

Former National School  
Moor Lane, Clitheroe, Lancashire:  
Archaeological Building Recording



November 2008

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# Former National School

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### Archaeological Building Recording

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#### SUMMARY

The former National School in Clitheroe (NGR: SD 74284157) was built in 1839 to provide education for children according to the Church of England, and it was funded by a combination of government grants and public subscription. Although it ceased to be the National School in 1932, it appears to have continued to be used for education for some time afterwards, but more recent changes led to external additions and internal alterations. Archaeological building recording was carried out during its conversion for the Individual Restaurant Company in October and November 2008, and this record includes measured drawings, photographs, and a written description.

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## **FORMER NATIONAL SCHOOL, MOOR LANE, CLITHEROE, LANCASHIRE:**

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING RECORDING**

#### **LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS REPRODUCED IN THIS REPORT**

This is a selection illustrating the key points of the report: a complete set of photographs forms part of the project archive (see Appendix).

<b>Photo</b>	<b>Subject</b>
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- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 1  | Front elevation, from the east (after alterations to front elevation)                        |
| 2  | Front elevation, across Moor Lane, from the south-east (with scaffolding)                    |
| 4  | General view of the site, from the south-east (after alterations to front elevation)         |
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| 13 | Detail of first floor windows in front elevation (after alterations to front elevation)      |
| 16 | South end of the building, from the south-west   |
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| 19 | South end of the rear of the building, from the west   |
| 20 | Outside steps and part of rear elevation of main building, from the west                     |
| 22 | Detail of boarded window in rear elevation, with intact mullion                              |
| 23 | Rear wing, with outside steps, from the north  |
| 24 | Foot of outside steps to first floor of rear wing, from the north                            |
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| 30 | Wall cupboard in north-east corner of ground floor   |
| 31 | Cupboard in rear side of ground floor (blocked doorway?) with earlier fittings for a door    |
| 32 | Detail of rear window (with frame replaced) (interior view)                                  |
| 34 | Detail of corbel to first floor beam, in rear wall, from the south-east                      |
| 35 | First floor interior, from the north   |
| 36 | First floor interior, from the south   |
| 37 | Arch to first floor alcove over front porch, from the west                                   |
| 38 | Detail of hinged, cast iron ventilator opening in rear elevation on first floor              |
| 39 | Roof truss, from the south   |
| 40 | Underside of roof, showing position of ridge ventilator                                      |



## **FORMER NATIONAL SCHOOL, MOOR LANE, CLITHEROE, LANCASHIRE:**

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING RECORDING**

#### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report presents the results of archaeological building recording at the National Buildings, a former National School, in Clitheroe, Lancashire. The work was commissioned by the Individual Restaurant Company as its developer, and carried out between October and November 2008, to fulfil a condition of planning consent from Ribble Valley Borough Council for the conversion of the building to a restaurant.
- 1.2 The former National School was built in 1839 to provide education for children according to the Church of England, and was funded by a combination of government grants and public subscription. Although it ceased to be the National School in 1932, it appears to have continued to be used for education for some time afterwards, but more recent changes associated with commercial use led to external additions and internal alterations.
- 1.3 The work was carried out to a brief agreed with the Lancashire County Archaeology Service, and included a photographic record, the production of a measured survey annotated with archaeological information, and a study of historical sources. This report will be submitted to the client, Ribble Valley Borough Council, the Lancashire County Archaeology Service and the English Heritage National Monuments Record, and published on the internet via the Oasis Project. The project archive will be deposited with the Lancashire Record Office.

#### **2 Location and current use**

- 2.1 The site lies in Clitheroe town centre and in Clitheroe civil parish, on the west side of Moor Lane, which is the town's main street. The building stands at NGR: SD 74284157, at the eastern foot of the hill on which Clitheroe Castle stands (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The building ceased to be used as a National school in 1932, but continued as a school into the mid or late 20th century, although in recent years it served as an electrical goods store, until the present redevelopment.

#### **3 Planning background**

- 3.1 The former National school is listed as having special architectural or historic interest, grade 2, and the identifying description reads:

Dated 1839. School building of 2 storeys, rough rendered, rusticated quoins. Centre projects. Stone kneelers to gable ends. Welsh slate roof. 3 windows to flanking sections, the centre shorter, stone surrounds, rectangular drip moulds. Ground similar, except there is a modern extension of 1 storey to left, which also covers the centre. Projecting centre has large finials to gable ends, kneelers. Centre stone plaque above 1 window, rectangular drip mould, above blocked door.

- 3.2 Listed building consent was granted by Ribbles Valley Borough Council on 21 August 2008, for the change of use of the building to a restaurant (application no 3/2008/0147). The consent includes a condition (no 2) that a detailed record be made of the building prior to development, which this report and the project archive are intended to provide. Although the condition was imposed by the local planning authority, the Lancashire County Archaeology Service has undertaken to oversee the recording and is to be the principal recipient of the report.

## 4 Historical background

- 4.1 The National Schools Society was formed in 1811 to promote secular and religious education for children, according to the tenets of the Church of England (its full title was the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church), and it was intended to counter the successes of the non-sectarian British and Foreign School Society (established in 1808), which had enjoyed recent success in teaching children of all Christian denominations, but which was particularly popular with non-conformists. In its first year the National Schools Society opened 52 schools attended by 8,620 pupils, and in the following year it had 230 schools for over 40,000 pupils. It was a charitable society but in 1833 began to obtain government grants for new buildings, and in the 1850s the government began to assist with building maintenance. In terms of numbers taught it was very successful, and by 1888, 2,300,000 children were taught in its schools<sup>1</sup>.
- 4.2 In Clitheroe the earliest school to be established was almost certainly the Royal Grammar School, which received its charter in 1554, and this was probably the only educational establishment in the town until the late 18th or early 19th century, when a number of small private or "dame" schools also operated. However the government's fiscal support for the National Schools Society in the 1830s, which amounted to a total of £20,000 a year between 1833 and 1839 towards building new schools in England and Wales, was the stimulus which led to the construction of the new National School in Clitheroe. Grants were awarded from this fund on the basis that at least half of the building costs were contributed locally, and in 1838 the Rev Anderton secured £300 directly from the

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<sup>1</sup> Cannon, J (ed) 1997 *The Oxford Companion to British History*

government, as well as £90 from the National Schools Society, for a new building intended for 500 children, later increased to 600.

