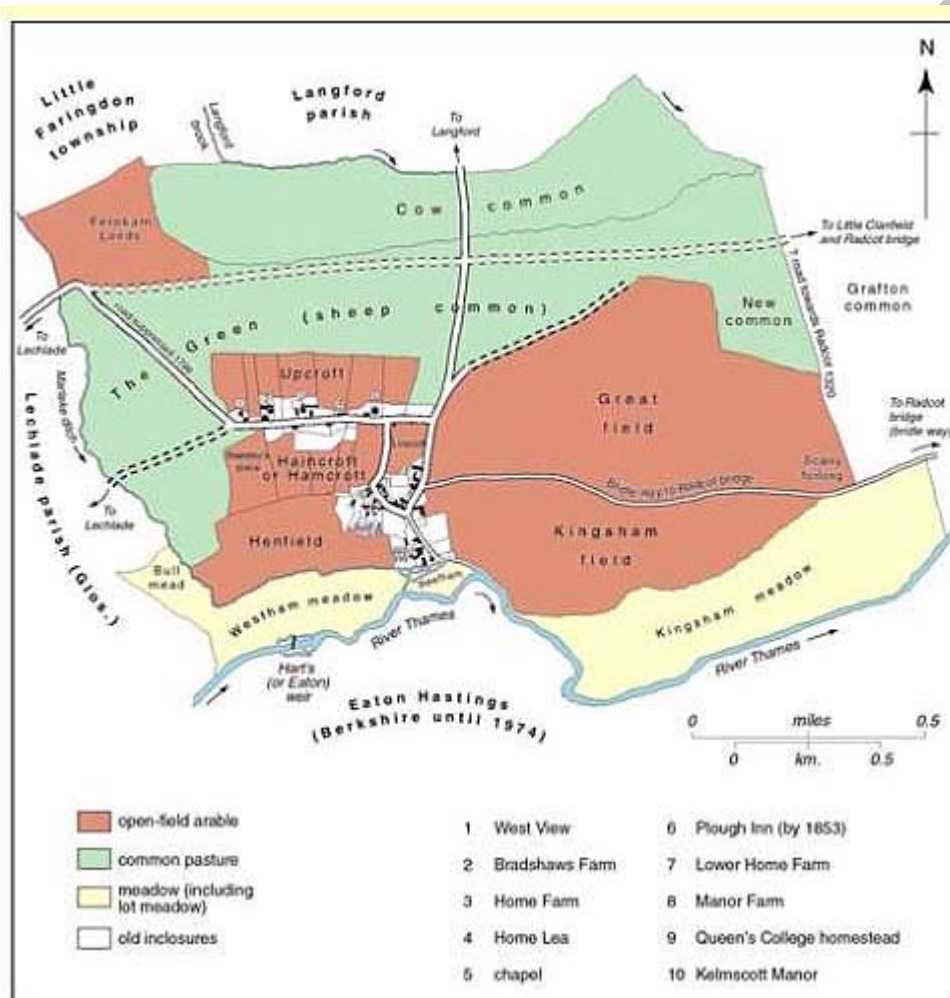


VCH OXFORDSHIRE:
ONLINE TEXTS IN PROGRESS: BROADWELL PARISH: KELMSCOTT
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ECONOMIC HISTORY: Agriculture

Open Fields and Agricultural Resources



Kelmscott's open fields c.1798

Before inclosure in 1799, Kelmscott's open-field arable comprised some 476 a. (46 per cent of the township), with 400 a. of common pasture (38 per cent), and 170 a. of meadow (16 per cent). The largest common fields were Great and Kingsham fields, which abutted each other on the township's eastern side, and together covered over 300 a.; the smaller Haincroft, Henfield, Upcroft, and Long Croft or Lincroft were clustered around the hamlet, while Fernham, which covered 59 a., adjoined the north-west boundary, detached from the rest of the arable.¹ Home and Galloway

¹ PRO, Kelmscott incl. award; Bodl. incl. map (photo. of orig. in priv. possession).

