

VCH Oxfordshire Texts in Progress

OVER NORTON

Economic History

From the Middle Ages Over Norton was predominantly agricultural, although its proximity to Chipping Norton encouraged the emergence of a variety of rural crafts and trades by the 17th century and possibly earlier. In the 19th century the most prominent of the village's non-agricultural activities was glove-making, while businesses at the outlying Chapel House catered for travellers on the main Oxford and Banbury roads. Most inhabitants relied on farming, amongst them the many landless labourers who, following the loss of common rights at enclosure in 1770, worked on the township's tenant-run farms. Farming practices throughout were typical of the Cotswold edge, combining sheep-and-corn husbandry with cattle rearing and dairying.

The Agricultural Landscape

From the Middle Ages Over Norton's open fields were separate from Chipping Norton's, one 15th-century landholding covering six yardlands in Chipping Norton's fields and two yardlands in Over Norton's.¹ East and west fields were mentioned in the 13th and 14th centuries, probably reflecting a two-course rotation,² but otherwise no details are known, and from the 16th century the fields were subject to piecemeal enclosure. A 40-a. arable holding belonging to Cold Norton priory was left unploughed and possibly enclosed in 1507, though in the 1540s Brasenose College's lessee at Priory farm still cultivated c.160 a. with two ploughteams, half in Over Norton and half in Chipping Norton, ploughing and fallowing them alternately.³ Possibly his land lay in discrete blocks, and certainly by the 1750s Priory farm encompassed c.200 a. of ring-fenced closes around the farmhouse, some of which were still cultivated in alternate years. A further 94 a. lay in the remaining open fields, cultivated on a four-course rotation of cropping and fallow.⁴ Piecemeal enclosure also occurred on the Huckvales' estate at Frenches in the 17th century,⁵ though more than 1,400 a. of open-field

¹ TNA, C 1/56/39.

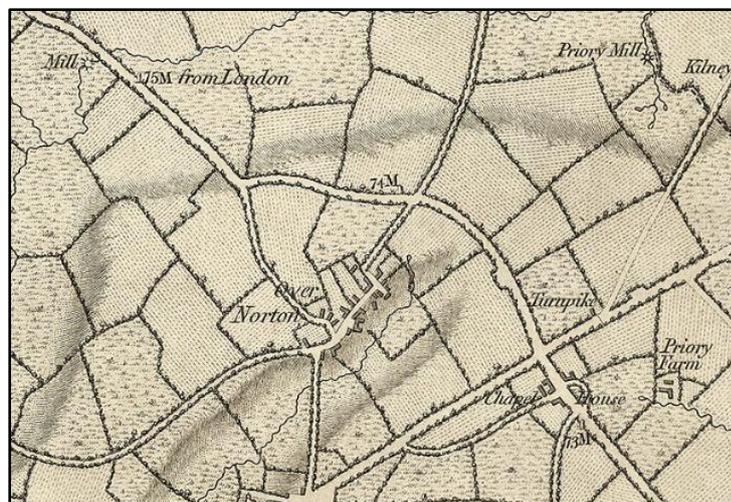
² BNC, Over Norton 3, 5–6, 8, 10–12.

³ I.S. Leadam (ed.), *Domesday of Inclosures 1517–18* (1897), I, 383–4; *Oxf. Ch. Ct Deposns 1542–50*, p. 19.

⁴ BNC, B14.1/24a and b; cf. *ibid.* B568 (17th- and 18th-cent. surveys).

⁵ Bodl. MS dd Dawkins C1/IA1/1; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 31/4/28; above, landownership (other estates).

ground (around three fifths of the township) remained at enclosure in 1770.⁶ By then the fields were organized into four 'quarters' called Fernhill, Wheathill, Langdon, and Hull, and extended from the village to the township's north, west, and south-west boundaries.⁷



Over Norton village in 1797, showing its post-enclosure fields of arable and pasture: detail from Richard Davis's map of Oxfordshire.