- 4.3 A public meeting was held at the Grammar School in December 1838 to discuss the practicalities of establishing the new school, and a rough design for the building was drawn up by the Rev Anderton, at the estimated cost of £600. By February 1839 subscriptions had been raised from wealthy individuals to bring the building fund to £700, and the owner of Clitheroe Castle, Mr Carr, offered the present site for the school, in place of one previously agreed with another landowner. By the end of March contracts for the construction work had been let, the stonemasonry to a value of £269, carpentry £205, slating and plastering £85, and plumbing and glazing £29, giving a total of £588; there was an additional expenditure of £120 for quarrying the site, which is cut into the hillside, but the school committee sold much of the stone produced. Although begun in the summer of 1839, the building was not completed until the following year, and cost over £800, in excess of the original estimate, the shortfall being met by local donors<sup>2</sup>.
- 4.4 The earliest maps of Clitheroe identified during this recording are two of 1842: Trapps' map of the town, and the tithe map (Figures 2 and 3). These show the school with a elongated cruciform plan, and the latter map names the building as "National School". The large scale Ordnance Survey 1:1056 map surveyed only a few years later and published in 1849 shows the building in much more detail, including some of the internal arrangements, although these are not precisely to scale (Figure 4). The school then appears to have comprised a single large hall occupying the whole of the main block, with a doorway to the west giving access to the rear wing, which was subdivided, and contained a single flight of stairs. No external stairs are shown. A revision of the 1880s (Figures 5 & 6) shows no external changes; the interior is not depicted at this date however.
- 4.5 According to an account given in the 1920s, the accommodation within the school in the 19th century comprised two rooms on both ground and first floors of the main block, described as a "large room" and a "class room", and in the small rear wing, a cottage for the use of a master or caretaker. The building was heated by three open fires, later supplemented by four stoves, and in 1907 by a new central heating system<sup>3</sup>. This year saw other major alterations, some depicted on floor plans and elevations, copies of which are held by the present owner. The proposals, which all appear to have been carried out, included the replacement of the windows in the front elevation (involving the removal of the original mullions and casements with small quarrels, and the heightening of most of the openings themselves), and the addition of three ventilators to the roof. In

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<sup>2</sup> Langshaw, A 1926 "The National School" in *Clitheroe Advertiser and Times* 14 May 1926, p2

<sup>3</sup> Langshaw, A 1926 "The National School" in *Clitheroe Advertiser and Times* 4 June 1926, p2

the main block a new partition created a class room at the south end of the main large room, but the other class room at the north end appears to have been an established feature at this time. New entrances were proposed for the rear wing so that infants, girls and boys each had their own doorway, necessitating new internal and external staircases, while the interior of the wing was to be altered to form separate cloakrooms for the three groups: infants on the ground floor, and boys and girls on the first floor, with a new partition between the latter (Figures 10 and 11). The external stairs which survive today are shown on the OS map of the same year (1907; Figure 7), implying that these were also added at the time, and the same is true of the new latrines in the west corner of the site. No changes are shown by the OS between 1907 and the 1930s (Figure 8).

- 4.6 An undated photograph taken around the mid 20th century shows the school largely as it survives today, with the exception of a later extension at the north end which had not then been built (Figure 12).

## 5 Recording methodology

- 5.1 The archaeological building recording took place during conversion works, between 8 October and 19 November, and involved photography, the production of measured drawings, and a written account. To some extent the construction work in progress, and stored materials, impeded inspection and recording.
- 5.2 The photographic record was made using a medium format camera with perspective control and other lenses, and black and white film for its archival qualities. External and internal photographs were taken, using either a 1m or 2m ranging pole marked with 0.5m graduations as a scale, and the locations of the photographs are shown on a site plan and copies of the floor plans. All the photographs have been printed to a size of 7" x 5" or 10 x 8", and form part of the project archive; a selection are also copied in this report, where they are referred to by numbers in **bold**. Because the front elevation was obscured by scaffolding at the outset of recording, a return visit was made following its removal, by which time some limited alterations had taken place (chiefly the replacement of window frames and some stonework).
- 5.3 The drawn record comprises ground and first floor plans of the building and a cross-section, showing all significant archaeological detail, and employing conventions based on those specified by English Heritage<sup>4</sup>. The plans are based on a survey by Carroll Design.

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<sup>4</sup> English Heritage 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*

