

Working Lives in Welford-on-Avon

A village that worked for its living

For three centuries most people in Welford-on-Avon earned their bread from the land, but the kind of land work changed completely. In 1841 about 105 of the 594 people in the Gloucestershire part of the parish were agricultural labourers and only 11 were farmers (48/01). By 1897 Kelly's Directory could say that "the principal industry is market gardening" (48/19–20), and in 1911 nine households on one stretch of the village street were headed by market gardeners working on their own account (48/11). A century later the 1990s Society minutes describe "a village where many commuters live" (38/01–03).

This essay follows that story through the Welford and Weston Local History Society's archive. It draws on the enumerators' books from 1841 to 1911 (48/01–12, 14/12), the Society's own 1851 occupation tables (01/49), the trade directories of 1856, 1897 and 1914 (48/13–22), parish-register notes (11/28), deeds (10/24), H. M. Woodward's notebooks of the 1910s–1940s (20/01, 21/1–21, 19/28), and the oral-history interviews the Society made in the 1970s (08/02–07). References in brackets are folder and item numbers.

The argument runs in five stages:

1. Before about 1800 Welford had a mixed economy of open-field farming and cottage crafts: weavers, flax dressers, glovers, coopers, a needlemaker.
2. Enclosure in 1801–02 and the decline of hand crafts turned most men into wage labourers. By the 1813–14 register skilled men and labourers were "equal" in number; within a few years labourers outnumbered tradesmen ten to one (11/28).
3. Through the Victorian decades the village kept a full set of crafts, but women's gloving and field work, the river trade and the old hand trades faded.
4. From the 1870s small freehold plots, fertile soil and carriers' carts to Birmingham turned Welford into a market-gardening village of small, independent growers.
5. After the First World War market gardening shrank, the Milcote estate was sold (1923), and work moved out of the village to Stratford's factories, offices and shops.

Earlier essays in this project cover some of the people met here in more depth. The Matthews and Johnson blacksmiths have their own essay ([The Forge](#)), as do the builders and thatchers ([house building](#)), the schoolteachers ([education](#)),

the clergy ([religion](#)) and the innkeepers of the river ([Boat Cottage](#)). Here they appear only where they explain how Welford worked as a whole.

One caution applies throughout. Censuses record what people told an enumerator on one night. They undercount women's paid work, seasonal work such as pea picking, and second jobs. Alfred Davis, who enumerated Welford in 1901 and 1911, was himself "a boot maker and market gardener", and the Society's 1901 talk notes that "some occupations were seasonal and required a second string to one's bow" (46/37–95).

Before the censuses: weavers, glovers and apprentices, 1600–1800

The earliest Welford workers the archive names are two weavers. A lease of 20 September 1600 passed a messuage, orchard, garden and close from John Oakes of Welford, weaver, to William Battersbie of Welford, weaver, for 2,000 years at sixpence a year (10/17, 10/21). The Society's note-taker who worked through the Lychgate deeds boiled the whole run down to one sheet of trades (10/24):

Date	Trade	Name
1600	Weaver	J. Okes and W. Battersby
1686	Blacksmith	J. Okes
1686	Cooper	Edward Hotham
1686	Goldsmith, in London	John Hotham
1714	Farmer	Thomas Rawlins of Braggington
17?6	Cordwainer	George Sale or Seale
1831	Wheelwright	Richard Brookes; John Stanley

The note-taker put an exclamation mark beside the goldsmith. A Welford family with a son working gold in London in 1686 shows that village crafts could lead a long way from the village.

Cloth and leather

Weaving was a real village industry, not a stray entry. The church registers name weavers in 1813–16 (William Gray, Hugh Taylor, Richard Bolton and a Feild) and a flax dresser, Thomas Adkins (11/28). H. M. Woodward, writing in the 1930s, said he had "talked in the past with several old people who

remembered some of the old hand-loom weavers and could point out what were once weaving sheds" (19/28). A 1938 note lists "weavers, flax-dressers, needlemakers & cordwainers" from the registers and says "several old weaving sheds still exist" (54/105). The Society's 1931 exhibition included a weaving-loom rod "from the last cottage in the village where weaving was done" (01/38–46).

Gilda Gray recorded the darkest story. In the 1790s William Ingram, "a skilful weaver", kept a petty school north of Pool Close while "his wife Mary travelled a wide district selling fine linen". He hung a troublesome boy, John Sandford, on a peg by his collar, and the boy died (05/02). The detail that matters here is the household economy: the husband at the loom and the schoolroom, the wife on the road as a pedlar of the cloth.

The flax behind that linen was grown locally. In 1677 Andrew Yarranton, engineer of the Avon navigation, wrote that the Manor of Milcote was "the true land to bear flax", that "some hundred acres" were already sown in some years, and that if the whole manor were sown it "would employ nine thousand people" in sowing, weeding, pulling, dressing, spinning and weaving (01/065). The scheme was never carried out, but field names such as Flax Hill survive on the parish maps (08/20–29). Rudge's 1803 county history adds that "the lower classes are generally employed in agriculture, except in the winter, when the manufacturers from Stratford supply them with flax for spinning" (01/58).

Leather work ran alongside the cloth. In 1628 the churchwardens paid for "glovers shreds, eggs and cheese curds to mende the steeple", which means glovers' offcuts were common enough in the parish to be bought as a building material (02/01–12, 17/01). In 1709 the parish apprenticed Stephen Court to William Loach, glover (10/31).

Apprentices sent out

The churchwardens' and overseers' accounts show the parish paying to bind its poor children to masters, and the masters were increasingly in the industrial towns (10/31, 13/32):

- 1707: Edward Simons to John Smith, with shoes, breeches, stockings and a linsey waistcoat bought for him.
- 1709: Stephen Court to William Loach, glover.
- 1766: R. Radnall to Thomas Parks of Harborne, "to learn the art and mystery of a nailer".
- 1788: John Abell to Barth Freeman of Birmingham, steel toymaker; Will Abell to W. James, button caster of Birmingham.

- 1796: a girl, Hannah, about ten years old, apprenticed until twenty "to learn needle making in the best manner" to John Jow of Astwood Bank.

The list traces a shift in where Welford children found a living: from local glovers and smiths to the Black Country nail trade, Birmingham's "toy" and button workshops and the Redditch needle district.

The open fields and enclosure

Until 1801–02 Welford's arable lay in open fields; a deed of 1708 still speaks of "one little headland lying & being in the Common fields of Welford" (10/24). A 1967 history written for the Society, probably by Miss Ray, argued that before enclosure "the typical Welford man was an independent cottager with 3–6 acres, often freehold, and never 'cap touching'" (40/01). Enclosure cost the landholders £1,751 for the commission and £663 for new roads, and brought a large quantity of land into cultivation (40/01, 01/58). It also helped to make wage labour the normal condition of a Welford man, which is where the census story begins.

The land: farmers, labourers, carters and plough boys

From 1841 to 1881 the typical Welford man was an agricultural labourer working for one of a handful of large farmers. The 1841 enumerator found about 105 agricultural labourers in the Gloucestershire part of Welford against 11 farmers, among them John Edkins of Binton Bridge House, William Parker, John Mills of the Mill House and a woman farmer, Ann Sanford (48/01).

The 1851 count

The most careful picture is a set of handwritten tables a Society member made by counting every 1851 entry for Welford, Weston and the hamlets (01/49).