The c.300-a. Chapel or Over Norton heath lay in the east of the township until enclosed in 1770, when the poor were allotted 50 a. in lieu of common rights.⁸ Several of the commons were shared with Chipping Norton until the 16th century, prompting disputes and, ultimately, their division, so that by c.1670 an inhabitant could claim that Over Norton's summer grazings (for cattle) commanded higher values than the town's.⁹ Sheep were also grazed on the heath, where Cold Norton, Chipping Norton, and Bartletts manors were permitted to graze flocks of up to 400 each, while smaller flocks owned by Over Norton's freeholders were stinted according to the number of yardlands they held.¹⁰ Reduced stints were imposed in 1719 when the heath was infested by moles,¹¹ and a rabbit warren on the heath prompted tensions between lords and tenants during the 16th and 17th centuries,¹² but was probably removed following Over Norton manor's creation in the 1680s.¹³ After enclosure most of the common was incorporated into New (later Hull) farm, and was judged later to '[wear] a much better appearance'.¹⁴ The lord Henry Dawkins also thought the township 'much improved'.¹⁵

⁶ OHC, encl. award; below (since 1770).

⁷ Bodl. MSS dd Dawkins C7/IA16/1; C7/IA16/4. No encl. map has been found; for a reconstruction of the open fields see map at rear of J.M.A. Cliffe, *The Husbandmen of Over Norton* (2011).

⁸ OHC, encl. award; below, social hist. (welfare).

⁹ TNA, C 8/113/67; *ibid.* E 134/20&21Chas2/East1; E 134/22Chas2/East15.

¹⁰ BNC, Estates 2.

¹¹ Bodl. MS dd Dawkins C7/IA16/2; below (to 1770).

¹² Below, social hist. (1500–1800).

¹³ OHC, BOR1/2/3D/3; Bodl. MS dd Dawkins C5/IA11/4; above, landownership.

¹⁴ C. Bruyn Andrews (ed.), *Torrington Diaries* (1934), I, 191; for Hull fm, below (since 1770).

¹⁵ Young, *Oxon. Agric.* 93–4.

Meadow was probably restricted to the stream valleys. By the 17th century some was enclosed, but other meadow remained open and divided into strips on the arable fields' edges, with some of it distributed by lot. Several pieces were intermittently cultivated in a system of ley-farming.¹⁶ Woodland was never plentiful, the old-enclosed Priory farm carrying only c.13 a. in 1759.¹⁷ By the early 20th century Priory farm's owner Albert Brassey maintained 24 a. of wood, while William Dawkins owned 45 a. (including fox coverts) at Over Norton park.¹⁸

Farms and Farming to 1770

Mixed arable and livestock farming was practised on Cold Norton priory's estate throughout the Middle Ages, although in the 1380s–90s (following successive outbreaks of plague) the prior complained that lands lay uncultivated due to shortage of labour.¹⁹ Sheep were prominent from an early date on the neighbouring Heythrop and Great Rollright estates,²⁰ and probably also increased in importance in Over Norton. At the priory's dissolution in 1507 a 40-a. arable holding worked by a single ploughteam was neglected and possibly enclosed, causing 20 people to be evicted from their houses,²¹ and in the 1540s Brasenose College's lessee at Priory farm, John Pate, grazed 400 sheep in the township, besides growing hay, corn, peas, and beans.²² In those parts of the township belonging to Chipping Norton manor John Busby and his brothers kept c.140 sheep and employed a shepherd, and in 1545 (following their father Robert's death) reported that 51 tods of wool worth 13s. a tod had been sold, possibly at Stratford-upon-Avon fair and Stow-on-the-Wold. Sheep dung was used to fertilize the arable, and flocks were pastured in both summer and winter, one (numbering 324) belonging to the Ascott-under-Wychwood farmer Bartholomew Chaundy (d. 1596).²³

Several of Over Norton's 16th- and 17th-century husbandmen farmed on a relatively small scale. John Tidmarsh (d. 1589) left only twelve sheep and two draught animals, 12s. worth of corn, and hay worth 3s. 4d., while William Hutchins (d. 1591) evidently bred cattle, leaving a cow, two heifers, and two yearling calves (worth £4 6s. 8d. in all), and hay and straw worth 16s.²⁴ Crops grown in the early 17th century included wheat, barley (some of it

¹⁶ Bodl. MSS dd Dawkins C1/IA3/3; C2/IA5/1; C3/IA6/3; C3/IA6/7; C12/IB12/4.

¹⁷ Ibid. MS Top. Oxon. d 391; BNC, B14.1/24a.

¹⁸ OHC, DV/X/80; OS Map 6", Oxon. XIV (1922 edn).

¹⁹ BNC, Cold Norton 28; *Cal. Papal Regs* 1396–1404, 198–9.

