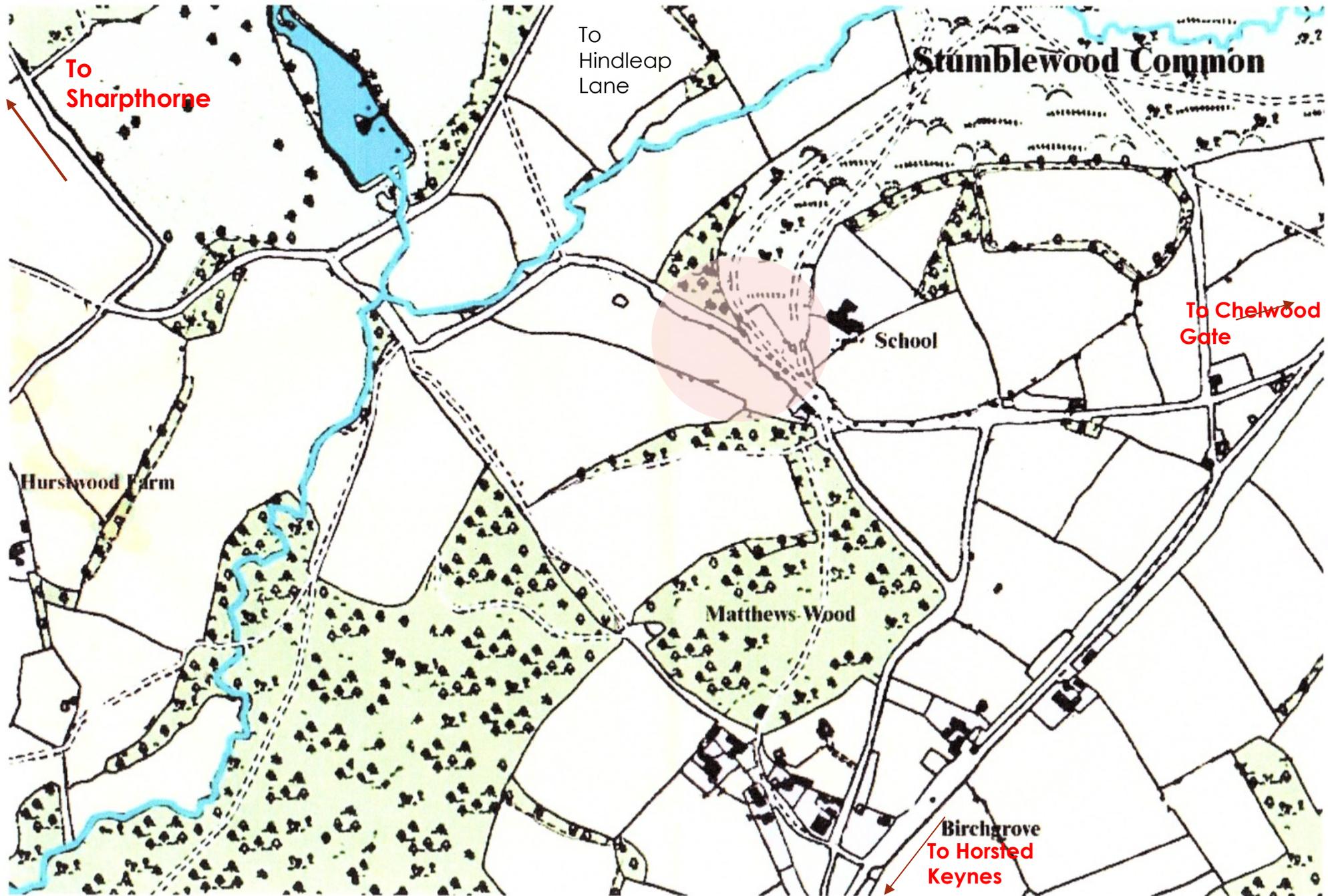


# Twyford School

1842 - 1923

Notes taken from a talk to DPHS by John  
Older in September 2019

Twyford School Location



. N

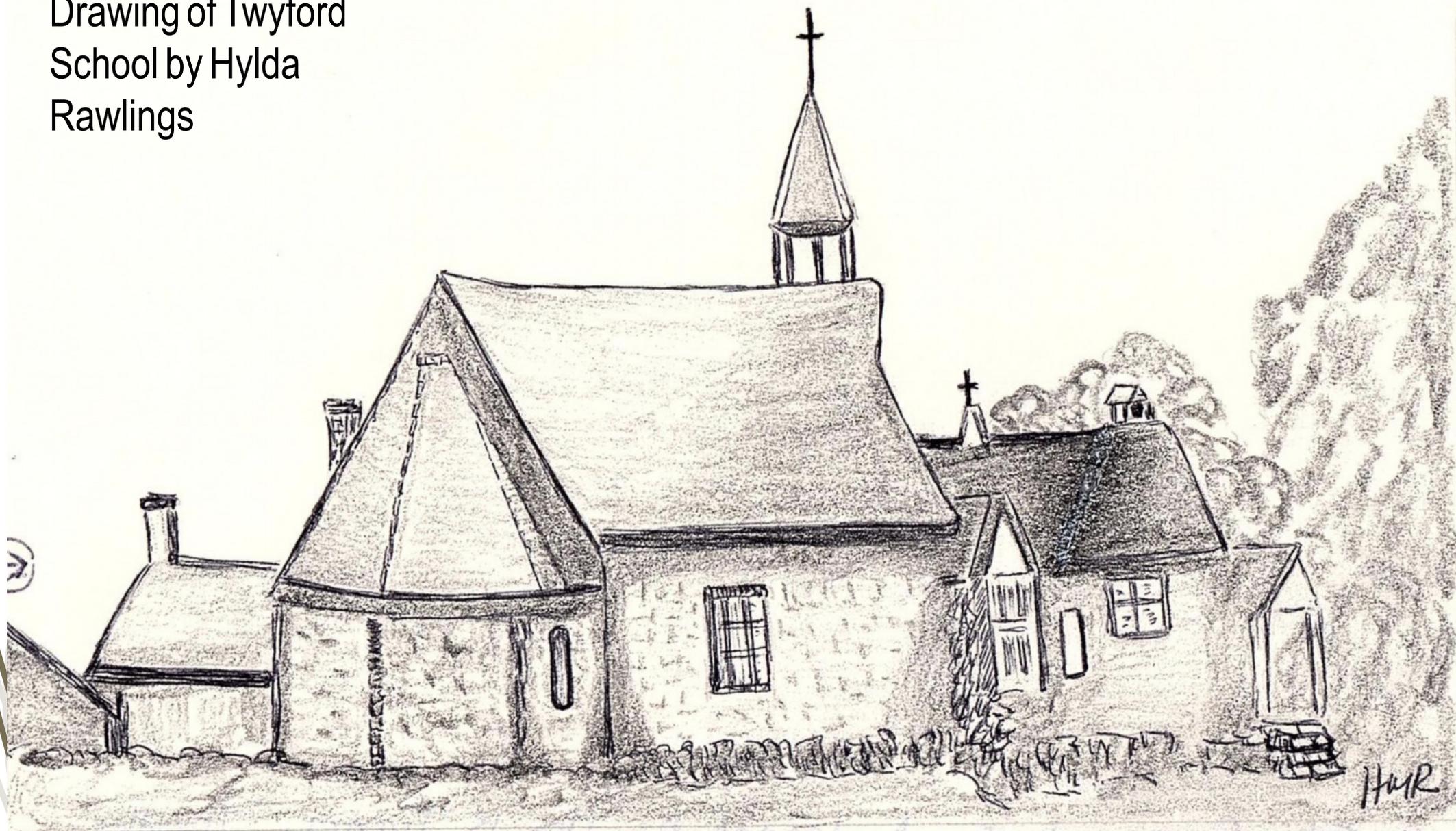


The Site of the School  
Today.



It is sad that this interesting building has been completely lost

Drawing of Twyford  
School by Hylda  
Rawlings



Twyford Church and School • attached Schoolhouse

## The National Society – the church initiative that led to the founding of Twyford School

In 1811 the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church (The Church of England) was formed. Its schools were called National Schools.

In 1814 non-conformists (Protestants who did not belong to the Church of England) formed the British and Foreign Schools Society.

Both began to receive government grants from the 1830s which increased steadily for the next few decades.