They split the area into five districts and give, for men aged 14 and over:

Occupation, males 14+	Weston & Milcote	Welford N	Welford S	Bickmars h	Little Dorsington	Total
Agricultural labourer	26	101	8	12	4	151
Farmer	4	11	4	2	–	21
Farmer's son	2	6	–	–	1	9
Shepherd	4	1	2	–	–	7
Wagoner	2	–	4	–	–	6

Farm bailiff	1	–	1	–	–	2
All occupations	42	185	23	17	5	272

Three out of every five grown men worked on the land for wages. Another 28 boys under fourteen were already working as agricultural labourers or plough boys, against 44 boys at school. The same tables count 33 paupers, 14 men and 19 women (01/49).

The enumerator's book shows how concentrated the land was. Joseph Hughes farmed 240 acres with 12 labourers and 3 boys; Matthew Mills farmed 110 acres; the rector, Charles Davenport, held 180 acres of glebe (14/12). In 1871 the big holdings were larger still: Benjamin Chamberlain had 432 acres, John Tysoe of Rumer Hall 600 and John Adkins of Welford Pastures 186, while across the river William and Robert Tomes farmed 400 and 300 acres at Weston (48/05). In 1881 Samuel Tysoe at Rumer Hill had 630 acres and Samuel Blackwell at Bickmarsh Hall 1,000 (48/06). That year's surname list of Welford alone runs to well over a hundred families, almost all of them labouring.

What the labourers did

The census word "labourer" hides a ladder of skills. The 1861 book lists a carter at 32, plough boys of 12 to 15, a "field woman" in nearly every labourer's household, and an old man who was "almsman, formerly ag. lab." at 73 (48/04). The 1881 enumerator wrote down carters, shepherds and plough boys as separate trades (48/06). By 1911 the outlying farms were run by specialists. Francis Parish of Welford Hill employed carters, a cowman and a cattleman; John Barnett was a waggoner with a sixteen-year-old waggoner's boy; Harry

Burbidge was a gamekeeper; Thomas Hopkins was a shepherd (48/12).



The gap between farmhouse and cottage was stark. In 1911 Francis Parish had twelve rooms for five people and Walford Lloyd twelve rooms for two, while Thomas Hopkins the shepherd housed ten people in eight, and John Barnett's family lived in what he wrote down simply as "Three Rooms" (48/12). The Society's talk on the 1901 census puts money on it: an agricultural labourer such as Richard Gardener of Church Street earned "just over £46 per year", a teacher such as George Wright £147 and the rector £238 (46/37–95).

There was no pension until 1909, so men worked until they could not. Frederick Gould of Magpie Cottage was still an agricultural labourer at 70 in 1901 (46/37–95). In 1911 George Freeman, a "retired farm labourer" of 76, was drawing the newly introduced Old Age Pension while seven people shared his three rooms; two labourers, Thomas Blundell and John Bennett, were the only heads in the parish who signed their schedules with a cross (48/09).

Labour on the move

The labourers' world was not closed. Martin Cave, a widowed "jobbing farm labourer" born in Ireland, lived with his son's family in 1911 (48/09). Boarded-out children from Birmingham and Cardiff lived with labouring families such as

George Radbourne's and Mary Ann Bennett's (48/11). In the other direction, the Society's 1967 history says the population fell from 641 in 1821 to "barely 400" by 1881 "as young people left for Birmingham" (40/01). The census figures do not support so steep a fall (see the closing section), but the drift to the towns is real enough: by 1915 George Wright complained that farm labourers were being priced out of cottages, one rent having risen from £4 to £12 a year (25/07, 15/10).

Woodward's notebooks keep a few of the human relationships behind the tables. Ben Chambers, the gentleman farmer of Welford Hill, once lent his labourer John Coley £5; years later, when Chambers had become poor, Coley repaid the kindness in kind (20/01). Arch Gould, a market gardener of 85 in 1970, remembered his father's story that Welford's witch would sit on a gate on Binton Road and stop the horses dead in the seven-acre field, so that "neither draw the plough nor allow themselves to be led", while she laughed at the ploughmen and carters (21/22–66).

Women's work: glovers, field women, dressmakers and servants

Welford's women did paid work in every generation the archive records, but what they did changed sharply: glove-sewing and field work in the mid-Victorian decades, market gardens and lodgers around 1900, service and shop work after that. The censuses are the weakest guide here, because most wives were entered with no occupation at all. In 1851 the Society's tables count 104 wives and 24 daughters "no description" out of 258 women aged 14 and over (01/49).

The 1851 picture

The same tables list the women who were given a trade (01/49):

Occupation, females 14+ (1851)	Number
Servant	27
Fieldswoman	26
Dressmaker and tailoress	8
Farmer's wife, daughter, widow or mother	16
Glover	6
Sempstress	5
Charwoman, washerwoman or laundress	8

Schoolmistress	4
Housekeeper	3
Innkeeper	2
Farmer	2
Silkwinder, shoebinder, buckler	3
Boatwoman, grocer, gardener, governess, nurse, agricultural implement maker	1 each

The single "agricultural implement maker" and "boatwoman" stand out; so does the "buckler", a fourteen-year-old shoemaker's daughter. The two innkeepers were Mary Parker at the Bell and Lucy Mills at the Four Alls, and Susannah George ran a boarding school at Vine House (14/12). A pasted note in the 1851 enumerator's book explains that a "boot closer" was "a woman or girl who stitched the uppers on boots" (14/12).

Gloving

Glove-sewing was the women's cottage industry of Victorian Welford. It was piecework: the leather was cut elsewhere and sewn at home, and Woodward remembered that the little vice that held the work, "known locally as a 'Donkey'", could still be found in lumber-rooms "a few years ago" (19/28). He added that "the gloving industry lasted longer than the weaving". The censuses show it rising and then vanishing:

- 1851: 6 glovers in the Society's tables (01/49).
- 1861: about 10 glovers and 32 field women in the enumerator's book (48/04, counted from the transcription).
- 1871: 28 glovers, "many wives and daughters working as glovers or field women" (48/05).

- 1881: about 20 glovers and a similar number of field women (48/06, counted from the transcription).
- 1891: one, Elizabeth Neal, 35, "gloveress", keeping house for her blind father (48/07).
- 1901 and 1911: none (48/08–12).

Whole households sewed. In 1851 Jane, 23, Elizabeth, 25, and Ann, 33, all appear as glovers, and Charlotte Rouse, 55, is entered as "Pauper (Glover)" (14/12). In 1881 the glovers were wives of 26 to 58 and daughters as young as 12, born in Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Oxfordshire (48/06). The disappearance between 1881 and 1891 is abrupt. The archive does not explain it; the likeliest cause is machine-made gloves in the Worcester trade, but that is an inference, not something these folders say.

Field women and laundresses

"Field woman" meant paid work for farmers: weeding, stone-picking, hoeing, haymaking and harvest. In 1861 almost every labourer's wife on the first pages of the book is one: Sarah Fields, 28, Leah Gibbs, 26, Grace Bennett, a widow of 57 (48/04). Women combined it with other work. Elizabeth Marshal, a widow of 53, and her daughter Emma were both "fieldwoman and laundress"; Eliza Hawkes was a "silkwoman, formerly laundress"; Hannah Boyce was a "boot and shoe binder" and Elizabeth Bennett a "straw bonnet maker" (48/04). Ann Hornby, a widow of 67, farmed 50 acres while her daughter Harriet was a dressmaker (48/04).