## 6 Description of the building

### Exterior

- 6.1 The former National School stands a few metres west of Moor Lane on a site which has been levelled, and which is retained at the front by a stone boundary wall surmounted by iron railings, with access to the site from the north end (1-5), by the late 20th century extension (6-7). (Originally there was a gateway in the boundary wall directly by the front entrance, of which one gate pier survives.) The historic building is rendered with pebbledash which is of some age, and obscures the main walling material, which appears to be predominantly limestone rubble, while the original dressings to the windows and doorways, as well as the plinth course, are of gritstone. The “quoins” however are all of cement, possibly replicating or overlying an earlier arrangement of stone which has weathered.
- 6.2 The front elevation is arranged symmetrically with three bays to either side of the central, projecting bay which contains the principal entrance: a wide doorway with Tudor arch and moulded surround, containing blank shields in the spandrels and a hood mould with stops (8,9). A panel above the doorway within a moulded stone frame is now blank, but formerly bore the words “National School”, as shown on the early photograph (Figure 12). At first floor level in the central bay is a window with moulded surround, and frame dating from 1907: this was originally a two-light window with small paned glazing. Above it is a trefoil within a circle forming a date-stone, with the date of AD 1839: elaborate finials stand over and to the sides of this feature (10,11).
- 6.3 The three bays to either side of the central bay contain alternate tall and short windows, the former heightened during the refenestration of 1907, and in all cases the original mullions were removed, as is evident from the appearance of the sills (and see Figure 9) (12-15).
- 6.4 Of the two original gables to the main block, the south side (16) forms a plain, pebbledash rendered wall without openings, while the latter has been built against but does not appear to have contained any original features. The rear of the building is more complicated however, as from it projects the rear wing, of a lower roof height than the main block (17). It is not quite centrally placed, but stands slightly to the south of the building’s centre. To the south of it a modern shed was added in the late 20th century by roofing over part of the yard (18,19): there are two original windows to the rear of the main block on both ground and first floor here, the openings plain in comparison to those at the front, and all with their original mullions (flat-faced, rather than moulded), removed. To the north of the rear wing are three similar windows on each floor, all altered to some degree

(20,21). One on the ground floor (largely hidden by the external stairs) contains its mullion, but its window has been replaced by boarding (22).

- 6.5 The exterior of the rear wing itself has been subject to alteration but the render obscures many of its details. On the north side the stone stairs of 1907 with iron hand-rails (incorporating knobs to deter misuse by the boys), forms a significant feature and houses a brick-built store beneath it, accessible from the interior of the wing via an inserted doorway (23,24). Of the two ground floor windows to the west of the stairs, the outer one is the girls' entrance, created in 1907. The boys' entrance (with monolithic jambs) is at the top of the stairs, created at the same time, and next to it is a two-light window which appears unaltered. The west gable of the wing contains a variety of openings, none of which are thought to be original: the present ground floor doorway appears to have been created in 1907 for the use of the infants (25). The south side has an original doorway to the ground floor and a tall, two-light window over, which may also be original, or which may have been heightened (26). The adjacent, smaller window appears to be a 20th century insertion.
- 6.6 The building's roof is covered with blue slate, with stone ridges, and moulded coping to the gables which terminates at shaped kneelers; stone gutters, or eaves troughs, are used on all the roof pitches. The ridge of the main block is higher than that of the rear wing, and contains a chimney stack at the north gable, as well as the bases of two ventilation cowls, the cowls themselves having been removed. These ventilators were part of the 1907 alterations. There are also chimney stacks at the east and west ends of the rear wing.

### Interior

- 6.7 Changes in the building's use over time, including the present conversion to a restaurant, have led to the loss of fabric and character from the interior, so that there is relatively little to be written about its present appearance.
- 6.8 The front entrance, which formerly led into a small lobby, now runs directly into the main ground floor room which occupies the whole of the main block (27-29). The floor surface is now obscured, but the original one is thought to have been of flagstones. The walls are faced with brickwork except in the two northern bays (where the limestone rubble is exposed, but which may have been boarded over formerly), a distinction which is shown on the 1907 plan and which indicates the extent of the class room which occupied this end of the building at that time. No evidence for a fireplace was found within this end, although the gable stack suggests there was one at one time, but two other features are significant: a cupboard in the north-east corner, occupying a recess in the wall and with sunk-panelled doors (30), probably not original; and another recess in the west side of the room, which has been used as a cupboard, but which has a fitting for a door

latch and may be a blocked doorway (31). It is shown only as a recess on the 1907 plan however. At the south end of the ground floor, the faint arch of a blocked fireplace can be discerned in the gable, although no chimney stack survives at this end of the building. Of the ground floor windows, those which were not heightened in 1907 (including all those in the rear elevation) retain their low arches with round-edged bricks (32); those which were increased in size now have flat timber lintels to the interior (33). The frames fitted at that time are all of timber and contain a variety of opening arrangements, all of "hopper" form.

- 6.9 The first floor is carried on chamfered softwood beams with shaped stone corbels in the walls (34), and there appears to have been a lath and plaster ceiling beneath it. There is no evidence for any staircase within the main block and access to the upper floor was presumably always made by means of the stairs within the rear wing, although if this did serve as a cottage in the 19th century, it implies that the stairs were shared. There are now two doorways from the rear wing, of which only the south one, with brick arch, is evidently original. Within the main block the first floor is now a single open space, but there is a change similar to that on the ground floor at the north end, where the brick lining to the walls does not continue to the two end bays (35,36). As on the ground floor, a blocked fireplace seems to be discernible at the south end, but not at the north end although there almost certainly was one here. A brick arch leads to an alcove within the front central bay (37), with no evidence for any doorway or partition. Other features include a series of ventilators within the walls, served by air-bricks on the exterior which are shown as to be inserted on the 1907 proposals (Figure 9); the ventilators have hinged cast iron doors, embossed with the maker's name Stott & Co of Oldham (38).
- 6.10 Over the first floor room the tie-beams have corbels of the same form as those on the ground floor, and a lath and plaster ceiling appears to have been fixed at this level (rather than higher up which would have left part of the roof trusses exposed) (39); the trusses are all of plain king-post form with raking-struts, with no decorative features, intended to be purely functional. Within the roof space the bases of the three ventilation turrets survive (40).
- 6.11 The interior of the rear wing is entirely modern in character and no historic features or arrangements survive within this part of the building to indicate its former layout, which is however partly apparent from the 1840s OS map and the 1907 proposals (Figures 4, 10,11)

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Good historical evidence survives for the earlier appearance and layout of the former National School, but alterations to its fabric in the 20th century have removed much of its internal character and arrangements. The 1839 building

had a very different form in its front elevation, where mullioned windows and small paned windows would have given it an Elizabethan appearance which was largely lost in the refenestration of 1907. Internally, the original room divisions appear to have created a large room in the south end and small room at the north end on both floors (although the building is not so shown on the OS 1840s map), with the rear wing used as a cottage, but this arrangement was altered slightly in 1907, when the large room on the ground floor was subdivided by a new partition (since removed), and the rear wing altered to form cloakrooms with separate entrances for infants, girls and boys, the last group also being provided with a new external staircase. The school was therefore very much typical of the age, when large rooms were used for instruction of large groups of children, although its storied form is slightly less typical, as many mid 19th century schools were of a single storey, and more usually Gothic in style.