Wife of Sir George Duckworth  
sometime secretary to Austen  
Chamberlain. Lady  
Duckworth was daughter of  
the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Caernavon

Lord Robert Cecil was a British  
lawyer, politician and diplomat.  
He was one of the architects of  
the League of Nations and a  
defender of it, whose service to  
the organisation saw him  
awarded the Nobel peace Prize  
in 1937. A pacifist with deep  
religious convictions

Her daughter Margery  
was the original president  
of the historical society

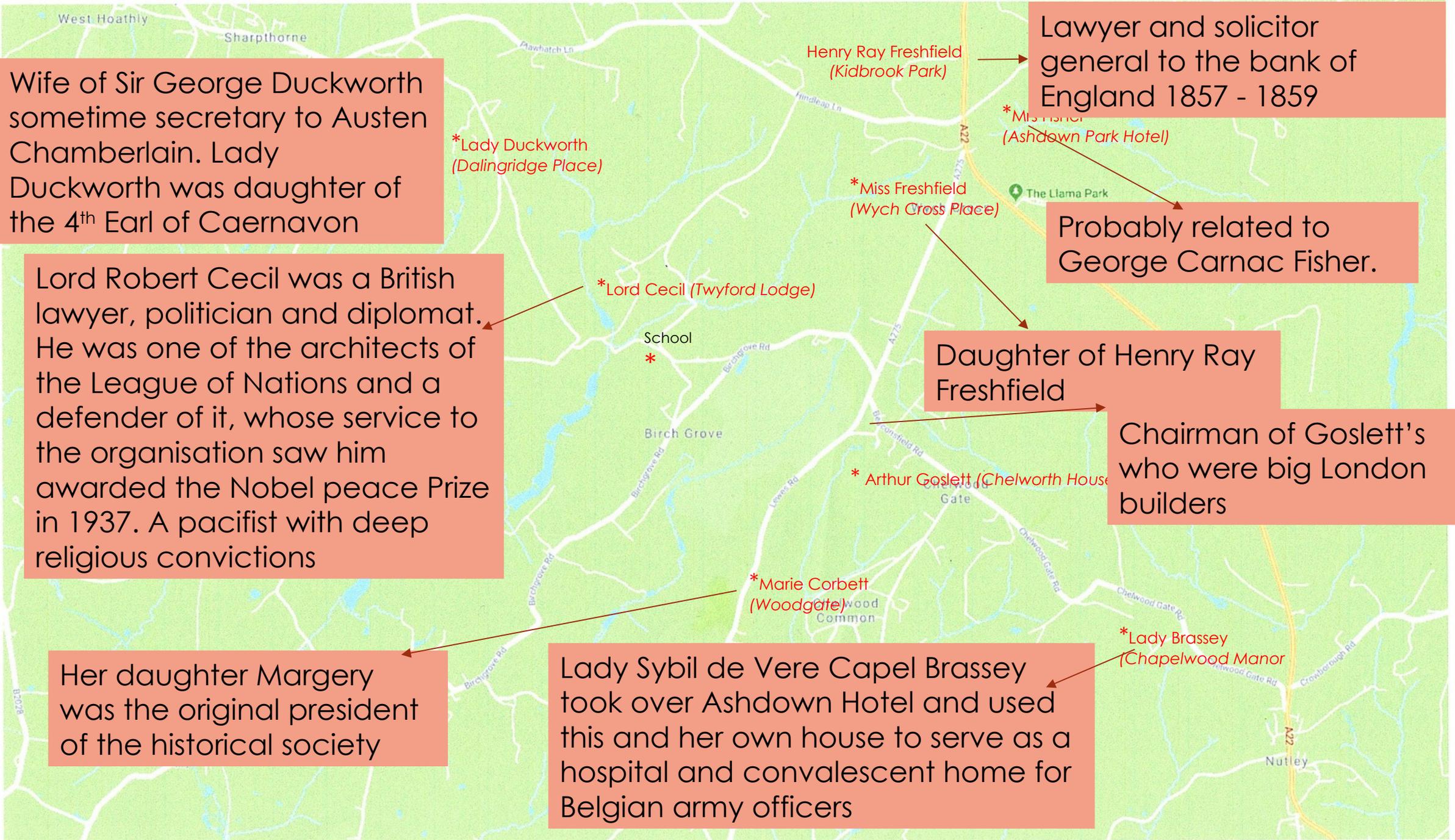
Lady Sybil de Vere Capel Brassey  
took over Ashdown Hotel and used  
this and her own house to serve as a  
hospital and convalescent home for  
Belgian army officers

Lawyer and solicitor  
general to the bank of  
England 1857 - 1859

Probably related to  
George Carnac Fisher.

