# JACK BURGOINE'S
# MEMORIES OF CLOPHILL

Jack was born of a farming family. His great grand-parents, Jessie Burgoine and Mary Ann Izzard, were both born in 1850 and after marrying in 1871 settled down to live at Ivy Farm where they had eight children, seven boys and one girl, of which Wilfred (Wilf), born in 1890, was Jack's father.



**Jessie & Mary Ann Burgoine**

The following notes are from a recording made when we chatted with Jack on 23rd September, 04, when he was 83.

We started recording after picking Jack up at Sunnyside Nurseries and it covers Clophill Road, Maulden, progressing to the A6, the Green and along Clophill High Street.

**Clophill Road, Maulden – starting at Sunnyside Nurseries**

Mr Gordon used to live in Holly Cottage, beside Sunnyside, before my Father bought it. He was a JP and he gave every child in Maulden an apple, an orange, sweets and a present (something like a board game) at Christmas. As far as schooling was concerned, although it was Maulden, all those who lived east of the Dog & Badger along Clophill Road went to Clophill School. The nearby woods were known as the Bogs because the ground was very boggy. One day Mr Tanquerary of Oakley House was shooting in those woods and he sunk in the ground. There's no bottom in that ground and if it hadn't been for his shooting stick and gun he would have been lost - but they got him out. On another occasion my brother fetched me from my bed to see the otter he had shot. It is now in Luton Museum.

My Granddad (Jessie Burgoine) lived at 136 Clophill Road, Maulden before moving to Ivy Farm. My Uncle Perc (Percy Burgoine) was born in Holly Cottage but built Sunnyside Nurseries, which he then sold to my father. Peckham Winston lived at Ivy Farm as a market gardener, but later moved to "Rustling Leaves" in Clophill High Street. Hedley Lobb subsequently lived at Ivy Farm. Hedley used to work at Sunnyside at one time and then retired and worked for my brother.



**Jack's Granddad used to live here at 136**

Bert and Owen Keely lived at Maulden Mill. Bert was a market gardener and Owen worked the field opposite the Dog and Badger. This, together with his market garden round earned him a living.



**Maulden Mill where Bert and Owen Keely used to live**

"I used to have a field near where Jackson's is now. The Jackson`s field used to belong to Cecil Sharp and Bernard Sharp. Bernard *(Marjorie Brown's father -Ed)* retired to live at "Dawnbreak" in Kiln Lane near the Village hall. Cecil Sharp lived at the bottom of the pathway called Trilley, which led up to the woods. After Chapel, we used to walk up the Trilley, then down Badger Lane (next to the Dog and Badger pub) to Sunnyside.



**‘Sunnyside’ and the Nurseries taken during the peak years of the 60’s**

Mr. Sharp (not Bernard) lived at Long Thatch, no. 123. Will Sharman lived at the two houses by the bridleway. Ralph Izzard and Will Sharman both worked at Sunnyside. Cecil Sharp (Bernard's brother) lived at 123A, moving there from Water End. Mr. Powell lived at 150, Green Ridge. It was one big house, now made into three.

Mr Vass lived at 127A. Vass is a family name around here but they had no connection with LW (Leslie) Vass of Ampthill who buy and sell Army trucks and Land Rovers.

Most of the area was open land when I was young. 129A is on a plot, which was originally 5 1/2 acres of fruit orchard which I owned. This was the small orchard; the larger one is behind the house where my son Alan lives.

Lionel Northwood lived at no. 131 years ago and then owned E & R Transport.



**Ivy Farm**



**Long Thatch (123)**



**'Green Ridge' (150) once one large house now three**

All of the market gardeners had 5 acres and a lorry. They took all of their produce to Luton, London and St.Albans and other local centres to serve the shops. During the Second World War I remember being in a field at Cheapside, Luton, when Vauxhall was bombed. I was also in a field at Pirton when Henlow Camp was bombed. The gang of men lay down in the cauliflowers as they were machine-gunned. The men were not injured but the horse and cart bolted back to the farm, frightened by the gunfire.

A huge amount of produce was taken to London during the wartime, but all lorries had to stop and wait at Barnet for bombing to stop and until the 'all clear' had been signalled by the air raid sirens.

