



VCH Oxfordshire Texts in Progress

## Chipping Norton

Urban Economic History



Chipping Norton's medieval market place and burgage plots, as shown on the 1840 town map in Chipping Norton Museum.

### Medieval Trade and Industry

Chipping Norton was laid out as a planned market town probably in the mid 12th century, with fairs granted from 1201. From an early date it participated in the Cotswold wool trade, its wool merchants trading overseas by the 1270s, and in the 15th century exporting through ports such as Bristol and Southampton. Woollen cloth was also woven in the town, although the absence of reliable waterpower seems to have precluded the development of fulling mills, meaning that textile production played a lesser role than in nearby Burford or Witney. After the Black Death Chipping Norton's population and economy contracted temporarily, but there is no evidence for significant stagnation or decline, and the wool trade reached its peak in the 15th century, when wealthy mercantile families invested profits in the parish church, its chantries, and a new guild. Other crafts and trades typical of a medium-sized medieval market town also flourished, with a range of leatherworkers, metalworkers, and shopkeepers, and at least one large and successful inn.

## **Economic Life to c.1350**

The provision of a large planned market place suggests that the town's weekly market existed from its foundation, despite a lack of references until 1302. Annual fairs were granted from 1201, and the name Chipping (or 'market') Norton was established by 1218.<sup>1</sup> From 1253 the town faced competition from a weekly market and annual fair at nearby Great Rollright, although neither seem to have flourished.<sup>2</sup>

Documentary sources for Chipping Norton's 13th-century economy are scarce,<sup>3</sup> but occupational bynames suggest the presence of bakers, cordwainers or shoemakers, drapers, farriers, mercers, and spicers.<sup>4</sup> Already the town was involved in the Cotswold wool trade, with cloth being sold by 1241,<sup>5</sup> but unlike Burford and Witney it lacked some of the natural prerequisites for cloth manufacture, particularly the reliable fast-flowing streams required for fulling.<sup>6</sup> As a result, the town's specialism soon became raw wool. Adam Breton was a prominent wool merchant in 1272,<sup>7</sup> followed by his widow Juliana, who in 1279 contracted to sell five sacks to the Riccardi family of Lucca in Italy to be shipped from the Lincolnshire port of Boston. Another Italian family, the Frescobaldis of Florence, bought wool from Richard le Faytour in 1311,<sup>8</sup> and Hugh Pope was indebted to a London-based German merchant in 1306.<sup>9</sup>

New occupations indicated by early 14th-century bynames included those of dyer and fuller, suggesting some cloth manufacture despite the apparent absence of mechanized fulling, while others were cooper, ironmonger, smith, tanner, and wheelwright (*rotour*).<sup>10</sup> The early 14th century was a time of economic depression nationally, with falling market and fair tolls reported in Witney, where there was also a marked decline in textile production.<sup>11</sup> No similar evidence is known from Chipping Norton, although its total assessed wealth fell from £273 in 1316 to £203 in 1327, placing it well above both Burford and Witney in the former year, but behind Witney in the latter.<sup>12</sup> The grant of a new fair in 1330 was perhaps an attempt to bolster flagging trade, as well as a counter to the new weekly Friday market and

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<sup>1</sup> Above, devpt of town; below (mkts).

<sup>2</sup> Below, Gt Rollright, econ. hist. For other nearby mkts, below (mkts).

<sup>3</sup> Surviving borough records are mostly post-medieval, and no *Rot. Hund.* entry survives.

<sup>4</sup> BNC, Chipping Norton 1, 2x; Magd. Coll., Chipping Norton 7–10; *Cat. Anct Deeds*, II, C. 2903; TNA, C 146/2903; *Reg. Sutton*, VIII, 195.

<sup>5</sup> *Oxon. Eyre, 1241*, p. 148.

<sup>6</sup> Above, bdies (landscape); A. Catchpole et al., *Burford: Buildings and People in a Cotswold Town* (2008), 43–5; *VCH Oxon.* XIV, 73–7.

<sup>7</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1266–72, 692.

<sup>8</sup> A.R. Bell et al., *The English Wool Market c.1230–1327* (2008), 57, 163, 182; cf. TNA, C 241/66/86.

<sup>9</sup> TNA, C 241/115/271.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* E 179/161/8–10; below, agric. (milling).

<sup>11</sup> C. Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages* (2002), 243–6; *VCH Oxon.* XIV, 75.

<sup>12</sup> TNA, E179/161/8–9.

annual fair granted at neighbouring Churchill in 1327.<sup>13</sup> In 1334 the town was taxed on £221, significantly above both Witney (£179) and Burford (£147).<sup>14</sup> Some wool merchants continued to prosper, Richard Breton sending four sacks to London for export to Antwerp in 1339,<sup>15</sup> and in 1348 petitioning the Crown for payment of a debt of £53 for 'good Cotswold wool' bought from him for the king's use nine years earlier.<sup>16</sup> He or others like him perhaps contributed to the enlargement of the parish church, where the scale and quality of early 14th-century work suggests considerable wealth amongst benefactors.<sup>17</sup>

### ***Economic Life from the Black Death to c.1500***

Little or no evidence survives for the impact of the Black Death (1349) on Chipping Norton's economy, but presumably most forms of trade declined sharply, at least for a time. By 1377 the town had fewer poll-taxpayers than either Burford or Witney,<sup>18</sup> but there is little suggestion of medium-term stagnation or contraction. New building was undertaken at 20 High Street, where a surviving late 14th-century undercroft was perhaps used as a wine tavern,<sup>19</sup> and some townsmen maintained wide horizons, two of them suing men from London and Gloucester for debt in 1361 and 1390 respectively.<sup>20</sup> In 1396 a Chipping Norton property was owned by a London capmaker, perhaps implying a healthy metropolitan market for local wool.<sup>21</sup>

The Cotswold wool trade reached its zenith in the 15th century, even if exports of raw wool were being overtaken nationally by those of woollen cloth.<sup>22</sup> Chipping Norton's specialism remained raw wool, although some cloth production is indicated by the presence of weavers,<sup>23</sup> and a flourishing clothing trade by various drapers, hosiers, mercers, and tailors.<sup>24</sup> Still no fulling mills are known, although some manual or mechanized fulling evidently took place in the local area, since William Paxford (d. 1501) left two whole cloths to

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<sup>13</sup> *Cal. Chart.* 1327–41, 8, 161; below (mkts).

<sup>14</sup> Glasscock, *Subs.* 1334, 234–7; Rodwell, *Hist. Towns Oxon.* 201–2.

<sup>15</sup> *Cal. Fine* 1337–47, 109.

<sup>16</sup> TNA, SC 8/13/616; *Rot. Parl.* II, 182; *Cal. Close* 1339–41, 46; *Cal. Pat.* 1338–40, 288.

<sup>17</sup> Below, relig. hist. (church archit.).

<sup>18</sup> Rodwell, *Hist. Towns Oxon.* 201–2.

<sup>19</sup> Above, town bldgs.

<sup>20</sup> TNA, C 241/141/24; C 241/178/42.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* CP 25/1/191/24, no. 54.

<sup>22</sup> E.M. Carus Wilson and O. Coleman, *England's Export Trade 1275–1547* (1963), 122–3, 138–9; D. Hurst, *Sheep in the Cotswolds: The Medieval Wool Trade* (2005), 150–204.

<sup>23</sup> TNA, CP 40/618; CP 40/629; CP 40/724; CP 40/788; *Cal. Pat.* 1452–61, 451.

<sup>24</sup> TNA, CP 40/618; CP 40/705; CP 40/748; CP 40/837; CP 40/841; CP 40/889; P. Manning, 'Notes on the Monumental Brasses in Chipping Norton Church, Oxon.', *Jnl of Oxf. Univ. Brass-Rubbing Soc.* 1 (1897), 3–9.

his son, and Richard Smyth (d. 1503) left a white cloth to his brother in London.<sup>25</sup> Wool merchants or woolmen nevertheless dominated the town's mercantile class,<sup>26</sup> some of whom were guild members in other towns including Stratford-upon-Avon (Warws.) and Ludlow (Salop.).<sup>27</sup> John Young (d. 1451) was amongst those commemorated with brasses in the parish church, where they and their families established a guild chapel and chantries and where their ambitious building projects transformed it into one of the larger Cotswold wool churches.<sup>28</sup> Young's son-in-law Thomas Gerveys was one of several Cotswold woolmen who between them in 1475 shipped 518 sacks to the Italian merchant Gherardo Canigiani from Southampton.<sup>29</sup> The same port was used by some other Chipping Norton woolmen, who typically returned with wine, although herring, fruit, and oysters were also mentioned.<sup>30</sup> The merchant John Pynner (fl. 1475–92) traded in Bristol with his wife Margaret,<sup>31</sup> who dealt with Richard Cely the younger, Merchant of the (Calais) Staple, Cely buying 6,000 fells in Chipping Norton for £180 in 1482.<sup>32</sup>

Other occupations recorded in the town during the 15th century included those of butcher, Chandler, chapman, grocer, spicer, and tiler,<sup>33</sup> of whom a chapman in 1440 owed debts in London (to a beltmaker and a fishmonger),<sup>34</sup> while a butcher in 1479 owed almost 50s. in Coventry.<sup>35</sup> A few people were involved in blacksmithing and ironmongery. The smith William Smith was pursued for debt in 1430,<sup>36</sup> and Thomas Smith supplied ironwork for the bell tower of Oxford's Merton College chapel, completed between 1448 and 1450.<sup>37</sup> A forge 'lately built' in Middle Row in 1462 may have been among the earliest buildings erected

<sup>25</sup> TNA, PROB 11/13/82; PROB 11/13/458; C. Dyer, *A Country Merchant, 1495–1520: Trading and Farming at the End of the Middle Ages* (2012), 198.

<sup>26</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1452–61, 580; TNA, CP 40/717; CP 40/788; CP 40/871.

<sup>27</sup> TNA, PROB 11/16/822; M. Macdonald (ed.), *The Register of the Guild of the Holy Cross, St Mary and St John the Baptist, Stratford-upon-Avon* (Dugdale Soc. 42, 2007), 155, 217, 377, 380, 392, 424, 437; W.C. Sparrow, 'A register of the Palmers' Guild of Ludlow in the reign of Henry VIII', *Trans. Salop. Archaeol. & Natural Hist. Soc.* 7 (1884), 119.

<sup>28</sup> Manning, 'Brasses', 3–9; below, relig. hist. (Middle Ages; church archit.).

<sup>29</sup> A.A. Ruddock, *Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton, 1270–1600* (Southampton Rec. Ser. 1, 1951), 90; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 27.

<sup>30</sup> O. Coleman (ed.), *The Brokage Book of Southampton, 1443–44* (Southampton Rec. Ser. 4, 1960), 85; E.A. Lewis (ed.), *The Southampton Port and Brokage Books, 1448–1449* (Southampton Rec. Ser. 36, 1993), 107, 113, 150, 174, 217.

<sup>31</sup> TNA, CP 40/919; CP 40/943.

<sup>32</sup> Hurst, *Sheep in the Cotswolds*, 185; A.H. Hanham, *The Celys and their World* (1985), 151; A.H. Hanham (ed.), *The Cely Letters, 1472–1488* (1975), 155, 158, 182.

<sup>33</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1467–77, 323; 1476–85, 87; TNA, CP 40/618; CP 40/656; CP 40/685; CP 40/692; CP 40/717; CP 40/768; CP 40/807; Manning, 'Brasses', 8.

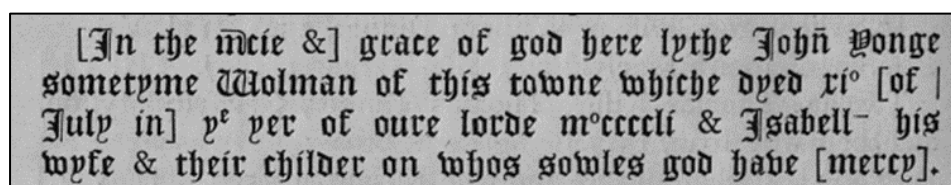
<sup>34</sup> TNA, CP 40/717.

<sup>35</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1476–85, 87.

<sup>36</sup> TNA, CP 40/677.

<sup>37</sup> J.E. Thorold Rogers (ed.), *Oxford City Documents, Financial and Judicial 1268–1665* (OHS 18, 1891), 326; VCH Oxon. III, 101.

there, forming encroachments in the market place.<sup>38</sup> John Pargeter (d. 1484), whose memorial brass survives in the parish church, was a prosperous ironmonger who in 1461 acquired a shop in Woodstock.<sup>39</sup> Leatherworking was also present, with a skinner mentioned in 1421, a currier in 1427, and several cordwainers.<sup>40</sup> Taverners and hostellers were documented from 1403,<sup>41</sup> of whom Robert Stratford owned an inn called the 'Crown upon the hoop' in 1429.<sup>42</sup> The White Hart inn (16 High Street) was apparently purpose-built as a late medieval hostelry, a timber-framed jettied gallery added to its rear c.1500 indicating its profitability.<sup>43</sup>



Memorial brasses to the woolman John Young (d. 1451) and his wife Isabel (top and left), and the timber-framed jettied gallery added to the White Hart inn c.1500 (right).

## Economic Life 1500–1800

The decline of the wool trade in the period after 1500 was counterbalanced by the expansion of a range of other crafts and trades, which were largely comparable with those of neighbouring market towns,<sup>44</sup> and which attracted outsiders. By 1628, and until 1835, all inhabitants practising a craft, trade, or profession within the borough had first to be admitted

<sup>38</sup> Bodl. MS Ch. Oxon. 145; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 39; above, devpt of town.

<sup>39</sup> *Par. Colln*, I, 92; *VCH Oxon.* XII, 361.

<sup>40</sup> TNA, CP 40/641; CP 40/664; CP 40/861; CP 40/888.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* CP 40/570; CP 40/636; CP 40/641.

<sup>42</sup> *Cal. Close* 1422–9, 453; cf. TNA, C 1/7/68.

<sup>43</sup> Above, town bldgs; E. Simons et al., 'A Late Medieval Inn at the White Hart Hotel, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia* 70 (2005), 309–23

<sup>44</sup> cf. Catchpole et al., *Burford*, 92–8; *VCH Oxon.* XIV, 77–88.

as a freeman by the town officers, on payment of a fee. Sons of freemen could produce their father's copy of admission; otherwise, freedom could be obtained either by serving a seven-year apprenticeship in the town or by paying a fine (latterly £4).<sup>45</sup> Tanning, leatherworking, and malting were prominent, and the manufacture of woollen cloth became increasingly significant in the 18th century, which also saw the emergence of a small group of professionals and of some specialist craftsmen and tradesmen catering for the gentry. The hospitality and building trades prospered throughout, the latter especially after 1700 when many houses in the town were rebuilt or refronted. Farming nevertheless underpinned the town's wealth, with livestock, cereals, and agricultural products forming the bulk of goods traded at its regular markets and fairs.<sup>46</sup> A fifth of male 17th-century testators described themselves as husbandmen or yeomen, excluding the many craftsmen and tradesmen who derived at least a part of their income from farming. Several townswomen also did agricultural work.<sup>47</sup>

### ***The Wool Trade and Cloth Manufacture***

The wool trade remained strong in Chipping Norton during the early decades of the 16th century, but thereafter, following the national trend, sales of raw wool (particularly for export) declined sharply.<sup>48</sup> Only a few woolmen are known after 1500, of whom Richard Tanty (d. 1531) struck a deal in 1504 with a Gloucestershire man who agreed to supply him with wool for the rest of his life at a fixed price of 5s. 8d. per stone,<sup>49</sup> while in 1539 his son-in-law Robert Catesby (d. 1546) bought six sacks of wool worth £53 in Blockley (Glos. formerly Worcs.).<sup>50</sup> Griffith Mitton (d. 1519), with property in Coventry,<sup>51</sup> enclosed 80 a. of arable in Chipping Norton presumably for sheep,<sup>52</sup> and in 1530 his widow Joan was owed money by the wealthy Witney-based Merchant of the Staple Richard Wenman.<sup>53</sup> One of the last prosperous woolmen was Robert Busby, Chipping Norton's joint highest taxpayer in 1524

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<sup>45</sup> OHC, BOR1/14/MS/1; *1st Rep. of Commissioners ... into Munic. Corpns: App. Pt 1* (Parl. Papers 1835 [116], xxiii), pp. 169–70; below, local govt (1607–1835).

<sup>46</sup> Below (mkts).

<sup>47</sup> Table 1; OHC and TNA, Chipping Norton wills and inventories; below, agric. (1500–1770).

<sup>48</sup> cf. *VCH Oxon.* XIV, 78; Catchpole et al., *Burford*, 42–3.

<sup>49</sup> P.J. Bowden, *The Wool Trade in Tudor and Stuart England* (1962), 88; TNA, C 1/449/17; Manning, 'Brasses', 9.

<sup>50</sup> TNA, C 1/1312/65–68; OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 178.131; 179.172.

<sup>51</sup> Coventry Archives, PA 60/1; TNA, REQ 2/7/53; *Par. Colln*, I, 92.

<sup>52</sup> I.S. Leadam (ed.), *Domesday of Inclosures 1517–1518* (1897), I, 330–1.

<sup>53</sup> TNA, CP 40/1046; *VCH Oxon.* XIV, 78.



and farmer of the manorial demesne.<sup>54</sup> After his death in 1542 his sons sold 51 tods of his wool worth £33 3s.<sup>55</sup>

Whilst the wool trade faltered, cloth manufacture in west Oxfordshire increased in the 16th century, with Witney in particular seeing a marked acceleration in the production of undyed broadcloths.<sup>56</sup> Chipping Norton, with its lack of fulling mills, did not experience the same level of growth, although some manual fulling and cloth-finishing took place in Over Norton,<sup>57</sup> and a few clothworkers and weavers lived in the town,<sup>58</sup> perhaps (as in Burford) organised and commissioned by Witney clothiers, who presumably assisted in apprenticing young Chipping Norton men to Witney weavers.<sup>59</sup> After 1600, in response to national difficulties, the focus of Witney's production shifted from broadcloths to woollen blankets,<sup>60</sup> and Chipping Norton's weavers perhaps followed suit, although only a few remained in the town after 1650.<sup>61</sup>

The 18th century saw a revival of cloth manufacture in Chipping Norton, with weavers increasingly working for themselves, and some becoming masters who controlled all aspects of production from sourcing wool to marketing the finished cloths. Such men included Samuel Blissard (d. 1752), whose well-appointed premises in Horsefair included a workshop with seven looms and a 'combing shop'. His trade stock (worth £258 or four fifths of his total goods at death) largely consisted of wool, yarn, and various types of woollen cloth, mainly harrateens (a coarse cloth used for hangings and upholstery), of which some were in London awaiting sale.<sup>62</sup> Wool was supplied by woolstaplers, of whom Henry Wells was mentioned in 1754,<sup>63</sup> while Broome Witts (d. 1768) divided his time between Chipping Norton and London, where he had a second business as a linen-draper.<sup>64</sup> His son Edward

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<sup>54</sup> TNA, C 1/956/51–54, calling him 'woolman'; *ibid.* E 179/161/198; below, agric. (1500–1770); social hist. (Middle Ages).