²⁰ *VCH Oxon.* XI, 138–40; below, Great Rollright, econ. hist.

²¹ Leadam, *Domesday of Inclosures*, I, 383–4.

²² *Oxf. Ch. Ct Deposns 1542–50*, pp. 19–20.

²³ Ibid. pp. 5, 9, 21–2; *VCH Oxon.* XIX, 101.

²⁴ *Oxon. Inventories*, p. 300; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 131/4/41.

malted for brewing), oats, and legumes, while pigs were kept for bacon, and some milk was used for cheese and butter, with bees mentioned occasionally.²⁵ A few holdings may have specialized in sheep or cattle,²⁶ and John Hopkins (who in 1625 left 67 sheep along with cereals in the fields) had a live-in shepherd.²⁷ Most farms probably remained mixed, however, and by the later 17th century some were growing in size, Robert Guy (d. 1673) leaving (exceptionally) £100-worth of cattle, sheep, and pigs, along with corn, legumes, and hay worth £208. Labourers working on such farms presumably included men like Anthony Best, who died in 1664 leaving a single cow.²⁸

A stint of 50 sheep per yardland was imposed on the township's commons by the 17th century,²⁹ and in 1719 inhabitants agreed to reduce the number from 40 to 28 for 12 years, suggesting mounting pressure. An order in 1723 limited to twice a year the commoners' right to gather as much furze as one person could carry from the heath, while other orders dealt with maintenance of fences to protect crops from stray animals, and a molecatcher was paid 1s. per yardland. Four fieldsmen were appointed to enforce compliance, and landholders met annually on the Friday after May Day to set boundary stones, remove nuisances, and settle disputes.³⁰ The field orders may have been prompted by the Busbys' growing consolidation of the recently separated Over Norton manor, and were followed in 1722 by an agreement under which several inhabitants surrendered their common rights in land which William Busby was licensed to enclose.³¹ Nonetheless common grazing persisted, and some stints may have been independently bought and sold, the yardlander Freeman Berry (d. 1742) leaving his wife the right to pasture 11 cattle and 200 sheep.³²

Most 17th- and 18th-century landholdings were still scattered irregularly through the open fields, which by then were run on a four-course rotation, albeit with some flexibility (through use of hitchings and leys) to help soils recover.³³ Individual holdings differed widely in size, reflecting an active land market in which labourers and smallholders participated, acquiring cottages and tiny amounts of land with grazing rights for one or two animals.³⁴ Before enclosure Thomas Guy held seven-sixteenths of a yardland (probably c.13 a.), and in 1769 freeholders' quitrents payable to Over Norton manor ranged from 10s. (due from

²⁵ OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 30/1/46; 4/3/9; 55/2/45; 65/4/8.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 296/3/20; 115/4/36; 115/4/46 (cattle); 26/4/6; 6/1/42 (sheep). On the old-enclosed Frenches farm Cuthbert Huckvale (d. 1637) left cattle, pigs, and corn, but no sheep: *ibid.* 31/4/28.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 31/1/3.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 80/2/27; 6/2/29.

²⁹ Bodl. MSS dd Dawkins C4/IA10/2; C12/IB12/6; BNC, B568.

³⁰ Bodl. MSS dd Dawkins C7/IA16/2–3.

³¹ *Ibid.* C5/1A11/10; above, landownership.

³² OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 117/4/42.

³³ Bodl. MSS dd Dawkins C1/IA3/3; C4/IA10/2; C6/IA13/2; C7/IA16/2; above (agric. landscape).

³⁴ Bodl. MSS dd Dawkins C4/IA9/6; C5/IA11/6; C22/IB20/4; C24/IC5/1.

Thomas Kerby of Chapel House) to just 2*d*. In all, the lord collected 31 separate quitrents totalling £2 13*s*. 5½*d*.³⁵