fields, mentioned in 1573 with Fernham, Henfield, and Kingsham, were apparently predecessors of Great field,² and the overall pattern was established almost certainly before the early 14th century, when arable in Lake furlong (later in Home field) was mentioned.³ The 'croft' fieldnames suggest that some of the open-field arable around the hamlet may have been taken from medieval closes, but by the 16th century all seem to have been fully integrated into the common fields.⁴ Kelmscott's soil, a deep loam overlying gravel, was judged in the early 20th century to be 'unequal and inferior' to some in the area, but supported a variety of cereals, legumes, and root-crops.⁵ The 16th-century names Beanlands and Stonyland suggest varying quality, and the name Lincroft that in the Middle Ages some flax may have been grown.⁶ On the eve of inclosure there appears to have been a standard four-course rotation of fallow, wheat, beans, and barley.⁷

The 'pasture of the men of Kelmscott', mentioned in 1320,⁸ lay in a broad arc from Bull mead in the south-west to Langford brook in the north-east. By the 18th century it was divided into an outer cow common and an inner common called the green, evidently the 'sheep green' mentioned in 1722.⁹ Additional pasture rights in some meadows were agreed in 1320 between the lords of Bradwell Odyngsell and Bradwell Cirencester manors, who confirmed grazing there from mowing time until the feast of the Purification (2 February) or until Hockday (the second Tuesday after Easter),¹⁰ and presumably some regulated grazing was available in the fields after harvest. Filkins inhabitants seem also to have had limited pasture rights in Kelmscott, perhaps for the town bull, since at inclosure they collectively received ¼ a. (called 'Filkins bull') in compensation.¹¹

Kelmscott's extensive common meadows, comprising much of the 185 a. recorded on Broadwell manor in 1086, flanked the open fields' southern edge, along the north bank of the river Thames. Kingsham (c. 115 a.), in the south-east, and Westham (c. 50 a.), in the south-west, were mentioned from 1320, when the lords of Bradwell Odyngsell and Bradwell Cirencester manors each had rights there, presumably with their tenants. The two manors' rights in Kingsham and Baley meadows seem then to have been rotated from year to year.¹² In the 16th century, and still in the early 18th, strips in Westham and some other meadows

² Queen's Coll. Mun., 4.O.86, ff. 25--27; 4.O.118, pp. 119--29; for Galloway field, above, intro. (communications).

³ Ross (ed.), *Cirencester Cart.* I, pp. 206--10.

⁴ Queen's Coll. Mun., 4.O.86, ff. 25--27.

⁵ Young, *Oxon. Agric.* 13, 129--30; Orr, *Oxon. Agric.* 54.

⁶ Queen's Coll. Mun., 4.O.86, ff. 26v.--27.

⁷ Young, *Oxon. Agric.* 130.

⁸ Ross (ed.), *Cirencester Cart.* I, pp. 206--10.

⁹ PRO, Kelmscott incl. award, with Bodl. incl. map (photo.); Queen's Coll. Mun. 4.O.118, pp. 119--29.

¹⁰ Ross (ed.), *Cirencester Cart.* I, pp. 206--10.

¹¹ PRO, Kelmscott incl. award; Bodl. incl. map (photo.).

¹² *VCH Oxon.* I, 422; Ross (ed.), *Cirencester Cart.* I, pp. 206--10; for acreage and location, PRO, Kelmscott incl. award; Bodl. incl. map (photo.).

were allocated among the inhabitants by lot, though parcels in Kingsham seem by then to have been fixed,¹³ and a few small, privately owned parcels (hams) were mentioned from the Middle Ages to the later 18th century.¹⁴ The desirability of Kelmscott's meadowland is suggested by numerous purchases made by outsiders: small parcels in Littleham and Reefham changed hands repeatedly between 1296 and 1364,¹⁵ and in 1498--9 one of the non-resident Harcourt family held another meadow for 13s. 4d. a year.¹⁶ In the early 19th century a



Riverside meadows near Kelmscott Manor

leading Kelmscott farmer praised the quality of local hay, commenting that he had bought no cattle cake for many years and that his prize animals ate nothing else.¹⁷ Persistent flooding, still common in the 20th century,¹⁸ must nevertheless have reduced their value, and perhaps that of Kelmscott's other agricultural land.