Market gardens, lodgers and service

As gloving vanished, market gardening and visitors took its place. Frieda Gray, who knew the village from 1947, wrote that before 1914 there should have been photographs of "women working in Bridge Field — strawberry picking, tying onions, singling out lettuce & cauliflower plants, tying radishes — boxes of produce ready for the carrier" (08/03). A Herald column on the 1920s says "many worked long hours in their market gardens, the pride and joy of Welford" and "let rooms to summer visitors. Sometimes, as many as a hundred" (03/01–19). J. H. Garrett, boating up the Avon in 1906, counted up to fifty lodgers in August (11/33).

Letting rooms became a recorded trade. Kelly's lists Mrs Alice Bradley and Mrs Mary Tipping for "apartments" in 1897 (48/20), and Arthur Bachelor, Mrs Oliver Farley and Alfred Sykes of The Orchard in 1914 (48/21). Two widows in 1911, Martha Sharp and Elizabeth Neal, gave "apartment letting" as their occupation (48/10). Emily Horne, a dressmaker married to the market gardener Charles

Horne, "kept up her dressmaking, & when Welford became a resort of summer visitors, she let apartments" (21/1–21).

Some women ran businesses outright. Rebecca Hancox, widow, was a market gardener employing labour in 1911, and Harriet Blundell was listed as a market gardener in 1897 (48/11, 48/20). Sarah Ann Harris was a dressmaker on her own account; Mary Ann Bennett and Emma Edkins took in laundry; Agnes Wilkinson and Harriet Clayton went out charring (48/10–11). Domestic service ran from the Rectory, with its nursery governess and a fifteen-year-old housemaid in 1911 (48/11), down to Amy Harris, 17, "general servant (domestic)" (48/11). Teaching was the one profession open to village girls: Olive Hancox, Frances Hancock and Beatrice Marsh were all elementary teachers in 1911 (48/11–12), and the school is covered in the [education essay](#).

The Second World War brought women from the towns. "In Welford most available land was used to produce food and the girls from the towns came as Land Army girls to work on the land" (36/14); Millie Bott remembered feeding them, "starving hungry after working on the land" (36/9–10), and Weston House was used by land girls (47/80–90). Miss James of Frog Lane made a living bottling fruit for the Stratford hotels, with a shed "stacked from floor to ceiling with bottles" (36/14).

The village trades: smiths, carpenters, shoemakers, bakers and butchers

Welford kept a full set of village craftsmen right through the nineteenth century, and the same families held the same trades for generations. In 1841 the enumerator found carpenters of the Hornby, Hunt and Gould families, shoemakers, tailors, blacksmiths, butchers, bakers, a miller, a weaver, a linen weaver, a wheelwright, a carrier, a draper, shopkeepers and dressmakers, as well as a village surgeon, Joseph Lawrence (48/01). The 1851 tables give the numbers for men (01/49):

Trade, males 14+ (1851)	Number
Sawyer and carpenter	9
Shoemaker	7
Miller (one also a baker)	5
Bricklayer	4
Stonemason	4
Blacksmith	3
Butcher (and a butcher's boy)	4
Tailor	3
Wheelwright	2
Thatcher	2
Innkeeper	2
Groom	2
Baker, grocer, cooper, carrier, fisherman, roadman	1 each

Taken together that is about 55 craftsmen and tradesmen against 151 labourers. The 1856 Post Office Directory gives the masters' names: Thomas Barratt, painter and glazier; Thomas Hands and George Wright, tailors; Joseph Harris, Richard Haydon, Henry Hopkins and Levi Taylor, shoemakers; John Hornby senior, William Hornby, Thomas and William Hunt and Joseph Simmonds, carpenters; John Hornby junior and Henry Warmington, butchers; John Stanley, wheelwright and farmer; John Tims, bricklayer; and Samuel Gunn, miller and farmer (48/13).

Wood and iron

The smithy and the wheelwright's shop worked side by side. Deeds show a wheelwright's and a blacksmith's shop opposite the lych gate from 1831 to 1875, held by Richard Brookes and then John Stanley, who in 1851 employed two men (10/17–22, 14/12). From 1868 the Matthews family kept the main forge. Arthur Matthews told the Society in the 1970s that his grandfather and three

sons "did all the smithing & were plumbers, wheelwrights, ladder makers, and occasionally dentists for the surrounding district", and that the grandfather built "the first pedalled bicycle in the area — wooden spokes of course" (08/07). The smithy moved to a wooden shack by the garage about 1936, where Ted and Fred Johnson were "blacksmiths and boatbuilders" until about 1962, "when horse work had virtually ended" (08/07, 31/06). The full story is in [The Forge](#).

The building trades were also family affairs. Gilda Gray recorded that one side of the Hancox family "were the village builders in the 18th" century and built the parish workhouse (21/22–66). In 1911 Herbert Hawkins was a building carpenter and employer, Arthur Quiney a builder and employer, and Sam Bryan and Fred Hopkins house painters (48/10–12). Thatchers came and went: two in 1851, one in 1901 (01/49, 48/08), and in 1913–14 D. Cresswell of Salford Priors, "Thatcher and Market Gardener", charged £16 for re-thatching Mrs Johnson's cottage (33/07–41). The builders and thatchers are covered in the [house building essay](#).

Needle and last

Shoemaking was the largest craft after carpentry, and it lasted. Henry Hopkins appears as a shoemaker in 1856 and still in 1897 (48/13, 48/20), and Henry Hopkins was also the 1851 enumerator and a Wesleyan Sunday-school leader (14/12, 44/31). Alfred Davis, census enumerator in 1901 and 1911, was "a boot maker and market gardener" (46/37–95); Mrs Alice Ward was a boot maker in 1897 (48/20). In the 1940s Bill Johnson was the cobbler in Chapel Street and also ran "the dance band for Saturday-night dances in the Memorial Hall" (31/06). The 1896 photograph of the maypole being raised shows a shoemaker in a white apron at the centre of the crowd (16/53).



The tailors are best remembered through Woodward's anecdotes. Thomas Hands sat "cross-legged on a table by his cottage window" next to Welford House, was "as active as a cat" at sixty, and charged 12s 6d for trousers agreed at 12s because, his boy said, "thread had gone up". He made riding breeches so tight for Ben Chambers that "I couldn't get them off the first night" (20/01). No tailor appears after 1881.

Bread, meat and coal

Baking and brewing went together. The Shakespeare inn was also the village bakehouse; Mr Sabin's father "made bread at the Shakespeare & the round extended as far as Chipping Campden" by horse-drawn van (08/07). Roland Basson, landlord from 1932 to 1973, baked there with his brother Cyril, "starting at 4 a.m. and making up the next day's dough after the pub closed at 11 p.m.", until sliced bread closed the bakery; at Christmas the oven roasted the village's geese and turkeys (13/18, 31/06). In 1911 the street had four working bakers: Samuel Basson, Alfred Hincok, John Rogers and Edward Griffin (48/10–11).

Butchers ran from Henry Warmington and John Hornby in 1856 to John Smith in 1897 and G. A. Lea, who advertised in the parish magazine in 1959 (48/13, 48/20, 11/14). The coal trade was a second string for several families: Dey, a coal dealer, in 1816; Joseph Gould, innkeeper, boat proprietor and coal merchant in 1851; Joseph Blundell, "coal dlr. & markt. gdnr" in 1897; Archie Wright and William J. Blundell in 1914 (11/28, 14/12, 48/20–21). Charlie Sabin,

born about 1899, "worked in the coal business and in market gardening" (13/14).

