

Local History Tracts

Cottage Industries

The rise in the number of cottage industries throughout the Vale may be, to a certain extent, the result of the changes in farming practise, the mechanisation of the farm resulted in the reduction of the labour force, consequently many families had to turn their efforts to other pursuits.

During the period from 1840 until the turn of the century Ashbury, like any other vale village had a number of secondary trades apart from farming.

There was:- Stephen Avenall - painter, glazier and paper hanger, William & Thomas Goddard and JOseph Richens - blacksmiths, coopers and farriers. There were four carpenters, three bakers, two butchers and a dog trainer.

In the years	1883	and	1893	there were
Blacksmiths	3		3	
Wheelwrights	2		3	
Bakers	3		2	
Maltsters	3		2	
Butchers	1		2	
Dressmakers	2		8	
Boot & Shoe makers	1		1	
Carpenters	4		5	
Thatchers	1		2	
Laundress'	1		3	
Nurse	-		1	
Postman	-		1	
Watch & Clock maker-			1	
Plumer & House Decorator	1		1	

Gradually the Craven Estate released their hold on the tenant farmers by allowing them to buy the freehold of their farms. The final break-up of the estate came about as the result of death duties.

(The so-called Curse of the Cravens allegedly imposed hundreds of years ago after an ancestor made a village girl pregnant. The legend was that all male Cravens would die young. The fifth Earl was drowned at 35 when he fell from a yacht during a wild party. The sixth Earl died of leukaemia when he was just 47. The seventh Earl committed suicide in 1983 at the age of 26.)