<sup>55</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 179.111; *Oxf. Ch. Ct Deposns 1542–50*, p. 9; below, Over Norton, econ. hist.

<sup>56</sup> *VCH Oxon.* XIV, 78; *Oxon. Atlas*, 40, 78.

<sup>57</sup> Accounting for the two fullers and one shearman in Table 1: below, Over Norton, econ. hist.

<sup>58</sup> *Oxf. Ch. Ct Deposns 1634–9*, p. 12; J. Bolton and M. Maslen (eds), *Calendar of the Court Books of the Borough of Witney, 1538–1610* (ORS 54, 1985), 53, 75, 76; Table 1.

<sup>59</sup> Bolton and Maslen (eds), *Witney Ct Bks*, 104; Catchpole et al., *Burford*, 46; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 51.

<sup>60</sup> *VCH Oxon.* XIV, 78–9.

<sup>61</sup> Only one weaver's will was proved between 1650 and 1700: OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 2/2/32.

<sup>62</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 72; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 118/1/29, also mentioning 'tammetts' (i.e. tammies) and jerseys, for which see E. Kerridge, *Textile Manufactures in Early Modern England* (1985).

<sup>63</sup> OHC, Cal. QS I, p. 323.

<sup>64</sup> For the Wittses, below, social hist. (18th cent.).

was a prominent woolstapler with a wool store in Spring Street, until his business failed in 1793 and he was declared bankrupt in 1796.<sup>65</sup>

By 1784 there were four woollen cloth manufacturers in the town, of whom William Banbury, Stephen Biggerstaff, and Joseph Freeman specialised in harrateens and William Fowler made tilts (covers for waggons).<sup>66</sup> Fowler, who reputedly started his business in New Street in 1746, was succeeded c.1785 by Thomas Bliss, a clothier from Chalford near Stroud (Glos.); he settled in the town probably in 1757 and briefly became an innkeeper,<sup>67</sup> although he obtained freedom of the borough as a clothier in 1762.<sup>68</sup> In 1786 he bought a spring-loom and three shuttles from the Witney blanket manufacturer Edward Early,<sup>69</sup> and at his death in 1796 the business ('a considerable manufactory ... making horse clothing, tilting, etc.') passed to his son William, who continued it after 1800.<sup>70</sup>

### **Other Trades and Industries 1500–1800**

Alongside these specialisms, Chipping Norton retained the range of trades and industries typical of any small market town (Table 1). After agriculture, the second largest employment sector was food, drink, and accommodation, characterized by bakers, butchers, and grocers as well as by several maltsters, innholders, and victuallers. Leatherwork and shoemaking was next, followed by building trades (carpenters, glaziers, masons, plasterers, and slaters). Numerous retailers included drapers, haberdashers, ironmongers, and tailors, while additional craftsmen encompassed metalworkers, coopers, ropers, and tallow chandlers, with clockmakers appearing after 1700. 'Service' occupations included barbers and servants, and by the 18th century a small but prominent group of 'professionals' included apothecaries, auctioneers, bankers, lawyers, and physicians. Some of those called themselves 'gentleman', a term which was increasingly applied to wealthy farmers and innholders and to the most substantial tradesmen and manufacturers.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>65</sup> *Bailey's Brit. Dir.* (1784); *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 558; Bodl. MS dd Dawkins C27/IC13/12; *Oxf. Jnl*, 23 Nov. 1793; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 72; A. Sutton (ed.), *The Complete Diary of a Cotswold Parson: The Diaries of the Revd Francis Edward Witts, 1783–1854*, I (2008), 40.

<sup>66</sup> *Bailey's Brit. Dir.* (1784). By contrast Witney had c.60 manufacturers: *VCH Oxon.* XIV, 83.

<sup>67</sup> Meades, *Hist.* 77; Eddershaw, *Story*, 83–4; OHC, par. reg. transcript, marriage 1758; *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 557; below (other trades, 1500–1800).

<sup>68</sup> OHC, BOR1/5/A1/1, f. 151v.

<sup>69</sup> R.L. Evans, 'The Bliss Mills and the Bliss Family in Chipping Norton, 1758–1920', *Top. Oxon.* 20 (1975), 7, giving a notebook of Thos Bliss as his source; cf. *VCH Oxon.* XIV, 89–92.

<sup>70</sup> S. Coleman, 'William Bliss of Chipping Norton', *Baptist Quarterly* 45.1 (2013), 31; *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 557; below (19th cent.).

<sup>71</sup> Table 1; OHC and TNA, Chipping Norton wills and inventories; below. For the term 'gentleman', cf. *VCH Oxon.* XIV, 88 (Witney); XVI, 125 (Henley).



Table 1: Status and occupation of testators in Chipping Norton and Over Norton, 1500–1800. (Source: OHC and TNA wills and inventories).

	1500–49	1550–99	1600–49	1650–99	1700–49	1750–99	Total	Percentage
<b>No status or occupation</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Occupation (see below)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>6</b>
Burgess	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	
Esquire	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	
Gentleman	1	3	10	14	14	17	59	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>961</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>OCCUPATION:</b>								
<b>Agriculture &amp; Labouring</b>								
Husbandman	-	13	18	12	3	-	46	
Farmer	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	
Labourer	-	2	4	10	4	7	27	
Shepherd	-	2	3	3	5	1	14	
Warrener	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	
Yeoman	-	3	20	27	28	20	98	
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Building</b>								
Carpenter, Joiner, Turner	-	1	3	1	9	2	16	
Glazier	-	-	1	-	2	5	8	
Mason, Freemason	-	-	1	4	7	1	13	
Plasterer	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	
Slater	-	1	-	2	1	-	4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Cloth Trade &amp; Clothing</b>								
Boddice-maker	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	
Draper	-	1	-	1	-	-	2	
Feltmaker	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	
Linen-draper	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
Haberdasher	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
Mantua-maker	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	
Tailor	-	3	3	6	3	2	17	
Woollen-draper	-	-	3	-	-	-	3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Distribution &amp; Retail</b>								
Carrier	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	
Chandler, Tallow	-	-	2	-	2	1	5	
Chandler								
Chapman, Dealer, Higgler	-	-	1	-	3	1	5	
Cornfactor	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
Ironmonger	-	-	2	-	1	1	4	
Mercer	-	1	2	2	3	5	13	
Shopkeeper	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Food, Drink, &amp; Accommodation</b>								
Baker	-	-	1	1	4	5	11	
Butcher	-	3	2	3	4	5	17	

	1500–49	1550–99	1600–49	1650–99	1700–49	1750–99	Total	Percentage
Grocer	-	-	-	1	1	4	6	
Innholder, Victualler	-	1	4	7	10	11	33	
Maltster	-	-	2	7	3	9	21	
Tapster	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>17</b>

**Leatherwork & Shoes**

Collarmaker	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	
Cordwainer, Shoemaker	-	3	7	4	4	1	19	
Currier	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	
Glover	-	1	3	1	3	-	8	
Heel-maker	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	
Last-maker	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	
Saddler	-	-	2	2	1	3	8	
Tanner	-	2	5	3	8	1	19	
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>12</b>

**Metalwork**

Blacksmith, Smith	-	2	-	4	1	2	9	
Brasier	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
Pewterer	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	
Tinman	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>2</b>	-	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>

**Professional**

Apothecary, Physician, Surgeon	-	-	-	3	1	5	9	
Clerk, Chantry Priest, Vicar	2	1	1	2	3	1	10	
Scrivener	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
Teacher	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>4</b>

**Wool Trade & Cloth****Manufacture**

Clothworker	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	
Fuller, Tucker	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	
Shearman	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	
Weaver	-	2	3	1	2	4	12	
Woolcomber	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
Woollen Manufacturer	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
Woolstapler	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>

**Other**

Barber, Periwig-maker	-	-	-	1	3	3	7	
Coachman	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
Cooper	-	1	-	-	1	1	3	
Excise Officer	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
Gardener	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
Hair-merchant	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	
Hive-maker	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	
Miller	-	2	1	1	2	-	6	
Ploughwright	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	
Roper	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	
Servant	-	-	1	-	-	2	3	
Soap-boiler	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
Upholsterer	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	
Watchmaker	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	

	1500–49	1550–99	1600–49	1650–99	1700–49	1750–99	Total	Percentage
Wheelwright	-	1	-	2	1	1	5	
Woodman	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Food, Drink, and Accommodation**

Sales of food and drink were regulated in the manor court,<sup>72</sup> and by 1687 all inns and alehouses were licensed.<sup>73</sup> Bakers and butchers were mentioned throughout the period, of whom the prosperous baker George Carter (d. 1624) leased the ground floor of the guildhall in 1612,<sup>74</sup> while the butcher Richard Taylor (d. 1673) moved to the town from his home county of Devon in 1628, aged 29.<sup>75</sup> Some owned their own houses and shops: the butcher Samuel Righton (d. 1708) bought 12 Market Place in 1680,<sup>76</sup> and the baker Samuel West (d. 1747) probably rebuilt 9–11 West Street in the 1720s.<sup>77</sup> The grocer Richard Groves (d. 1672) was one of 11 Chipping Norton tradesmen known to have issued trade tokens.<sup>78</sup> Samuel Bradley (d. 1767) left his grocery shop to his unmarried sister Margaret (d. 1775), whose probate inventory (worth an astonishing c.£16,000) listed goods worth more than £600, showing the shop to be well stocked with chocolate, coffee, hair powder, soap, spices, sugar, tea, and tobacco.<sup>79</sup> Lawrence Castle (d. 1776), of 13 Market Place, was a grocer, tallow chandler, and soap-boiler,<sup>80</sup> as were two other men c.1790, alongside another grocer, two bakers, two butchers, and a wine and spirits merchant.<sup>81</sup>

Food and drink was also sold by the town's numerous victuallers, of whom several kept inns or alehouses. Inns often belonged to members of the town's élite, amongst them Thomas Hyatt and Henry Cornish, two of the corporation's founder-members.<sup>82</sup> Hyatt (d. 1634) owned both the Swan inn (recorded from 1608) and another in Stow-on-the-Wold

<sup>72</sup> OHC, BOR1/1/D/1; below, local govt (to 1607).

<sup>73</sup> M.S. Gretton (ed.), *Oxon. Justices of the Peace in the 17th Century* (ORS 16, 1934), 22–3.

<sup>74</sup> TNA, C 93/4/1; *ibid.* PROB 11/143/611. Cf. Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 51, where the theory that he rented the space out as booths is now considered unlikely: info. from Adrienne Rosen.

<sup>75</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 66/4/5; *Oxf. Ch. Ct Deposits 1634–9*, p. 12.

<sup>76</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 147/2/22; *ibid.* Acc. 6779, bdl 3, no. 2; CNM, summary of deeds for 12 Market Place.

<sup>77</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 74/2/5; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 80–1, 203; CNM, summary of deeds for 9–11 West Street.

<sup>78</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 27/2/10; Meades, *Hist.* 58, 60; G. Milne, *Catalogue of Oxfordshire Seventeenth Century Tokens* (1935), 8, 36.

<sup>79</sup> TNA, PROB 11/935/369; PROB 11/1016/331; PROB 31/629/66.

<sup>80</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 16/3/27; *Oxf. Jnl Syn.* 3 Feb. 1776; CNM, summary of deeds for 13 Market Place.

<sup>81</sup> *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 558.

<sup>82</sup> OHC, BOR1/1/D/1.

(Glos.),<sup>83</sup> while Cornish (d. 1650) left the White Hart (bought from the Toft family in 1603) to his nephew William Diston, together with his licence to sell wine.<sup>84</sup> Diston (d. 1676) issued a trade token bearing the inn's sign in 1666.<sup>85</sup> The Swan and White Hart were joined as Chipping Norton's largest and most important inns by the Talbot (established by 1591) and the Crown and Cushion (opened c.1620 by Robert Mayor, and sometimes called the Catherine Wheel), the four together being taxed on a total of 45 hearths in 1662.<sup>86</sup> All of them serviced coaches passing through the town,<sup>87</sup> and all or most possessed a brewhouse and 9–14 guest chambers, sometimes individually named after coaching destinations.<sup>88</sup> The Swan also boasted a club room in 1713, and stabling for 100 horses in 1744.<sup>89</sup> A fifth large inn (the King's Head) opened before 1758 in premises on New Street developed by the tailor Edward Fell to capitalize on the coaching trade, but found only limited success despite continuing in business until the 1860s.<sup>90</sup> The Swan closed in 1796, when the wine and spirits merchant James Hitchman remodelled it as an off-licence (renamed the Rum Puncheon).<sup>91</sup>

Lesser inns and alehouses also prospered, one of the earliest being the George, a former chantry property recorded from 1549.<sup>92</sup> The Black Boy was mentioned in 1664,<sup>93</sup> and Thomas Frayne (d. 1671) kept an inn at 24 High Street, where he brewed beer.<sup>94</sup> The roper William Taylor established the Blue Boar perhaps in 1683.<sup>95</sup> By 1721 there were 29 licensed premises in the borough, falling to 25 in 1750 and 22 in 1792.<sup>96</sup> Amongst them were the Chequers (originally the Blue Anchor), opened by the tanner Thomas Rouse after 1755,<sup>97</sup> and the Fox, which was renamed as such in 1768 by John Cleaver, a retired butler from

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<sup>83</sup> TNA, PROB 11/166/334; R. Taylor et al. (eds), *Calendar of the Court Books of the Borough of New Woodstock 1607–22* (OHS 65, 2007), 8, 17.

<sup>84</sup> TNA, C 3/385/10; *ibid.* PROB 11/214/314; below, social hist. (1540–1800).

<sup>85</sup> OHC, par. reg. transcript, burial 1675/6; Meades, *Hist.* 61; Milne, *Oxon. Tokens*, 7, 36.

<sup>86</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 56–7; TNA, E 179/255/3; *ibid.* C 2/Jasl/M16/57; STAC 5/C32/37.

<sup>87</sup> *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 557; above, communics.

<sup>88</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 74, 93, 99, 201; Swan: OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 37/4/18; 133/2/42; 168/4/14; TNA, PROB 4/19659; Talbot: OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 55/3/4; 171/5/28; White Hart: *ibid.* 12/4/8; 76/1/31. None is associated with the Crown and Cushion.

<sup>89</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 168/4/14; *London Evening Post*, 10 Jan. 1744.

<sup>90</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 75–6; above, landownership (other estates). It was absent from *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 556–8; *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4).

<sup>91</sup> OHC, BOR1/3/A3/3; *Oxf. Jnl.* 3 Dec. 1796; D. Lewis, *Chipping Norton Inns* (2nd edn, 2004), 49, 53, 67; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 201.

<sup>92</sup> *Cal. Pat.* 1548–9, 194; Bodl. MS dd Dawkins C9/IB5/4–5; above, landownership (other estates).

<sup>93</sup> TNA, PROB 11/324/114.

<sup>94</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 127/2/22; Cliffe, *High Street*, 63; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 108.

<sup>95</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 75, 121–2; datestone 'WT/1683'; below. It certainly existed by 1708: OHC, BOR1/3/F1/1.

<sup>96</sup> OHC, BOR1/3/A1/1; BOR1/3/A3/1–3.

<sup>97</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 70, 75, 122–4; OHC, B15/2/45D/3; B15/2/47D/1–2; *Oxf. Jnl.* 28 Sept. 1782.

Kiddington.<sup>98</sup> The future cloth manufacturer Thomas Bliss was landlord of the Ram and Swan inns consecutively in the 1760s–70s.<sup>99</sup>



Two former coaching inns: the King's Head (left) and the Swan (right).

Commercial malting was often undertaken part-time by farmers and tradesmen. The farmer William Diston (d. 1626), one of the corporation's first members, had a malt mill, kiln, and ten bushels of malt at his New Street farmhouse, and the woollen-draper Thomas Fawler (d. 1647) left 32 qrs of malt worth £42.<sup>100</sup> Specialist maltsters appear from the early 17th century,<sup>101</sup> of whom Simon Hathaway and James Henshaw were examined before the Privy Council in 1630 for 'buying of corn to make malt in this time of restraint'. Henshaw asserted that, although the town bailiffs had allowed him to make 50 qrs of malt that year, he had in fact made less than 20, of which two were sold to a Moreton-in-Marsh (Glos.) innkeeper.<sup>102</sup> Malthouses were built behind several properties in the town, one at 1 Market Street probably by the town clerk William Thomas (d. 1674), whose premises also included garner-, kiln-, and malt-chambers.<sup>103</sup> Thomas Cave (d. 1679) left malt worth £142, some stored in Stratford-upon-Avon,<sup>104</sup> and Edward Parker (who rented a malthouse in Horsefair)

<sup>98</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 75, 146; *Oxf. Jnl*, 6 Aug. 1768.

<sup>99</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 7 Dec. 1771, 28 Dec. 1771, 4 Dec. 1773; Lewis, *Inns*, 52–3.

<sup>100</sup> OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 17/4/20; 23/1/4; *ibid.* BOR1/1/D/1; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 59. Both gave evidence in court about their part-time malting in 1622: TNA, STAC 8/106/17.

<sup>101</sup> e.g. OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 70/4/19; 32/1/18; 66/3/9; *Oxf. Ch. Ct Deposns 1634–9*, pp. 16–17.

<sup>102</sup> *Cal. SP Dom.* 1629–31, 402, 499; *Acts of PC 1630–1*, 162, 220–2; TNA, SP 16/184/17; below, social hist. (1540–1800).