A few one-off trades show how varied the village was. George Golder was a fish dealer in 1901 (46/37–95). George Emery was a cab proprietor in 1911; John Parish was sanitary inspector to the rural district council and Reginald Rushton a mail contractor in 1914 (48/09, 48/21). The registers record "Alexander Mackie – Mechanic", the first so described, in 1863 and an engine driver, John Marshall, by 1875 (11/28). There was a surgeon in 1841, but none was living in the village in 1901 (48/01, 46/37–95); by 1914 Dr Arthur Thomson came from outside and held a surgery on Wednesdays at 3 p.m. (48/22).

James Mills of the Hollies: needles, winnowing machines and tramway blocks

One Welford man shows that a village craftsman of the 1810s could sell to Staffordshire farmers and to Brazil. James Mills of the Hollies, who died in 1840, appears in the 1813 register as a "threshing machine maker", with the note "(kind invented by)" (11/28). His great-grandson H. M. Woodward, who lived in Mills's former "Needle-shop", described him as one of "at least two makers of agricultural machinery" in the village, the other being G. Allcock, who made "Drill Ploughs" and winnowing machines at Church House (19/28).

Winnowing machines by canal

A typed copy of "James Milles Ledger" calls him an "Agricultural implement maker" who "sold Winnowing machines, wheat, bean, and turnip Drills and Scuffles" (11/29). The surviving entries are sales of winnowing machines, called "fans", to Staffordshire farmers:

Date	Buyer	Price
3 Nov 1815	Mr Twigg, Radford Bridge near Stafford	£10 10s
17 May 1816	Mr Charles Pallett, Thickbroom near Lichfield, to Fradley Wharf	not given
13 Mar 1817	Mr Hardy, Leese Hill Farm, Kingstone near Uttoxeter	£8 8s
14 Dec 1817	Mr Fearn, Kings Standing, to Bromley Wharf near Lichfield	£8 8s

The machines went by canal wharf, and the ledger notes the market days at Lichfield and Uttoxeter, where Mills presumably took orders (11/29). Gilda Gray's notes add that the machines were "made for labour 25/- piece work" and "sold for £10" (11/24). A newspaper piece in the 1931 exhibition file says he patented a winnowing machine in 1829 and "carried the model he made to

Gloucester City (whither he walked) to advertise his business in a practical way" (11/27). Woodward owned "a neat little model which he used to exhibit at fairs and Markets" (19/28).

409,000 needles for Rio

The most surprising document in the archive is a copy of an 1819 invoice for "one case containing Needles shipt by Wm George for account of James Mills of Welford on board the ship Frolic of London Alexander Forbes Commander to Rio-de-Janeiro". It lists ten packets of "White Chapel sharps", a kind of sewing needle, totalling 409,000 at 2s a thousand: £40 18s, plus 10s for the packing case and £1 10s shipping (11/29). The consignee was "Nathaniel Lucas Esq"; one copy has "Hunt" written above the name and the margin note "Son of Rector of Welford" (11/24).

Woodward was sceptical about the needles. "He claimed also to be a Needlemaker though he could only have dealt with some process of that business" (19/28). That fits the wider evidence. Needle-making was the great industry of the Redditch district, where the 1796 Welford apprentice was sent (10/31), and the Society's own talk on needles noted that pointers "usually died very young because of the carborundum dust" (38/01–03). Mills was most likely a finisher, packer or factor rather than a full needle manufacturer. Still, a needle workshop existed: an 1847 register entry names Edward Harris, needlemaker (11/28), the 1983 listing review says Mills "carried on local industries here — including needle making" at the Hollies (10/32), and Gilda Gray called Hollies Cottage a needle factory (21/66).

Tramway blocks and papier-mâché

When the Stratford and Moreton Tramway was built in 1821–26, Mills became a sub-contractor, "undertaking to bore the stone blocks in to which the rails were to be fixed" (19/28). Gilda Gray's notes give the working: 67 days "6 horses men & boys — at £2.2. a day"; stone "went from Binton by river, & cut into blocks at Stratford"; blocks "bored for 4d a piece"; 1,149 blocks by Geo. Osborne and 1,735 boated by "Henry" (11/24). He also made the wheel pattern for the tramway's branch line in 1826 (01/38–46).

He tried papier-mâché too, "from trays to violins", sending work "to B'ham to be japanned" in collaboration with "Messrs. Woodward and Midgely, of Birmingham" (11/24, 11/27). The register records Josiah Woodward, japanner of Birmingham, in 1830 (11/28). A 1938 note says one of the village blacksmiths "introduced the Papier Maché work also, and one of the iron moulds for making papier-maché trays can still be seen here" (54/105). The 1967 history adds two

more ventures without detail: "the first iron perambulators" and "a short-lived ball-bearing works at the Mill" (40/01).

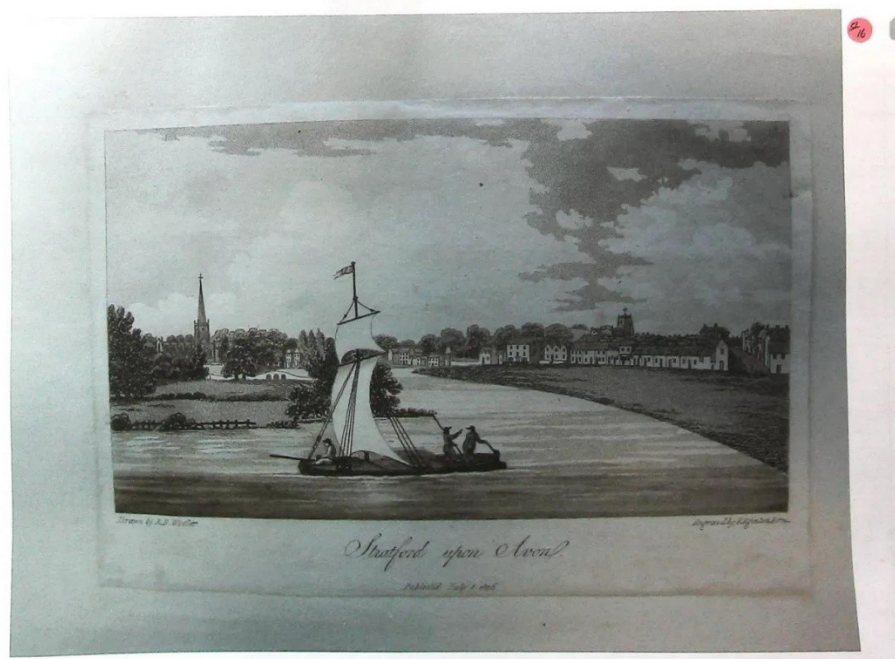
Mills matters for this essay because he shows the ceiling of village enterprise before the railway age: a man with a workshop, horses and a few hands, trading by canal and sea. Nothing on his scale followed him. After 1840 Welford's craftsmen served the village and the farms around it.

The river and the mill: bargemen, millers, eels and osiers

The Avon gave Welford two kinds of work that most inland villages lacked: the river trade, which died in the 1870s, and the water mill, which ground corn until 1958.