## Appendix: Contents of the project archive

To be deposited with the Lancashire Record Office

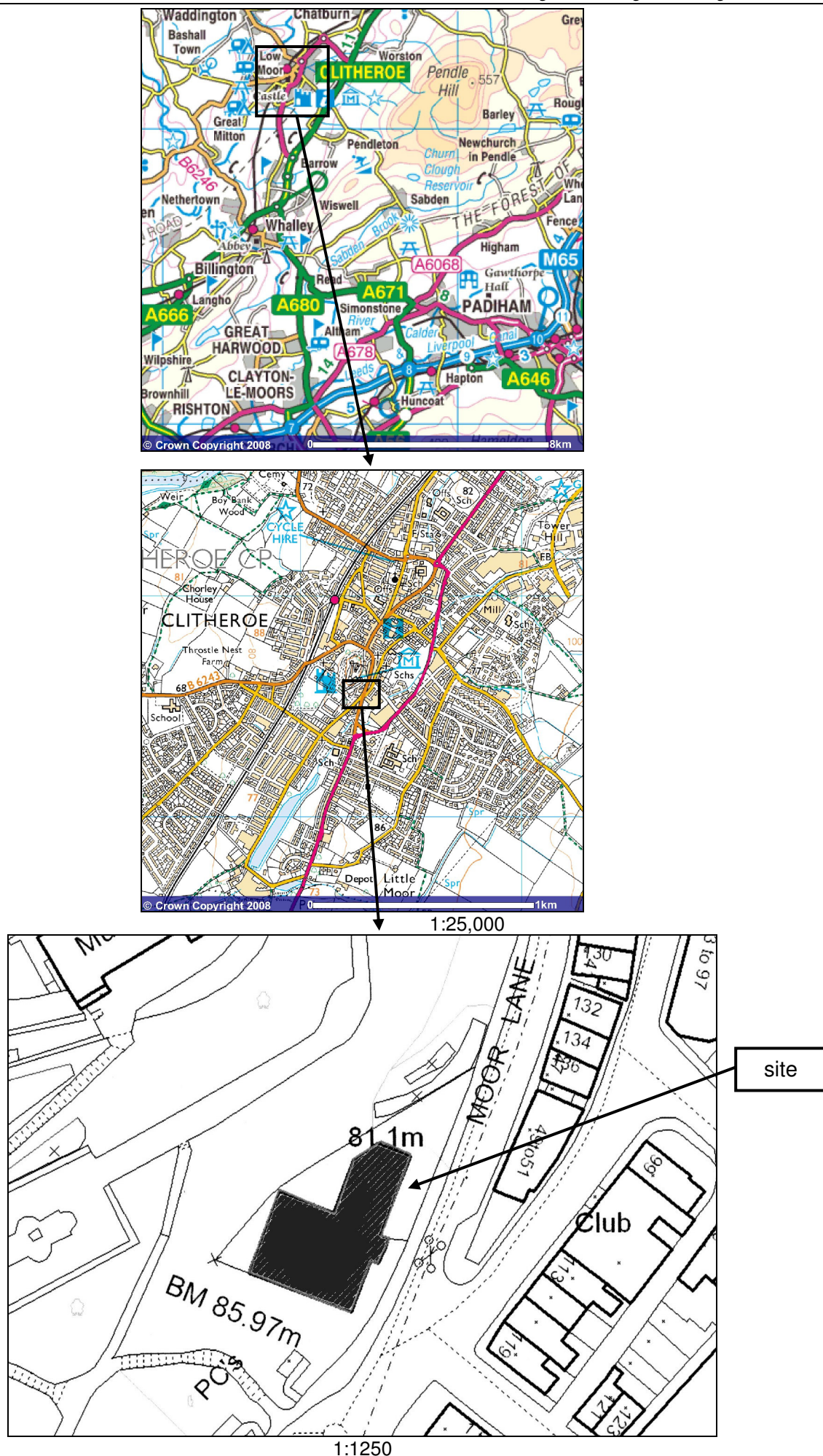
1 file, containing:

- a copy of the report
- full set of black and white photographs and negatives
- site notes (annotated plans etc)