Farms and Farming Since 1770

Enclosure was carried out in 1770 under a private Act of 1769, which also covered Chipping Norton and Salford.³⁶ In Over Norton the principal beneficiary was Henry Dawkins as lord of Over Norton manor, who was allotted 766 a. of new enclosures out of his total estate of 1,052 acres. Brasenose College, Oxford (owner of Cold Norton manor) was awarded 283 a., and the dean and chapter of Gloucester cathedral 219 a. in lieu of appropriated tithes, while eight other landowners received smaller amounts totalling 134 acres.³⁷ Two new isolated farmhouses (Choicehill and New or Hull) were built in the former open fields,³⁸ but otherwise farms were run from existing farmhouses. New farm (409 a.), Middle farm (292 a.), and West or Hill View farm (338 a.) were leaseholds on the Dawkins estate,³⁹ while Priory farm (351 a. in 1828) and Priory mill (31 a.) were held under Brasenose College. Samuel Huckvale's Choicehill farm (391 a.) combined 137 a. of old enclosures with 254 a. leased from Gloucester cathedral.⁴⁰

Following enclosure Henry Dawkins consolidated and extended his Over Norton estate, which covered 1,417 a. by 1818,⁴¹ while the family's home farm bred sheep and dairy cattle and produced hay for fodder.⁴² An enlarged Hull farm (479 a.) was let for seven years at £520 annual rent to Thomas Carpenter, who cultivated around two thirds of it with wheat, barley, oats, and fodder crops. Mixed corn, sheep, and cattle farming was widespread, though with differing emphases: at West farm (347 a.) more than two fifths of the land was laid down to grass, while on Brasenose's Priory farm almost three quarters of the acreage was cropped, the intensive cultivation reportedly reducing fertility by 1788.⁴³ A six-course rotation was mentioned in the early 1800s.⁴⁴ Nine inhabitants were styled farmer in 1841, and the same number farmed a total of 2,135 a. ten years later, employing 66 men and

³⁵ *Ibid.* C41/IF5/5; OHC, encl. award. The local yardland was probably 30 a.: Bodl. MS dd Dawkins C3/IA7/1; BNC, Cold Norton 12.

³⁶ Chipping Norton and Salford Enclosure Act, 9 Geo. III, c. 75 (private).

³⁷ OHC, encl. award; above, landownership.

³⁸ Above, landscape etc. (settlement; built character). For Halt (or Lime Kiln) Fm, below, Great Rollright.

³⁹ Arthur, *Over Norton*, 124–5 and plates (1770 map in private possession). In the 19th cent. Middle farm was absorbed into Over Norton park and Witts farm.

⁴⁰ BNC, B14.1/24c and d; B14.1/29b; OHC, P20/4D/3.

⁴¹ Dawkins' 1810 map and 1818 survey (in private possession).

⁴² *Oxf. Jnl*, 30 Aug. 1817, 30 Sept. 1820, 2 Oct. 1830; Arthur, *Over Norton*, 139–41.

⁴³ Dawkins' 1818 survey; BNC, B14.1/24d; *ibid.* Cold Norton 73; cf. Young, *Oxon. Agric.* 311 (Huckvale's sheep).

⁴⁴ Young, *Oxon. Agric.* 115; below, Salford, econ. hist. (since 1800).

boys.⁴⁵ The township was able to supply its own labour needs, around a fifth of inhabitants in 1871 being directly dependent on farm work; among them were not only agricultural labourers (two of them then unemployed), but plough boys, shepherds, sheep dippers, carters, and bailiffs.⁴⁶ Just under half the cultivable land was then cropped (two thirds of it with cereals), while the rest was grazed by 232 cattle and 1,591 sheep.⁴⁷

The onset of agricultural depression reduced the demand for labour, and by 1901 farm workers comprised only a tenth of a smaller population.⁴⁸ The trend towards dairying increased as elsewhere, though c.1914 the parish was still roughly half arable and half pasture.⁴⁹ Stock sold from Choicehill in 1908–9 (following the death of its owner-occupier William Fawdry) included Shorthorn cattle, Oxford Down sheep, cart horses, pigs, hay, straw, and fodder crops.⁵⁰ Most farms (including Choicehill from 1910) were still leased, though levels of owner-occupation increased as the main estates were broken up.⁵¹ Tenanted corn-and-stock farms sold in the 1920s included Wilmot P. Walford's Home farm (99 a.), Firs farm (83 a.), Hill View farm (172 a.), and Hill Side farm (52 a.), all of them run from the village, although Hill Side included isolated 19th-century cottages called The Folly which were later demolished.⁵² Changing patterns of landownership later prompted the building of several new outlying farmhouses, including Sandfields in the 1950s and Cleeves in 1994.⁵³

