

Prior to a separate elected Parish Council, all matters concerning the village were dealt with by a Vestry meeting. This only appointed Churchwardens, Constables and Overseers to the poor, but had no control over major problems in the village which were dealt with by Market Harborough Board of Guardians.

A Vestry meeting held on 23rd March 1868 at 6.30 pm discussed the sewage problems in Fleckney and I quote: 'whereas it has been stated by members of this Vestry that there are many nuisances in this parish over which this Vestry has no control, such as privies, and cesspools forming parts of dwelling house walls, pigsties, and heaps of manure in close proximity to houses, overcrowded and badly ventilated houses and workshops, and that a communication to the above effect be made to the committee of the Market Harborough Board of Guardians and to petition they take steps for the proper inspection and removal of such nuisances'.

The problem was still around when the Parish Council took over from the Vestry who obtained permission from Market Harborough to deal with this problem themselves.

The inhabitants of Fleckney still only had outside privies, middens (dung heaps), cesspits, pail closets, and earth closets, and for refuse Dust Bins, Ash pits and Dust holes. The Fleckney Parish Council in 1908 advertised for Tenders for the post of house scavenger on a yearly contract and appointed a Mr Gamble who had put in a tender for £75 per year. There was always friction about complaints of non collection, and the scavenger complaining about refuse being left out for collection which should have been burnt.

Fleckney - Here Comes the Scavenger Man

Ray Stevens



KILBY ROAD, FLECKNEY 1912.

A public notice for the inhabitants of Fleckney dated 20th May 1913 warned occupiers that by omitting to see refuse is cleared away, rendered themselves to be proceeded against for permitting a nuisance on their premises. Some idea of the problem is highlighted from a few lines of a poem by Mr Webster, a local man, and I quote: 'By gum Jack Smeeton's scavenger cart do you know they reckon yer could smell it as far as Great Glen as he went up Leicester Road and back again'.

With the onset of piped water and flush toilets these problems began to disappear but one gets some idea of what Fleckney and other surrounding villages put up with and took for granted. Were these the good old days?