

LOST COTTAGES OF STEEPLE ASTON



Church Corner is the historic heart of our village. In this photo of around 1910, the thatched cottages on the left were already at least 250 years old, and probably housed four families. The resident with a window protected by fencing had no doubt grown tired of the local children staring in. At the corner there is a post which held an oil lamp, lit each evening by the parish. Next to what is now The Nest, on the other side of Cow Lane, is a tiny semi-detached thatched cottage – each dwelling one room wide. Adjacent is a terrace of small C19th houses, known as Rogers’ Row. Both buildings were demolished in the 1970s. By the 1960s Church Cottages were virtually derelict, and in the 1970s underwent major change, with the thatch replaced by a slate roof with a row of dormer windows that we see today. It is no longer four but just two dwellings: Merlins and Church Cottage. What they have lost in historic character, they have gained in modern comforts.

The photographer of South Street (as it was known) below, in the 1920s, stood next to The Tchure looking towards the shop. In the 1940s and 50s the cottages on the left were owned by Mr. Price (who started the garage business at Hopcrofts Holt), and the cottages were merged into one and rented to the Burgess family. Howard, one of the family, contacted SAVA recently and donated various documents to the archive. He recalls: “Rosemullionhad a Japonica bush and apples growing up the front of the cottage. There was a green wooden porch at the front with a bench seat; sometimes a tramp would rest here when we gave him some bread and water.....There was a substantial terraced cottage garden on the other side of the road, with two brick potting sheds.” The cottages were demolished around 1960, giving Greenacre behind them the space for the extension that it has today. The outline of the garden and the flat-roofed shed across the road are still there, but the tramp and his bench seat are long gone.