<sup>103</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 69; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 66/4/10.

<sup>104</sup> TNA, PROB 4/25470.

sold malt in London c.1720,<sup>105</sup> while in 1784 the cloth manufacturer William Fowler was also a maltster.<sup>106</sup> In the 1790s the banker and mealman William Atkins supplied flour to bakers in and around Birmingham and Coventry.<sup>107</sup>

**Tanning and Leatherworking** Tanning and leatherworking, mentioned sporadically in the Middle Ages, became more prominent after 1500, particularly as the wool trade declined. Tanning expanded to take advantage of the town's regular livestock sales as well as vacant land on its outskirts, which was well supplied with water from springs. At least five tanners were mentioned in the 16th century,<sup>108</sup> and several more in the 17th and 18th,<sup>109</sup> of whom one was fined in 1634 for selling unsealed leather in Woodstock.<sup>110</sup> By 1606 Chipping Norton's own officers included leather sealers whose job it was to check on the quality of leather being made or sold in the town.<sup>111</sup>

The largest and most important tanneries were in Church Lane and West Street. The 'gentleman' William Henshaw (d. 1558), who paid the second highest tax in 1544, perhaps established the long-lived Church Lane tannery, which evidently passed to his son Ralph (d. 1611), a glover, and then by marriage to the Letches, from Hornton near Banbury.<sup>112</sup> John Letch (d. 1628) and his son Thomas (d. 1634) both left goods worth over £600, including (respectively) leather and hides valued at £360 and £376; John's inventory further mentioned tan vats and two mills for shredding bark, and Thomas's his stock of 470 hides, 360 calf skins, and 55 loads of bark, along with debts owed him in Burford and Charlbury.<sup>113</sup> After Thomas's son John died in 1712 the tannery was acquired by Nathan Norgrove (d. 1725) and his son John (d. 1731),<sup>114</sup> who expanded it into a close near the churchyard, perhaps also building the house later called The Elm.<sup>115</sup> John's son John (d. 1747) was succeeded by his son-in-law Thomas Rouse, who leased it to Robert Rawlings (d. 1777) and sold it after 1783,<sup>116</sup> probably to Robert Bricknell, a prosperous tanner in the town c.1790.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 69.

<sup>106</sup> *Bailey's Brit. Dir.* (1784).

<sup>107</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 1 Aug. 1795; L.W. Thwaites, 'Marketing of Agric. Produce in 18th-Cent. Oxon.' (Birmingham Univ. PhD thesis, 1981), 285–6; below (19th cent.).

<sup>108</sup> TNA, CP 40/971; CP 40/990; Bolton and Maslen (eds), *Witney Ct Bks*, 151; Table 1.

<sup>109</sup> e.g. Table 1; OHC, par. reg. transcript, burials 1674, 1721; BNC, Chipping Norton 43–50.

<sup>110</sup> M. Maslen (ed.), *Woodstock Chamberlains' Accounts 1609–50* (OHS 58, 1993), 105.

<sup>111</sup> TNA, STAC 8/67/9; OHC, BOR1/3/A1/1–3; below, local govt (to 1607).

<sup>112</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 183.150, mentioning his 'vater close' in Clay Lane (i.e. Church Lane); *ibid.* MS Oxf. Dioc. b 69, f. 3, mentioning his 'leather and his pits'; TNA, E 179/162/227; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 52.

<sup>113</sup> OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 139/1/32; 41/3/38.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* 43/3/25; 143/3/5; TNA, PROB 11/644/62, detailing purchases from the Letches.

<sup>115</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 70, 177.

<sup>116</sup> OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 143/3/41; 123/1/69; *ibid.* B15/2/45D/3–4; TNA, PROB 11/1034/81; *Oxf. Jnl*, 28 Sept. 1782.

<sup>117</sup> *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 558; below (19th cent.).

West Street's tanneries perhaps included the pond called Stretch pool.<sup>118</sup> One possibly on the site of Rowell's Yard passed with the adjacent farmhouse (37 West Street) from the husbandman William Smith (d. 1628) to his son-in-law William Brayne, and eventually to the wealthy tanner John Brayne (d. 1744), who apparently rebuilt the farmhouse as an elegant townhouse (Rowell's House), and left the premises to his daughter.<sup>119</sup> A second West Street tannery, sold before Brayne's death to the tanner William Coates (d. 1744),<sup>120</sup> may have been that established by the vicar John Norgrove (d. 1659), whose son Nehemiah (d. 1693) owned leather hides and bark worth £342 at his death.<sup>121</sup> Nehemiah's son John (d. 1719), who like his father and grandfather lived at College Place, left it to trustees including John Brayne.<sup>122</sup>

Other leatherworkers included numerous cordwainers and shoemakers (supported by heel-makers and last-makers), as well as a few breeches-makers, collarmakers, curriers, glovers, and saddlers. None was especially wealthy,<sup>123</sup> although some held positions of authority in the town, the glover Christopher Needle and the shoemaker Edward Avery becoming two of the corporation's first members in 1607.<sup>124</sup> At his death in 1617 Avery's shop contained 120 shoes, leather, thread, tallow, and lasts, together worth nearly £15,<sup>125</sup> while another shoemaker was apprenticed to a Witney master in 1587,<sup>126</sup> and the Holder family of cordwainers occupied College Place between 1566 and 1636.<sup>127</sup> Shoemaking was perhaps boosted by the rise of the Northampton industry, causing at least one Banbury shoemaker to relocate to Chipping Norton by 1645.<sup>128</sup> Glovers included Richard Davis (d. 1698), whose shop contained gloves and breeches 'ready-made' as well as cutting-leather and skins of beavers, calves, horses, lambs, and sheep. The saddler William Harbert (d. 1671) left stock-in-trade worth £53,<sup>129</sup> while the saddler John Field (d. 1787), the only leatherworker listed in 1784,<sup>130</sup> left his tools, shop furniture, and stock to James Prestidge,<sup>131</sup> who continued in business after 1800.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>118</sup> OS Map 1:2500, Oxon. XIV.11 (1881 edn). Its etymology is unknown, but it might refer to stretching hides during tanning.

<sup>119</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 60/2/3; TNA, PROB 11/735/421; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 70, 213.

<sup>120</sup> TNA, PROB 11/735/271.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid. PROB 11/288/750; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 143/1/21; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 52, 70.

<sup>122</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 143/2/27; BNC, Chipping Norton 41–50.

<sup>123</sup> Table 1; OHC and TNA wills and inventories.

<sup>124</sup> OHC, BOR1/1/D/1; *ibid.* MSS Wills Oxon. 21/4/34; 1/4/12; 171/1/12.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid. MS Wills Oxon. 1/4/12.

<sup>126</sup> Bolton and Maslen (eds), *Witney Ct Bks*, 116–17.

<sup>127</sup> BNC, Chipping Norton 36–41; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 217.

<sup>128</sup> *VCH Oxon.* X, 64.

<sup>129</sup> OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 19/1/12; 33/3/24.

<sup>130</sup> *Bailey's Brit. Dir.* (1784).

<sup>131</sup> TNA, PROB 11/1149/254; OHC, par. reg. transcript, burial 1787.

<sup>132</sup> OHC, B15/2/45D/15–23; B107/2D/2–7; *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4), where he is mistakenly listed as Jas. Preston.



**Building Trades** From the Middle Ages stone for many town buildings came presumably from neighbouring quarries, such as that above High Street mentioned in 1471.<sup>133</sup> Masons were largely unrecorded before the 17th century, although in 1545 Thomas Friday was owed money for a pavement at Bruern abbey, a window at Hanwell castle, and battlements at King's Sutton church (Northants.).<sup>134</sup> After 1650 the number of documented masons increased, presumably reflecting the rebuilding or refronting of many Chipping Norton houses particularly in the early 18th century.<sup>135</sup> In 1695 the mason Thomas Taylor subdivided what is now 10–11 Market Street,<sup>136</sup> and at his death the mason John Paty (d. 1718) owned a 'new erected' tenement at 10 Middle Row.<sup>137</sup> John's father Thomas Paty (d. 1698), a freemason, worked his own quarries in the town,<sup>138</sup> as did John Watson (d. 1720), whose two quarries included one at Horsefair.<sup>139</sup> Two Chipping Norton masons contracted to quarry stone in Over Norton for 20 years from 1720, one of whom worked with a colleague in 1738 to build a pigeon house at Ditchley Park in Spelsbury.<sup>140</sup> For a decade from 1791 the town was also home to the architect John Cheney.<sup>141</sup>

Others working in the building trades included carpenters, glaziers, joiners, plasterers, plumbers, and slaters.<sup>142</sup> An absence of thatchers reflects the predominance of limestone roofing slates, which were presumably mostly quarried locally. The carpenter John Hyatt (d. 1624) left 400 elm boards, three ladders, and ten pairs of rafters in his shop, while slaters and plasterers included various members of the Hookham family, originally from Stow-on-the-Wold,<sup>143</sup> and Richard Williams (d. 1800), proprietor of the Elephant and Castle pub.<sup>144</sup> The glazier William Knowles (d. 1634) was in business by 1608,<sup>145</sup> and several members of the Malins family of West Street worked as plumbers and glaziers,<sup>146</sup> John (d. 1781) repairing windows and lead guttering at the parish church in the 1770s.<sup>147</sup> Joseph (d.

<sup>133</sup> *Cat. Ancient Deeds*, V, A.11316.

<sup>134</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 179.147. For an early 17th-cent. mason, *ibid.* 30/2/1 (Thos Henslo alias Buncker, 1613).

<sup>135</sup> Table 1; above, town bldgs; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 76–84.

<sup>136</sup> CNM, summary of deeds for 10 Market Street; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 76.

<sup>137</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 145/2/32; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 78, 135.

<sup>138</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 53/1/11; *ibid.* par. reg. transcript, burial 1698; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 76.

<sup>139</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 73/5/21.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.* PAR64/10/1D/1; A. Gomme, 'Architects and craftsmen at Ditchley', *Archit. Hist.* 32 (1989), 92.

<sup>141</sup> H.M. Colvin, *Biog. Dict. British Architects 1600–1840* (3rd edn, 1995), 246; A. Rosen, 'A country architect: John Cheney of Chipping Norton, 1766–1809', *Oxon. Recorder* (OBR newsletter) 82 (2020), 10–13.

<sup>142</sup> Table 1; OHC and TNA, Chipping Norton wills and inventories; *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 558.

<sup>143</sup> For Mark (fl. 1761), OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 135/3/45. For John (fl. 1765, 1790), CNM, summary of deeds for 36 New Street. For Jos. (fl. 1791), OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 163/4/110.

<sup>144</sup> OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 30/4/37; 159/3/36; *ibid.* par. reg. transcript, burial 1624.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* MS Wills Oxon. 138/1/30; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 62.

<sup>146</sup> OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 142/1/33; 142/3/11; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 77.

<sup>147</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 46/4/3; GA, D936/A/31; *Oxf. Jnl Syn.* 14 Jul. 1781.

1801), a corporation bailiff, was one of three plumbers and glaziers working in the town c.1790.<sup>148</sup>

**Retail Trades** Many of the town's wealthier inhabitants worked primarily in retail trades, particularly those associated with cloth, such as drapers, haberdashers, and mercers.<sup>149</sup> William Hunt (d. 1545) left shops in Banbury, Chipping Norton, and Woodstock to three different sons,<sup>150</sup> while those with interests further afield included the draper John Hutchins, active in Coventry in 1584.<sup>151</sup> The linen-draper and mercer Richard Berry (d. 1626) and the mercer Thomas Cornish (d. 1617) were frequent petitioners in Witney's borough court c.1600, Cornish's father Thomas, another Chipping Norton mercer, having settled in Witney, where he served as town bailiff in 1601.<sup>152</sup> Berry, the younger Cornish, and his younger brother Henry (d. 1650) were also among five mercers or drapers chosen as bailiffs or burgesses of the new corporation in 1607,<sup>153</sup> alongside Thomas Fawler (d. 1645) and Mark Preston (d. 1640), whose shop contained 225 ells of cloth and 93 yards of other fabrics at his death.<sup>154</sup> Henry Cornish's nephew William Diston (d. 1676) was also a prominent mercer before inheriting the White Hart inn,<sup>155</sup> while Fawler's sons Thomas (d. 1647) and Henry (d. 1699) followed their father as woollen-drapers,<sup>156</sup> Henry issuing a trade token. So too did the draper and mercer Michael Cornish (d. 1681), another of Henry Cornish's nephews, whose shop goods were valued at £244.<sup>157</sup> Later drapers and mercers included Nehemiah Norgrove, whose stock in 1731 (following his bankruptcy) included brocades, damasks, satins, and 'Dutch and Genoa black velvets',<sup>158</sup> while Edward Stockford had a corner shop facing the market house, until he left town in 1759.<sup>159</sup> Three others were listed in 1784, one of them also an auctioneer.<sup>160</sup>

Another group of retailers made and sold garments. Tailors included John Cornish, who issued a trade token probably in the 1660s,<sup>161</sup> while hats were purveyed by the

<sup>148</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 269/1/3; *ibid.* par. reg. transcript, burial 1801; *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 556, 558.

<sup>149</sup> Table 1; OHC and TNA, Chipping Norton wills and inventories.

<sup>150</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 179.90.

<sup>151</sup> TNA, CP 40/1422.

<sup>152</sup> Bolton and Maslen (eds), *Witney Ct Bks*, p. lxiii and *passim*; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 12/1/12 (Thos Cornish junior, who also settled in Witney after his time as a Chipping Norton burgess).

<sup>153</sup> TNA, PROB 11/150/76; PROB 11/214/314; OHC, BOR1/1/D/1; *ibid.* MS Wills Oxon. 12/1/12.

<sup>154</sup> TNA, PROB 11/194/508; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 51/3/27; *ibid.* BOR1/1/D/1.

<sup>155</sup> *Oxf. Ch. Ct Deposns 1634–9*, pp. 12, 15–16; above.

<sup>156</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 23/1/4; TNA, PROB 11/452/253.

<sup>157</sup> Milne, *Oxon. Tokens*, 7–8, 36; TNA, PROB 11/365/195; PROB 4/5561.

<sup>158</sup> *Daily Post*, 27 Jan. 1731; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 72–3.

<sup>159</sup> *Oxf. Jnl Syn.* 11 Nov. 1758, 28 Jul. 1759.

<sup>160</sup> *Bailey's Brit. Dir.* (1784); below.

<sup>161</sup> OHC, E229/3/D/7; Milne, *Oxon. Tokens*, 7, 36.

feltmaker Thomas Edmunds (d. 1697), the hatter John Lambert (fl. 1711), and the 'yeoman' Samuel Harris (d. 1616), whose shop contained hats worth £130.<sup>162</sup> Women's clothing was made by the mantua-maker William Collett (d. 1737)<sup>163</sup> and by various boddice- and staymakers,<sup>164</sup> of whom two were listed c.1790.<sup>165</sup> Other shops belonged to ironmongers such as David Dix (d. c.1667) of Stratford-upon-Avon, and the upholsterer Philip Wisdom (d. 1709), both of whom issued trade tokens,<sup>166</sup> whilst Joan Carrick (d. 1612) sold mainly earthenware pots.<sup>167</sup> A hair merchant was mentioned in 1730,<sup>168</sup> a tobacconist in 1744,<sup>169</sup> a cutler and stationer in 1779,<sup>170</sup> and two booksellers in the 1790s.<sup>171</sup>

**Metalworking and Other Crafts** Blacksmiths were present throughout the period,<sup>172</sup> with 17th-century forges known in Middle Row, Goddard's Lane, and West Street. The Warings worked the Middle Row smithy,<sup>173</sup> Richard Waring (d. 1698) owning bellows, coal, iron, an anvil, a vice, and working tools together worth £10,<sup>174</sup> while William Beck (d. 1762) left 100 horseshoes each to his son and grandson.<sup>175</sup> Other metalworkers included braziers and tinmen,<sup>176</sup> two of whom were listed c.1790,<sup>177</sup> while the pewterer Humphrey Hyatt (d. 1704) rented a house in London.<sup>178</sup>

Coopers and wheelwrights were mentioned frequently, and several tallow chandlers included Mathias Trout (d. 1669), who issued a trade token and left candles, tallow, and wick yarn together worth almost £10.<sup>179</sup> Less usual crafts were those of sievemaking (1592), cardmaking (1720), and hivemaking (1736),<sup>180</sup> while poor townspeople supported by Henry Cornish's charity (established 1650) were to be set to work in 'some manual trade of

<sup>162</sup> OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 126/1/31; 30/2/34; *ibid.* P323/4/D/1.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.* MS Wills Oxon. 122/4/35; *ibid.* par. reg. transcript, burial 1736/7.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.* MSS Wills Oxon. 35/4/15; 118/2/23; *ibid.* par. reg. transcript, marriage 1755; Kirtland, *Memorials*, 27–8.

<sup>165</sup> *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 558.

<sup>166</sup> TNA, PROB 11/324/114; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 177/1/32; *ibid.* par. reg. transcript, burial 1709; Milne, *Oxon. Tokens*, 7, 9, 36–7.

<sup>167</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 11/4/12.

<sup>168</sup> TNA, PROB 11/639/285; OHC, monumental inscriptions transcript, L23.

<sup>169</sup> OHC, SL30/2/D/4.

<sup>170</sup> Oxf. Jnl Syn. 23 Oct. 1779.

<sup>171</sup> *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 558; GA, GDR/Q1/1797/74.

<sup>172</sup> Table 1; OHC, par. reg. transcript, burial 1720.

<sup>173</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 51, 134; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 66/4/10; *ibid.* BOR1/13/1D/24.

<sup>174</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 88/3/50.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.* 9/3/4.

<sup>176</sup> Table 1; Oxf. Ch. Ct Deposns 1634–9, p. 12; Oxf. Jnl Syn. 10 Jul. 1762; OHC, par. reg. transcript, marriages 1758; *ibid.* monumental inscriptions transcript, l6.

<sup>177</sup> *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 558.

<sup>178</sup> TNA, PROB 11/474/493; OHC, par. reg. transcript, burial 1703/4.

<sup>179</sup> Milne, *Oxon. Tokens*, 8, 37; TNA, PROB 4/4361. For coopers, wheelwrights, and other tallow chandlers: Table 1; OHC, BOR1/13/1D/4; *ibid.* E229/3/D/3; *ibid.* SL35/4/3/D/1–3; *ibid.* par. reg. transcript, baptisms 1616, 1731.