I used to cycle to Pirton , three or four times a week when I was courting Rita. It was 8 miles. My father used to buy potatoes from the Weedon family in Pirton and I would use the lorry in the evening after the men had gone home to collect the potatoes to be able to go courting as well. Petrol was rationed in wartime so packing, loading and collecting the potatoes was the only way I could get transport to go courting.



**Jack,Maud & Madge Burgoine with Tom Vonopio (Italian POW) and Dandra (German POW)**

During the War, as most of the men were away fighting, I had 20 Italian prisoners of war, 20 Germans and 25 prisoners from Bedford Jail along with a Warder with a loaded gun to keep an eye on them. The Italians lived where the offices are today and my wife Rita cooked them a meal every day. Rita, my mother in law and I visited one of them in Italy after the War, taking my 7.3 litre Ford Fairlane over the on an aircraft normally used as a gun carrier.

My brother in law Peter Izzard (he married my wife's sister Jean ) lives at no. 166 near the Pine View Caravan Park. The house cost £2500 to build. They met when Jean came to live at Sunnyside after leaving Hitchin Grammar School, aged 17.

The first Caravan at Pine View belonged to Derek Keens. Derek spent most of his working life driving tractors at Sunnyside. He now lives in Mill Lane and when he retired in he bought a Ferguson tractor which he still drives in the area.

Cyril Humphries' nursery was where the new estate of houses at ‘Trilley Fields’ now stand.



**The recently developed 'Trilley Fields'group of houses**

Arthur Head, who had 2 daughters and a son, ran the Commander in Chief pub. I went to school with his daughter, Jean, and she subsequently married Ron Mackton from Flitwick. The pub was built in 1907.



**The former 'Commander-in-Chief public house**



**The Old Bakehouse**



**Little Thatched Cottage with Bakehouse Cottage to it's right**



**No 145 the former Butchers Shop**

My Uncle Percy lived next to the pub at The Laurels, now called The Old Bakehouse.

No. 145 was the butcher's shop run by Colin Billington. followed by Walter and Frank Young as the main butcher for Clophill. Later on there was another butcher at 35 High Street owned by Mr. Lasham.

Mrs Duncombe lived at no.204, the little thatched cottage, where she gave music lessons.

Neville Diggins had the garage (now A & F Motors ) although his garage was originally on the comer of the road near to where the Wesleyan Chapel stood.

My Uncle Tom Burgoine lived at Edgewood Cottage along with his nine children - some of their names were Stan, Sis, Con, Wyn, Lil, Hilda and Art.



**To the right , part of the remaining wall to Miss Moore's estate**

At the junction with the A6 a big wall went right round the Miss Moore's Estate and extended across the road to the public house. Diggins garage was on the corner of the A6 and Clophill Road. Petrol was then 1/5d per gallon. The Wesleyan Chapel was alongside the garage. It was a large chapel with a gallery upstairs.

Miss Moore's estate was bought by the Bedfordshire C.C. and in 1937-8 part of the land was used to build a new stretch of the A6 to bypass the old route that wound around the south side of The Green, past the Flying Horse and then over the Bridge into what is now Old Silsoe Road.

*…….more about the by-pass in Part 2 next month*

## JACK BURGOINE'S MEMORIES OF CLOPHILL PART 2

Our April edition recorded Jack Burgoine's memories of life to the west of the A6 before and during the 2nd. World War. Following are Jack's reminiscences of Clophill within the village.

### Across the A6 to The Green.

There was a little wooden shop on the left at the entrance to Clophill, kept by John Smith and Mrs. Perkins. The A6 went round The Green and over the little bridge. Where the water was shallow, the horses used to go through the river rather than over the bridge. It was a dangerous stretch of road with many accidents. The Pound was used on Saturday night to lock up the drunks. Peter Izzard, who now owns the Haulage Company, Maud Izzard, Mrs. Webb and Will Hinton lived at the white cottages facing the Flying Horse. Bert Juff lived at no.11 at the bakers. Johnny Ryan had a blacksmith's shop behind the Green Man pub and there was a large garage where buses were kept overnight. Ron Grummit built the bungalow at no.4 The Green. This has now been converted to our new village Post Office and Store owned by Deepak and Dakhsa Chandaranna. Mrs. Juff lived next door. Chris Diggins used to have the Bicycle shop where Groom's Hairdressers is now. They lived at no.1 High St.