Daughter of Henry Ray  
Freshfield

Chairman of Goslett's  
who were big London  
builders



**Why didn't children who lived near go to Danehill School? Twyford School was a 2 mile walk from Danehill, but there was a large cohort of Danehill children on roll. Why so many journeyed to Twyford is not entirely known, but the quote below may be an indication**

- Note from Shon Bennett, Manager of the Freshfield Lane brickworks sometime after the first world war.

“With the Guv'nor in the Navy, it was likely that I could, and was expected to, remain out of the services to look after the estate. It was considered a reserve occupation. The only service I could volunteer for was aircrew. This I did and was called to London for two days for screening.

The verdict was that I was intelligent, extremely fit but educationally substandard; thanks to the low quality of teachers at Danehill School I attended during World War One'

# Headteachers of Twyford School

James Bish (1851 - ?)

Thomas Lane (1861 - ?)

John Joseph Wright (3/1870 - 3/1875)



## Headteachers' Diaries

Between 1870 and 1923 (when the school closed) each headteacher was required to keep a daily diary of anything of relevance.

Early diaries were thorough and recorded a lot of what was taught and not much else.

Later diaries reflected other priorities such as which children had been punished and why, or teacher absences.

All of them recorded a lot about the weather, the temperature in the classroom and the state of the boiler (often breaking down or filling the room with smoke and fumes).

**After John Joseph Wright - A.H Hillyer (4/1875 – 5/1875) At this time staff retention seems to have been a major problem, with Mr Merry lasting just a few weeks as headteacher**

To the worthy Mr Hillyer:

I herewith give you one month's written notice from this date to leave your appointment as master to my school. I hope to be suited with a master in a very short time. I shall require you to leave immediately I have succeeded. The singing yesterday bore ample testimony to the consistent neglect of practice.

Yours truly

Mr Merry

# Mr Hillyer's

Sir

I was exceedingly surprised yesterday morning to find a report current throughout the village the day previous confirmed by the reception of your letter.

I have not at present been able to read sufficiently to understand it clearly, however as it is, I venture respectfully to ask you kindly to permit me to vindicate my character with regard to the absolutely supposition, unfounded, uninformed charge of neglect of choir practices made at the close of your communication.

I have the honour to be

Yours

A. H. Hillyer



The school at this time was run by a pupil monitor, John Langden (6/1875 – 12/1875). In Victorian schools it was common for a bright older pupil to help out with teaching, often to the benefit of both monitor and pupil. However a pupil running the school for 6 months is surprising!

## John Langden

Was very disciplinarian. Record shows a steady stream of punishments issued for poor work

Quick to set about improving the singing. Teaches the school 'The Violet'

### **The Violet**

Down in a green and shady bed,  
A modest violet grew;  
Its stalk was bent, it hung its head  
As if to hide from view.  
And yet it was a lovely flow'r,  
Its colors bright and fair,  
It might have graced a rosy bow'r  
Instead of hiding there.

Yet there it was content to bloom,  
In modest tints arrayed;  
And there it spread its sweet perfume  
Within the silent shade,  
Then let me to the valley go,  
This pretty flow'r to see,  
That I may also learn to grow  
In sweet humility.



H. Coleby (12/1875 – 1/12/1876)

**School Closed for 4 months**



W. Smith (4/1877 – 11/1882)

Mrs Moss (12/1882 – 2/3/1883)

*(School closed for 7 weeks)*

Mrs Bouvard (23/4/1883 – 16/12/1898)

Frances Britton (1/1899 – 10/11/1899)

*Clara Baker temporarily in charge*

Mrs Fanny Tawse (8/1/1900 – 30/3/1904)

Miss A. Marsh (8/4/1904 – 29/6/1906)

## 1906. A turbulent Year

Miss Marsh

March 30<sup>th</sup> 'Received letter from the managers which necessitates my resignation which I have submitted.'

June 29<sup>th</sup> 'This is my last day and I resign the school with much pleasure'

Miss Condé (30/06/1906 – 20/12/1906)

Sept 5<sup>th</sup> 'School opened . Miss Condé not present'.

Sept 21<sup>st</sup> ' Miss Condé resumed work after 10 school days absence.'