<sup>180</sup> OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 166/1/6; 117/3/44; Bodl. MS dd Dawkins C26/IC13/4.

spinning, knitting, bone lace-making or the like'.<sup>181</sup> Members of the Taylor family worked as ropers from at least the 1660s,<sup>182</sup> Thomas (d. 1673) occupying premises in Goddard's Lane. After his son William (d. 1711) turned those into a public house the ropemaking business was moved to 24–25 High Street,<sup>183</sup> where it was continued by William's son Thomas (d. 1755); he also owned a hemp mill adjoining the Lower mill, and was followed by his son William (d. 1793)<sup>184</sup> and grandson Thomas.<sup>185</sup>

Clockmakers and watchmakers were present from the early 18th century, several of them Quakers. Thomas Diston (d. 1724) was in business by 1711, and Tobias Gilks took an apprentice in 1737 and repaired Wigginton church clock in 1743–4. William Atkins came from Norwich and was probably apprenticed in London, employing two apprentices of his own in Chipping Norton in the 1770s. By then John Simms was also established, the first of six generations of clock and watch makers which ended with John Edward Simms (d. 1979).<sup>186</sup>

**Service Trades and Professions** Only three servants made wills in the period,<sup>187</sup> but many more worked as apprentices or in the households of wealthier farmers, tradesmen, and retailers, some receiving bequests from their employers.<sup>188</sup> Fourteen servants were taxed at the lowest rate of 4d. in 1524,<sup>189</sup> and a gardener died in 1692.<sup>190</sup> Others engaged in service trades included a chimney sweep married in 1756,<sup>191</sup> several barbers (of whom some also made perukes or wigs),<sup>192</sup> and a hairdresser mentioned in 1781.<sup>193</sup> The White Hart inn apparently had its own barber's shop in 1675,<sup>194</sup> and the barbers John Darby (d. 1723) and Edward Freeman (d. 1765) evidently worked at the Unicorn inn.<sup>195</sup>

<sup>181</sup> TNA, PROB 11/214/314; below, social hist. (welfare).

<sup>182</sup> OHC, BOR1/13/1D/6; Bodl. MS Ch. Oxon. 2770.

<sup>183</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 75, 82, 121; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 66/4/6; TNA, PROB 11/520/101.

<sup>184</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 213.213; *ibid.* par. reg. transcript, burial 1793; *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 558; below (milling).

<sup>185</sup> CNM, Rock Hill folder, draft will of Wm Taylor 1776; OHC, SL217/1/D/1.

<sup>186</sup> C.F.C. Beeson, *Clockmaking in Oxfordshire, 1400–1850* (3rd edn, 1989), *passim*; T. Marshall, *The Quaker Clockmakers of North Oxfordshire* (2013), *passim* (asserting incorrectly that Atkins came from Brailles in Warws.: cf. TNA, RG 6/1332, marriage 1764); Bodl. MS dd Dawkins C32/ID1/28; OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 19/2/34; Cliffe, *High Street*, 35; *Chipping Norton News* (Mar. 1979).

<sup>187</sup> Table 1; OHC, MSS Wills Oxon. 30/3/36; 135/1/34; 304/4/47.

<sup>188</sup> e.g. *ibid.* 179.90; 126/3/12; TNA, PROB 11/186/249. Cf. *Oxf. Ch. Ct Deposns 1609–16*, p. 2.

<sup>189</sup> TNA, E 179/161/198.

<sup>190</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 67/2/19.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.* par. reg. transcript, marriage 1756.

<sup>192</sup> Table 1; e.g. OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 8/3/37; TNA, PROB 11/905/194; cf. OHC, Far. LII/i/1–11.

<sup>193</sup> OHC, Acc. 6779, bdl 3, no. 20.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.* MS Wills Oxon. 76/1/31; Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 74.

<sup>195</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 125/2/14; TNA, PROB 11/905/194; OHC, par. reg. transcript, burials 1732, 1765; CNM, summary of deeds for 14 Market Place.

Some barbers were also surgeons,<sup>196</sup> and surgeons, apothecaries, and physicians (some recorded from the 1580s) made up the bulk of an emerging class of professionals in the town, several of them wealthy and influential.<sup>197</sup> Less reputable practitioners presumably prompted a manor court order in 1731 banning quack doctors from setting up stalls at the town's markets and fairs.<sup>198</sup> The apothecary Samuel Farmer (d. 1683) issued a trade token and kept a shop stocked with £95-worth of drugs and medical equipment,<sup>199</sup> while William Bulley (d. by 1764) left his apothecary son John (d. 1788) all his medicines, gallipots, and utensils.<sup>200</sup> Charles Heynes (d. 1799) was one of four surgeons and apothecaries practising in the town c.1790, of whom two (including Heynes) were corporation members.<sup>201</sup> Lawyers included the attorney John Lock (d. 1770) and his successor Theophilus Walford,<sup>202</sup> while the scrivener John Wakefield (d. 1782) presumably also worked in the legal profession, and like Walford served as town clerk.<sup>203</sup> Auctioneers listed in 1784 and c.1790 included the draper Richard Wagstaff,<sup>204</sup> and by the 1790s three private banks operated in the town, one of them purchasing Lower Haddon manor near Bampton in 1793.<sup>205</sup>

## Economic Life in the Nineteenth Century

Industry in 19th-century Chipping Norton was transformed by the arrival of the railway in 1855, which not only fuelled the rapid industrialization of woollen cloth manufacture at two large textile mills developed by William Bliss & Son, but also enabled the expansion and mechanization (using steam power) of a brewery established by the wine merchant and maltster William Hitchman in 1850. By 1876 clothmaking was Chipping Norton's 'staple' (in a town which had had no distinguishing trade in 1842 and 'few facilities for manufactures' ten years later),<sup>206</sup> and by 1881 Bliss's mills employed almost 400 inhabitants, more than a quarter of all working townspeople.<sup>207</sup> Alongside, Chipping Norton largely retained its

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<sup>196</sup> CNM, summary of deeds for 1 Middle Row; OHC, Acc. 6779, bdl 2, nos. 3–4.

<sup>197</sup> Table 1; OHC and TNA, Chipping Norton wills and inventories; OHC, par. reg. transcript, burial 1589, *ibid.* monumental inscriptions transcript, E39, H16, I15–16, X25, X30.

<sup>198</sup> OHC, BOR1/3/A1/1.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.* MS Wills Oxon. 23/3/24; Milne, *Oxon. Tokens*, 7, 36.

<sup>200</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 9/3/13; TNA, PROB 11/1167/277.

<sup>201</sup> TNA, PROB 11/1332/130; OHC, monumental inscriptions transcript, X30; *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 556–8.

<sup>202</sup> TNA, PROB 11/959/398; Oxf. Jnl Syn. 15 Dec. 1759, 31 Oct. 1770, 9 Dec. 1771; *Bailey's Brit. Dir.* (1784).

<sup>203</sup> TNA, PROB 11/1091/111; Oxf. Jnl Syn. 17 Oct. 1767, 9 Dec. 1771.

<sup>204</sup> *Bailey's Brit. Dir.* (1784); *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 558.

<sup>205</sup> OHC, E40/2/D/28–35; *ibid.* Far. LII/iii/1; *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 557; *VCH Oxon.* XIII, 87–8.

<sup>206</sup> *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876); *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842); *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852).

<sup>207</sup> Chipping Norton Family History Group, *Memories of the Mill in the Valley* (2009), 42–57; TNA, RG 11/1520.

existing mix of crafts and trades, characterized by hospitality (no longer reliant on coaching after 1855), leatherworking (especially gloving and shoemaking), and retailing, supplemented by a few new small-scale industries such as coach-building, iron-founding, and printing. Professions and services expanded to cater for a growing population, and agriculture remained strong, reflected in the town's continued markets and fairs.<sup>208</sup> By the end of the century Chipping Norton was additionally known for its gloving, which employed 'a good number of men and women', while a co-operative society (established in 1866) was also proving successful.<sup>209</sup>

### **Woollen Cloth Manufacture**

By 1800 Chipping Norton's foremost (though not only) cloth manufacturer was William Bliss (d. 1825), who began the move, continued by his sons, from cottage-based manual industry to mechanized factory production.<sup>210</sup> An important step was the purchase in 1804 of a malthouse on the south side of New Street, which was converted into the firm's 'upper mill', with a horse gin driving machinery including carding engines. That was followed in 1810 by acquisition of a water-powered flour mill south-west of the town, which became Bliss's 'lower mill' and was used for fulling and spinning,<sup>211</sup> although in drier periods cloth had instead to be fulled at Swinbrook (on the river Windrush near Burford). In 1816, when ill health forced Bliss to retire, he handed over the firm to his eldest son Robert, who emigrated to America in 1839. Business, whilst successful in 1819, was reportedly 'on the decline' in 1831.<sup>212</sup>

The company's fortunes were improved by Robert's younger brother William (d. 1883), who headed it from 1838, and from 1865 traded as William Bliss & Son in partnership with his son William. The enterprise he took over initially employed c.50 people, most of them domestic spinners or weavers, although 11 people (6 male and 5 female, all aged 13–17) worked at the lower or upper mills, the former housing eight water-powered machines, and the upper another eight machines powered by what was then the only steam engine in any Oxfordshire textile factory.<sup>213</sup> The main products were still waggon-tilts and

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<sup>208</sup> Below (mkts).

<sup>209</sup> *British Industries Business Review* (1895), 32; cf. *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1903).

<sup>210</sup> Unless indicated, this section based on: W. Bliss, 'History of William Bliss & Son's Woollen Manufactory, 1757–1877' (copy of MS, c.1877, in OHC, Acc. 2585); Coleman, 'Wm Bliss'; Evans, 'Bliss Mills'; R.L. Evans, 'Dunstan House, Penhurst and the Upper Bliss Mill', *Top. Oxon.* 21 (1976–7), 3–8; H. Hurrell, *The Bliss Mill, Chipping Norton: Industrial Lancashire in the Cotswolds* (1996); Meades, *Hist.* 89–91; Eddershaw, *Story*, 88–92.

<sup>211</sup> Below, agric. (milling). Confusingly, the mill was formerly known as 'Upper mill' from its position on the stream.

<sup>212</sup> Brewer, *Oxon.* 499; Lewis, *Topog. Dict. Eng.* (1831 edn), III, 417.

<sup>213</sup> *First Rep. of Commissioners appointed to inquire into Munic. Corpns of Eng. and Wales: Appendices pt 1* (Parl. Papers 1835 (116), xxiii), p. 36; *Returns of Mills and Factories which have*

horse cloths, although by 1842 the firm also made tweeds,<sup>214</sup> which it developed in partnership with the London draper James Locke. By 1854 Bliss had a London warehouse,<sup>215</sup> and the company soon gained an international reputation built on awards won at British and overseas trade exhibitions for its expanding range of tweed suits, horse cloths, military serges, and woollen cloaks, rugs, and shawls. By 1871 those products were 'renowned in both hemispheres' and had 'given prominence and importance to a hitherto obscure locality'.<sup>216</sup>



William Bliss (d. 1883), left, and the upper (New Street) mill, right.

Increased production was achieved through rapid expansion both of the company's workforce (to c.150 in 1852 and to c.560 in 1871),<sup>217</sup> and of its two Chipping Norton mills, in which all stages of cloth production were brought together, bringing an end to outworking. The upper mill was enlarged in 1851, when a steam-powered carding room and a power-loom shed were built, and the lower mill was rebuilt and adapted for coal-fired steam power in 1855, coinciding with the arrival of the railway, for which Bliss had long campaigned. That brought supplies of coal (c.2,500 tons a year by 1862)<sup>218</sup> and wool (mostly imported from British colonies) directly to sidings beside the lower mill, which was further expanded in 1863–5 to form a substantial six-storey building with ancillary structures including a dyehouse, weaving shed, office, and manager's house. An office block facing New Street was erected at the upper mill in 1862. By 1867 the annual wage bill stood at £15,000 and

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*Neglected to Transmit their Returns to Inspectors, 1837–8* (Parl. Papers 1839 (41), xlii), pp. 126–9; cf. Hurrell, *Bliss Mill*, 2; A. Plummer, *The Witney Blanket Industry* (1934), 107.

<sup>214</sup> *Robson's Dir. Oxon.* (1839); *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842).

<sup>215</sup> *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1854); although Bliss himself gave the date 1860 for its establishment: Bliss, 'History'.

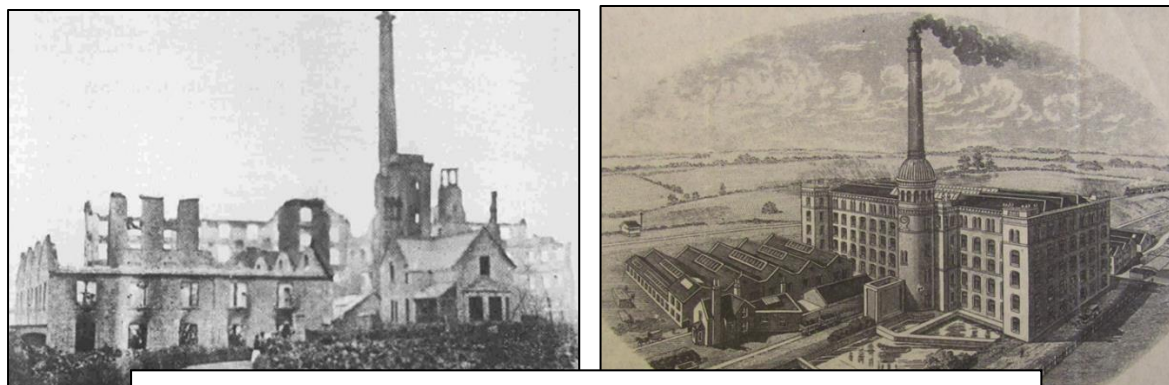
<sup>216</sup> Kirtland, *Memorials*, 52.

<sup>217</sup> *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852); Kirtland, *Memorials*, 52.

<sup>218</sup> TNA, RAIL 173/73.



the number of workers at 505, of whom 234 were women and 67 children, although none was employed under 13 years of age. Weekly wages averaged between 25s. and 55s. and most workers were paid by the piece, with annual bonuses given for ‘the largest quantity of the best work’. Company housing (cottages with gardens) was available to rent, and employees also benefited from educational, social, and welfare provision supported by the Bliss family, who claimed good relations with their workers, ‘master and servants having always worked together as one family for the good of all’.<sup>219</sup>



The lower mill: after the fire of 1872 (left) and as rebuilt in 1872–3.

In 1872 the company suffered a serious setback when fire destroyed the lower mill, killing three men. However, redundancies were avoided by running the upper mill day and night in double shifts, and within a year the lower mill had been rebuilt on a grander scale to designs by George Woodhouse.<sup>220</sup> By 1877 both mills together produced 25,000 yards of tweed cloth a week using 15,000 spindles, 130 carding-engines, and 250 power-looms.<sup>221</sup> Nonetheless the increasing popularity of Scottish tweeds, coupled with the financial burden of rebuilding the lower mill and a general downturn in British industry, meant that the company became less profitable in the 1880s–90s, when the third William Bliss, who succeeded his father in 1883, struggled to maintain it. Over one weekend in 1893 the entire workforce was laid off and only 300 re-engaged, the upper (New Street) mill being sold off later that year.<sup>222</sup> The reduced firm became a Limited company in 1895, with a board of directors, and the Blisses left both the business and the town in 1896, when William Bliss & Son Ltd came under the control of the Metropolitan Bank, with James Hawkyard and Arthur Dunstan as its principal directors.

<sup>219</sup> *Reports on Paris Universal Exhibition, 1867 Volume VI* (Parl. Papers 1867–8 (3969), xxx), pp. 33–100; below, social hist. (1800–1914).

<sup>220</sup> Above, town bldgs; *Oxon. Weekly News*, 14 Feb. 1872, 12 Feb. 1873.

<sup>221</sup> *Brit. Trade Jnl*, 1 May 1877; *Oxf. Chron.* 21 Jul. 1877.

<sup>222</sup> Cf. OHC, CH/CN/VI/1–4.

## Other Trades and Industries, 1800–1900

The census of 1851 provides a snapshot of other trades and industries in the town (Table 2), before factory-based woollen cloth manufacture became dominant later in the century. Out of more than 1,200 inhabitants whose occupations were recorded, the largest proportion (22 per cent) provided services, with servants alone accounting for 16 per cent of those in work, and for two fifths of all females with recorded occupations. Next came agriculture and retail (both 15 per cent), followed by leatherworking and shoemaking (11 per cent). Other sectors each employed under 10 per cent of workers, including woollen cloth manufacture (7 per cent), in which 43 women were engaged, although only one as a weaver. Several such women may have been domestic workers, along with 58 recorded dressmakers and milliners and most of the glovers and shoe-binders. Particularly significant individual employers (other than Bliss & Son) included the shoemaker Henry Greenwood with 93 workers, the shoemaker Samuel Williams with 10, the carpenter Charles Young with 7, and the roper Thomas Keck with 6.<sup>223</sup>

Table 2: Table of occupations recorded in Chipping Norton township in the 1851 census (excluding visitors and workhouse inmates). \* Some shoe-binders, glovers, and clothworkers may equally belong under Domestic Work

	Male	Female	Total	% of Total
<b>Agriculture:</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>15</b>
Agricultural Labourers	166	-	166	
Farmers	12	-	12	
Others	12	1	13	
<b>Building Trades:</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>7</b>
Masons, Stonemasons	28	-	28	
Carpenters, Joiners	24	-	24	
Others	35	-	35	
<b>Domestic Work:*</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>4</b>
Dressmakers	-	44	44	
Milliners	-	14	14	
<b>Innkeeping, Malting, &amp; Brewing:</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3</b>
Innkeepers, Hotel Keepers, Victuallers	22	1	23	
Others	8	3	11	
<b>Leatherworking &amp; Shoemaking:*</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>11</b>
Bootmakers, Cordwainers, Shoemakers	58	-	58	
Shoe-binders	-	37	37	
Glovers	13	15	28	
Others	8	5	13	

<sup>223</sup> TNA, HO 107/1732.