There was a fair, known as "The Statty" on Gartons Field Yard on what is now The Green Man car park. I owned this 7 acre field until it was compulsory purchased, firstly to be a playing field and later, the Readshill Council houses were built on it. This field stretched from behind the Council houses in Bedford Road up to Herbert's piece. Beverley Court was built on this land. The Fair came to Clophill twice a year, usually in September and Christmas. My friends and I used to do all the running about – collecting water for the steam engines and helping to get the roundabouts set up and we would be rewarded with free rides.
Every Boxing Day there was a festival on The Green and a hunt with hounds visited.

The Home Guard used to meet on The Green during the Second World War. One day I was dressed for Home Guard duty but after a very windy night all of the boilers heating my greenhouses had gone out (18 houses, 150 ft. long where the lorry park is beside Sunnyside.) and I had to spend time re-lighting them. Because I was late for duty the Home Guard came, with fixed bayonets, and collected me. George Chisholm (of Speeds Dairy Farm with whom I socialised) was the Officer in Charge and demanded an explanation. . I told him that my "bloody fires" had gone out and I had to stay to re-light them. Because I had sworn at an Officer I was taken to the barracks at Ampthill, where the Police Station now stands. A tribunal sentenced me to 28 days 'confined to barracks' and was held over the weekend where I was fed and treated

like an officer. But, because I had German prisoners of war working for me at Sunnyside and my father was dying, the NFU obtained my release on Monday morning. However that sentence is registered as a prison record and would have counted against me if, for example, I had wanted to join the Masons.

The main occupation around here in my younger days was either farming or market gardening. There were no other jobs until Vauxhall came to Luton. For women, it was in service to the gentry; or if you had a bicycle you could get to Ampthill station and get on the bus and travel to Luton to work for the hat manufacturers. Also, with no bathrooms or flush toilets inside houses, there were earth closets or buckets used indoors, which were emptied into the garden – organic farming!
With no running water inside the house, Saturday night was bath night with a big tin bath in front of the fire. All of the family bathed one by one. Monday was washday whatever the weather and 'soap-suds dinner' – cold cuts.

All of the farmer's straw went inside the yards for the animals and the winter job for the men was to clear the manure and put it on the fields. My uncle cleared hundreds of tons of horse manure sent up from London (London Dung) by train to go onto the fields. All of the waste from the woollen and cotton mills and hat factories was recycled into material called Shoddy (hence the term – looking very shoddy). When I worked for Godfrey he got grey shoddy which had a 3-year life cycle.

**The High Street**

Johnny Ryan, the blacksmith, lived at 4 High St. and the Undertaker lived at no. 6. Jack Hardwick lived at no. 3 after he moved out as publican of The Green Man. Mr. Gobey (Claude Gobey's father) had a round selling paraffin, pots and pans and was called 'ninepence ha'penny' because of the cost of what he sold. Mrs. Green lived at no.7; a quiet lady. Jack and Kath Eddy lived at no.20. Fred Young, an under master at school, not a full schoolteacher, lived at no. 22.

Eli Fossey lived at a shop at no. 9. Mr. Fossey was a shoe mender and had a number of children including Keith, Edna and Stan. Stan was my foreman, buying potatoes in the Fens.

Masters Mouse used to belong to Sir. Reginald Pearson's wife. He was the Managing Director of Vauxhall's but he did not live there. A milliner worked in one of the rooms of the house. Next door is no. 15, the home of Ray and Barbara Sharp. Ray told Spotlight that the previous owner was Mr. and Mrs Pepper. He was an engineer for the Great Ouse River Board. Prior to that a local midwife lived there.

The land where nos. 26-34 now stands was Walt Taylor's fields with farm and meadows all down the Causeway. Walter Taylor originally owned George Robinson's house at no. 19. George married Flo, who was Walter Taylor's daughter. The cows

were brought up The Causeway to be milked in barns where nos. 26 –34 now stands. Walter's brother, Wilf, delivered the milk locally.

Building of the houses in Cainhoe Rd. commenced in 1970 and they sold for about £3000 in 1972. Lasham's butcher's shop, no 35, had barns beside where Howard's Mews is now. Mr.Manning lived at no. 34 and was a hat manufacturer. Archie Robinson lived at the house currently known as Lammas Cottage; it was not known as Lammas Cottage in those days. Kitty Lammas lived at no.33 and no. 35 was a Fish and Chip shop owned by Mr. Garret. He later moved to Great Lane on the right hand side.