A fishery in the Thames at Kelmscott belonged in 1086 to Broadwell manor, with which it descended until the 18th century or later.¹⁹ In 1305 it was let with a villein yardland to John at water for 28s. a year, and the surname Fisher, recorded for a local villein family in the late 13th and early 14th century, suggests that fishing may have been an important supplementary resource:²⁰ in 1632 a Kelmscott husbandman owned a boat and a flue-net, and the river was well stocked with pike and crayfish in the late 19th century.²¹ The fishery may have become detached from Broadwell manor by 1784, when the Turner family's Kelmscott holding included a fishery and fishpond.²² Hart's or Eaton weir, owned from before 1754, with an attached fishery, by the Hart family, straddled the Thames ½ mile south-west of Kelmscott village, its attached house lying south of the river in Easton Hastings (formerly Berks.).²³ Osier beds in Kelmscott, presumably near the weir, also belonged to the Harts in 1798, and until 1837 the family owned a small meadow nearby.²⁴

¹³ Queen's Coll. Mun., 4.O.86, f. 25; 4.O.118, pp. 119--29.

¹⁴ J. Stevenson (ed.), *Edington Cart*. (Wilts. Rec. Soc. 42, 1987), p. 155; 'Arch. Queen's Coll. Oxf.' (typescript in Bodl. and Queen's Coll., 1931), II, nos. 2074--91: copy in Bodl.; *Oxf. Jnl* 9 Mar. 1771, p. 1.

¹⁵ *Edington Cart*. p. 155; PRO, E 211/427, conveyance 4 Aug. 38 Edw. III.

¹⁶ PRO, WARD 2/34/121/8.

¹⁷ Young, *Oxon. Agric.* 281--2.

¹⁸ Above, intro. (boundaries and landscape).

¹⁹ *VCH Oxon.* I, 422; *Bampton Hund.* 44--5; *Cal. Pat.* 1436--41, 343; ORO, Hey. II/iii/33.

²⁰ *Bampton Hund.* 44--5; PRO, C 133/119, no. 5; *ibid.* E 179/161/8.

²¹ ORO, MS Wills Oxon. 60/3/21; *Collected Letters of Wm. Morris*, ed. N. Kelvin, I, pp. 139, 350; III, pp. 77--8.

²² *Oxf. Jnl* 19 June 1784, p. 2; for the Turners, above, manor; below.

²³ OS Map 6", Oxon. XLIII NE (1884 edn); F.S. Thacker, *Thames Highway* (1968 edn), II, 47--9; *Oxon. Poll.* 1754, p. 11. For a basket-maker in the 19th cent., below (trade and ind.).

²⁴ PRO, Kelmscott incl. award; Soc. Antiq., Kelmscott box 2, lease and release 6--7 Sept. 1837.

Tenants and Farming: the 11th to 14th Century

In 1086 Kelmscott was presumably subsumed under the Domesday entry for Broadwell manor, and it is not clear what proportion of the manor's cultivated land lay in Kelmscott, nor how many of its 60 recorded tenants (excluding slaves) lived there.²⁵ By 1279 the township was, however, divided in the usual way into around 22 yardland holdings,²⁶ each, on later evidence, comprising some 17--18 a. of open-field arable, with around 4 a. of common meadow and (in the 16th century) pasture rights for 40 sheep, 7 cows, and 2 horses.²⁷ Fifteen yardlands in 1279 were each occupied by unfree villeins, of whom 13 held directly of the d'Oddingseles' Broadwell manor for rents of 3s. 9d. each, and labour services valued at 6s. 3d. a year. The remaining two villeins, holding of Hugh d'Oddingseles's kinsman Roland, owed much larger rents (13s. 4d. each), but lighter services. Another 7 tenants were cottagers, each with between 1 and 8 acres held for varying money rents. Only 7 yardlands and a few odd acres were occupied by free tenants: Roland d'Oddingseles held 4 yardlands apparently in demesne, while John de Greneberwe held and sublet 2 houses and 2 yardlands, and another tenant held a house and yardland jointly under Roland and Hugh d'Oddingseles. The last two holdings remained unchanged in 1305, though the recorded rents were then slightly lower than those reported in 1279. Henry in Angulo, free tenant of another yardland in 1305, was one of a family holding in villeinage in 1279, perhaps indicating manumission by the lord.²⁸