	Male	Female	Total	% of Total
<b>Metalworking &amp; Other Crafts:</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>5</b>
Coach-makers	10	-	10	
Others	53	2	55	
<b>Non-Agricultural Labourers:</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Professions:</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>5</b>
Schoolteachers, Governesses	4	17	21	
Clerks (office)	10	-	10	
Others	25	-	25	
<b>Retail Trades:</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>15</b>
Tailors	33	4	37	
Bakers	19	1	20	
Butchers	15	-	15	
Grocers	11	2	13	
Shop Assistants	6	5	11	
Dealers, Hawkers, Higglers	9	1	10	
Drapers	7	3	10	
Others	47	21	68	
<b>Services:</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>22</b>
Servants (mainly domestic)	40	157	197	
Grooms, Ostlers	21	-	21	
Laundresses	-	14	14	
Charwomen	-	10	10	
Others	29	-	29	
<b>Woollen Cloth Manufacture:*</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>7</b>
Clothworkers (mainly in factory)	19	42	61	
Weavers	29	1	30	
Others	2	-	2	
<b>Miscellaneous Occupations:</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>1243</b>	<b>100</b>

**Inns, Malting, and Brewing** Eighteen premises were licensed in 1821,<sup>224</sup> and around 20 licensed inns, hotels, and public houses existed for the rest of the 19th century, with a further 11 beer retailers by 1895 (when there was also a Temperance hotel).<sup>225</sup> Two or three maltsters operated at any one time in the early decades of the 19th century,<sup>226</sup> members of the Atkins family from a 'substantial malthouse' erected behind 8–9 Market Street between 1809 and 1818, and converted into a gentleman's residence (Old Manse) in 1842–3.<sup>227</sup> By

<sup>224</sup> OHC, BOR1/3/A3/3.

<sup>225</sup> *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847–77 edns); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns); Lewis, *Inns*. For temperance hotel, cf. Eddershaw, *Story*, 110.

<sup>226</sup> *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *Robson's Dir. Oxon.* (1839).

<sup>227</sup> CNM, summaries of deeds for 8–9 Market Street; TNA, PROB 11/1883/396; *Oxf. Jnl*, 10 Aug. 1816, 4 Oct. 1823.

then the town's malting trade was dominated by William Simkins Hitchman, a wine, spirits, and hop merchant who had inherited the West Street business of his father James (d. 1830).<sup>228</sup>



Advertising poster (c.1885), showing the Albion Street brewery (top) and the West Street off-licence and offices (below). Original in Chipping Norton Museum.

In 1831 William erected 'an extensive range of building for a new malting concern' on Albion Street (then called Back Lane), followed by two large malthouses in 1832 and 1833,<sup>229</sup> and by 1845 the business of William Hitchman & Co. sent c.3,000 qrs of malt each year to Birmingham.<sup>230</sup> In 1849–50 he added a commercial brewery to the maltings,<sup>231</sup> which employed 58 men in 1871,<sup>232</sup> and produced pale ale and stout sold by agents across Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire.<sup>233</sup> At William's death in 1881 the firm (including its wine and spirits retail business) passed to his son Alfred William Spence Hitchman,<sup>234</sup> who in 1885 built a bottling plant at the brewery, followed soon after by an aerated mineral water manufactory,<sup>235</sup> both equipped with 'the best-improved steam-power machinery and appliances'.<sup>236</sup> In 1890 Hitchman & Co. (including 37 tied public houses, 24 of them freehold) was sold for £77,000, becoming a Limited company with a board of

<sup>228</sup> *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847–77 edns); TNA, PROB 11/1773/396; Lewis, *Inns*, 49, 67; above (1500–1800).

<sup>229</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 29 Oct. 1831, 5 Oct. 1833.

<sup>230</sup> TNA, RAIL 558/119.

<sup>231</sup> *Oxf. Chron.* 6 Apr. 1850; *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852); Lewis, *Inns*, 67.

<sup>232</sup> TNA, RG 10/1458.

<sup>233</sup> Advertising poster (c.1885) reproduced in Meades, *Hist.* 94.

<sup>234</sup> Lewis, *Inns*, 67.

<sup>235</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 27 May 1885, 13 Aug. 1890; *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1887).

<sup>236</sup> *British Industries Business Review* (1895), 33.

directors, of which Hitchman remained chair until his death in 1912.<sup>237</sup> In 1898 it joined with the Stratford-upon-Avon brewer Flower & Sons Ltd to acquire the rival firm of Lardner & Sons, based in Little Compton (Warws.).<sup>238</sup>

**Leatherworking, Gloving, and Shoemaking** Tanning continued to play a significant role in the town's economy. In 1822 Richard Bricknell's Church Lane tannery included a warehouse, three bark barns, a bark mill, and 60 vats capable of holding 1,000 hides, although by 1829 it was disused.<sup>239</sup> The Tinson family's tannery in the same street was described in 1828 as a fellmonger's yard with a beam house, dryery, pelting house, water pool, and lime pits, but that too evidently ceased soon afterwards,<sup>240</sup> and a fellmonger's yard with six vats in West Street was last recorded in 1830.<sup>241</sup> Thereafter tanning became focused on Diston's Lane, where separate tanner's and fellmonger's yards established before 1830 were combined into a single tannery by John Phillips in 1854.<sup>242</sup>

In 1874 the Diston's Lane tannery was sold to the glove-making firm of B. Bowen & Son.<sup>243</sup> That was established in 1834 by Benjamin Bowen, whose brother Thomas had settled in the town in 1825,<sup>244</sup> briefly leased the West Street fellmonger's yard,<sup>245</sup> and by 1828 employed people to make gloves,<sup>246</sup> being listed two years later as a wholesale glover.<sup>247</sup> The Bowens came originally from Worcester, and other family members soon followed, John Bowen's separate Over Norton gloving business employing c.200 people in 1852. A similar number may have worked for Benjamin, although most were presumably domestic workers in surrounding villages, and in 1851 only 28 townspeople (15 of them women) were recorded as glovers.<sup>248</sup>

Benjamin (d. 1879)<sup>249</sup> was succeeded by his son James, who in 1895 specialized in patent cut-leather driving gloves, the relevant patent having been obtained in 1868. Military

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.; *Oxf. Chron.* 29 Mar. 1890; *Oxon. Weekly News*, 29 May 1912; Lewis, *Inns*, 67;

<sup>238</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 15 Jun. 1898, 23 Nov. 1898; Lewis, *Inns*, 68.

<sup>239</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 22 Jun. 1822, 2 May 1829.

<sup>240</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 276/3/37; *Oxf. Jnl*, 24 May 1828; cf. TNA, HO 107/879.

<sup>241</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 21 Sept. 1822, 9 Oct. 1830.

<sup>242</sup> CNM, summary of deeds for 34 Diston's Lane; *Oxf. Jnl*, 18 Feb. 1854; *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1830); *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1854).

<sup>243</sup> CNM, summary of deeds for 34 Diston's Lane. For a fire there, *Oxf. Jnl*, 8 Oct. 1876.

<sup>244</sup> *British Industries Business Review* (1895), 32; VCH Oxon. II, 258; *Chipping Norton Official Guide* (6th edn, c.1930), 14; cf. OHC, par. reg. transcript, marriage 1826.

<sup>245</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 9 Oct. 1830; above.

<sup>246</sup> OHC, Cal. QS, II, p. 413b; *Oxf. Jnl*, 27 Sept. 1828. Cf. *First Rep. of Commissioners appointed to inquire into Munic. Corpns.*, p. 36, claiming involvement of some inhabitants in the 'Woodstock glove trade' in 1833, although no specific link to any Woodstock glovers has been found.

<sup>247</sup> *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1830).

<sup>248</sup> Table 2; below, Over Norton, econ. hist; cf. N.L. Leyland and J.E. Troughton, *Glovemaking in West Oxfordshire* (Oxf. City and County Museum Publication No. 4, 1974).

<sup>249</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 28 May 1879.

gloves also formed 'an important part of the manufacture', together with ladies' gloves, buckskin braces, doeskin breeches, cash bags, gaiters, leggings, and anklets. All the leather was tanned and dressed at the Diston's Lane tannery, with the products hand-finished and stored at the High Street factory, and in total the business employed 'fully 300 hands, including outworkers in the neighbouring villages'.<sup>250</sup> A second glove-making business, established by the brothers John and David Stayt in Over Norton in 1866, moved to premises in Churchill Road in the 1870s,<sup>251</sup> and by 1889 they too employed 300 female outworkers, each of whom sewed around 12 pairs of gloves a week earning 4d. or 5d. per pair.<sup>252</sup>

Other leatherworkers included numerous boot- and shoemakers, one or two curriers, and up to three saddlers and harness-makers.<sup>253</sup> Perhaps the largest shoe manufactory was that of Henry Greenwood, who came from Finsbury (Middx) and was a shoemaker, shopkeeper, and horse-hair sock manufacturer in New Street by 1847. In 1851 he employed 93 people (50 of them women), many as shoe-binders working at home, but production ceased following his death in 1853.<sup>254</sup> By 1863 the saddler and harness-maker Joseph Jeffries was also a boot- and shoemaker in New Street, moving to High Street in 1875;<sup>255</sup> following his death in 1891 the combined saddlery and footwear business passed to his son Joseph, who in 1895 was also a coal merchant.<sup>256</sup> Another long-lived saddlery business was that of Richard Minchin in Middle Row, established shortly before 1861 and continued until his son Richard's retirement in 1920.<sup>257</sup>

**Metalworking and Other Crafts** Up to five or six smiths (some also machinists and millwrights) worked in the town throughout the 19th century, often alongside two or three braziers, farriers, ironmongers, and tinplate workers.<sup>258</sup> The ironmonger William Adams was

<sup>250</sup> *British Industries Business Review* (1895), 32; *Gloves: letters patent to Benjamin Bowen and James Benjamin Bowen, both of Chipping Norton in the county of Oxford, for the invention of 'improvements in the manufacture of gloves'* (1868): copy in OHC; *London Gaz.* 10 Jan. 1868, p. 110.

<sup>251</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 27 Sept. 1911; *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876); TNA, RG 11/1520; Leyland and Troughton, *Glovemaking*, 15.

<sup>252</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 5 Jun. 1889.

<sup>253</sup> TNA, HO 107/1732; *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847–77 edns); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns).

<sup>254</sup> *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847); TNA, HO 107/1732; *ibid.* PROB 11/2177/329; CNM, summary of deeds for Finsbury Place.

<sup>255</sup> *Dutton, Allen, & Co.'s Dir. Oxon.* (1863); *Oxon. Weekly News*, 17 Mar. 1875; Cliffe, *High Street*, 44–5.

<sup>256</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 4 Feb. 1891; *British Industries Business Review* (1895), 33.

<sup>257</sup> TNA, RG 9/911; CNM, summary of deeds for 1A Middle Row; *pace* VCH Oxon. II, 255, quoting a date of 1795 for the origin of the business. Cf. a photograph in Meades, *Hist.* 80, where 'est. 1795' appears painted on the building façade above the Minchin shop.

<sup>258</sup> *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847–77 edns); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns).

also a gunsmith in 1852,<sup>259</sup> and sold part of his business in 1873–4 to Robert Rowell, who in 1876 was an ironmonger, gunsmith, gasfitter, tinplate worker, brazier, bellhanger, and oil and colour merchant located in High Street. A similar longstanding ironmongery business, also in High Street, belonged from c.1882 to Adams' former shop assistant George Padbury, and both he and Rowell continued until their deaths in 1894, Rowell also (by 1887) casting iron and brass in a foundry probably behind his shop.<sup>260</sup>

Small manufacturers included a parchment-maker in 1819,<sup>261</sup> a rake-maker in 1820,<sup>262</sup> and after 1850 a few basket-makers, cabinet-makers (some also upholsterers), chair-makers, sieve-makers, and umbrella-makers. A few coopers presumably worked mainly for Hitchman's brewery,<sup>263</sup> and successive members of the Keck family made rope,<sup>264</sup> from c.1845 in their ropewalk at 20 High Street, which employed six people in 1851.<sup>265</sup> Clock- and watchmakers included some who doubled as jewellers,<sup>266</sup> in particular Samuel Simms (d. 1869) of 13 High Street, who in 1849 supplied a clock for the new town hall.<sup>267</sup> Coach-building workshops were established by the wheelwrights John Beechey and John Endall in the 1830s, and by Edwin Gardner before 1851, when both he and Beechey employed five men.<sup>268</sup> Their respective businesses continued into the early 20th century, located in Churchill and London Roads.<sup>269</sup>

**Retail Trades** Nineteenth-century shops, most of which clustered around the market place, typically included several selling groceries and other foodstuffs, furniture, homeware, drapery, haberdashery, and clothing, with a lesser number of chemists, stationers, and tobacconists. More unusual retailers were a musical instrument dealer (in 1842), and a cycle agent, a cattle ointment manufacturer, and two photographers in 1895.<sup>270</sup> Significant businesses before 1850 included those of the grocer Joseph King (d. 1825, owner also of

<sup>259</sup> *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852).

<sup>260</sup> H. Hurrell, *The Hub Ironworks, Chipping Norton: a hundred years of iron casting in Chipping Norton* (2001), 1–9; *British Industries Business Review* (1895), 34; *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1887).

<sup>261</sup> OHC, Far. LII/v/11.

<sup>262</sup> CNM, summary of deeds for 62–66 West Street.

<sup>263</sup> TNA, HO 107/1732; *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1854–77 edns); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns).

<sup>264</sup> TNA, PROB 11/1718/450; PROB 11/1830/163; e.g. *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1830); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1895).

<sup>265</sup> Cliffe, *High Street*, 53; TNA, HO 107/1732. Cf. *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847).

<sup>266</sup> e.g. *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847–77 edns); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns).

<sup>267</sup> Marshall, *Quaker Clockmakers*, 176–80; Cliffe, *High Street*, 35; *Banbury Guardian*, 3 May 1849.

<sup>268</sup> *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1830); *Robson's Dir. Oxon.* (1839); TNA, HO 107/1732.

<sup>269</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1903).

<sup>270</sup> *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847–77 edns); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns).



Salford mill),<sup>271</sup> the wine merchants John Kingdon (d. 1818) and his son John (d. 1841),<sup>272</sup> the hatter Benjamin Chadband (d. 1851),<sup>273</sup> and the printer, bookseller, and stationer George Manby Smith (d. 1854), whose firm, started at 11 High Street in 1809, was continued by his son George Bloomfield Smith.<sup>274</sup> In 1869 another printer and bookseller, W.C. Hayes (d. 1911), established the *Oxfordshire Weekly News*, which continued to be printed in the town until 1928.<sup>275</sup> Larger shops in 1876 included A.A. Webb's grocery, drapery, upholstery, and furniture store at 13 Market Place, while Martin Pearson of High Street was a draper, silk mercer, hosier, haberdasher, tailor, and funeral furnisher.<sup>276</sup> By 1895 the Market Place grocer and baker W.C. Shrimpton had 'one of the best-known businesses in the town', and George Hood owned a drapery, haberdashery, and clothing shop also in Market Place, which claimed a 50-year existence. The chemist W.H. Stephan was the proprietor of 'Stephan's Celebrated Liver Pills'.<sup>277</sup>

The Chipping Norton Co-operative and Coal Society was established by eight individuals in 1866, initially dealing in coal brought in by railway before it opened a bakery and a grocery shop on West Street by 1869. With 143 members and a turnover of more than £3,000 in 1870, it made deliveries to surrounding villages by horse and cart. In 1885 the society bought Glyme farm for food production, and the opening of a purpose-built shop lit by electricity at 3–4 High Street in 1891 helped increase annual sales to almost £25,000, and membership to nearly 1,000. Unlike neighbouring co-operative societies it did not seek to expand by opening branch stores, and though one at Moreton-in-Marsh was taken over from Moreton's own failed society in 1898, it saw poor trade and was closed in 1902.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> TNA, PROB 11/1702/385; below, Salford, econ. hist.

<sup>272</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 2 Jan. 1819; TNA, PROB 11/1954/45; Lewis, *Inns*, 17.

<sup>273</sup> TNA, PROB 11/2148/346; OHC, par. reg. transcript, burial 1851.

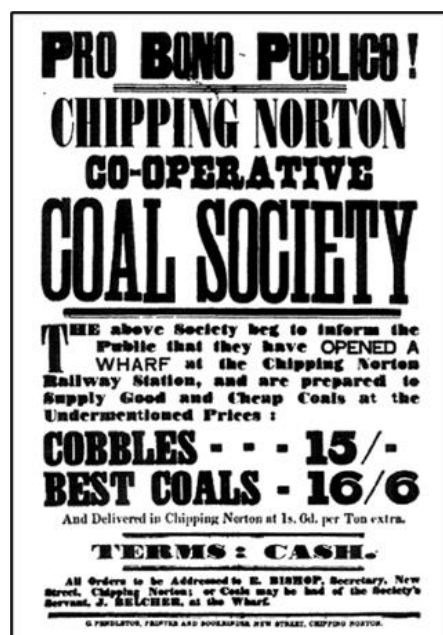
<sup>274</sup> OHC, QSD/Pr/1; TNA, PROB 11/2207/188; *Oxf. Jnl*, 30 Sept. 1854; *British Industries Business Review* (1895), 34.

<sup>275</sup> Eddershaw, *Story*, 126; *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876); *Oxon. Weekly News*, 22 Feb. 1911.

<sup>276</sup> *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876).

<sup>277</sup> *British Industries Business Review* (1895), 33–4.

<sup>278</sup> M. Bee and P.W. Tyrrell, *The Chipping Norton Co-operative Society 1866–1968* (2000); M. Bee, 'Pro bono publico: the Chipping Norton Co-operative Society, 1866–1968', *Family and Community History* 4:2 (2001), 111–23; OHC, B36. For Glyme fm, below, agric.



Handbill of 1866 announcing the formation of the Chipping Norton Co-operative Society (left) and the co-op shop at 3–4 High Street opened in 1891 (below).