Mr. Peck lived at no. 43,"Rustling Leaves" where his daughter Mrs. Jean Doggett, now lives. Mr. Peck was in partnership in a market gardening business with his brother in law, Mr. Winston, who lived at Ivy Farm, next to Sunnyside.

The Misses Goodhall lived at no.45, now known as London House. They were governors of the school and one of them (Miss L. Goodhall) was organist at the church. (Eds. Note – Mrs. Doggett has told Spotlight that her mother, Mrs. Peck was required to curtsey to Miss Goodhall). Later Alwyn Ward lived at no. 45.

Jack Boutwood lived across the road at no. 36 "Oakley House". He was my shooting partner when we used to go duck shooting down the Fens. The house was owned by the Rothwell family before that and they had three daughters. A church wedding in 1943 recorded that the bride lived at no. 36 and she was Georgina Tanqueray Willall, daughter of the late Major Tanqueray and Mrs. Rothwell of Oakley House.

Sir. Douglas Howard lived in Clophill House and the Northwood family owned the Mill House across the road. It had to be knocked down in the 1980's, as it was unsafe. Before the Northwoods, the miller was Mr. Course.
The land down The Causeway was extremely boggy and I lost a tractor down there. Mr. Course then moved into the bungalow now owned by George and Kreena Geere.

*Spotlight will publish more of Jack's memories in future editions.*

**PART 3**

The Methodist Chapel - The Burgoigne family have put flowers in the Chapel for over 50 years. It started when Jack's father put flowers there without charge and Jack continued doing so all his working life and Alan does it now. The Chapel recognised it by presenting him with a clock for '50 Years of Service to the Church'. His father and Enid have plaques in the chapel too. There are some vases in the Chapel which come from the old Wesleyan Chapel on the A6.

No 46 (Wootton House) was originally the Post Office and when that shut a grocery shop opened, run by Mrs Wootton. Her husband, Linden, did tailoring in one of the side rooms. In the barn alongside, a Mr Cotham did shoe mending Every Saturday morning, Jack did a village round selling flowers in Maulden and Clophill with a truck full of flowers from the nursery; he used to take a friend with him who collected the money. Mrs Boutwood said that Oakley House and Ivy House had the same scrolls over the front doors as both had been built by the same builder for two members of the family. Major Tanquerary lived at 36 and he married a Rothwell who lived at Ivy House, 52.

Between the present Post Office and Mr Richardson's house was all open fields *(each field had its own name but Jack could not remember them now)* where Jack used to ride his bike; and the footpath went all the way up to Kiln Lane. No 63 was owned by the Young family. Molly Young a school teacher (who was either Fred's wife or sister) still lives there now

Where No 70 now stands were two pairs of cottages; behind them was the Dunham's house and their piggeries; this was on the land where Mike and Julie Benson's house now stands (No 72). The Dunham's daughter Madge married a Tingey from Campton. Her sister Annie lived in the council houses (no65) but inherited the land across the road from her brother after he died. 78/80 used to be called Uckland Cottages.

The school was much bigger than it is now. The only part of the old school left is the bell tower on the grass in front of the present school. Jack did not go to all the lessons as he did gardening and had to do the Master's garden every day, so he missed some of the lessons, as a result he could not count well. They used to have one afternoon a week on the school gardens (where Townshott is now) and Jack won 1st Prize at Bedford Show from produce. He went to the village school from 5-14; his father wanted him to go to the High School but Jack wanted to leave school and get out on the farm on the tractors.

Opposite the school was a public house (The Compasses), owned at one time by Mr Eaton – Kreena Geere's father. It was said to have been used as the local court house & bakery at one time. Sid Odell used to live at 81 and had two daughters, Kath and Marion, and a son Ken (who died of pneumonia at about aged 20). Marion still lives in Bedford Road.

