

CRAFTSMEN

Memoirs of some of the village artisans

Tape 1 -

Blacksmiths – the Godden family, they made hoops for children.

Tape 2 -

Ewelme Nurseries – Edward Justin ran a nursery behind the present dairy yard before 1920's.

Undertakers - came from Wallingford, his grandmother had a black hearse drawn by black horses.

Tape 3 -

Most village men could turn their hands to most things. Father dug graves to supplement wage, he was a builder, and built The Hyde (Hide-a-way House) and house behind public telephone box in the High Street. Cycled to Rose Hill in Oxford, did a days work and cycled home again!

Tape 4 -

Bootmakers – Mr Foster

Thatcher – Mr Fred Harwood.

Tape 5 -

Len Foster the bootmaker mended the roundsmens bags. He had a shop in Crowmarsh, now a model engineering shop [next to post office]. A real old fashioned brootmakers, shop and store.

Tape 6 -

Blacksmiths – Les Miners, Tom Dymond, and a man called Smith.

Wheelwright Leslie Miners blacksmith/farrier/wheelwright, had forge next to the Lamb. He shod Peter Gemmell's racehorses at Ewelme Down. Had a travelling forge. Went into the Territorial's during the war to shoe army horses. After the forge was demolished Major Horsley allowed him to operate from his stables at the White House.

The Pottery - was a commercial business for a time.

Tape 9 -

Alongside the lovely old inn The Lamb was the smithy with Les Miners the blacksmith. He was our greatest friend as children. Many an hour he put up with us helping (or probably hindering him) to shoe the horses which were brought from far afield. How we loved Les and his smithy. It was a childrens paradise. Fred Harwood always thatched the Reading Room.

Tape 8 -

Lucy Tuckwell's family mended boots or had them sent away.

Tape 10 -

Blacksmith – Les Miners.

Cobbler – Les Foster in Crowmarsh

Wheelwright – Frank Godden

Undertaker -Tomlinson of Crowmarsh

Chimney sweep – Mr Wootton

Thatcher – Fred Harwood –

Farm horses – Mr Raymond Lawrence in charge of horses at Eyres Farm. Mr Tuckwell worked there too.

Tape 13 -

Frank Godden was the blacksmith and odd job man. He would pass through he village with a handcart. Did bricklaying etc and most people in village used him.
Mr Foster was a shoemaker at Crowmarsh.

Tape 14 -

Frank Godden could turn his hand to anything.
Fred Harwood was a master thatcher. Dismantled an old thatch and noted how it had been laid. So taught himself thatching and became Chairman of the Master Thatcher's Association.

Tape 16 -

Blacksmith – Frank Godden.
Bootmakers - Mr Foster.
Fred Harwood was the thatcher.

Tape 17 -

Young man called Leo Jones was a jobbing blacksmith, had a van and all his smithying tools. Mended a lot of farm machinery on site.
Mr Godden was still active as a carpenter.

Tape 19 -

Mrs Miners husband Les was a blacksmith at the Lamb, mostly wheels for carts and hoops for the boys. Forge opposite Smockacre.
One time village had many bootmakers, relative to the size of the village. Bill Munday mended shoes although many of us did our own. Les Foster took over from Bill and had a shop at Crowmarsh until recently. After the first world war shoes were awful.

Tape 20 -

Knife grinder used to come down and do knives and shears door to door.

Tape 27 -

In the 50s Mr Godden the odd job man. Mr Foster shoe repairer worked in Crowmarsh.
There was a man who used to keep the hedges and ditches clear and clean up the village - called Brassy Howard. Used a scythe and was paid by the Parish or District Council. In the 60s.

Tape 28 -

Remembers Frank Godden who Richard described as a painter and decorator and owned or used the black shed near the Shepherd's Hut.

Tape 30 -

Mr Godden made those hoops because he was the blacksmith.

Tape 33 - (Interviewed by George Cannon)

Was there a great deal of thatched houses in the village at that time?

The thatched ricks and the sheds and there was a big barn at the back which was thatched, its gone now.

GC Where did Fred Harwood come into thatching, he wasn't brought up as a thatcher?

No, he was a tractor driver, during the war there was a barn down on the Roke turn the County Council or someone wanted it thatched, I think they had evacuees in there and they wanted it re-thatched and Fred had done some on the cottage at Huntinglands and so father asked him to do it. He said he wasn't a house but a rick thatcher but he would have a go at it. Then I think he did one at Dorchester and then it got round, and Warborough and then went off on his own as a thatcher.

Fred Wooton was a carpenter/builder who worked for Harry West. (Putty West)

GC Mrs West gave me all his account books. Did a lot of work in Ewelme.

Especially on the school house.

The Trusts maintenance man. He used to have stuff in the school garden.

I think in the old workshop the annexe before the war.

GC Mrs West lives in Benson, his daughter.
She was at school with my sister.

GC Beautifully written in copperplate. I have asked the County Records if they would like them. And houses in the village are mentioned.

34 - Written submission

At The Lamb Uncle Les Miners was the blacksmith. Us children used to play in his smithy pumping the fire for him and painting the horses hooves after they had been shod.

Tape 35 -

I liked to work for 'uncle' Leslie Miners and pumped the bellows at his forge for him. It was hot work. I was 11 yrs old and he brought me a bottle of Pale Ale.

Tape 41 -

Craftsmen – Moses Winfield a wheelwright. Undertaker a Mr West? One of the building families? Godden? Don't remember.

Shoe-maker - Lesley went to school with him.

Jacobs had shop opposite Pouparts – before my time. My mother and grandmother talked of Jacobs.

Blacksmith - Lesley Miners at the Lamb shoeing horse had a tin shed and a tree at the back.

File 46 -

The Forge - I remember Frank Godden having a display window with bicycle parts in that building and I often called at his house to purchase parts (brake blocks, inner tubes, puncture repair kit etc). He would rummage around to find what I wanted. In hindsight I suspect that most of his stock was very old and passed its shelf life but he didn't charge much. Always willing to help, he and his wife were lovely people.

File 51a/b

Mr Frank Godden. Frank, with his tools and expertise, saved us from many a dilemma. A typical example which immediately comes to mind was to rectify the problem we had with the log stove. The wind invariably blew the smoke back down the chimney into the living room, but Frank extended and adjusted the chimney enabling us to enjoy the heat from the stove without the smoke accompaniment.

File 57 -

Mr. Cherry the baker had had his bakery just there on the same side of the road as the Shepherds Hut, and how Mr. Cherry used to deliver the bread on a carrier bike. Another one of Mr. Cherry's skills was hairdressing and he used to come to The Greyhound regularly to give my grandfather and all of us boys a good hair cut. Not sure what the style was!

File 60 -

The blacksmiths was quite exciting, he [Les Miners] made a fighter plane out of a tree trunk for us to play on and wooden rifles with bayonets.

File 72 -

Les Foster was a cobbler and had his shop in Crowmarsh. Les's claim to fame was when Steve Winwood (from the band *Traffic*) had come into his shop and requested Les to make him a pair of bespoke leather boots. *Traffic* were then living in Aston Tirrold.