



Christmas Past

The following are extracts from “The Northmarston Magazine” of 1875 and refer to the “Coal Fund” set up to collect money or goods in kind to assist the poorest residents of the village. The fund was overseen by the church.

“All persons in receipt of parish relief may have one hundredweight of coal at half price, before March 1, but if two or more persons with parish relief live in the same house they can only have one hundredweight between them, not one hundredweight each. Those who live below “The Bell” must have it of Carter and those who live above “The Bell” of Jerry Gregory.”

“In future, the vicar will not persuade churchwardens to go round collecting for the coal fund...the Churchwardens find collecting from door to door irksome and trying...Mr Anstiss and Mr Lines, with one or two others, both object to giving coal away...and complain that poor people sat up very late last year burning away their coals! We believe poor people did actually sit up, some of them, till eight o'clock and even till nine! What are we coming to?”

The following is an extract from “The Schornian” magazine of January 1903 and refers to the “Clothing Club” which was managed by the vicar’s daughter, Miss James.

“The Clothing Club money for this year, from our people’s pennies, twopences, sixpences etc amounted to over £33 which has been duly distributed by Miss James, who has again commenced receiving contributions at 10.30 am on Mondays at Vine Cottage. The contributors find the accumulated subscriptions useful at Christmas time, almost like gifts in fact.”