

Clophill through the years

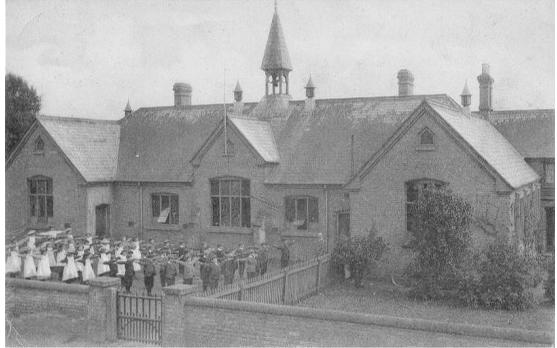
Lost Heritage

A selection of buildings that have been lost or changed over the years.

St Mary's School

In 1871 the National Society (C. of E.) provided money to build schools to accommodate 185 infants and juniors. Clophill National School was opened by a short service on Friday 5th January 1872.

The building was demolished in 1976 after the present school was built and developed. All that remains of the old building is the bell tower in the grounds.



New St Mary's Church

It was built in the Gothic style in 1848-9 and described by Nikolaus Pevsner as "an archaeologically convincing job, i.e. a church which the casual visitor might regard as genuine."

In 1964 dry rot was discovered and an extensive scheme of works over the next five years included re-roofing. For some reason, the nave clerestory was removed along with the crenellated parapet of the south

aisle, completely changing the appearance of the church frontage. Presumably, this was done for cost reasons but it has left the building looking sadly utilitarian.



Old St Mary's Church

Built in the Perpendicular Gothic style (i.e. from about 1350) the building comprised chancel, nave, south porch and west tower.

On completion of the new church in the High Street (1848) the old one was converted for use as a mortuary chapel as the graveyard remained open. In 1956 the lead was stolen from the roof and building was allowed to fall into ruin. (The old photo was taken about 1900.)



Primitive Methodist Chapel, Old Silsoe Road.

In 1853 a Primitive Methodist Chapel in Luton Road (now Old Silsoe Road) was registered by John Symonds Gostling of Bedford, upholsterer.

The ex-chapel later served as a fire station during World War II and then as Chapel Feeds. It was recently demolished to make way for a new house which is now 9 Old Silsoe Road.



Primitive Methodist Chapel, High Street

In 1915 the Primitive Methodists built a new chapel in the High Street next door to 53 High Street (the old Post Office) and, apparently, abandoned the old chapel in Old Silsoe Road. It was demolished in about 1972 to make way for the bungalow which is now 55 High Street.



Parish Room

Long before the first village hall in Kiln Lane was built, the Parish Room was the place for wedding receptions and many social functions. It was in the grounds of the Rectory opposite the entrance to St Mary's Church. Originally it was a tithe barn.



It caught fire in 1966 and was demolished as it was found that many of the timbers were rotten.

Reading Room

Jack Pitts recorded that it "was a great asset for village folk. Every evening it was open for billiards, snooker, cribbage or cards; but never on Sundays or Christmas Day. It was also used by the visiting Dentist as a surgery."



It was to the east of St Mary's Church in the High Street and was demolished to make way for the detached house which is now 93 High Street.

Mill House

If you looked across the mill stream from the bottom of Mill Lane you would have seen the Mill House, the residence of the miller, George Course. Built in the early 19th century, it was (and still is) listed Grade II but has been demolished.