Dec 20<sup>th</sup> 'This is my last day in charge here and I regret very much that I find living here too expensive for the salary given

J. J. Condé B.A. Université de Lille'



Miss M. Mottrille (7/1/1907 – 28/3/1907)

(Temporarily in charge while new Headteacher was found)

Miss Catherine Seeley (2/4/1907 – 21/6/1912)

Miss G. Newman (8/1912 – 29/5/1914)

Miss Wing (8/6/1914 – 27/9/1923)

**Although staffing seems to have been more stable in the later years, there must have been major problems at some times in the school's history.**

## Attendance at the school

This was very erratic largely due to ever present threat of infectious diseases.

**1911 – the number in the school was 65.**

Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> **Measles.** Dr Stott the medical officer orders the closure of the school for 3 weeks.

Feb 27<sup>th</sup> School closed for a further 2 weeks

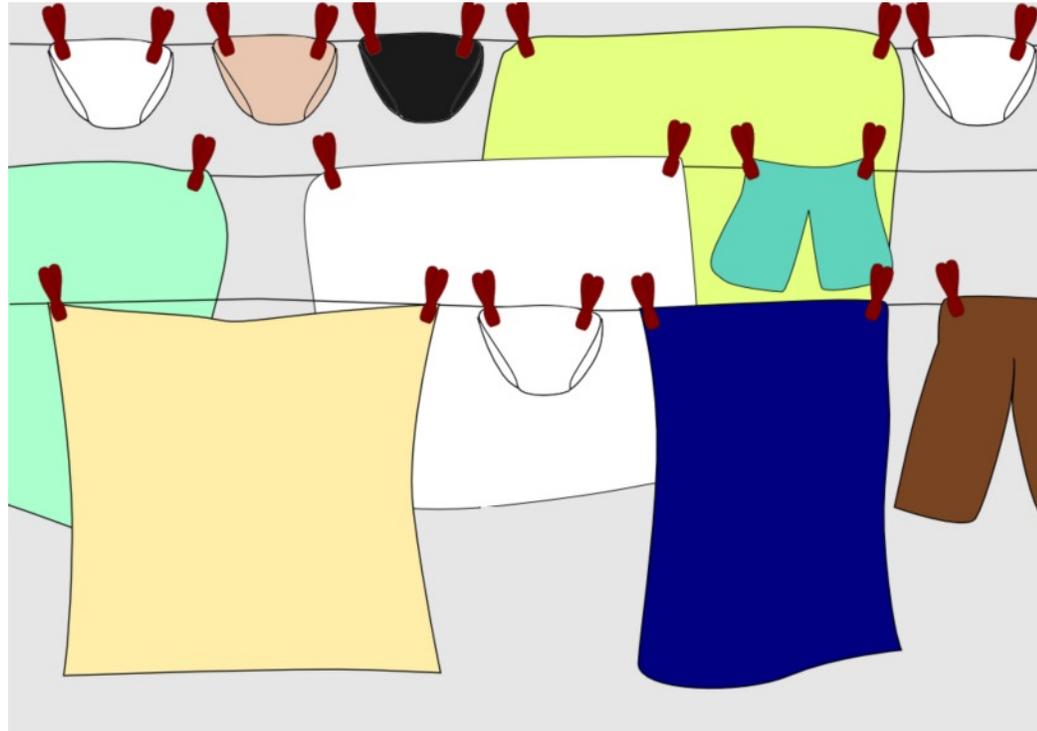
March 14 <sup>th</sup>	16 present
15 <sup>th</sup>	24 present
16 <sup>th</sup>	32 present
20 <sup>th</sup>	59 present

School was also closed for extended times as a result of whooping cough, diphtheria, scarlet fever, chicken pox, 'flu' and German measles.

# Regular absence

An inspection at Twyford School established that Margaret Riddley was always absent on Mondays.

A visit found Margaret and her mother busy tackling 'a mountain of washing'.



## Other reasons for absence

The weather was responsible for many absences and the rooms used for teaching were incredibly cold in the winter

Jan 29<sup>th</sup> Temperature in the classroom at the start of the day was 32°. Stove needs fixing.

Feb 5<sup>th</sup> Temperature at the start was 30°.

Feb 10<sup>th</sup> Temperature at the start was 32°.

Frequently children were missing for seasonal activities which included:

Hop picking, harvesting, driving cattle to market, acorn picking, beating and shooting.

## Visits from Clergy

Although after 1870 government inspections took place, initially inspections were undertaken by the school managers and local clergy.