**Building Trades** In 1815 the builder Daniel Hodgkins of New Street dissolved a business partnership with his son Timothy,<sup>279</sup> who was still a builder (as well as a cabinet-maker, upholsterer, and auctioneer) in 1842.<sup>280</sup> By 1851 some 28 stonemasons and 23 carpenters or joiners were resident, of whom six and four respectively were masters, including the gravestone-cutter Richard Meades.<sup>281</sup> The stonemasons Henry and Charles Burden worked together as builders by 1876,<sup>282</sup> employing 25 men in 1881 and constructing several town buildings, including the new co-operative store in 1890–1 and a new national schoolroom in 1896.<sup>283</sup> The contemporary builders James Compton, Sidney Lewis, and Charles Young were also carpenters,<sup>284</sup> Lewis employing seven men and a boy in 1881,<sup>285</sup> and Young owning a large timber yard on Albion Street which he sold in 1893.<sup>286</sup> Fewer men (often four or five at any time) worked as plasterers and slaters, and around the same number were painters, plumbers, and glaziers;<sup>287</sup> of those George Malins (d. 1851) repaired the church roof in 1839,<sup>288</sup> while his son John dealt also in china, glass, and earthenware.<sup>289</sup>

<sup>279</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 9 Sept. 1815.

<sup>280</sup> *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842).

<sup>281</sup> TNA, HO 107/879; HO 107/1732; S. Weston, 'Stone masons of Chipping Norton 1851', *Oxon. Family Historian* 9:32 (1995), 130–2.

<sup>282</sup> Weston, 'Stone masons', 131; *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876).

<sup>283</sup> TNA, RG 11/1520; *Oxf. Times*, 28 Jun. 1890, 12 Dec. 1896.

<sup>284</sup> *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876).

<sup>285</sup> TNA, RG 11/1520.

<sup>286</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 18 Mar. 1893; OHC, Far XXVII/12–29.

<sup>287</sup> e.g. *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847–77 edns); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns).

<sup>288</sup> OHC, PAR64/11/L2/3; *ibid.* MS Wills Oxon. 270/1/22; *Oxf. Jnl*, 16 Aug. 1851.

<sup>289</sup> *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns).

A brick kiln off Churchill Road (recorded from 1824) employed two or three brickmakers in the 1840s–50s,<sup>290</sup> and five men (all members of the Howse family) were thatchers in 1851.<sup>291</sup>

**Professions and Services** Professional occupations grew further after 1800, with solicitors and surgeons well represented on the corporation and (after 1835) the town council and mayoralty.<sup>292</sup> For much of the 19th century there were usually three or four solicitors,<sup>293</sup> of whom Thomas Tilsley (d. 1838) and Abram Rawlinson (d. 1875) were succeeded by their sons George Fawler Tilsley (d. 1870) and Abram Rawlinson (d. 1910),<sup>294</sup> while Weston Aplin (d. 1872) served as town clerk for more than 50 years.<sup>295</sup> By 1839 G.F. Tilsley had entered into partnership with Henry Field Wilkins (d. 1891),<sup>296</sup> whose family firm, which became Wilkins & Toy and later Wilkins, Toy, & Farrant, survived into the 1930s.<sup>297</sup> Members of the Heynes family continued as surgeons in the early 19th century,<sup>298</sup> later doctors including John Farwell (d. 1879) and Thomas Hopgood (d. 1880),<sup>299</sup> whose ‘medical hall’ at 15 High Street was open by 1842.<sup>300</sup> A veterinary surgeon was resident in 1839, and one usually practised later in the century.<sup>301</sup> Early 19th-century auctioneers included an ironmonger and a cabinet-maker, and in 1842 there was an estate agent,<sup>302</sup> while a prominent later auctioneer and estate agent was the coal merchant Frederick Wheeler (d. 1905).<sup>303</sup>

Two Chipping Norton banks established c.1790 failed in 1815–16: first William Atkins & Sons, following the theft of banknotes worth £15,000,<sup>304</sup> and then Corgan, Paget, &

<sup>290</sup> Bryant, *Oxon. Map* (1824); *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842); TNA, HO 107/879; HO 107/1732. The brickmaker Jos. Williams may have worked there as early as 1816: OHC, par. reg. transcript, baptism 1816.

<sup>291</sup> TNA, HO 107/1732.

<sup>292</sup> OHC, BOR1/5/A1/2–5. Cf. *Robson's Dir. Oxon.* (1839); *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852); *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1891).

<sup>293</sup> *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847–77 edns); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns).

<sup>294</sup> OHC, monumental inscriptions transcript, C82, H52, X25, X52.

<sup>295</sup> *Witney Express*, 14 Mar. 1872.

<sup>296</sup> *Robson's Dir. Oxon.* (1839); *Oxf. Chron.* 28 Nov. 1891.

<sup>297</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1895–1931 edns).

<sup>298</sup> *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *Robson's Dir. Oxon.* (1839).

<sup>299</sup> *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852); *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876); OHC, monumental inscriptions transcript, H55, F47.

<sup>300</sup> Cliffe, *High Street*, 40; *Oxf. Chron.* 14 May 1842.

<sup>301</sup> *Robson's Dir. Oxon.* (1839); *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1895).

<sup>302</sup> *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *Pigot's Nat. & Comm. Dir. Oxon.* (1842); above (building trades).

<sup>303</sup> *Harrod's Dir. Oxon.* (1876); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–1903 edns); *Oxon. Weekly News*, 26 Apr. 1905.

<sup>304</sup> *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 557; *Morning Chron.* 20 Jun. 1815; *London Gaz.* 15 Jul. 1815.

Matthews,<sup>305</sup> leaving the town without a bank.<sup>306</sup> By 1830 the grocers John and Charles Decimus Matthews were agents for the Banbury Old Bank, however,<sup>307</sup> and an agency for the Stourbridge & Kidderminster Bank was established in 1834 by the drapers Thomas Parsons and Thomas Rolls. The Banbury Old Bank branch closed shortly before 1850, while the Stourbridge & Kidderminster Bank was absorbed into the Birmingham Banking Company in 1880, subsequently becoming part of the Metropolitan and (in 1914) the Midland Bank,<sup>308</sup> and moving in 1892 into purpose-built premises at 18–19 Market Place.<sup>309</sup> The Witney bank Gilletts & Clinch (later Gillett & Co. of Banbury and Oxford) opened a branch at 15 High Street in 1880, taken over by Barclays Bank in 1919.<sup>310</sup>

The majority of those in service occupations were domestic servants, including a few gardeners, ostlers, and coachmen.<sup>311</sup> Others included barbers and hairdressers (one of whom was also a 'bird stuffer' or taxidermist), carriers, charwomen, chimney-sweeps, laundresses, and livery stable keepers.<sup>312</sup> Up to seven small private schools operated at any time, many of them run by female teachers,<sup>313</sup> and two men in the 1880s–90s advertised as tutors of music and shorthand.<sup>314</sup>

**Gas Manufacture** The town's first gasworks were built on Diston's Lane in 1836–7, run by the newly established Chipping Norton Gas and Coke Company. Its management committee included the Stroud engineer William Stears (responsible for the gasworks' construction), along with leading Chipping Norton inhabitants such as the woollen manufacturer Robert Bliss, the wine merchant William Simkins Hitchman, and the solicitor and town clerk Weston Aplin, with the banker John Matthews as treasurer, and the solicitors G.F. Tilsley and H.F. Wilkins as honorary secretaries. Its initial £2,000 capital was raised through sale of £10 shares,<sup>315</sup> and further capital was raised to fund the building of a replacement gasworks near William Bliss's tweed mill and the new railway line in 1856. The new location, besides removing the works from the town centre, allowed cheap access to

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<sup>305</sup> J. Orbell and A. Turton, *British Banking: A Guide to Historical Records* (2017), 166–7; *The Times*, 31 Jul. 1816; *London Gaz.* 3 Aug. 1816. For a banknote dated 1816, Meades, *Hist.* 88.

<sup>306</sup> Leics. RO, DG39/795.

<sup>307</sup> *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1830).

<sup>308</sup> *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847); *Slater's Dir. Oxon.* (1850); Orbell and Turton, *Brit. Banking*, 498–9; *Midland Bank in Chipping Norton: 150 years of banking 1834–1984* (1984): pamphlet in OHC.

<sup>309</sup> Above, town bldgs.

<sup>310</sup> Cliffe, *High Street*, 40; Orbell and Turton, *Brit. Banking*, 223–4, 226; *VCH Oxon.* X, 67; XIV, 97.

<sup>311</sup> e.g. TNA, HO 107/879; HO 1071732.

<sup>312</sup> *Ibid.*; *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847–77 edns); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns).

<sup>313</sup> Below, social hist. (educ.). Cf. *Pigot's Lond. & Prov. Dir.* (1823–4 and 1830 edns); *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847–77 edns); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883–95 edns).

<sup>314</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1887–95 edns).

<sup>315</sup> OHC, BOR1/28/L/1; town map (c.1840); *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852).

coal, with private sidings leased from the railway company.<sup>316</sup> The firm became a Limited company in 1858, by which time it was leasing the undertaking to Messrs Strode & Co. of London, who ran the gasworks until 1885.<sup>317</sup> A proposed purchase by the town corporation in 1884–5 fell through,<sup>318</sup> and the company continued to run the gasworks into the 20th century.<sup>319</sup>

## **Economic Life Since 1900**

Retailing saw only gradual changes in Chipping Norton in the first half of the 20th century, its co-operative society in particular going from strength to strength until its absorption into larger societies from the 1960s. Manufacturing, however, suffered from the closure of the town's gloving and leatherworking businesses and the decline of its brewery, which from 1933 produced only mineral waters and closed in 1967. Bliss's tweed mill, too, saw mixed fortunes until its closure in 1980, a bitter six-month strike in 1913–14 being followed by large military orders during the First World War, and by some later periods of resurgence. New developments included an iron foundry established in 1920, which became a medium-sized employer until its closure in 1982, while post-war fears that the town was becoming a dormitory for Oxford and Witney were partly allayed by the arrival in 1962 of Parker Knoll, whose London Road furniture factory became the town's chief employer following the tweed mill's closure. That too closed in 2004, however, prompting renewed fears for employment in the town. Later job opportunities were created by a variety of firms attracted to industrial estates and business parks on the town's fringes, while shops and businesses in the centre strove to cater for changing customer demands, driven by tourism, gentrification, and the rise of out-of-town and online shopping. By 2011 more residents (38 per cent) worked outside the town than at business premises within it (36 per cent), while the remaining 26 per cent of those in employment worked from home.<sup>320</sup>

## **Woollen Cloth Manufacture and Brewing**

The town's remaining textile mill, still operating under the name of William Bliss & Son Ltd but owned since 1896 by the Metropolitan Bank,<sup>321</sup> recovered to some extent in the first decade of the 20th century, with electric lighting installed in 1904 and electricity for

<sup>316</sup> OHC, BOR1/28/C/6, town clk to LGB 21 Aug. 1884; BOR1/28/L/3; *Oxf. Jnl* 13 and 27 Sept. 1856.

<sup>317</sup> OHC, BOR1/28/L/1; BOR1/5/A1/3, 16 Feb. 1853; BOR1/28/D/1.

<sup>318</sup> Below, local govt (utilities).

<sup>319</sup> Below (trades and indust. 1900–45).

<sup>320</sup> *Census*, 2011.

<sup>321</sup> Above (19th cent.).

machinery in 1910. Wages lagged behind those in other English woollen mills, however, and trade unionism among the workforce was met with fierce opposition from the managing director Arthur Dunstan, precipitating a strike in December 1913 involving some 237 out of c.380 workers. Of those only 100 were taken back, most after the strike had ended in June 1914. Both production and wages rose during the First World War, when the mill produced khaki cloth for the military, and in 1917 Dunstan purchased the firm of William Bliss & Son Ltd from the Midland (formerly Metropolitan) Bank, selling it in the same year to Fox Brothers & Co. Ltd of Wellington (Som.).<sup>322</sup>



The former (lower) Bliss mill photographed in 2022. The mill closed in 1980 and the building was later converted into luxury apartments.

As a subsidiary of Fox Brothers, William Bliss & Son concentrated on fine tweeds and flannels for sportswear made from Australian wool. More than 200 people were employed at the mill in the 1930s, when the business's 'flourishing condition' was attributed to its longstanding reputation.<sup>323</sup> The workforce was nearer 140 in 1977, when a mill shop opened and a night shift was introduced to cope with growing export orders, which had more than trebled since 1975 owing to increased demand from Japan, South Africa, and the USA, accounting in all for 70 per cent of all cloth made at the mill.<sup>324</sup> Only three years later, however, in 1980, economic recession forced Fox Brothers to end its Chipping Norton production, with a loss of 125 jobs.<sup>325</sup> The redundant mill was converted into luxury apartments, the first 12 of which were released for sale in 1989.<sup>326</sup>

<sup>322</sup> Eddershaw, *Story*, 111–15; M. Richardson, *Bliss Tweed Mill Strike, 1913–14: Causes, Conduct and Consequences* (2013); J. Hodgkins, *Over the Hills to Glory: Radicalism in Banburyshire, 1832–1945* (1978), 126–35; Bodl. MS Top. Oxon. c 523; *Devon & Exeter Gazette*, 13 Jan. 1917; *Oxon. Weekly News*, 3 May 1922. For the strike, below, social hist. (1800–1914).

<sup>323</sup> R.P. Beckinsale, 'Factors in the Development of the Cotswold Woollen Industry', *Geographical Jnl* 90 (1937), 358–9.

<sup>324</sup> *Oxf. Mail*, 28 Jan. 1977; *Chipping Norton News* (Feb. 1977).

<sup>325</sup> Eddershaw, *Story*, 123; *Banbury Cake*, 15 May 1980.

<sup>326</sup> Above, town bldgs; *The Times*, 30 Aug. 1989.



Hitchman & Co. Ltd remained a significant employer in the early 20th century, continuing to brew and bottle beer and to manufacture aerated water at its Albion Street brewery, and selling wines and spirits from its West Street off-licence.<sup>327</sup> The company, which in 1917 acquired Lowesmoor brewery in Worcester, amalgamated with the Banbury brewer Hunt Edmunds & Co. Ltd in 1925, the resulting company of Hunt Edmunds Hitchman Co. Ltd owning more than 300 tied houses in six counties.<sup>328</sup> Following a drop in beer sales blamed on increased taxation, all brewing at Chipping Norton was transferred to Banbury in 1933,<sup>329</sup> although mineral water was still made and bottled in Albion Street until 1967, when 30 workers lost their jobs.<sup>330</sup> The West Street office and off-licence of Hunt Edmunds (which acquired Hitchman's outright in 1951) continued until 1970, when the remaining brewery buildings were demolished.<sup>331</sup>



Hitchman's brewery workers c.1900 (left) and the Hub Ironworks (right).

### ***Iron Foundry***

The foundry business established by Robert Rowell (d. 1894) continued into the early 20th century as Rowell & Sons, run by his sons John and William in conjunction with the family's High Street ironmonger's shop.<sup>332</sup> In 1920, however, William set up a new foundry (known as the Hub Ironworks) on Albion Street, which he ran in an equal partnership with his sons Norman and Jack. Early castings included road signs as well as parts for railway signals and

<sup>327</sup> VCH Oxon. II, 264; *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1903–20 edns); cf. OHC, B19.

<sup>328</sup> L. Richmond and A. Turton, *The Brewing Industry: A Guide to Historical Records* (1990), 181; Lewis, *Inns*, 68; *Banbury Guardian*, 5 Feb. 1925.

<sup>329</sup> *Banbury Advertiser*, 6 Apr. 1933; 'Hunt Edmunds & Co. Ltd, 1896–1946': pamphlet (c.1946) in CNM, Hitchmans folder.

<sup>330</sup> Lewis, *Inns*, 68–9; *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 27 Apr. 1967.

<sup>331</sup> Richmond and Turton, *Brewing Industry*, 181; Eddershaw, *Story*, 124; Lewis, *Inns*, 49, 69. The brewery chimney had been demolished in 1948: *Chipping Norton News* (Apr. 2021).

<sup>332</sup> Above (19th cent.). This account based on Hurrell, *Hub Ironworks*; *Chipping Norton News* (Mar. 1982); *Oxf. Mail*, 27 Dec. 1985. Cf. *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1903–39 edns).

agricultural machinery, and by 1930 some 26 workers were employed, several of whom lived in company-owned housing in the town. Jack Rowell obtained the controlling share of the firm following his father's death in 1936, and during the Second World War women worked alongside men casting rocket nose-cones and mine sinking-weights.

New buildings erected at the foundry in the late 1940s included two offices, an engineering machine shop, and a canteen, and by 1950 the number of employees was 32, many of whom made railway castings. Norman Rowell died in 1960, and in 1965 his brother Jack sold the business to High Wycombe Foundry Ltd, which the following year reformed it as a Limited company called Chipping Norton Foundry Ltd. That was largely owned and controlled by Ronald Boone, who continued casting and machining at Albion Street, employing up to 40 people in the 1970s. In 1981, however, Chipping Norton Foundry Ltd was placed into voluntary liquidation and the company was sold to Newby Foundry Division Ltd, which ceased its Chipping Norton operations in 1982 when the remaining 20 workers lost their jobs. The foundry site was subsequently sold for housing.

### ***Other Trades and Industries 1900–45***

Until the Second World War Chipping Norton largely retained its late 19th-century pattern of employment, notwithstanding a decline in domestic service, an end to brewing and leatherworking, and an expansion of personal services to include a chiropodist, dentists, and opticians. The town kept a variety of retailers, and whilst some old established shops remained – notably A.A. Webb & Son (drapers) and T.K. Pettipher & Son (grocers) – others were taken over by larger chains such as International Tea Co. Stores Ltd (c.1900),<sup>333</sup> Foster Brothers Clothing Co. Ltd (1912),<sup>334</sup> and Boots the Chemist (1941).<sup>335</sup> New ventures included a photographic studio established c.1907 by Frank Packer (d. 1967) and continued until 1984 by his son Basil,<sup>336</sup> and in the 1930s an animal-feed mill was constructed near the railway station for Walter Craft & Sons Ltd.<sup>337</sup> The Chipping Norton Co-operative Society also prospered, with shops in High Street, Market Place, and West Street, the last rebuilt in 1935. Membership was 4,757 in 1939, when annual sales (totalling more than £176,000) came principally from groceries (41 per cent), bakery (12 per cent), and butchery (11 per

<sup>333</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1903–39 edns).

<sup>334</sup> OHC, CH/CN/I/1–19; *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1915).

<sup>335</sup> OHC, B107/2D/1–45; Cliffe, *High Street*, 47.

<sup>336</sup> <https://pictureoxon.com/2-0-1-b-packer.php> (accessed Nov. 2021); *Cake and Cockhorse* 10 (1987), 160.