Local experience of arable farming was at a low ebb during the Second World War, when livestock farmers' inadequate drainage of heavy grassland hindered calls to increase crop production.⁵⁴ Mixed dairy, beef, and arable farming was nevertheless widely practised in the decades following the war. At Witts farm calves fattened for 2½–3 years were sold through the Fatstock Marketing Corporation, while the Dawkinses' 170-a. farm at Over Norton park bred pigs, and was well known for the cream produced from its herd of Jersey cattle.⁵⁵ Thereafter the parish shared in the widespread late 20th-century shift towards cropping, and by c.2000 its cultivable land was predominantly arable, with wheat, barley, and linseed harvested by contractors at Sandfields alongside cattle and pig rearing.⁵⁶ Cultivation

⁴⁵ TNA, HO 107/879; HO 107/1732.

⁴⁶ Ibid. RG 10/1457; Arthur, *Over Norton*, 148.

⁴⁷ TNA, MAF 68/255 (1870). Later returns were subsumed under Chipping Norton.

⁴⁸ Ibid. RG 13/1400; Arthur, *Over Norton*, 147; above, landscape etc. (popn).

⁴⁹ Orr, *Oxon. Agric.* statistical plates; Arthur, *Over Norton*, 163, 249.

⁵⁰ *Cheltenham Chron.* 19 Sept. 1908, 13 Feb. 1909.

⁵¹ *Oxon. Weekly News*, 26 Jan. 1910; OHC, DV/X/80; above, landownership.

⁵² *Banbury Guardian*, 17 Sept. 1925; *Sale Cat.*, *Over Norton Est.* (1925) (in private possession).

⁵³ Arthur, *Over Norton*, 260–1, 264–5. Elmsfield fm (in the parish's SW corner) was farmed from Chipping Norton: OHC, DV/X/80 (and map).

⁵⁴ TNA, MAF 32/910/102.

⁵⁵ Arthur, *Over Norton*, 249–50, 271; *The Independent*, 11 Dec. 2010; OS Map 1:10000, SP32NW (1978 edn) (piggery); cf. *Sale Cat.*, *Choicehill Fm* (1974): copy in OHC, B28/1/D1/23/2.

⁵⁶ Arthur, *Over Norton*, 251, 261, 264, 266–7.

of garden allotments continued on 8 a. of ground provided by William Dawkins before 1900, the earlier poor's allotment (at an inconvenient distance from the village) having become disused.⁵⁷



Over Norton park farm (left) and village allotments (right).

Non-Agricultural Activities

Trades, Crafts, and Retail The siting of the medieval hospital and chapel on a major long-distance route may have attracted early roadside traders, while the village's proximity to Chipping Norton led to its emergence as a small-scale trade and service centre on the edge of the growing town, certainly by the 17th century.⁵⁸ Early clothworkers included the shearman John Tuston (d. 1600) and the tucker James Ward (d. 1627),⁵⁹ while other trades included those of collar-maker, shoemaker,⁶⁰ tailor,⁶¹ blacksmith,⁶² tallow chandler, and maltster.⁶³ William Kite (d. 1695) left 40 qrs of malt worth £32,⁶⁴ and several maltsters continued in the 18th century,⁶⁵ when pubs opened in the village and at Chapel House.⁶⁶

⁵⁷ Ibid. 284; OHC, DV/X/80 (and maps); OS Map 1:2500, Oxon. XIV.7 (1900 edn); Bodl. GA Oxon. c 317 (6) (Char. Comm. inq. 30 Nov. 1912); below, social hist. (welfare).

⁵⁸ Above, landscape etc. (communicis); below, social hist. (Middle Ages; welfare). A Chipping Norton man knew of no chapmen in Over Norton c.1608: TNA, C 22/332/42.

⁵⁹ OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 300/3/31; 70/2/62; Bodl. MSS dd Dawkins C9/IB5/6–8.

⁶⁰ OHC, O12/68D/1; TNA, STAC 8/162/7.

⁶¹ *Prot. Retns*, 95; TNA, E 134/20&21Chas2/East1; OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 8/1/2; 122/1/7; 75/1/24; 159/2/35.

⁶² Bodl. MSS dd Dawkins C3/IA6/11; C4/IA9/2–4; C4/IA9/6; C4/IA10/5; C6/IA13/9.

⁶³ Ibid. C4/IA10/1; OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 72/3/3; 127/3/3; 127/3/35; TNA, PROB 11/395/45.

⁶⁴ TNA, PROB 4/10877.