The clergy came from most of the surrounding area:

Nutley, Sharpthorne, Maresfield, Danehill, Fletching, Forest Row, Staplefield, West Hoathly, Ardingly College

Inspections were also undertaken by the school managers.



# What type of teaching was there?

- There would have been at least one qualified teacher
- Would have used pupil teachers
- Would have used 'object lessons' pioneered by Dr Charles Mayo

e.g. Money A letter A slate An umbrella The cow  
The elephant The camel An apple The stinging nettle

## Lesson Schedule in 1870

March 29	Commenced Book of Judges
30	Commenced Luke's Gospel
31	Lesson on the Birth of Christ
April 4	Lesson on Baptism
5	Judges 2
6	Luke 2
7	Scripture Test
12	Repeat Test. Children very deficient
13	Reading Test. Two children very backward.
14	Lesson on Christ's Death
Good Friday school closed for 1 week	
April 25	Lesson on Lord's Supper
26	Scripture Lesson
27	Catechism – "My Godfather"
April 28	Write a letter. "The prayer I said before bed last night"

## School disruption - Henry Ray Freshfield

In 1874, decides to build a chancel for Twyford church

- Sept 5<sup>th</sup> 'Alterations greatly disturbing school'
- Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 'Owing to noise could not have writing at desks'
- Oct 17<sup>th</sup> 'Obliged to have school in the outhouse'
- Oct 24<sup>th</sup> 'Class all crowded together in one room'
- Nov 14<sup>th</sup> 'Chancel opened. 'Holiday given'
- Nov 21<sup>st</sup> 'Recommenced school in our regular room'
- Nov 28<sup>th</sup> 'Found children very backward'

# Curriculum 1911 - Physical Exercise

As laid down by the Board of Education. This largely consisting of Swedish Drill.



# Maths Test

Divide 15.529478 by 4.3276 correct to three decimal places.

3.588

Find the interest on £945, 10s for 183 days at  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$

£11, 17s. 0 $\frac{1}{4}$

If A had one third of B's money in addition to his own he would have £63; and if B has three quarters of A's in addition to his own he would have £81. How much money does each have?

A has £48 and B has £45

The difficulty of the questions is quite astounding. Few children today could tackle them.

# Inspector's Report Jan. 1920

- 1 Heating inadequate. The infant room is often below 50°.
- 2 Plaster fallen in many places from lower part of interior wall.
- 3 Wash basins unusable. There are no plugs and waste pipes are choked up.
- 4 Most of the closet doors are off their hinges.
- 5 Lighting is very unsatisfactory in the centre of the building on a dull day.

# Not quite the end

The school was temporarily re-opened in 1939 for children evacuated from the Battersea area of London.

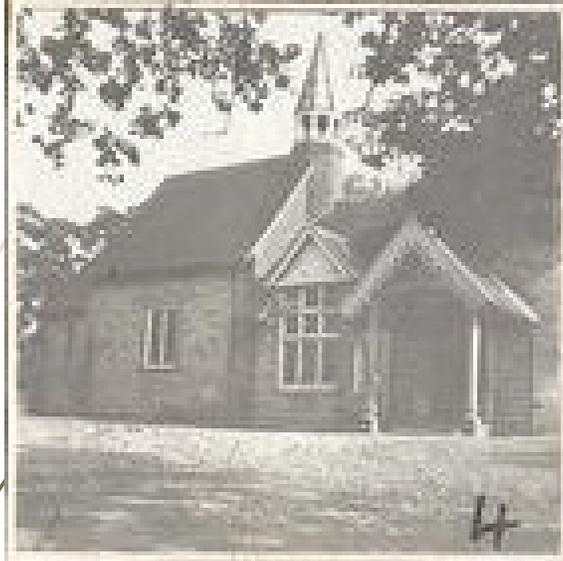
They lived in various properties around Birch Grove.

Some found Twyford School very difficult and were then allowed to do some lessons in Danehill. They used to have lunch at Danehill School.

Twyford carried on until 1944.

It was eventually demolished in the 1970s

## Photo Gallery







Circa 1912. (Madeline Neal, Teacher - back row left)



Mr Bird, Danehill Headteacher, with Twyford cricket team



Football Team (circa 1912)



Lilla May and George Pratt  
(started at Twyford on Aug  
19<sup>th</sup> 1912)