### Complete list of photographs taken, in film order

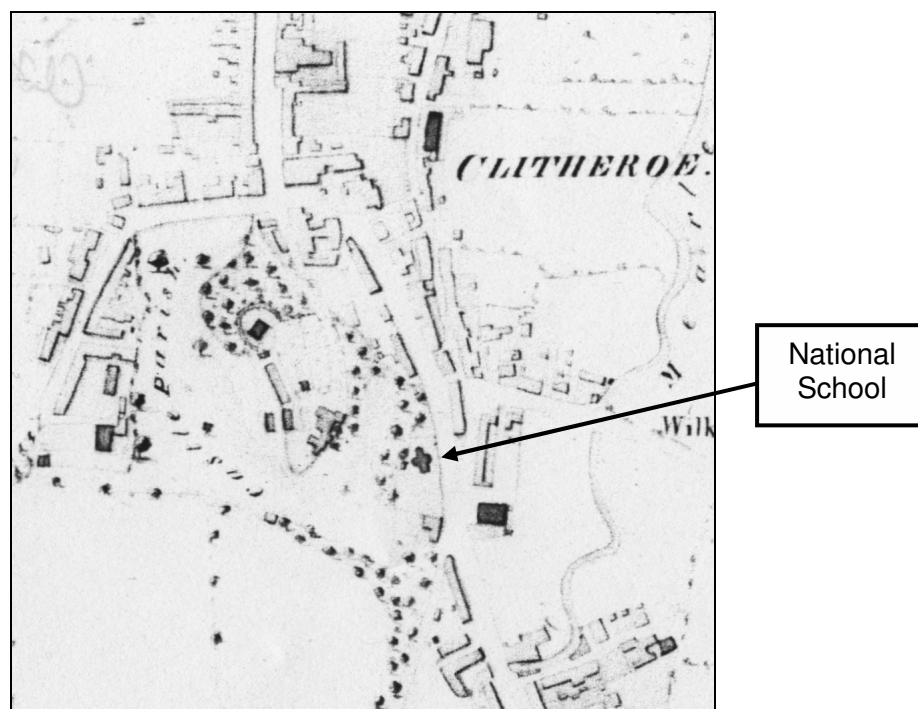
Photo	Film	Frame	Subject
3	1	1	Front elevation, across Moor Lane, from the south-east (with scaffolding)
2	1	2	Front elevation, across Moor Lane, from the south-east (with scaffolding)
16	1	3	South end of the building, from the south-west
19	1	5	South end of the rear of the building, from the west
17	1	6	Rear of the building, from the south-west
21	1	7	North end of the rear of the building, from the west
15	1	8	Detail of lower part of front window (heightened type, with frame replaced)
14	1	9	Detail of lower part of front window (unaltered type but with frame replaced)
24	1	11	Foot of outside steps to first floor of rear wing, from the north
22	1	12	Detail of boarded window in rear elevation, with intact mullion
23	1	13	Rear wing, with outside steps, from the north
20	1	14	Outside steps and part of rear elevation of main building, from the west
18	1	15	Rear elevation of south end of building, within later addition
26	1	17	Lower part of rear wing, within later addition, from the south-west
25	1	18	West side of rear wing (ground floor), from the south-west
29	2	1	Ground floor interior, from the north
28	2	2	Ground floor interior, from the south
33	2	3	Detail of heightened window in front elevation (interior view)
34	2	5	Detail of corbel to first floor beam, in rear wall, from the south-east
32	2	6	Detail of rear window (with frame replaced) (interior view)
30	2	7	Wall cupboard in north-east corner of ground floor
31	2	8	Cupboard in rear side of ground floor (blocked doorway?) with earlier fittings for a door
27	2	9	View into porch, from the south-west
37	2	11	Arch to first floor alcove over front porch, from the west
36	2	12	First floor interior, from the south
38	2	13	Detail of hinged, cast iron ventilator opening in rear elevation on first floor
39	2	14	Roof truss, from the south
40	2	15	Underside of roof, showing position of ridge ventilator
35	2	17	First floor interior, from the north
4	3	1	General view of the site, from the south-east (after alterations to front elevation)
5	3	2	Front elevation, from the south-east (after alterations to front elevation)
1	3	3	Front elevation, from the east (after alterations to front elevation)
10	3	6	Detail of date-stone in front elevation (after alterations to front elevation)
8	3	7	Detail of front entrance and formerly inscribed panel (after alterations to front elevation)
13	3	8	Detail of first floor windows in front elevation (after alterations to front elevation)
11	3	9	Detail of finials to front porch (after alterations to front elevation)

6	3	11	Front elevation, from the north-east (after alterations to front elevation)
7	3	12	Front elevation, from the north (after alterations to front elevation)
12	3	13	Detail of ground floor windows in front elevation (after alterations to front elevation)
9	3	14	Detail of arch and spandrels to main entrance in front elevation (after alterations to front elevation)