⁶⁵ OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 138/4/33; *ibid.* NQ3/1/D4/5; Bodl. MSS dd Dawkins C22/IB20/4; C22/IB20/6; C23/IC2/3–4.

⁶⁶ Below, social hist. (1500–1800).

Other well-established 18th-century occupations included those of weaver and carpenter,⁶⁷ while less frequently mentioned trades included butcher and higgler.⁶⁸ A short-lived brick kiln was mentioned in 1818,⁶⁹ and lime kilns may have operated on the Brasenose and Dawkins estates.⁷⁰

By 1811 twenty families were employed chiefly in trade, craft, or manufacture, and in 1841 the township supported three tailors, two blacksmiths, two carpenters, and a baker, glovemaker, slater, and stonemason.⁷¹ Small-scale quarrying and stone masonry (mostly for local building work) were undertaken from the 17th century and continued into the 20th,⁷² though a search for coal in 1891 came to nothing.⁷³ Glove-making expanded considerably in the 19th century, John Bowen's 'factory' employing c.200 people in 1852, although only a tiny number lived in the village. Bowen was originally from Worcester, and his success attracted other migrants from the same city.⁷⁴ By 1861 the factory was run by George Bowen, who directly employed two men and a boy, rising to nine men and two boys ten years later. Probably they occupied a workshop on Main Street, while other employees (many of them women) worked at home. By the early 20th century village glove-making had largely ceased, though it continued a little longer in the town.⁷⁵

Shopkeepers were mentioned from the 1790s,⁷⁶ and by the 1830s the village supported a few grocers' and bakers' shops alongside its pubs and the Chapel House inn.⁷⁷ By the early 20th century only Albert Saunders' shop and post office remained open, however, and long-standing trades and crafts disappeared, among them blacksmithing, carpentry, shoemaking, and tailoring, displaced presumably by competition from Chipping Norton. Few new businesses were established, exceptions including Harry Bennett's builders' firm (from the 1930s) and Martin Hilsden's violin-making workshop (in the 1970s).⁷⁸ Chapel House's renown as a stopping-place for travellers declined during the 19th century,⁷⁹

⁶⁷ OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 35/2/28; 151/2/4; 153/1/10; 114/8/3 (weavers); 133/2/41; 35/4/3; 135/1/5; 135/4/41; *ibid.* PAR64/5/A4/7; PAR64/5/A4/16–17.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* MS Wills Oxon. 126/4/40; *ibid.* B15/2/45D/17–18.

⁶⁹ Dawkins' 1818 survey (in private possession), p. 37.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* p. 19 (Limekiln ground); BNC, B14.1/24d (Lime Kiln ground, 1828).

⁷¹ *Census*, 1811; TNA, HO 107/879.

⁷² OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 169/4/17; *ibid.* PAR64/10/1D/1; Jeffery, *Rollright*, 159; Arthur, *Over Norton*, 34–6, 40; OS Map 1:2500, Oxon. XIV.7 (1881–1922 edns); above, landscape etc. (built character).

⁷³ J. Lucas, *Report to Lt.-Col. W.G. Dawkins on the Prospect of Finding Coal Under the Estate of Over Norton, Oxfordshire* (1891): copy in OHC, PA/OVER/553.2.

⁷⁴ *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852); TNA, HO 107/1732 (listing 16 resident glovemakers); above, Chipping Norton, econ. hist. (1800–1900).

⁷⁵ TNA, RG 9/911; RG 10/1457; RG 11/1520; RG 12/1179; RG 13/1400; Arthur, *Over Norton*, 232; above, Chipping Norton, econ. hist. (1900–45).

⁷⁶ Bodl. MSS dd Dawkins C20/IB17/6–7; C25/IC8/14.

⁷⁷ *Pigot's Dir. Oxon.* (1830 and 1842 edns); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847 and 1869–77 edns); *Lascelles Dir. Oxon.* (1853); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–1907 edns); OHC, QS1838/2/L1/4; *Oxf. Jnl.*, 19 Aug. 1882.

⁷⁸ *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1911–39 edns); *Oxf. Mail*, 4 Nov. 1976; above, landscape etc. (communic).⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Below, social hist. (since 1800).

though a petrol filling station opened there in the 1920s, and a second (on the opposite side of the crossroads) by the 1950s.⁸⁰ Both continued in 2021, when a car dealership occupied another part of the site.⁸¹ A caravan park and a self-storage business were established further along the Banbury road,⁸² and a skip-hire and waste recycling business at the outlying Sandfields Farm.⁸³



Chapel House Garage in 2020.