Barges and the locks

From William Sandys's works of the 1650s until the 1870s the Upper Avon was navigable from Evesham to Stratford, and Welford had two locks, one at the mill and a "new lock" below Cress Hill (52/09, 11/31). The barges were flat-bottomed, single-masted and carried 30 to 40 tons; "in the 1700's there were about 400 barges on the Avon" (52/09). They were not pulled by horses. A book of 1845 quoted in the Society's river talk says: "At a huge heavy-laden craft five or six strong men may be seen tugging laboriously — it is a painful sight to see these men dragging their barge along this river" (52/09). The 1967 history says "40-ton barges were hauled by men from Cress Hill Lock" (40/01).

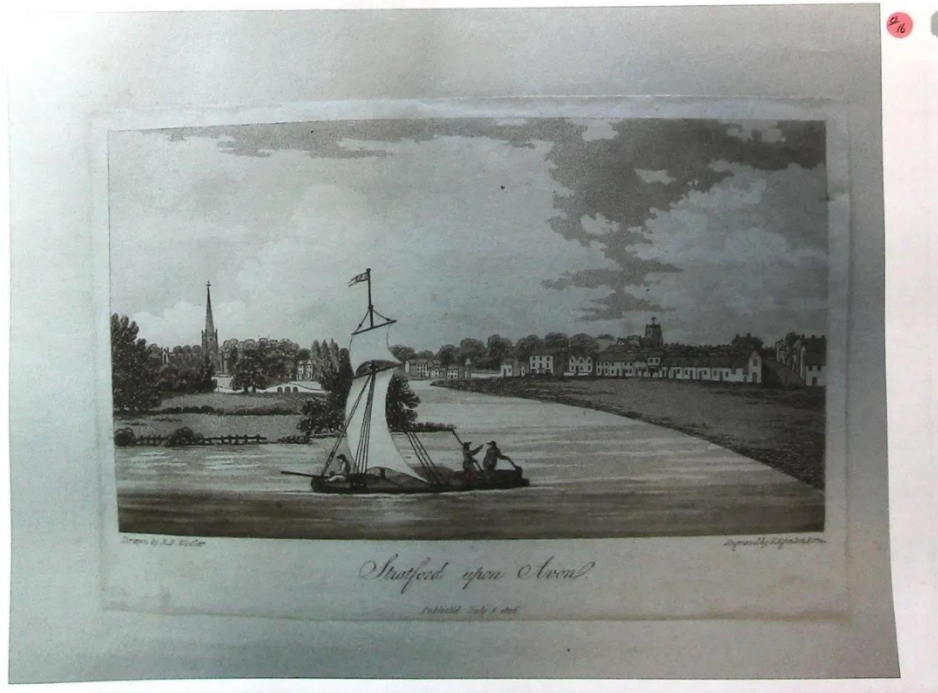


There were wharves at Binton Bridges, where "osiers and milled grain from the mill on that bank would be collected and coals delivered", at the foot of Boat Lane, and below Mill House, where a later owner dug up coal and crockery (52/09). The Boat Inn, formerly the Bear, was "a haunt of bargemen and prize-fighters" (19/26). C. J. Woodward, speaking at 93 in 1931, remembered watching from Cress Hill around 1842 as "coal boats and barges" went "through the locks to Stratford" (11/25). John Wilson, the future carrier, arrived in Welford as a small orphan about 1841 "by river, landing at Cress Hill lock" (44/01–41).

The registers and censuses name the river workers: William Vincent, fisherman, in 1834; George Houghton, boatman, in 1844; a fisherman and a boatwoman in 1851; Joseph Gould, innkeeper, "boat proprietor" and coal merchant at the Boat in 1851; and a lock-keeper's household at Weston in 1871 (11/28, 01/49, 14/12, 48/05). The railways killed the trade. The Great Western took control of the Upper Avon in 1859, stopped taking tolls in June 1875, and by 1873 Welford Lock was "in a ruinous condition, the gates having to be forced open" and the new lock "useless and broken" (52/09, 11/31). After that the river offered only fishing, pleasure boats for hire at the Four Alls and the Boat, and later the Johnson brothers' boatbuilding by the garage (11/33, 31/06).

Welford Mill

A mill stood at the end of Mill Lane for centuries; the 1588 flood "unthatched the mill" (52/09, 52/25). The building known to living memory dated from about 1800. In July 1810 the Warwickshire Advertiser offered for sale a "NEW erected water Corn Mill ... late in the tenure of ... John Roberts, a bankrupt", "capable of grinding nearly one hundred bags of corn per day and ... never in want of water" (52/09).



The millers changed often until the Hawkins family arrived. The registers name Reid (or Neid) in 1813 and Philip Pesley in 1827; Samuel Gunn was "miller & farmer" in 1856; Thomas Hawkins senior had the mill by 1881 (11/28, 48/13, 48/06). In 1851 the parish had four millers and a miller-and-baker (01/49). Tom Hawkins, who had worked for Whitfields, millwrights of Stroud, took the mill in 1895 and worked it until 1939; it was then sub-let to a farmers' association for "7 or 8 local farms only" (52/09). In 1911 he was a flour miller and employer, with Herbert Hunt as "miller's labourer, Welford Mill" (48/10-11). Harold Hawkins ran it until his death in 1956 and Alec Baldwin until it closed in 1958 (52/09).



The mill was more than a corn mill. It had two undershot wheels 17 ft 6 in across. The west wheel drove a kibbling machine for horse beans; the east wheel drove a shaft into a side building with saw benches, a wood-turning lathe, a carpenter's business and a cider press used by local farmers (52/09). The 1902 ledger shows Hawkins sawing elm, selling nails, hiring out a horse at 3s for eight hours and charging £4 10s for twelve weeks' keep of five beasts (52/09). John Spencer remembered, as a boy in the late 1940s, carting apples and pears to the press and filling pails of cider for the casks, some of which went to Rookes in Stratford (52/09). The mill was converted into a house in 1973 (52/09).

Eels and osiers

The mill also worked an eel trap, renovated by the Environment Agency in 1996: four sluice gates lifted with an iron bar, the eels carried up a slope into a trough and then into a basket "some six feet to the side of the trap" (52/09). Osier beds by Binton Bridges were cut for willow rods, which "went to Gardner, a company in Wootton Wawen for the production of items such as baskets, fencing and sheep hurdles"; "the demand for osiers died out in the 1950's" (52/09).

Market gardening: "an independent people" village

Between about 1870 and 1914 market gardening became Welford's defining trade, and it changed the village's social shape as much as its fields. In 1851 the Society's tables count just one market gardener and one "horticulturist" among 272 working men (01/49). By 1901 there were 19 market gardeners to 9 farmers (48/08), and Kelly's Directory of 1897 and 1914 both called market gardening "the principal industry" (48/19, 48/21).

How it grew

The census figures, though not strictly comparable, show the climb:

- 1851: 1 market gardener (01/49).
- 1861: about 5 entries (48/04, counted from the transcription).
- 1891: about a dozen market gardeners (48/07, counted).
- 1901: 19 (48/08).
- 1911: at least 13 heads of household in the schedules, nine of them in a single run of forty houses (48/10–12).

The directories tell the same story among the masters: four market gardeners in Kelly's 1897 list, twelve of the 44 traders in 1914 (48/20–22). Land sale particulars caught the mood. In 1892 Hutchings & Deer advertised the Baylies estate "TO SMALL CAPITALISTS, MARKET GARDENERS, AND OTHERS", announcing that "Welford is now the centre of a very large Fruit Growing and Market Gardening Industry" and that the land was "suited to the large and early supply of every description of Fruit and Garden produce" (25/08). Later sales repeated the phrase word for word (11/30).