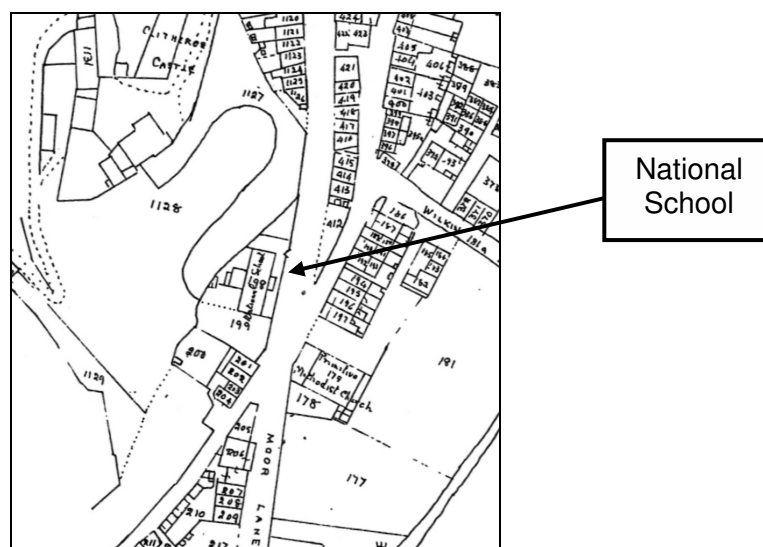


**Figure 1: Location maps**

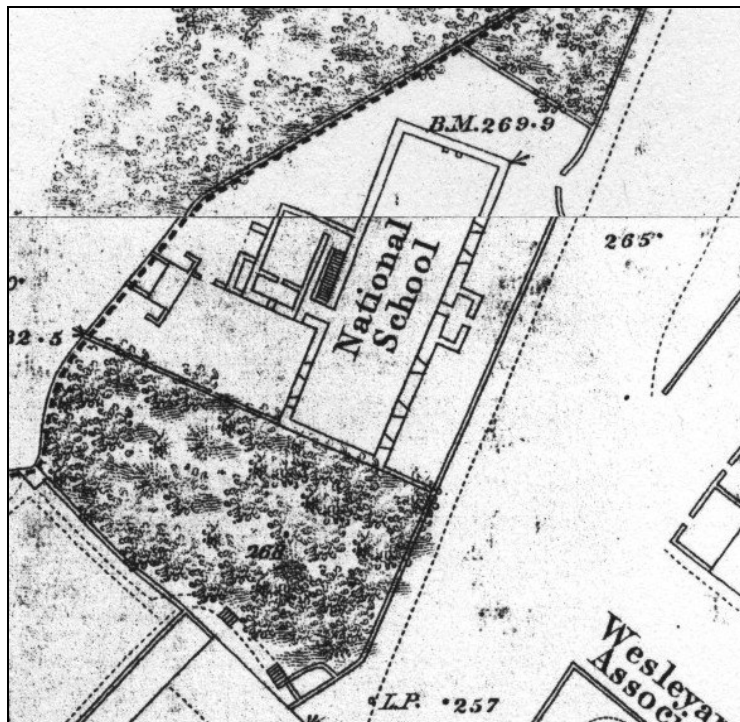
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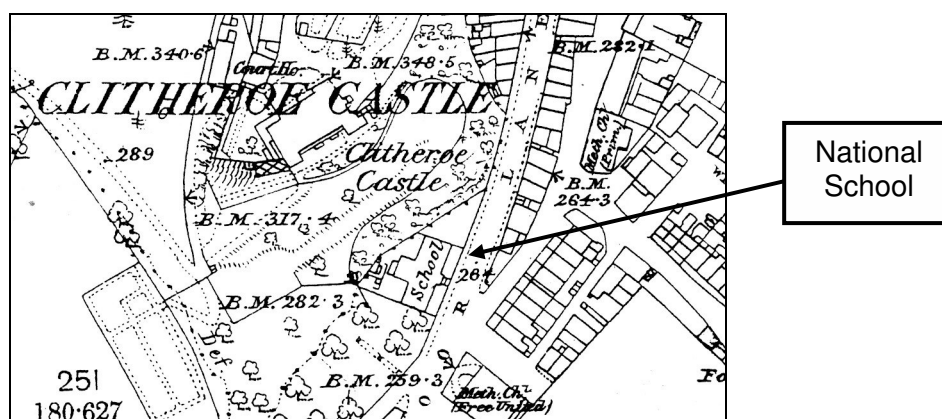
**Figure 2:** Part of Trapps' map of Clitheroe, 1842  
(Clitheroe Library)



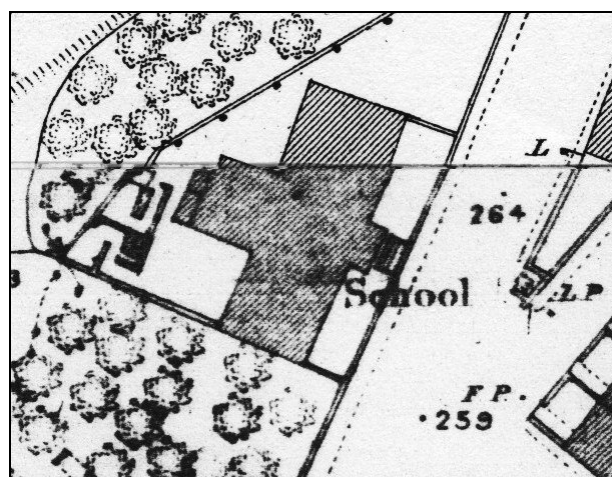
**Figure 3:** Part of the Clitheroe tithe map, 1842  
(tracing in Clitheroe Library; also LRO DRB 1/52)