<sup>337</sup> *Chipping Norton News* (Nov. 2014), 16.



cent). Branch stores opened in Moreton-in-Marsh in 1939 and Stow-on-the-Wold in 1942, but Glyme farm, which had consistently failed to deliver a profit, was sold in 1940.<sup>338</sup>

Hospitality remained important alongside growing tourism, with four hotels listed in 1939 (of which the Crown and Cushion and White Hart remained pre-eminent), as well as a boarding-house, 18 pubs, and three cafés. Five businesses associated with growing car use included a taxi-cab proprietor and at least two motor garages, one also dealing in cars and tractors. The cycle agent Frederick Putman made tents and hired them out to tourists, besides maintaining his ropemaking business at 20 High Street, which his father Joseph had taken over from the Kecks c.1900. Building firms were still run by members of the Burden and Lewis families, and Burbidge & Sons succeeded the Malinses as plumbers and house decorators.<sup>339</sup>

One of the greatest changes to the town's economy in the early 20th century was the demise of leatherworking. The gloving firm of B. Bowen & Son closed in 1924, having passed from James Bowen (d. 1922) to his daughter Mary, who sold off the Diston's Lane tannery in 1922.<sup>340</sup> J. & D. Stayt's glove factory on Churchill Road, run by David Stayt with his son Walter following John Stayt's death in 1911,<sup>341</sup> was bought by the Oxford Glove Factory Ltd in 1925 but closed soon after,<sup>342</sup> while Chipping Norton Glovers (established on Albion Street in 1922) lasted only around a decade.<sup>343</sup> By 1939 no leatherworkers remained, one of the last being the saddler, bootmaker, and coal merchant Joseph Jeffries, who left his business in the 1930s after more than 40 years at its head.<sup>344</sup>

New companies included successive gas and electricity firms. The Chipping Norton Gas and Coke Co. was taken over in 1906 by the Mid-Oxfordshire Gas Light and Coke Co.,<sup>345</sup> which acquired several Oxfordshire gasworks but was placed in receivership in 1910. In response the town corporation sought to buy the gas works or, if that proved impossible, to build a new one; its application for a Provisional Order was refused following a public enquiry, however, and in 1911 the gas works were taken over by the private Chipping Norton Gas Light and Coke Co Ltd, set up for that purpose by a Middlesex barrister with local family connections, and by a small group of local associates, who aimed to raise £10,000 capital in

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<sup>338</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1903–39 edns); Bee and Tyrrell, *Chipping Norton Co-op. Soc.*, 17–21; Brooks, *Pevsner N&W*, 260.

<sup>339</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1903–39 edns); Cliffe, *High Street*, 53.

<sup>340</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 11 Jan. 1922, 28 Feb. 1923; *Banbury Advertiser*, 20 Feb. 1930; CNM, summary of deeds for 34 Diston's Lane.

<sup>341</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 27 Sept. 1911, 1 Nov. 1911, 14 Jun. 1916, 15 May 1918.

<sup>342</sup> Leyland and Troughton, *Glovemaking*, 15.

<sup>343</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 8 Nov. 1922; *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1928–31 edns).

<sup>344</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1931–9 edns); Cliffe, *High Street*, 45; above (19th cent.).

<sup>345</sup> *London Gaz.* 21 Nov. 1905, 24 Aug. 1906; OHC, BOR1/28/L/4–5.

£5 shares.<sup>346</sup> The company later acquired a second gasworks at Moreton-in-Marsh, and ran the Chipping Norton works until nationalization in 1949,<sup>347</sup> when it was superseded by the Southern Gas Board.<sup>348</sup>

Electricity was introduced in 1905–6 by Harry Bunting and Son of Chipping Norton, who with the town council's agreement installed cabling and public street lamps.<sup>349</sup> The business was taken over in 1908 by the Chipping Norton and District Electric Light and Power Company Ltd, set up by the founder of the Mid-Oxfordshire Gas Co. (E.O. Preston) expressly to 'abolish competition'. The company was put into receivership along with Preston's gas company,<sup>350</sup> and was succeeded in 1911 by a new company set up by the London-based chartered accountant W.A. Schultz, who traded as the Chipping Norton Electric Supply Company Ltd, and built a generating plant off Burford Road.<sup>351</sup> That company also continued until nationalization, its successor (the Southern Electricity Board) running a shop on High Street from 1951 until the Board's privatization in 1990.<sup>352</sup>

### ***Other Trades and Industries Since 1945***

After the Second World War the Chipping Norton Co-operative Society expanded its activities, opening new branches in Milton-under-Wychwood in 1950, Blockley in 1951, Cornwell in 1952, and Charlbury in 1955. Its Chipping Norton shops included bakery, butchery, confectionery, drapery, furnishing, grocery, hardware, and shoe departments, as well as a café. Membership grew from 6,605 in 1951 to more than 8,000 in 1962, when annual sales topped £1 million, and over the following years its mobile shops also served surrounding rural communities. Nevertheless, both membership and sales began to fall, leading to its merger in 1968 with the Oxford and District Co-operative Society.<sup>353</sup> In 2021 its

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<sup>346</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 28 Sept. 1910, 29 Mar., 7 Jun. 1911. A prominent role was played by the Chipping solicitors Messrs Walsh, Gray, and Rose, one of whose partners (B. Lilley) was son of the purchaser, and became the company's secretary.

<sup>347</sup> For misc. records, Berks. RO, R/D156; GA, Q/RUC10; TNA, BT 31/35023/116074.

<sup>348</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gas\\_board](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gas_board) (accessed May 2022).

<sup>349</sup> Below, local govt (utilities).

<sup>350</sup> *Oxon. Weekly News*, 28 Sept. 1910, 29 Mar. 1911; *London Gaz.* 3 Nov. 1908; OHC, BOR1/27/A1/3, pp. 12, 21–4, 36–41.

<sup>351</sup> OHC, BOR1/27/A2/5; *London Gaz.* 22 Nov. 1912; OS Map 1:2500, Oxon. XIV.11 (1922 edn). A separate attempt to form a joint gas and electric company in 1910 was abandoned following corporation opposition: OHC, BOR1/28/L/6; BOR1/27/A1/3, pp. 56, 62.

<sup>352</sup> OHC, BOR1/27/A2/6–7; BOR1/27/C/7; BOR1/27/F4/1; BOR1/5/A1/17; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern\\_Electric](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_Electric) (accessed May 2022); Chipping Norton street directories.

<sup>353</sup> Bee and Tyrrell, *Chipping Norton Co-op. Soc.*, 19–28; *Blair's Dir. Oxon.* (1969).

successor the Midcounties Co-operative Society retained a supermarket (built in 1994), a pharmacy, and a travel shop, the supermarket also housing the town's post office.<sup>354</sup>

In the late 1950s Chipping Norton boasted 16 hotels or inns and 5 cafés, as well as more than 80 shops, trades, and services including 6 grocers, 5 drapers, 4 butchers, 4 hairdressers, 3 chemists, 3 shoe retailers, 2 dentists, and 2 opticians. Six firms were listed as builders and decorators and five as motor agents or engineers, while three banks included a branch of the National Provincial (later National Westminster), opened in 1951.<sup>355</sup> Apart from Bliss's tweed mill no large-scale employer remained, however, and by 1960 there were fears that Chipping Norton was becoming a dormitory town, with as many as 400 workers commuting daily to Oxford and Witney factories, 'tempted away by the high wages of the motor industry'.<sup>356</sup> As a result the borough council acknowledged the need for new light industrial development, and encouraged manufacturers to establish factories in the town.<sup>357</sup>



Chipping Norton Co-operative Society: delivery van c.1930s (left) and butchery department c.1960 (right).

One firm to respond was the furniture manufacturer Parker Knoll Ltd, which in 1962 opened a small factory on the south side of London Road, and formed a subsidiary company (Cornwell Norton Ltd) to develop and make three-piece suites and recliner chairs there. In 1970 the premises were doubled in size to accommodate production and staff transferred from Parker Knoll's High Wycombe (Bucks.) factory, which had burned down, and Parker Knoll (which absorbed Cornwell Norton in 1971) soon became the town's largest employer,

<sup>354</sup> [www.midcounties.coop/stores/](http://www.midcounties.coop/stores/) (accessed Nov. 2021); *Chipping Norton News* (Sept. 1994; Dec. 2020).

<sup>355</sup> *County Publicity Dir. Oxon.* (1958–9); Chipping Norton Local Hist. Soc., *Chipping Norton Through Time* (2009), 25. Cf. *Blair's Dir. Oxon.* (1969).

<sup>356</sup> *Tewkesbury Register*, 12 Jan. 1962.

<sup>357</sup> *Chipping Norton Official Guide* (1964), 16–17.

opening a showroom in 1972, and employing 414 staff in 1980.<sup>358</sup> More than 500 people worked at the factory in 2002, when falling sales and an ‘overly complex’ manufacturing process were blamed for redundancies which saw the workforce halved by the end of 2003. The remaining 250 workers left in 2004, when the factory closed and its 14-a. site was sold for housing.<sup>359</sup>

In the town centre some shops at the upper end of New Street were demolished in 1969 for road widening, together with the Unicorn hotel on the lower side of Market Place, replaced by a supermarket in 1981.<sup>360</sup> Between 1971 and 1999 the former British school on New Street housed a commercial sound recording studio belonging to the brothers Richard and Mike Vernon,<sup>361</sup> and in 1979 the guitar-maker Paul Fischer opened a studio shop in West End.<sup>362</sup> By the 1970s, when a Chipping Norton chamber of commerce was established,<sup>363</sup> the town was gaining a reputation for its antique shops,<sup>364</sup> one of which was later kept by the actor and comedian Ronnie Barker,<sup>365</sup> and in 1997 a former granary was converted into the Station Mill antiques centre.<sup>366</sup> Several antique dealers remained in 2021, when the town had a variety of independent and chain shops, some in a small shopping arcade created off High Street in 1994. All but one of the town’s banks had recently shut, but four pubs and three hotels remained,<sup>367</sup> the White Hart having closed in 2003.<sup>368</sup> The largest hotel was a 72-bedroom Premier Inn, built on Spring Street in 2016.<sup>369</sup>

In the 1980s–90s West Oxfordshire District Council worked with the town council and private developers to establish industrial estates and a business park on the town’s northern and western fringes, attracting a variety of companies of differing sizes, several of which were ‘high-tech’ providers of digital, media, scientific, and technical services.<sup>370</sup> By far the biggest was the Woodstock-based medical device manufacturer Owen Mumford Ltd, whose Worcester Road factory (built in 1992 and expanded in 2007) was Chipping Norton’s largest employer by 2013, with a workforce of over 300. Another 100 people worked for CETA Insurance Ltd (founded in the town in 1993) at its headquarters on the Cromwell Business

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<sup>358</sup> S. Bland, *Take a Seat: The History of Parker Knoll, 1834–1994* (1995), passim; *Birmingham Daily Post*, 10 May 1962; *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 22 Jun. 1970; *Chipping Norton News* (Nov. 1980).

<sup>359</sup> *Oxf. Mail*, 7 Mar. 2003, 3 Oct. 2003, 7 Feb. 2004, 17 Aug. 2004.

<sup>360</sup> Meades, *Hist.*, 135; *Chipping Norton News* (Oct. 1981).

<sup>361</sup> *Oxf. Mail*, 15 Jun. 2017; blue plaque on bldg.

<sup>362</sup> *Chipping Norton News* (Oct. 1979); [www.paulfischerguitars.com](http://www.paulfischerguitars.com) (accessed Nov. 2021).

<sup>363</sup> In 1976: *Banbury Guardian*, 29 Nov. 1979.

<sup>364</sup> *Chipping Norton News* (Apr. 1977; Nov. 1979).

<sup>365</sup> From 1987 until 1999: *Banbury Guardian*, 21 May 1987; *The Guardian*, 26 Oct. 1999.

<sup>366</sup> *Chipping Norton News* (Nov. 2014), 16; [www.stationmill.com](http://www.stationmill.com) (accessed Nov. 2021).

<sup>367</sup> Local info. For shopping arcade and banks, *Chipping Norton News* (Sept. 1994; Nov. 2020).

<sup>368</sup> *Chipping Norton News* (Apr. 2003); Simons et al., ‘Late Medieval Inn’.

<sup>369</sup> <http://allisonpike.com> (accessed Nov. 2021); *Chipping Norton News* (Feb. 2017).

<sup>370</sup> Meades, *Hist.* 135; [www.westoxon.gov.uk](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk); [www.elmsfield.com](http://www.elmsfield.com); [www.countryestates.co.uk](http://www.countryestates.co.uk) (accessed Nov. 2021).

Park,<sup>371</sup> and by 2017 the telecoms supplier Phone Co-op (started in the town in 1998) employed 60 people on the Elmsfield Industrial Estate.<sup>372</sup> In 2020 Chipping Norton's two largest business sectors were professional, scientific, and technical services (18 per cent of local businesses) and retail (11 per cent), though only 16 per cent of firms employed more than ten people.<sup>373</sup>

## Markets and Fairs

**Markets** Chipping Norton presumably had a weekly market from the town's foundation in the 12th century, although no specific reference has been found before 1302,<sup>374</sup> despite the addition of 'Chipping' (or 'market') to the town's name by 1218.<sup>375</sup> In 1548 it was 'a great market town',<sup>376</sup> and in 1607, under the borough charter, ownership of the market was transferred from the lord to the newly established corporation, prompting prolonged conflict.<sup>377</sup> Market day was then Wednesday, as it had probably been from the Middle Ages.<sup>378</sup> In the 1670s the market was noted for its corn, cattle, and provisions,<sup>379</sup> and in the late 18th century the main commodities were corn, horses, cows, sheep, lambs, leather, and cheese.<sup>380</sup> In 1819, when the weekly market was 'well attended', two market days (the last Wednesdays in March and September) were particularly busy, and were noted for the 'large quantities' of cheese brought for sale.<sup>381</sup>

By 1831 five Wednesday markets each year were 'great markets' principally for livestock, the fifth (in December) having been introduced in 1825 'at the particular request of the farmers'.<sup>382</sup> By 1847 those cattle markets (called fairs) were monthly and 'usually well frequented', with both cattle and sheep present 'in large numbers'.<sup>383</sup> They were changed from the last Wednesday of the month to the first Wednesday in 1861 and to the second Wednesday in 1932, shortly before their cessation c.1936.<sup>384</sup> The original weekly market,

<sup>371</sup> *Chipping Norton News* (Dec. 1991); Banbury Cake, 17 May 2007; *Witney Gazette*, 5 Jun. 2013.

<sup>372</sup> *Oxf. Mail*, 6 Jul. 2017; *Chipping Norton News* (Sept. 2017).

<sup>373</sup> Local Insight Profile for Chipping Norton Ward, Feb. 2021 (accessed online Nov. 2021).

<sup>374</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.* IV, 53; TNA, C 133/104/21.

<sup>375</sup> *Pipe R* 1218 (PRS n.s. 39), 84; *PN Oxon.* II, 368. The Latin form *Norton mercatoria* occurs c.1210: Magd. Coll., Chipping Norton 1.

<sup>376</sup> *Chant. Cert.* 22.

<sup>377</sup> OHC, BOR1/1/D/1. For associated strife, below, social life (1540–1700). Successive lords still claimed the markets tolls: *ibid.* BOR1/2/1D/8; BOR1/5/A/1/2, abstract of title to manor.

<sup>378</sup> So avoiding direct competition with Banbury, Witney, and Stow-on-the-Wold mkts (all Thursday), Gt Rollright (Friday), Charlbury (Monday), and Hook Norton (Tuesday).

<sup>379</sup> R. Blome, *Britannia* (1673), 188.

<sup>380</sup> *Owen's New Book of Fairs* (1776), 53; *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 556.

<sup>381</sup> Brewer, *Oxon.* 499.

<sup>382</sup> Lewis, *Topog. Dict. Eng.* (1831 edn), III, 418; *Oxf. Jnl*, 26 Nov. 1825.

<sup>383</sup> *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847).

<sup>384</sup> OHC, BOR1/13/N/1; BOR1/13/N/5; BOR1/13/C1/6–7.

chiefly for grain in the 1840s when 15,000 qrs a year were reportedly sold there,<sup>385</sup> fell into abeyance soon after 1928,<sup>386</sup> but was revived for general retailing in 1958, held every Wednesday as in 2021.<sup>387</sup> A farmers' market established in 2000 also continued in 2021, held on the third Saturday of each month.<sup>388</sup>



Sheep being sold in the market place in the early 20th century.

**Fairs** In 1201 the lord Reginald de Dammartin, count of Boulogne, was granted an annual three-day fair starting on the feast of SS Philip and James (1 May). A second or (more likely) replacement fair was granted in 1204 to the lord William Fitz Alan, running for four days from the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross (3 May).<sup>389</sup> That was confirmed to John Fitz Alan in 1253,<sup>390</sup> and another four-day fair was granted in 1330 to the lord Roger Mortimer, earl of March, beginning on the vigil of the feast of St Barnabas (11 June).<sup>391</sup>

In 1606 the lord Michael Chadwell surrendered the Holy Cross and St Barnabas fairs in return for two new four-day fairs starting on the feasts of St Matthias (24 February) and St Mark (25 April).<sup>392</sup> Another three-day fair around the summer feast of St Thomas Becket (7 July)<sup>393</sup> evidently existed by 1545,<sup>394</sup> and passed to the corporation under the 1607 borough charter, along with two new three-day fairs around the feasts of St Bartholomew (24 August)

<sup>385</sup> *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847); TNA, RAIL 558/119.

<sup>386</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1928).

<sup>387</sup> *Chipping Norton Official Guide* (1964), 16; (1970), 15; [www.westoxon.gov.uk](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk) (accessed Nov. 2021).

<sup>388</sup> *Chipping Norton News* (Jul. 2000); [www.tvfm.org.uk](http://www.tvfm.org.uk) (accessed Nov. 2021).

<sup>389</sup> *Rot. Chart.* 91, 136.

<sup>390</sup> *Cal. Chart.* 1226–57, 418.

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.* 1327–41, 161.

<sup>392</sup> TNA, C 66/1664, mm. 25–26. Presumably they passed to the corporation with the manor in 1667.

