

FACTS ABOUT THE HAMLET OF CLIFTON, EAST DOWN

Clifton is the hamlet that lies along the main East Down road, between East Down Manor and the junction for Churchill. It is claimed that Clifton developed and grew from the presence of the nearby manor. Certainly, the Pyne Arms owes its existence to the manor, as it was originally part of the manor farm. It became the village post office when the farm was sold, probably in the mid nineteenth century. Many of the properties in Clifton were occupied by employees or tenants of the manor at one time. However there was also Clifton Farm, providing work and requiring workers from the area.

The property now known as Bridge House, used to be two separate farmworkers dwellings called Bridge Cottages. In more recent times Mr. Lawday, who used to be the village post man and lived in one of these cottages, used one of his front rooms to sell sweets and tobacco and provide other essentials for the residents of East Down parish. He was a bit of an entrepreneur, because he would also take orders from locals and then walk around the parish delivering them. Whilst delivering he would take a small supply of other groceries for people to purchase. He will be remembered by a few of our more senior parishoners for his selling of "tiny tip tea", a brand that has sadly gone the same way as Mr. Lawday.

East Down Methodist Church, which has now been converted to a private residence and called The Old Chapel, was originally built in 1903. The church was built on the site of the village sweet shop, with an adjoining outbuilding that was used as a cafe in those days. Stone used in the construction of the church were hauled by horse and cart from Arlington Mill quarry. There was a high wooden-topped screen erected between the church and Sunday School areas, and this was made by a John Hussell, who charged 17s 6d (75p in current coinage) for the work. The church was expected to close when Kentisbury Methodist Church opened in the early 1970's, but it remained open and well attended until December 23rd 1984, when a final service was held, incorporating a traditional Carol Service. The church was not registered for marriages until 1977. It's first bride was Miss Dawn Fry, of Wigmore Farm, who married Mr. Richard Middleton of Coventry.