

George St. Pierre Harris-a local architect

By Sue Short

19/04/12



Pratts Bottom School was designed by George St. Pierre Harris

Information about Pratts Bottom School supplied by Gwyneth Hudson

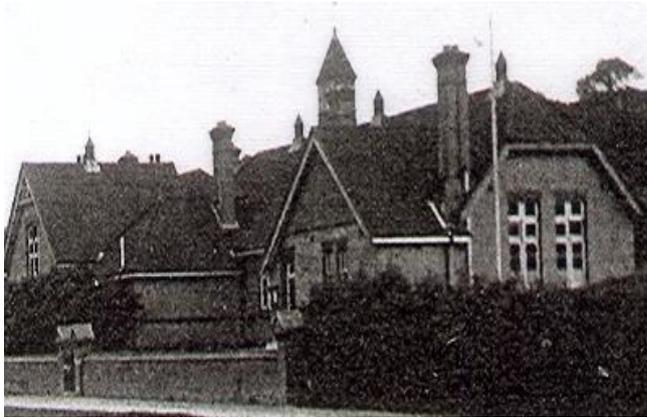
In 1885 Alderman William Waring, Chairman of the Managers of Chelsfield School Board donated Redlands Field in Pratts Bottom '*in fee simple upon trust for the purposes of a Public Elementary School within the meaning of 'The Elementary Education Act 1870' and to be applied as a site for a Board School under the said last mentioned Act for the said parish of Chelsfield and for the Residence of the Schoolmaster and Schoolmistress of the said school and for no other purpose whatsoever.*' The house is still there but is now part of the building used for classes.

This branch of 'Chelsfield Board School' for children up to 14 years, opened in 1886, in Hookwood Road just off 'Richmore Hill' (sic) alongside the turnpike road. That name is still there on the front of the school but is hidden under a cement layer applied early in the Second World War when invasion fears meant that all signposts and place names were hurriedly removed in order to make things difficult for enemy troops. **George St. Pierre Harris** was the architect who designed the school.



Orpington Village Hall

In **1890**, when Orpington was just a rural village, local architect George St Pierre Harris designed a village hall to provide a social focus for the growing community. The hall contained a 350 seat concert hall, a billiard room, library and small committee rooms. During the two World Wars, it served as a hospital, refuge centre and muster point. For a couple of years, from 1927, it was used by the local Presbyterian Church for services. In 1962, the hall was badly damaged by fire, followed by some years of neglect; it was demolished in the late 1970s



(1) Pratts Bottom Primary School designed by George St. Pierre Harris

(2) The Walnuts designed by George St. Pierre Harris

Note the similarities the design of both buildings, for example the height of the chimney stacks and the gables.

The Walnuts, High Street, Orpington, Bromley, c. 1900

Walnuts, a house designed and built George St. Pierre Harris in 1886, was opposite Mayfield Place in Orpington. It was named for the avenues of walnut trees nearby and had the same owners as Mayfield Place, the Vinson family. It had a short life as a house; becoming connected with the local tennis club in about 1930. It was demolished before 1960 and the site, where it stood, is where the entrance to the Walnuts Shopping Centre is now located. George St. Pierre Harris also designed the terraced 'arts and craft' style houses on the east side of the **Aynscombe Angle in Orpington.**

George St Pierre Harris, of Covert Corner in Orpington, died on September 2nd 1939.