<sup>393</sup> TNA, STAC 8/67/9; below (tolls); social hist. (1540–1700). Cf. *Par. Colln*, I, 90, associating the saint with a traditional dedication of the parish church.

<sup>394</sup> Peter Temple sold 2 heifers in the town on 7 Jul. 1545: N.W. Alcock (ed.), *Warwickshire Grazier and London Skinner, 1532–1555* (1981), 52.

and SS Simon and Jude (28 October).<sup>395</sup> All five fairs continued c.1720, perhaps only for single days,<sup>396</sup> and after the calendar change of 1752 were held on 7 March, 6 May, 18 July, 4 September, and 8 November.<sup>397</sup>

Thomas Lodge of Chipping Norton obtained two additional fairs by royal grant in 1678, held on the last Fridays in May and November, and known later as 'Lodge's fairs'.<sup>398</sup> Lodge (d. 1683) left them first to his wife Margaret (d. 1687) and then to his sons in succession, of whom the eldest, Walwin, died in 1700.<sup>399</sup> Before 1707 they were sold to the Chipping Norton roper William Taylor (d. 1711), passing to his son Thomas (d. 1755) and grandson William,<sup>400</sup> who may have sold them in 1790.<sup>401</sup>

By 1831 the five borough fairs and two Lodge's fairs (the latter still held on their original days) had been joined by three statute or mop fairs recorded from 1765. Those took place on consecutive Wednesdays around Old Michaelmas (10 October), and were for both hiring servants and pleasure.<sup>402</sup> They continued in 1850, when the only other fair (apart from the monthly cattle 'fairs') was the New Year fair,<sup>403</sup> held on the Wednesday after 1 January; that was introduced in 1844 primarily for the sale of cattle, horses, pigs, and corn, but was abolished in 1855.<sup>404</sup> The newly opened railway brought in 'several hundreds' of people to the second mop fair in 1855,<sup>405</sup> and amusements in 1880 included a menagerie and a shooting gallery. A travelling funfair was routinely present in the early 20th century, when hiring died out. Around 1914 the mop fairs were discontinued, but from 1930 (with a break during the Second World War) a three-day pleasure fair called the mop was held annually in September, continuing into the 21st century.<sup>406</sup>

## Tolls

From the Middle Ages to 1607 tolls from markets and fairs belonged to Chipping Norton's lords. In 1302 they were worth £4 a year,<sup>407</sup> more than New Woodstock's around the same

<sup>395</sup> OHC, BOR1/1/D/1.

<sup>396</sup> *Par. Colln*, I, 90.

<sup>397</sup> *Owen's New Book of Fairs* (1776), 53; *Univ. Brit. Dir.* II [c.1790], 556; Mann, *Fair*, 39–40.

<sup>398</sup> *Cal. SP Dom.* 1677–8, 622; TNA, C 202/61/4.

<sup>399</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 42/1/41; *ibid.* par. reg. transcript, burials 1683, 1687, 1700.

<sup>400</sup> TNA, PROB 11/520/101; CNM, Rock Hill folder, draft will of Wm Taylor, 1776; above (urban econ. 1500–1800). Wm evidently attempted to sell them in 1773: *Oxf. Jnl Syn.* 24 Feb. 1773.

<sup>401</sup> *Oxf. Jnl Syn.*, 6 Jan. 1790. The vendor is not named.

<sup>402</sup> Lewis, *Topog. Dict. Eng.* (1831 edn), III, 418; Mann, *Fair*, 40. Cf. *Oxf. Chron.* 29 Sept. 1838, 11 Oct. 1856, 8 Jun. 1861.

<sup>403</sup> *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847); *Gardner's Dir. Oxon.* (1852). For cattle 'fairs', above (mkts).

<sup>404</sup> OHC, BOR1/5/A1/3.

<sup>405</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 13 Oct. 1855.

<sup>406</sup> OHC, BOR1/13/L/6; Mann, *Fair*, 56–70.

<sup>407</sup> TNA, C 133/104/21.

time (£2–£3), and six times the value of Witney's.<sup>408</sup> A reported lease of the tolls in 1331 to Thomas Madeley of Shipston-on-Stour (Warws., formerly Worcs.), for the large annual rent of 11 marks (£7 6s. 8d.), may have been associated with the recent acquisition of a new four-day fair,<sup>409</sup> but by 1393 (when they were back in hand) the tolls yielded only 20s. a year, rising to nearly £3 c.1450, but falling to 15s. 9d. clear in 1485–6.<sup>410</sup>

Around 1600, when salt was tolled at one peck per cartload, the lord Michael Chadwell let his market and fair tolls to a shoemaker for five years at £9 annual rent. Tolls of corn were apparently excluded, being traditionally being paid in kind 'under the eaves' of the market house, and allowed to a bellman or beadle whose duties included sweeping the market place and maintaining the market house.<sup>411</sup> In 1607, under the borough charter, the market and three of the fairs were transferred to the new corporation,<sup>412</sup> but disorder erupted at that year's July fair when rival manor and borough officers each attempted to collect the tolls.<sup>413</sup> Confusion over their ownership evidently persisted: a Staffordshire husbandman admitted in 1611 that he had twice sold sheep in Chipping Norton market without paying any tolls,<sup>414</sup> and in 1649 the lord Edward Dixon leased both market and fair tolls to the borough corporation for 31 years at £6 annual rent and two sugar loaves. The matter was finally resolved in 1667 when the corporation bought the manor.<sup>415</sup>

From 1668 the corporation granted long leases of the right to set up market and fair stalls and sheep-pens (known as sheepgrounds) in front of their houses to the owners or occupiers of properties in High Street and Middle Row. The rents were based on the width of the market-place frontage, and subletting incurred an additional payment.<sup>416</sup> Cattle tolls were separately leased by 1685, and from 1686 the combined income was partly used to fund the grammar schoolmaster and certain charities for the poor.<sup>417</sup> The traditional arrangement with the bellman was formalized in 1687, the corporation leasing all of its corn tolls to the parish sexton in return for ringing the bells and repairing the market house, and for £3 annual

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<sup>408</sup> VCH Oxon. XII, 369; XIV, 103–5.

<sup>409</sup> TNA, E 142/70/1; above (fairs).

<sup>410</sup> Ibid. C 136/101/3; *ibid.* SC 11/33; SC 6/HENVII/491.

<sup>411</sup> Ibid. C 21/C34/12; *ibid.* STAC 8/162/7; below, local govt (to 1607).

<sup>412</sup> OHC, BOR1/1/D/1.

<sup>413</sup> TNA, STAC 8/16/8; STAC 8/67/9; STAC 8/112/1; Eddershaw, *Story*, 52; below, social hist. (1540–1700).

<sup>414</sup> Taylor et al. (eds), *Cal. Woodstock Ct Bks*, 104.

<sup>415</sup> OHC, BOR1/2/1D/8; BOR1/14/MS/1, schedule of deeds; above, landownership (manor); below, local govt (1607–1835).

<sup>416</sup> OHC, BOR1/13/1D/1–24; BOR1/14/MS/1, schedule of deeds.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid. BOR1/13/2D/1–2; *12th Rep. Com. Char.* 263–4; below, social hist. (educ.; welfare). For 1685 lease, OHC, BOR1/14/MS/1, schedule of deeds.



rent.<sup>418</sup> In 1708, when c.30 properties had stallage or sheepground rights, the various toll rents yielded almost £38 a year, including £17 10s. for the cattle tolls.<sup>419</sup>

By 1709 the town's shopkeepers were permitted to weigh cheeses on fair days in their own shops, thus avoiding tolls charged on stallholders using public scales.<sup>420</sup> From 1720 setting up a booth or shed at the corporation's fairs required a 12*d.* payment for each, and in 1725 the chamberlains were to find a new lessee for the cattle tolls (still at £17 10s. a year), collecting them themselves in the meantime.<sup>421</sup> By 1824 the cattle tolls were let for £20 a year, and from 1836 were collected by two people appointed by the mayor, charged at 8*d.* per 20 sheep, 2*d.* per horse, 2*d.* per cow, 3*d.* per sow, and 1*d.* per pig, although freemen of the borough were excused tolls on cattle purchased.<sup>422</sup> Corn tolls were abandoned for three years from 1759,<sup>423</sup> while annual tolls from the privately owned Lodge's fairs were valued at £13 in 1773 and £14 in 1790.<sup>424</sup>

From around the 1830s the old system of stallage and sheepground leases was replaced, the former by tolls (standardized in 1875) paid by stallholders to a corporation lessee, who in the 1870s held them for £15 a year. Sheepground rents were replaced by a single exclusive licence to erect sheep-pens, granted to a labourer for two years in 1869 for £5 a year and an extra shilling for every 20 sheep penned. Stall tolls were increased in 1920,<sup>425</sup> and in 1941 were still leased to a toll collector who enjoyed a half share in them, and whose income included lorry-parking charges in the market place.<sup>426</sup> By then, however, a greater revenue came from the right to provide amusements at the annual mop fair, which in 1930 was leased to a showman for £100 a year, rising to £2,290 (then paid to West Oxfordshire District Council) in 2003.<sup>427</sup>

### **Market Places and Market Houses**

Chipping Norton's original market place, one of the largest in Oxfordshire, was substantially shortened before 1302, and in the later Middle Ages suffered significant encroachment along its spine, creating Horsefair and Spring Street in the north and Middle Row towards the

<sup>418</sup> OHC, BOR1/13/2D/3. Cf. *ibid.* MS Oxf. Archd. Oxon. c 141, p. 521.

<sup>419</sup> *Ibid.* BOR1/3/F1/1, which, on the evidence of the cattle tolls, appears to cover a six-month period.

<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.* E36/5/2/E/1.

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid.* BOR1/5/A1/1, ff. 8, 37.

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.* BOR1/5/A1/2–3.

<sup>423</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 14 Jul. 1759. No reason is given. Similar abandonments were introduced in Stow-on-the-Wold and Woodstock: Thwaites, 'Agric. Produce', 154.

<sup>424</sup> *Oxf. Jnl Syn.*, 24 Feb. 1773, 6 Jan. 1790.

<sup>425</sup> OHC, BOR1/5/A1/3; BOR1/13/L/2–4; BOR1/13/N/2; CNM, Tolls folder, leases 1869–88.

<sup>426</sup> OHC, BOR1/13/C1/6; BOR1/13/F4/1–6.

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid.* BOR1/13/L/6; Mann, *Fair*, 64, 68–9.

centre.<sup>428</sup> A 'high cross' mentioned in 1531 evidently stood towards its southern end near the present town hall,<sup>429</sup> which was built in 1842 to replace a series of open-sided market houses on or near the same site.<sup>430</sup> The town hall initially had an arched open undercroft used as a market house and equipped with a new weighbridge. The undercroft (also called the butter market) was converted into additional rooms for the town hall in the 1860s,<sup>431</sup> but the building was still used for hiring at mop fairs later in the century,<sup>432</sup> and the weighbridge stood outside it in 1904.<sup>433</sup>



The sole surviving pillar from the market house dismantled in 1842 (left) and the town hall which replaced it in the same year (below), the undercroft of which was originally conceived as a butter market.



Trade around the market place probably spilled from an early date into Horsefair, New Street (where there was also a medieval cross), and West Street.<sup>434</sup> By the early 17th century cattle were traditionally sold in New Street and horses in Horsefair, but c.1604 the lord of the manor Michael Chadwell transferred the cattle market to West Street and the horse fair to New Street. Chaos ensued at the July fair in 1607 when, contrary to a proclamation by the corporation bailiffs and burgesses, Chadwell and his followers attempted to move them back to their traditional locations.<sup>435</sup> By the 1860s Hitchman's

<sup>428</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 19, 23–4; above, devpt of town.

<sup>429</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 178.46; Kirtland, *Memorials*, 22–3; above, devpt of town.

<sup>430</sup> Above, town bldgs.

<sup>431</sup> J. Grantham, *Chipping Norton Town Hall Past & Present* (2007), 3, 9–10, 16–19; OHC, BOR1/5/A1/3, min. 18 Oct. 1865; above, town bldgs.

<sup>432</sup> Mann, *Fair*, 56; *Banbury Guardian*, 19 Oct. 1876.

<sup>433</sup> OHC, BOR1/26/Y/4.

<sup>434</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 19, 200; above, devpt of town.

<sup>435</sup> TNA, STAC 8/112/1; STAC 8/162/7. For the context, below, social hist. (1540–1700).

brewery yard and a close belonging to the Crown and Cushion were also regularly used for livestock auctions on market and fair days,<sup>436</sup> but in 1869 the corporation resolved that the market place and West End (or West Street) were the most suitable places for cattle and sheep sales, and that selling of livestock elsewhere should cease.<sup>437</sup> Sheep sales continued in the market place into the early 20th century, but in 1892–3 the corporation created a new cattle market off its south-east end, demolishing the former Red Lion inn to give access to a new street named Cattle Market.<sup>438</sup> Fixed iron pens there erected in 1928 were removed after cattle markets ceased in the 1930s,<sup>439</sup> and later markets and fairs generally took place in the market place.<sup>440</sup>

### **Market Regulation**

Little is known about medieval market regulation, although four ‘bailiffs’ evidently had control over weights and measures in the late 13th century, when a woman was beaten and imprisoned for complaining about the size of a loaf of bread.<sup>441</sup> A ‘reeve’ of the market was mentioned c.1330.<sup>442</sup> Infringements of the assize of bread and ale and forestalling offences (selling outside the market) were presumably handled in the manor court, unless a portmoot mentioned c.1450 had any jurisdiction.<sup>443</sup> Around 1605 officers appointed in the manor court included cardiners or meat inspectors, ale tasters, and leather sealers or inspectors,<sup>444</sup> and a bellman or beadle (documented by 1531) received corn tolls in return for duties associated with the market place and parish church.<sup>445</sup> About the same time a separate court of piepowder (for resolving disputes at markets and fairs) was apparently established with royal licence by the lord Michael Chadwell;<sup>446</sup> under the borough charter of 1607 it passed to the corporation, however, whose two bailiffs were constituted clerks of the market, with authority to inspect weights and measures and to enforce the assize of bread and ale.<sup>447</sup>

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<sup>436</sup> *Oxf. Jnl*, 21 Apr. 1860, 1 Jun. 1867, 24 Apr. 1869; OHC, BOR1/5/A1/4, min. 14 May 1869; Mann, *Fair*, 49.

<sup>437</sup> OHC, BOR1/5/A1/4, min. 13 Aug. 1869; Mann, *Fair*, 50.

<sup>438</sup> Rosen and Cliffe, *Making*, 25, 91; above, devpt of town. For sheep sales, Meades, *Hist.*, pl. 33.

<sup>439</sup> OHC, BOR1/13/L/5; BOR1/13/C1/7; above (mkts).

<sup>440</sup> For a temporary relocation of the mop in 1936 to the recreation ground, Mann, *Fair*, 67.

<sup>441</sup> TNA, SC 8/79/3904.

<sup>442</sup> BNC, Chipping Norton 7; below, local govt (to 1607).

<sup>443</sup> TNA, SC 11/33; below, local govt (to 1607).

<sup>444</sup> TNA, STAC 8/112/1.

<sup>445</sup> OHC, MS Wills Oxon. 178.46; above (tolls).

<sup>446</sup> TNA, C 3/292/11; C 21/C34/12.

<sup>447</sup> OHC, BOR1/1/D/1.

The piepowder court may have lapsed by 1628, when the corporation issued bylaws concerning the proclamation of fairs and the timely removal of stalls and pens.<sup>448</sup> Two years later the Privy Council ruled against borough officers who had charged four townsmen with ‘unconscionably’ raising the price of corn,<sup>449</sup> and in the late 1660s jurors at the court leet were to present forestallers and regrators (those reselling items purchased at markets or fairs within a 4-mile radius), and those using false weights.<sup>450</sup>

By the 1720s the corporation’s manor court appointed two clerks of the market (distinct from the bailiffs), the bellman or beadle, and between two and four leather sealers.<sup>451</sup> In 1725 the town clerk was to help the serjeants collect the ‘pitch and shew penny’ from Charlbury inhabitants bringing their wares to market,<sup>452</sup> while in 1731 the corporation banned quack doctors from setting up stages or selling medicines on market and fair days. Presentments were made in the manor court for milking cows in the market place (1757), forestalling the market (1764), short measures (1771), and false weights (1785), and in 1803 the tithingmen presented the clerks of the market for losing the weights and scales provided.<sup>453</sup> In 1766 an anonymous threatening letter to one of the bailiffs perhaps prompted a corporation order giving townspeople exclusive rights to purchase goods in the market before the market bell was rung at 12 noon.<sup>454</sup>

A separate inspector of weights and measures was appointed by the newly-formed borough council from 1836, which also elected a single clerk of the market.<sup>455</sup> In 1880 the council’s authority to regulate amusements at markets and fairs was challenged by the police, who intervened over use of live ammunition in shooting galleries and the presence of stall-roundabouts.<sup>456</sup> Otherwise the borough or urban district council maintained its control of markets and fairs until 1974, when responsibility passed to West Oxfordshire District Council.<sup>457</sup>

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<sup>448</sup> Ibid. BOR1/14/MS/1.

<sup>449</sup> *Acts of PC* 1630–1, 162, 220–2; *Cal. SP Dom.* 1629–31, 402, 416, 491, 495, 499. Cf. above (urban econ. 1500–1800); below, social hist. (1540–1700).

<sup>450</sup> OHC, BOR1/14/MS/1. The constables reported that there were no such offenders in Chipping Norton at the Trinity quarter sessions in 1687: Gretton (ed.), *Oxon. Justices*, 22–3.

<sup>451</sup> OHC, BOR1/3/A1/1; below, local govt (1607–1835).

<sup>452</sup> OHC, BOR1/5/A1/1, f. 36; Thwaites, ‘Agric. Produce’, 131.

<sup>453</sup> OHC, BOR1/3/A1/1–3; Ballard, *Notes*, 27–8.

<sup>454</sup> OHC, BOR1/5/A1/1; *Oxf. Jnl*, 15 Nov. 1766; Thwaites, ‘Agric. Produce’, 452, 482–3.

<sup>455</sup> OHC, BOR1/5/A1/3.

<sup>456</sup> Below, social hist. (19th cent.).

<sup>457</sup> Mann, *Fair*, 68; [www.westoxon.gov.uk](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk) (accessed Dec. 2021).