

Welford-on-Avon · Church Lane, north side

Melbrook Cottage

One of a row of four small brick cottages on the lane that loops round the churchyard, and the farm workers, gardeners and later owners who lived along it.

Drawn from the Welford and Weston Local History Society archive (folder references in grey). The archive names Melbrook in only five documents, so parts of this account are inference, and are marked as such.



The terrace on Church Lane in 1992. Wayside, Jasmine, Melbrook and Pathway, photographed for the Welford-on-Avon Conservation Area Study, where it is fig. 9. 15/08

Keyte Lane 1802 to 1938

Church Lane was not always called that. In the 1802 enclosure award it is Keyte Lane. When H. M. Woodward copied out the award's footpaths in October 1938, he added a note in red that "Keyte Lane is now called Church Lane" 18/15. One of the paths he listed, No. 7, was the villagers' usual way to church from the upper end of the village. It ran "by the side of several homesteads and gardens to Church Lane", and the 1992 study still describes a shady footpath leading off the lane 18/15, 15/08.

The lane bends north around the churchyard. Its western end is the grand end, with the Old Rectory and Cleavers, a mid-Georgian brick house. Further east are two timber-framed cottages, Orchardene (now [Drakes Cottage](#)) and Box Tree Cottage, which used to be called

Tower View 10/32, 15/08. Melbrook belongs to the plainer part of the lane. The 1992 study describes the street like this:

A charming 19th century terrace of four cottages on the north side completes the street scene.

Welford-on-Avon Conservation Area Study, July 1992 · 15/08

A brick terracelate nineteenth century

Almost everything old in Welford is timber-framed and thatched. Of the 66 entries in the modern listing text, 26 have thatch 47/1–66. Melbrook and its neighbours are different: they are a brick terrace with a slate roof, two storeys high. The study's survey entry, Map Ref 110, dates them "C20/19", which means built in the nineteenth century and altered in the twentieth 15/08. The photograph shows one upstairs window and one downstairs window per cottage, with small pitched porches over the doors. In the photograph the brickwork shows a pattern of light and dark bricks.

The archive has no deed, plan or building date for the row. Brick terraces of this size were usually built in Victorian villages to let to farm labourers and tradesmen, and the people found on Church Lane in 1911 fit that pattern. That is an inference from the building's type and from the census, not from any record of who built the terrace.

There are two Jasmine Cottages in Welford. Melbrook's neighbour in this row is a brick cottage. The other is a thatched seventeenth-century house on the High Street, listed Grade II in 1972 47/31, 13/02. That is the Jasmine Cottage where "Fried Bread" Joseph Harris lived and where J. E. Hartles, treasurer of the British Legion, lived in the 1950s 20/01, 56/07–09. It has nothing to do with this row.

The lane in 1911 census night, 2 April 1911

The 1911 census is the earliest record in the archive that names Church Lane's households. The enumerator listed seven cottages on the lane, between Church Farm and Mill Lane. Five of them had three rooms. James Paddock wrote his out in full: "2 bedrooms, 1 living room" 48/09, 48/11.

Sched.	Household	Work	Rooms
108	George Thomas Smith, 23, wife Ellen and son George	Labourer on the borough sewage farm	3
109	Thomas Jones, 67, wife Alice and son Alfred	Farm labourers	3
110	James Paddock, 52, wife Ellen and three children	Farm labourer	3
111	Charles Bennett, 48, wife Martha and three daughters	Farm labourer	5
112	George Radbourne, 68, from Oxfordshire, wife Joanna and	Farm labourer	3

	Sched. Household	Work	Rooms
	two young boarders		
113	Andrew Hornby, 60, wife Mary and sons Walter and Herbert	Carpenter; farm labourer; postman	6
114	Barron Nichols Hancox, 28, wife Annie and daughter Dorothy	Market gardener	3

The census gives no house names, so it can't say which of these families lived in the cottage later called Melbrook. If the terrace stood by 1911, its four families are probably among the five three-room households: the Smiths, the Joneses, the Paddocks, the Radbournes and the Hancoxes. That is an inference. The timber-framed cottages further along the lane were small too, and the order of the schedules can't settle it.

The lane in 1950 "People in Welford 1950"

In 1950 someone in the village went street by street through Welford in a red cash book, writing down who lived where 01/56. The Church Lane page lists Mr and Mrs George Smith and Mr Douglas Smith, Miss Mary Russell at Tower View, Mr and Mrs Alfred Ivings, Mr and Mrs Green, Mrs Hadley, Miss Hornby, Mr and Mrs Oliver Farley, the Bustons at The Bungalow, Mrs Marjorie Newey at Daffodil Cottage and Miss Josey at Daffodil Barn.