From an old school photo (1929) Jack remembered school friends. Leslie Abbot, Raymond Stimpson, Ken Odell, Richard (Dick) Shepherd, Bert Harris (lived up Bedford Road), Bernard Fossey (9 High Street), Maurice Hinton (lived over the bridge), Ken Gibson (lived next to Darstons?), Michael Tyson (lived on Bedford Road), Francis Platt is Doris Pitts brother (brother also to Basil) who lived opposite Diggins Garage. Maud Lammas (lived in Bedford Road), Emily Taylor (Bedford

Road), Jean Hind, Joan Gibson, Josie Lammas, Nora Richardson, Edna Wilmore (sister to George and Charlie), Nellie Pitts (worked for the Burgoigne's in the house), Madge Castle (Dunham), Teacher – Miss Roberts mother of Sir Stanley Odell MP. Tom Izzard (used to suck his thumb all through school!), Sidney Matthews died in the first week he went to war, Stanley Richardson, Alfred Harris (Bedford Road), George Wilmore, Bob Roberts, James Bone (Arthur Bone's son), Stanley Burgoigne (Jack's cousin), Ron Matthews (Back Street), Arthur Cole (first council house in Bedford Road), Kenneth Widdowson (Kings Cottage), Stanley Fossey, Clifford Stimpson (Jacques Lane), Miss Wittermore (a Prefect), Cyril Abbott (preacher at Chapel), Francis Hinton (lived in a caravan where the garage is now on Old Silsoe Road), Winifred Shannon, Janet Tyson (got a scholarship to Bedford High School along with Alwyn Ward), Marion Odell (Sid's daughter who lives on Bedford Road now), Kathleen Gibson (sister of Jack and Ken who lives in Silsoe), Betty Mann, Audrey Peat. Another picture showed one class with the teacher as Miss Ayden with Ronnie Peat, Charlie Wilmore, Hubert Cole, Cecily Peat.
Jack Groom had a box-making factory 'The Canyon Case Company' in Great Lane which he then he moved to Gordon's Garage at the back of Alan Burgoine's place in Clophill Road. He sold out to a company at Broom and you can still see the old wooden sign 'Rook's Boxes' if you go to Jordan's Mill. Mr Gaylor lived at 100 High Street when Jack was a boy. Appleby's Blacksmith Shop was near where Church Mews now One of the houses in Little Lane had a tree growing up inside it and it was chopped off to hold the house up!

Mr Horsnail lived in Dormer House. Alf Jeffery lived at 91 where his daughter Ann still lives. Alf married a Colman, and he had his market gardening barn next door. The Gillets lived at 93. The Henman's bought The Old Rectory in 1966 but Jack could not remember when it stopped being the Rectory but he remembered the 'new' Rectory being built. Stan Woodward lived at 118. The New Inn, 120, was a pub owned by Frank and David Shepherd. Ben Peat lived at 119, Jack's sister married his son, and Mr Bone lived in the thatched cottage (122).

The girl who lived at Journey's End had six fingers on each hand; she had them taken off as they had tons of money. He was a hat manufacturer in Luton and shot himself in the end. Jack was only allowed to go out with his daughter if he had a chaperone; this was Wilf Taylor, the milkman's wife, who worked at the house. So that relationship did not last long! Jacques Lane has always been as it is, built just to give access to the fields. Ronnie Gobey used to live in the end Council house.
Frank Shepherd, son of the owner of the New Inn, lived in Jacques Lane and Mr Stimpson lived in a house, now demolished, on the corner near to the old Rising Sun.

**Up Mill Lane into Back Street and down Bedford Road (A6)**
Jack thought that The Strand was built to house workers on Clophill House estate; Jack Pitts used to live there at one time so did his wife Doris. Harry Brown lived there too. Maud O'Connor, Hedley Hobbs' sister, lived at 2 Mill Lane. Her husband used

to go to London every day to work at Mount Pleasant Post Office; he had a marvellous job and spoke 7 languages fluently.

There used to be the village well near the junction of Back Street and The Slade. Ray Stimpson lived at No2 Back Street, now owned by John Turner. Mr Gobey lived up The Slade; he used to do a round of a different village each day with his horse and cart selling pots and pans. The Stone Jug was always a pub in Jack's early years and it was run by Mr Tuffnell. Sid Matthews lived at No 15 and Donald Matthews lived in the white house behind it. Maud O'Connor lived at Old Owls Nest before moving to 2 Mill Lane. Sammy Stanford lived at No 30 where Anne Armitage now lives. The Public Footpath used to run in a straight line from beside the Green Man through what is now Readshill and up beside the quarry.

The friends referred to in the school picture as living in Bedford Road, lived in the Council houses on the A6.