**Figure 4:** Ordnance Survey 1:1056 map (here enlarged), published 1849 (survey date: 1844-6)  
Clitheroe sheets 1 & 2

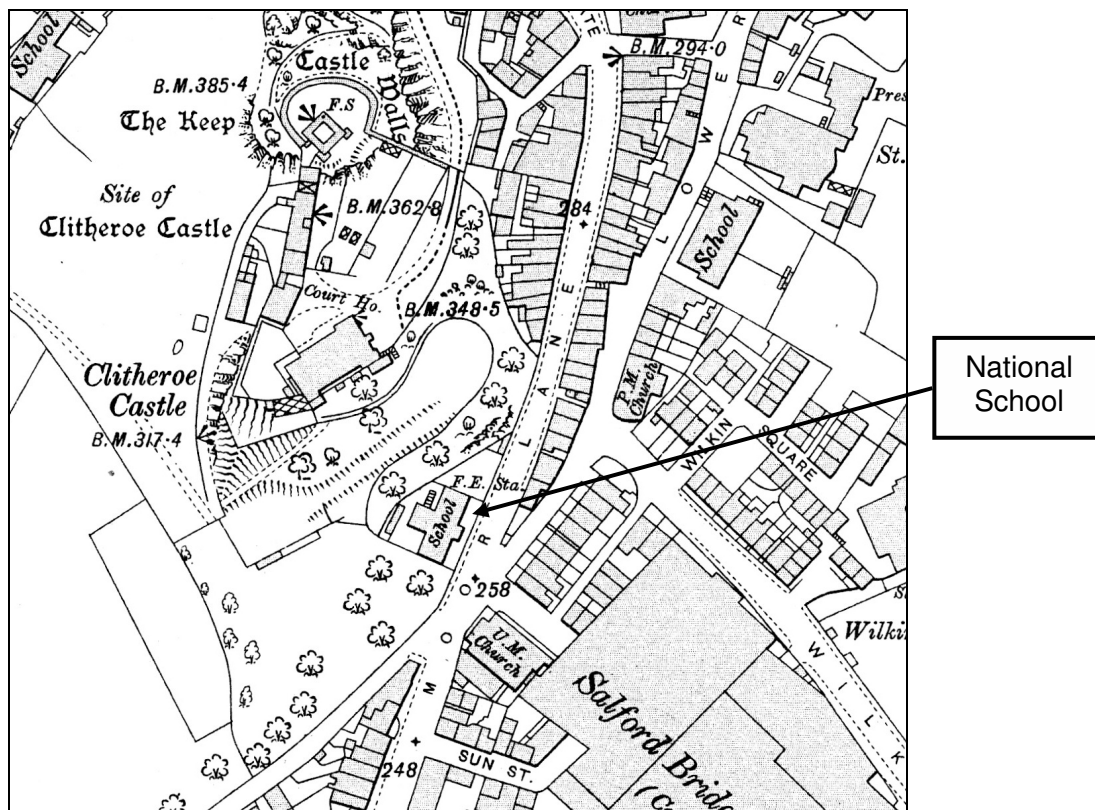


**Figure 5:** Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map, published 1886 (revision date: 1884)  
Sheet no: Lancashire, 47.14