Why Welford

The sources give four reasons. The first is land tenure. Arthur Matthews's grandmother, who came in 1868, "always used to say that Welford was an independent people village": "the land was freehold & individuals were able to buy small parcels of land & set up in business, usually market gardening", something "most noticeable to a newcomer from somewhere where the Lord of the Manor owned all land" (08/07). The second is the soil: the Victoria County History draft says "the soil is fertile and many of the inhabitants are engaged in market gardening" (31/11).

The third is earliness. Frieda Gray was told by H. M. Woodward that before 1914 "the quality and earliness of Welford's saladings were unrivalled ... three weeks before the Vale of Evesham" (08/03), and the 1967 history claims "Welford men were the first sellers of salad crops at Birmingham market" (40/01). The fourth is the example of the Vale of Evesham next door. A paper read to the Farmers' Club about 1912–13 explains how market gardening around Evesham grew from 1,000 to over 10,000 acres in forty years, largely through labourers who rented a plot, worked it "in the early morning and 'after work' in the evening", and gradually became smallholders under the "Evesham Custom" of tenant-right (23/30–53). Woodward and Rector Davis were founder members of the Littleton & Badsey Growers (08/03); Woodward's diary records "Started Market Gardening with Horace" in 1914 and a growers' sales scheme in 1921 (18/19).

Crops and seasons

Cherries and plums were the specialities. George Wright wrote in 1915 that "large quantities of very fine fruit are produced, and sent away to the markets — cherries and plums are, perhaps, the specialities" (25/07). Under the fruit trees grew the saladings and vegetables: strawberries, onions, radishes, lettuce, cauliflower and peas (08/03). Mr Sabin "proved that he could grow 5 crops of radishes in a year some years" on a rented plot called "the convict land", shared by four partners (08/07). A small holding sold in 1949 had "200 fruit Trees and 450 soft fruit trees" and "large Strawberry beds" on about 2½ acres (11/30).

Picking needed far more hands than the village had. Pea pickers came in gangs "from all over the district" and were paid on piece work "at rate of 1/- for a 40 lb net". They were also horse dealers, and ran horses "up & down Chapel Street for show & sale" (08/07). Around 1900 about 400 of them celebrated so hard that they "broke every window" in the Shakespeare, costing the landlord his tenancy (13/14), and when Roland Basson took the inn in 1932 "about 200 pea pickers" crowded in on his first day (13/18).

Cherry picking had its own gangs and lore. Joseph Hancox told Woodward of "the old cherry-picking gang of which Ned Gibbs was leader", who would "rear a 40 round ladder in the middle of the orchard supported only by a pair of props", climb it, "get over, and descend the back side". Hancox once bought the Rector's cherry crop and built a platform in a tree "as large as an oak" to guard it from the birds (20/01). A good season brought "Plum Weddings" in the autumn (20/01). Woodward's own verse, "Cherry Picking, 1918", has the cherry-minders running under the trees "with tom-tom and with tin can, and muzzle loading gun" to scare the blackbirds and starlings, and "Old Grandad", Joseph Hancox, telling "quaint stories of the past" in the shade (21/1-21).



Getting it to market

Produce went by night to Birmingham. Joseph Hancox loaded his cart about six in the evening, crossed Binton Bridge (paying toll), and went by Aston Cantlow to the Birmingham road. At the Bird in Hand below Liveridge Hill, kept by "Mother Rainbow", the carriers, "sometimes over 20 in number", ate supper and waited until after midnight, "thus contriving to pass all the toll-gates on the main road twice in the same 24 hours so that they had only to pay toll once" (21/1-21, 20/01). The produce was sold by six in the morning. "The buyers were largely if not chiefly women", Hancox said, "a very shrewd and businesslike lot of people, and quite jolly withall when business was done" (20/01). The 1967 history names the carrier families: the Sandfords, Rouses, Blundells and Matthews (40/01). Later the railway stations at Binton and Milcote took some of the traffic (11/30), and in the 1930s Wilson Matthews's motor lorry took Mr Lively's produce to "Messrs Daniels in B'ham veg. market" (08/07).

The growers

Market gardening created a new middle rank of small owners. Woodward put the Hancoxes "distinctly above the labouring classes" as "owners of real estate, and, for the most part, tradesmen on their own account", but "not treated as equals by the larger farmers" (20/01). Joseph Hancox (1841-1919) was "market gardener, landowner and churchwarden" (46/37-95). Charles Horne, "an almost unschooled ex-navvy", came home with savings, married the dressmaker Emily Mills, and built up a market garden next to the chapel (21/1-21). William Blundell, market gardener, left £2,095 when he died at 42 in 1917 (46/15-36).

John Wilson (1838-1903) shows how far the trade could carry a poor boy. An orphan from Halesowen who arrived by river about 1841, he was a ploughboy at 13, then a pedlar, a hawker with a donkey and cart, and a carrier "with horses and carts to take produce from the local market gardens to Stratford Market" (44/01-41). He bought market-garden land and "ten or twenty cottages", and saved about £420 in Liberator Building Society shares, which he lost in its collapse in 1892 (44/S1-X2). His grandson Jim Matthews, registered in 1915 as "Market Gardener" of Virginia Cottage, came home from Canada to enlist and died of wounds on 9 August 1917 (43/02-84). The family wrote that the land "proved a financial success until the coming of World War I when so many fine young men working in that field went away and were killed"; afterwards it "proved unprofitable and was gradually sold" for housing (33/42-46).

After 1918

Market gardening carried on but no longer set the pace. After the war German prisoners cleared part of Quiney's Leys, and in 1919 Mr Sabin, back from the army, planted fruit trees there for Mr Stanley; their damsons, plums and apples

were still fruiting on verges in the 1970s (08/07). Some of the Milcote estate became smallholdings for returning soldiers after its sale in 1923 (03/01–19). In September 1932 Mr Lively and his brother took 7½ acres on Cress Hill, dug it with a two-tined fork in seven weeks, and grew asparagus ("Connover's Colossal" and "Late Giant Mammoth") in beds 3 ft by 6 ft that took three years to crop and lasted sixteen; they "used to work up to 11 p.m.", and added pigs in 1948 (08/05, 08/07). In 1970 Arch Gould, 85, was still a market gardener on Binton Road, and Gilda Gray noted that the Hancox descendants were "still market gardeners in the village today — tilling the soil as their forefathers have in Welford since the 1560's" (21/22–66). By 1992 the conservation study saw only "small agricultural holdings, orchard remnants, poplar windbreaks, market gardens" along Barton Road (15/08).

Carriers, inns, shops and the post

A village of small producers needed people to move goods, sell them and carry news. These were the jobs that tied Welford to Stratford and Birmingham, and the same few families held them for decades.

Carriers

The carrier was the village's link to market. The register names Samuel Rouse, carrier, in 1847; in 1851 William Blundell was "carrier and farmer of 4 acres" (11/28, 14/12). John Blundell, gardener, described himself as a carrier in his will of 1886 (10/17–22). Kelly's lists John Ritchings, carrier, and John Wilson, "oil dealer & carrier", in 1897, and J. Turvey, farmer and carrier, about 1900 (48/20, 46/99).