Some of the families had stayed put for forty years. George Smith of the sewage farm was still on the lane, and so was a Miss Hornby. The Ivings name turns up again in 1987, when Eric R. Ivins lived at Jasmine, next door to Melbrook 30/05. That suggests one family held a cottage in the row from at least 1950 to 1987, though the spellings differ and the link is not proven. The notebook still gives no names for the four cottages. In this archive, Melbrook's name first appears in 1983.

Named and noticed 1983

On 17 December 1983 the Society's secretary, S. J. Wilshaw, sent the Parish Council an updated list of buildings worth protecting. The Society thought the official 1960 list was out of date 10/32. Under Church Lane, with no map number and a proposed Grade III, the handwritten list adds "Row of 4 brick cottages - Wayside, Jasmine, Melbrook, Pathway". The covering letter explains entries like this one. Some buildings had been added "not necessarily of architectural or historic interest" but "to protect the character of the village".

CHURCH LANE			
17/12	II	The Old Rectory (formerly The Rectory)	Elizabethan (part)
17/14	II	Chlovers	
17/15	III	Orchardene Box Tree Cottage (formerly Tower View)	Block of 2 timber frame cottages one with thatched roof. 2 storeys. Plaster and brick infilling.
	III	Row of 4 brick cottages - Wayside, Jasmine, Melbrook, Pathway	

The Society's 1983 list. The last Church Lane entry is the earliest mention of Melbrook's name in the archive. Other copies of the same list are at 14/08 and 30/06. 10/32

The proposal seems not to have led to a listing. The terrace is not in the modern list descriptions the Society kept 47/1-66, and a web search found no Historic England entry for it. Grade III had been abolished in 1970, so the grade the Society asked for no longer existed. Instead, the 1992 Conservation Area Study surveyed the row and singled it out as completing the street scene 15/08.

Melbrook's own residents 1987 onward

The first person the archive places at Melbrook by name is Pamela M. Fisher. The 1987-88 register of electors lists her as the only voter in the house. Derek and Joan Harvey were at Wayside and Eric R. Ivins was at Jasmine. Pathway doesn't appear by name that year 30/05. In 1950 there were Fishers on the Long Marston Road, a Mrs Fisher and Mr Crudge and a Mr and Mrs Fisher, but nothing ties them to Pamela Fisher 01/56.

The archive has nothing about Melbrook after 1992. The name is unusual and doesn't appear in older Welford field or place names in the archive, so it was probably chosen by an owner in the twentieth century. Nobody has recorded why.

Who lived here

Date	Who	Source
1911	Probably one of the three-room households on Church Lane: Smith, Jones, Paddock, Radbourne or Hancox (inferred)	48/09, 48/11
1950	Probably one of the Church Lane households in the notebook. The Ivings family may already have been in the row (inferred)	01/56
1983	Cottage named as Melbrook; occupant not recorded	10/32
1987-88	Pamela M. Fisher	30/05
1992	Photographed in the Conservation Area Study; occupant not recorded	15/08

Gaps and disagreements

- **The building's age.** The 1992 study's text calls the row nineteenth-century, but its survey entry says "C20/19". The 1983 list gives no date, and nothing in the archive gives a building date.
- **The undated copy of the list.** Folder 30/06 is a handwritten copy of the same list. Its archive note dates it to the 1960s because it uses Grade III. Its entries match the 1983 list, including Melbrook, so it is more likely a copy of the 1983 proposal.
- **Two Jasmine Cottages.** Records for the thatched Jasmine Cottage on the High Street (47/31, 20/01, 56/07–09) are about a different house.
- **Further research.** The 1921 census, the 1939 Register and later electoral registers would show who lived at Melbrook between 1911 and 1987. None of them are in this archive.

Sources

- 10/32 · Society letter and list of buildings, 17 December 1983 (copies at 14/08 and 30/06)
- 15/08 · Welford-on-Avon Conservation Area Study, July 1992, Church Lane section and Map Ref 110, fig. 9
- 18/15 · H. M. Woodward, Schedule of Public Footpaths and Roads, October 1938
- 48/09, 48/11 · 1911 census summary book and household schedules 107–114
- 01/56 · "People in Welford 1950" notebook
- 30/05 · Register of Electors 1987–88, Church Lane entries 377–424
- 47/1–66, 47/31, 13/02 · listing descriptions (for the other Jasmine Cottage)
- Web: [listed buildings in Welford-on-Avon](#) (no entry for the terra