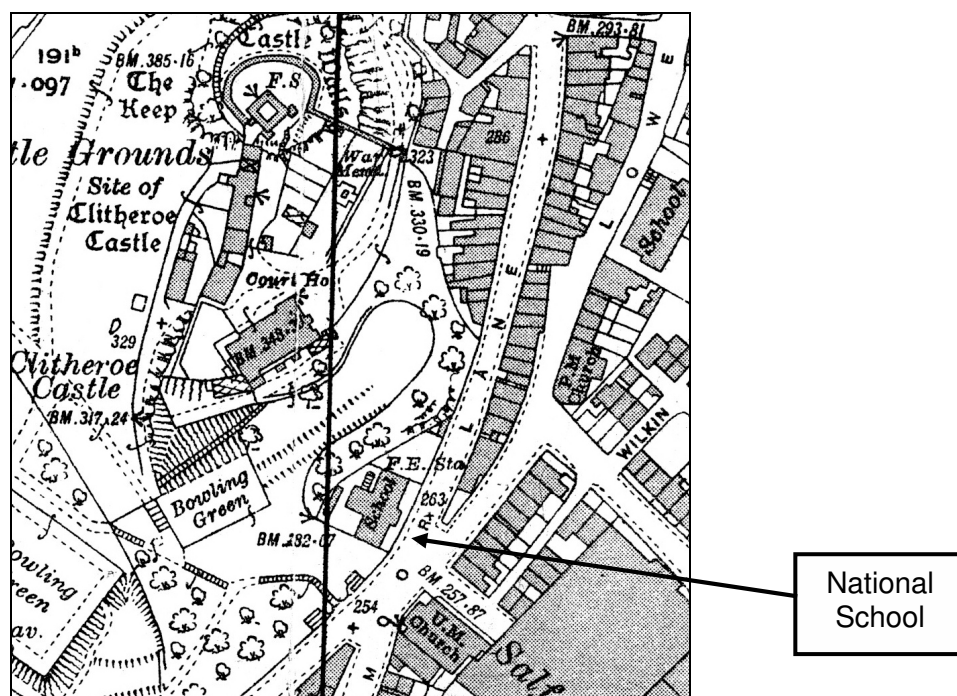


**Figure 6:** Ordnance Survey 1:1056 map (here enlarged), published 1886 (revision date: 1884)  
Clitheroe sheets 1 & 2

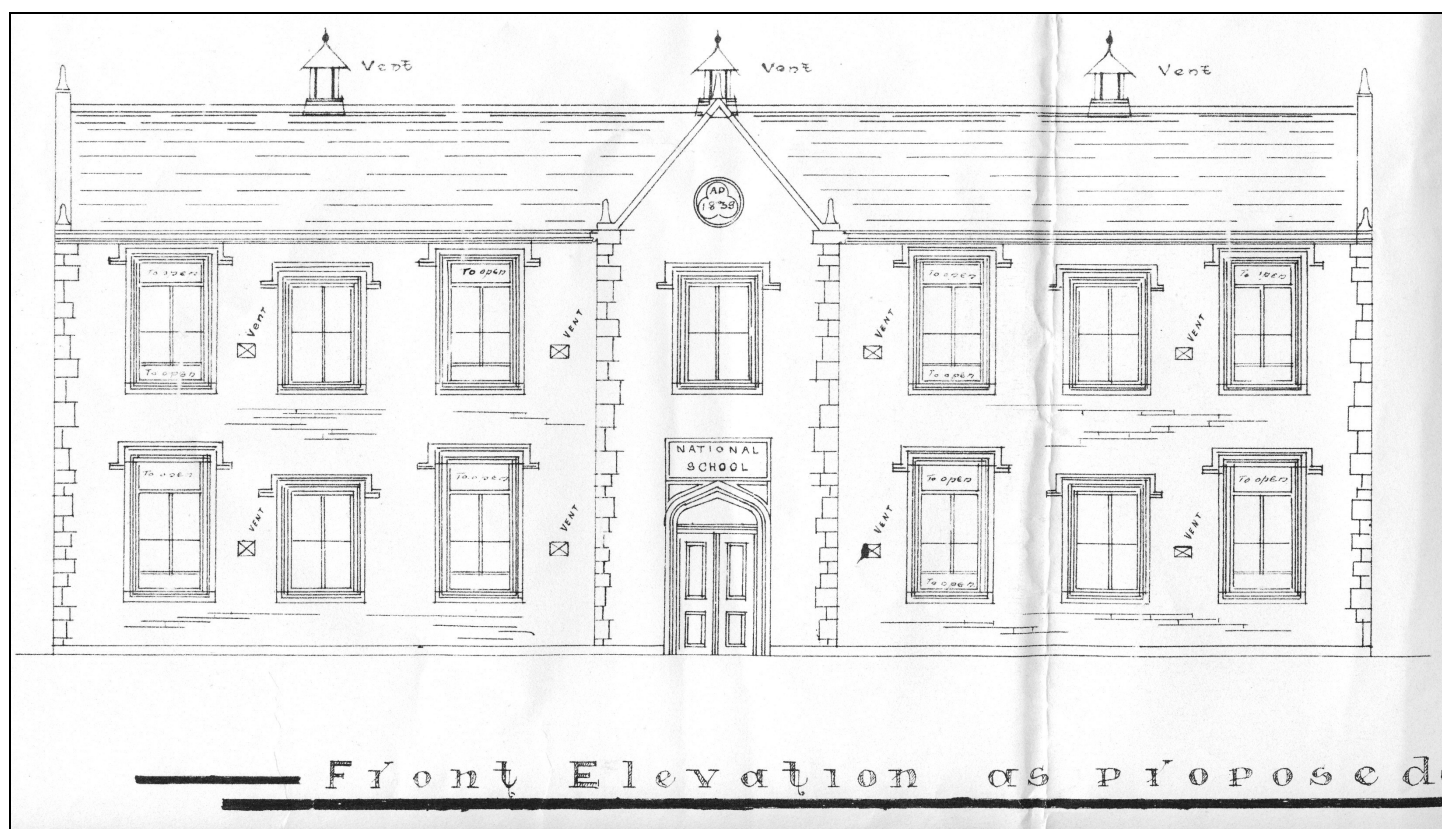
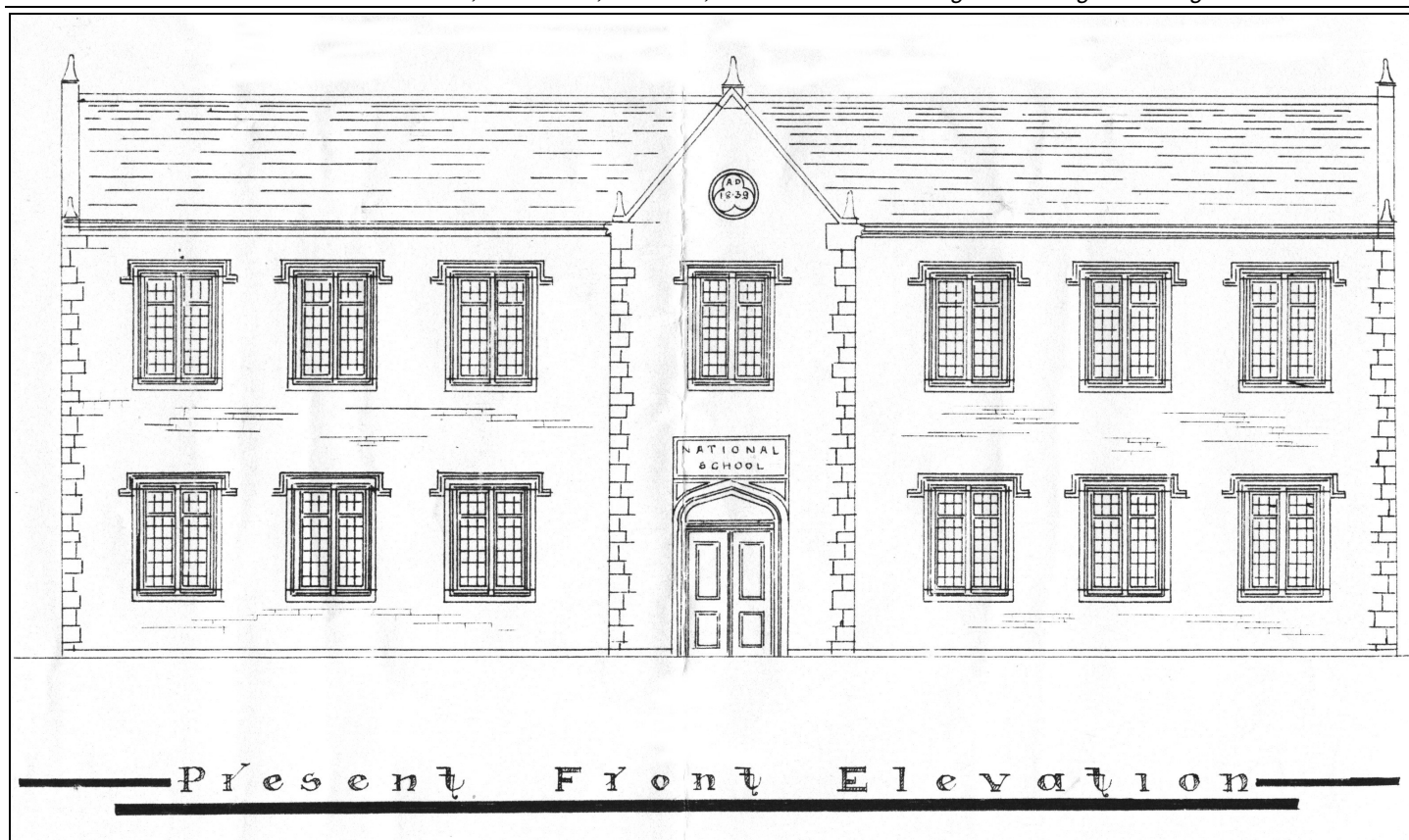




**Figure 7:** Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map, published 1912 (revision date: 1907)  
Sheet no: Lancashire, 47.14



**Figure 8:** Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map, published 1932 (revision date: 1929-30)  
Sheet no: Lancashire, 47.14



**Figure 9:** Drawings showing existing front elevation and proposed alterations, 1907. Architect not known; plan approved 5th April 1907. Reduced from original scale of 8 feet to 1 inch (1:96).  
Copy of plan in possession of present owner.