Wilson's business shows how the work grew. He began as a pedlar, then a hawker with a donkey, then a pony, and "eventually carts, wagons and horses", carrying market-garden produce to Stratford; in 1891 the census calls him "hawker (employer)" (44/01–41, 48/07). On Fridays "planks were put across the cart to take the village women into Stratford for shopping" (44/01–41). His grandson Wilson Matthews "retained and developed the Carrier trade with motor lorries" from Bell Bank (33/42–46). By the 1940s the women went by bus instead, at sixpence a trip (31/06). The Society's 1970s contact list marks one villager, Ada Francis, specially "for carriers records", but no carriers' books survive in the archive (08/02).



Inns and beer-houses

Welford had three or four licensed houses at any time, each with a second trade. The Bell was kept by Mary Parker in 1841–51, Thomas Matthews in 1856, Frederick Evans in 1881, William Lennard Stanley in 1897 and Levi Stanley in 1911 (48/01, 14/12, 48/13, 48/06, 48/20, 48/11). The Four Alls at Binton Bridges was kept by Lucy Mills in 1851–56, then William Walker, George Frazer and Albert Price (14/12, 48/13, 48/06, 48/20, 48/11). The Boat by the river was kept by Joseph Gould, James Tabberer, William Hemming and James Carr until its fire, and is covered in the [Boat Cottage essay](#). The Shakespeare in Chapel Street, kept by Joseph Allcock in 1881, was an inn and bakery, run by the Sabins about 1900 and then by Samuel Basson and his nephew Roland until 1973 (48/06, 08/07, 13/18). Beer retailers such as John Harris and Richard Lloyd in 1856 sold from their own houses (48/13).

The inns were also workplaces for the whole village. Auctions, the court leet and village meetings were held at the Bell (10/32), and the Cirencester Benefit Society, a working men's club, held its annual dinner in the Bell yard (08/07).

Shops

The 1856 directory names four shopkeepers: George Harris, Joseph Harris (also a shoemaker), Mrs Mary Hemmings and William Strong (48/13). Strong was remembered by C. J. Woodward as the grocer who "led the choir with a stentorian voice" (11/25). In 1897 there were Michael Bridges, Arthur George Harris, Thomas Harris (grocer and post office) and Ernest Valentine Parriss (48/20). In 1911 Ernest V. Davis was "grocer & draper", employing two nephews as apprentices (48/10).

J. H. Garrett in 1906 found "two general stores" and "that emporium of dry goods situated near the may-pole", where a visitor could buy "a box of matches ... and a reel of thread and a packet of needles upon commission" and be "struck with satisfaction at the large amount of change you get out of a shilling" (11/33). In the 1940s Mrs Edgington remembered Mr Montague's shop, kept by his wife and daughter; Montague "milked his cows in sheds on Barton Road and delivered by bicycle, from two cans on the handlebars, round Welford and on to Dorsington" (31/06). By 1959 the parish magazine carried advertisements for the Maypole Stores and Cafe, G. A. Lea the butcher and the Maypole Hatchery (11/14).

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G. A. LEA <i>Butcher</i> CHAPEL STREET STRATFORD-ON-AVON <i>Telephone 2006</i>	H. W. HOLDER GRAFTON STORES WELFORD-ON-AVON Tel. Welford 221 GROCERIES ★ NEWSPAPERS CONFECTIONERY ★ TOBACCO AND CIGARETTES
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The post

The post office was one family's business for most of a century. George Harris was "receiver" in 1856, with letters delivered at 11 a.m. and dispatched at 4 p.m.

(48/13). William M. Harris kept the post office in 1881 and Thomas Harris (1859–1940) was sub-postmaster from before 1897 until at least 1914 (48/06, 46/35, 48/21). By 1914 the office handled money orders and telegrams, with two deliveries a day, a Sunday delivery and wall boxes at Churchend and Rumer Hill (48/21). In 1911 Harris's wife assisted and his son was a telegraph messenger, while Herbert Hornby of Church Lane was the village postman for the G.P.O. (48/10–11). In the Second World War the postman was still "one of the Harriss's" (36/9–10).

Before all this the post came on foot. Tommy Porter, "the walking postman of 1874", blew a horn on his Stratford-to-Pebworth round and "talked to himself because he liked to converse with 'a sensible man'" (20/01).

The twentieth century: retirement, war and the commute

In the twentieth century Welford stopped being a place where nearly everyone worked within sight of the maypole. The change began before 1914 and was complete by the 1960s.

Newcomers before the war

The 1901 census still showed "more than half the working population" drawing its income from agriculture (46/37–95). But the 1911 schedules for the village street already include eleven households living on "private means" or a pension: a retired station master in ten rooms, a retired captain of the mercantile marine, a retired marine engineer and a gentleman at Weston House with a housemaid. The transcriber's verdict is that "Welford in 1911 was already a place people retired to" (48/10).

New kinds of work came with the newcomers. The 1911 census lists a printing works director from Highbury, a commercial traveller in soft goods, a fire insurance surveyor, an estate agent at Binton Bridges, a soap manufacturer (Frank Windsor), and two artists, Charles Revell Burt and Emanuel Boydell (48/09–11, 46/32). Most of these men worked in Birmingham or Stratford. George Wright saw it happening in 1915: one new house had been built in 1894 against more than thirty by 1915, "several cottages are now held by men whose business takes them elsewhere during the day", and the village was turning "suburban" (25/07, 15/10).

The railway gave a few local jobs. Samuel Hitchman was station master at Milcote in 1881 and Charles Mathews in 1901; Francis James Nelder held the post when he became a Memorial Hall trustee in the 1920s (48/06, 48/08, 60/04). A Welford man, John Marshall, was an engine driver by 1875 (11/28). George Smith was a "labourer on sewage farm" in 1911 (48/11), a sign of the

new public services that also employed a road labourer for the rural district council and a school attendance officer, Alfred Davis (48/09).

War and the land sales

The First World War took the young men out of the market gardens, and some never came back; the Wilson family believed the war was what made their market-garden land unprofitable (33/42–46). German prisoners of war cleared land at Quiney's Leys (08/07). In 1923 Lord Sackville's Milcote estate was sold. The rector's biographer wrote that the parish "was changing from agriculture and market gardening, and after the sale of Lord Sackville's Milcote estate in 1923 became largely residential in character" (19/02). In 1931 Welford was transferred from Gloucestershire to Warwickshire (48/10).

The village economy of the 1930s and 1940s still had a recognisable core. Mrs G. E. Edgington, who arrived in 1940, found the village "almost self-contained": Roland Basson at the Shakespeare and his brother Cyril at the bakery, the butcher's next door, Mr Montague's shop and milk round, Bill Johnson the cobbler, Ted and Fred Johnson the blacksmiths, the garage where her husband worked, and the mill "run by the Hawkins family: eel traps, corn grinding and cider pressing" (31/06). In the Second World War "most available land was used to produce food", the playing field was ploughed, and Land Army girls worked the fields (36/14).

After 1945: the trades close

One by one the old workplaces shut:

- The osier trade "died out in the 1950's" (52/09).
- Welford Mill stopped grinding in 1958 and was converted to a house in 1973 (52/09).
- The smithy by the garage closed about 1962, "when horse work had virtually ended" (08/07).
- The Shakespeare bakery closed when sliced bread reached the village (13/18).

The village grew instead. The population was 664 in 1931 and 787 in 1951, and was estimated at about 1,000 in 1962, when some 90 dwellings had been built in eleven years, "most ... bungalows on Barton Road, Headland Road and Binton Road" (19/44). Council houses at Millers Close and Headland Close housed the families who still worked locally (01/56).