Milling Priory mill, a water-powered corn-mill on the township's north-eastern edge, belonged in the Middle Ages to Cold Norton priory, and from the 16th to 19th centuries to Brasenose College, Oxford.⁸⁴ The surviving mill was built probably in the 17th century,⁸⁵ when it was thatched and three-bayed, its lessees including Robert Brent (d. 1616) of Thrupp and Brent's son-in-law Thomas Chamberlain (d. 1689) of Oddington (Glos.).⁸⁶ Later resident millers included three generations of the Scarlet family, of whom Edward (d. 1803) and his brother Thomas also ran Little Rollright mill.⁸⁷ Attached land (let by Brasenose to the earl of Shrewsbury) lay in Over Norton's open fields, covering 31 a. both before and after enclosure.⁸⁸

⁸⁰ *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1928–39 edns); OHC, RDC9/3/F6/2; RDC9/3/F7/2.

⁸¹ www.wheelerschippingnorton.co.uk (accessed Sept. 2021).

⁸² <https://cotswoldhillscountrypark.co.uk>; www.wigwamstorage.co.uk.

⁸³ www.skiphireandrecycling.co.uk; WODC online planning docs, 10/0207/P/CM (K.J. Millard Ltd).

⁸⁴ Jefferys, *Oxon. Map* (1767); OS Map 1", sheet XLV (1833 edn); above, landownership.

⁸⁵ J. Cliffe, *An Architectural Record of the Buildings in the Parish of Over Norton, Oxfordshire* (1999), 45.

⁸⁶ BNC, B568; *ibid.* Property Ledger B.3d.1, f. 151; Jeffery, *Rollright*, 148–9; *VCH Oxon.* XII, 192; *VCH Glos.* VI, 90, 97. Chamberlain also leased Priory Fm: above, landownership.

⁸⁷ OHC, Gt Rollright par. reg. transcript; *ibid.* MSS Wills Oxon. 151/2/51; 273/3/13; below, Little Rollright, econ. hist. (milling).

⁸⁸ BNC, B14.1/24b and c; B14.1/29b.

The lessee by the 1820s was William Claridge (d. 1834),⁸⁹ succeeded by his sons and by his daughter-in-law Mary Ann, who employed two men in 1871.⁹⁰ She was followed by her brother George Salmon (d. 1897) and by George's son Henry (d. 1918), the millhouse itself being occupied in 1911 by the journeyman miller Joseph Bishop.⁹¹ The mill was sold as part of Albert Brassey's Heythrop estate in 1923,⁹² but ceased to operate in the 1930s; tufa was mined there during the Second World War, and by the 1960s the mill wheel had been removed and replaced by a flat-roofed timber-framed extension to the house.⁹³ The house itself, of coursed limestone rubble with ashlar dressings, was two-storeyed and two-bayed with gable-end stacks before being remodelled and extended in the early 21st century.⁹⁴

A windmill 'lately set up' on Over Norton heath was advertized to let in 1766.⁹⁵ It was probably short-lived, however, and no further references have been found.

⁸⁹ *Oxf. Jnl*, 27 Jan. 1827; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 230/2/6.

⁹⁰ OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 257/1/25; TNA, HO 107/879; HO 107/1732; *ibid.* RG 9/911; RG 10/1457.

⁹¹ TNA, RG 11/1520; RG 12/1179; RG 13/1400; RG 14/8254; *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–1915 edns).

⁹² *Banbury Advertiser*, 20 Sept. 1923; above, landownership; for later owners, *Oxon. Weekly News*, 23 Jan. 1924, 16 Sept. 1925; OHC, RDC9/3/F6/2; RDC9/3/F7/2; Arthur, *Over Norton*, 263, 267–8.

⁹³ Cliffe, *Architectural Record*, 45; W.L. Meagher and P. Sheasby, *Portrait of a River: the River Swere in Oxfordshire* (2005), 25; illust. in appendix to WODC online planning docs, 17/01466/HHD.

⁹⁴ WODC online planning docs, 06/1323/P/FP; 17/01466/HHD; *Oxf. Times*, 24 Oct. 2019.

⁹⁵ *Oxf. Jnl*, 24 May 1766.