The 1973 golden-wedding report on Clara and Charlie Sabin catches the new pattern in one family. Charlie had worked "in the coal business and in market

gardening"; Clara's father had worked at the mill. Of their daughters, one had married a farm worker, the other a man who "worked at N. C. Joseph's factory in Stratford" (13/14). Joseph's canned fruit and vegetables from the Vale market gardens and made aluminium pots and pans, switching to munitions in the war (44/01–41). Roland Basson's successor at the Shakespeare in 1973 was his son-in-law, who gave up work as a sales representative to take on the inn (13/18).

By the 1990s the Society's minutes describe Welford as "a village where many commuters live", with Glebe Farm keeping 50 cows and the school 86 children (38/01–03). The fields along Barton Road held "caravan parks, small agricultural holdings, orchard remnants, poplar windbreaks, market gardens" (15/08). The work that had shaped the village was now mostly done elsewhere.

Where the sources disagree or are thin

The broad story is well supported, but several details conflict, and some whole areas of work are barely documented.

Disagreements

- **Who ran the Shakespeare.** Mr Sabin said his father took the tenancy "about 1900" and baked there (08/07, 13/14), and the 1897 directory and 1901 census agree, with Henry Sabin as beer retailer and inn-and-bakery keeper (48/20, 48/08). The 1973 Evesham Journal says Samuel Basson had run it "for about 40 years" before 1932, which would start in the early 1890s (13/18). The 1911 census, with Samuel Basson as "baker and innkeeper" and Henry Sabin as a jobbing gardener, suggests the Bassons took over between 1901 and 1911, so the "40 years" is too long (48/10).
- **The miller in 1911.** The 1911 transcription reads the flour miller as "Tom Dawkins" (48/11), but the river talk says Tom Hawkins worked the mill from 1895 to 1939, and Kelly's 1914 names Thomas Hawkins (52/09, 48/21). "Dawkins" is very probably a misreading of Hawkins.
- **Population loss.** The 1967 history says the population fell to "barely 400 by 1881" (40/01). The 1881 enumerators counted 566 people in Welford

village and 123 at Bickmarsh (48/06), and Kelly's gives 591 for 1891 (48/19). The drift to the towns was real, but the figure is wrong.

- **The county transfer.** The census transcriptions date Welford's move to Warwickshire to the boundary changes of 1931 (48/10); the rector's biography puts it "ten years" after 1923 (19/02).
- **Mr Sabin's age.** One interview sheet gives his birth year as 1898, the fair copy 1890; 1890 fits his leaving school at 14 in 1904 (08/06, 08/07).
- **The later smithy.** The 1970s draft says on one page that Mr Matthews's brother reopened the smithy by the garage and Mr Johnson took over in 1962, and on the next that Mr Johnson ran it from about 1936 to 1962 (08/07). The [Forge essay](#) discusses this.
- **James Mills's machines.** The 1813 register calls him a "threshing machine maker" (11/28); his ledger and Woodward speak only of winnowing machines and drills (11/29, 19/28). The 1829 patent (11/27) comes long after the ledger sales of 1815–17, so it may have been for an improved model.
- **Mills's needle trade.** The 1819 invoice and the 1847 "needlemaker" support a real needle business (11/29, 11/28), but Woodward, his own descendant, doubted it went beyond "some process of that business" (19/28). The consignee's name is also uncertain: "Nathaniel Lucas" in one copy, with "Hunt" and "Son of Rector of Welford" added in another (11/24).

Where the record is thin

- **No working records.** There are no farm wage books, no market gardeners' accounts, no carriers' books and no glovers' records. The Society knew this: its 1977–79 market-gardening research group under Mr Pearce made notes that were "never collated" (37/01–04), and Frieda Gray knew of no photographs of the market gardens before 1914 (08/03).
- **Women's work is under-recorded.** Most wives appear with no occupation, and the seasonal work of picking, tying and packing barely reaches the censuses. The counts of glovers and field women for 1861 and 1881 in this essay come from counting the transcriptions and may be a few out.
- **Gaps in the census copies.** The 1851 village pages in 48/03 are a fragment (14/12 is complete); 1871 lacks pages 9, 13 and 14; the first five

Bickmarsh pages of 1881 are missing; and the 1861 copy lacks a page (48/03, 48/04, 48/05, 48/06).

- **Nothing after 1911 counts occupations.** The 1950 house-by-house notebook and the 1987 electoral register give names but not jobs (01/56, 30/05). For the twentieth century the essay relies on memoirs and newspaper cuttings.
- **The glove trade's organisation.** No source names the masters who put out the gloves, where the leather came from, or why the work stopped between 1881 and 1891.
- **The pea-pickers' riot** of about 1900 rests on one family's memory (13/14, 08/07); the Society itself suggested checking the Herald for those years.

Sources

All references are to the Welford and Weston Local History Society archive, by folder and item.

Ref	What it is	Used for
48/01	1841 census transcription	Labourers and farmers, village trades
14/12, 48/03	1851 census, village and outlying parts	Glovers, innkeepers, Hughes's labour force
01/49	Society's 1851 occupation tables	Counts of men's and women's work
48/04	1861 census	Field women, glovers, plough boys
48/05	1871 census summary	110 labourers, 28 glovers, farm sizes
48/06	1881 census	Large farms, glovers, Milcote station
48/07	1891 census	Market gardeners, last gloveress
48/08, 46/37–95	1901 census and Society talk	19 market gardeners, wages
48/09–12	1911 census schedules	Street-by-street

		occupations
48/13–22, 46/98–99	Directories 1856, 1859, 1897, c.1900, 1914	Traders, post office, "principal industry"
11/28	Parish-register trade notes 1813–1875	Weavers, needlemaker, ratio of labourers
10/17–24	Lychgate deeds and summary	Weavers 1600, cooper, goldsmith, wheelwrights
10/31, 13/32	Ray, Education in Welford and Weston	Parish apprenticeships 1707–1796
01/065, 01/58	Yarranton on Milcote flax; Rudge 1803	Flax growing and spinning
05/02	Gilda Gray, parish magazine 1957	William Ingram, weaver-schoolmaster
19/28, 11/24, 11/27, 11/29, 01/38–46	Woodward and Gray on James Mills	Winnowing machines, needles, tramway
52/09	Talk on the River Avon at Welford	Barges, wharves, mill, eel trap, osiers
11/25, 11/31, 11/33	Woodward 1931; navigation booklet 1905; Garrett 1906	River trade, shops, visitors
20/01, 21/1–21	Woodward's commonplace book and Book of Gossip	Hancox, Hands, cherry picking, Birmingham market
08/02–07	Society interview notes, 1970s	Matthews smiths, Sabin, Lively, market gardens
25/07, 15/10	George Wright, 1915	Fruit growing, rising rents, commuters
25/08, 11/30	Sale particulars 1892–1950	Market-garden land, smallholdings
23/30–53	Webb, "The Evesham Custom", c.1912	How labourers became growers

44/01–41, 43/02–84, 33/42–46	Wilson and Matthews family papers	Carrier, market gardener, Jim Matthews
13/14, 13/18, 31/06	1973 cuttings; Edgington memoir	Shakespeare bakery, pea pickers, 1940s trades
36/9–10, 36/14	Wartime memories	Land Army, fruit bottling
19/02, 19/44, 38/01–03, 15/08	Rector's biography; 1962 planning report; Society minutes; Twentieth-century change 1992 study	
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