Early 14th-century tax assessments²⁹ show considerable disparities in the wealth of individual tenants, which was not entirely related to size or status of holdings. Occupiers in 1306 were taxed on moveable goods worth between 12s. and just under £7, and in 1316 on between 26s. and just under £6. Many of the higher payments came from tenants whose yardlands had been held in villeinage in 1279 and 1305,³⁰ while Walter Staleworth, assessed in 1327 on goods worth over £14, belonged to a family recorded only as cottagers in 1279, although in 1305 the same (or another) Walter held a yardland. John Crock, tenant of a free yardland, was assessed on £3 in 1306 and on £4 17s. in 1316. The township's total assessed wealth exceeded £70 both in 1316 and 1327, and average assessments per

²⁵ *VCH Oxon.* I, 422.

²⁶ *Bampton Hund.* 44--5.

²⁷ Queen's Coll. Mun., 4.O.86, f. 27; 4.O.118, pp. 119--29; *Oxf. Jnl* 19 June 1784, p. 2.

²⁸ *Bampton Hund.* 44--5; cf. PRO, C 133/119, no. 5.

²⁹ PRO, E 179/161/8--10.

³⁰ e.g. John at water, Wm. Frere, John Mump, Thos. Fisher, Roland Astile: *Bampton Hund.* 44--5; PRO, C 133/119, no. 5.

person, 68s. in 1306, 63s. in 1316, and 79s. in 1327, suggest that Kelmscott was among the more prosperous rural settlements in the area.³¹

Tenants and Farming: the 15th to 18th Century

During the mid 14th century Kelmscott's population seems to have fallen, due presumably to the lasting effects of plague.³² Its fortunes during the 15th century are obscure, though such depopulation may have contributed to the increasing dominance of prosperous yeoman families such as the Turners, who were recorded in the township from the 1520s and who subsequently built Kelmscott Manor.³³ The family's growing wealth is evidenced by the lay subsidy of 1544, to which Elizabeth Turner (d. 1558) paid almost half of the 24s. contributed by twelve Kelmscott taxpayers, and for which her moveable goods were assessed at £16 out of a total of £63 13s. 4d.³⁴ By the 1570s three out of eight taxpayers in Kelmscott were members of the Turner family, and together owned nearly half the township's assessed moveable wealth;³⁵ the largest contributor, Andrew Turner, left goods worth £169 at his death in 1594,³⁶ compared with only £10--£30 left by many Kelmscott farmers in the period.³⁷

Such prosperity may have allowed the family to take advantage of the gradual break-up of Broadwell manor during the 16th and early 17th centuries. At his death in 1600, Richard Turner had a house and 1½ yardlands in Kelmscott as a tenant of Broadwell manor, the lingering residue of manorial custom being reflected in the relief of a horse which his son Thomas owed for entry into the holding.³⁸ Three years later the new owner of Broadwell manor sold to William Turner, in perpetuity, a house, garden, and 84 a. of land in Kelmscott, including pasture and meadow,³⁹ and several other Kelmscott freeholders seem similarly to have acquired parcels of former manorial land around the same time.⁴⁰ By 1662 there were four Turner households in Kelmscott, three of which had 3 or 4 hearths, among the largest dwellings in the hamlet;⁴¹ soon after, Thomas Turner (d. 1682), recently granted arms, added an impressive new wing to Kelmscott Manor, and at his death left goods including

³¹ PRO, E 179/161/8--10; cf. *ibid.* C 133/119, no. 5; *Bampton Hund.* 44--5.

³² Above, intro. (population).

³³ *Subsidy*, 1526, 262; above, manor.

³⁴ PRO, E 179/162/223, m. 4d.; cf. ORO, MS Wills Oxon. 181, f. 202.

³⁵ PRO, E 179/162/341, m. 12; E 179/162/345, m. 4d.

³⁶ ORO, MS Wills Oxon. 190, ff. 49--50v.

³⁷ e.g. *ibid.* 180, ff. 114 and v., 204v.--205; *ibid.* 65/3/29; 296/1/25.

³⁸ Bodl. MS North Adds. c 2, f. 83v.; above, manor.

³⁹ Bodl. MS Ch. Oxon. 5248; cf. above, Broadwell, manors (Bradwell Odyngsell).

⁴⁰ BL, Harl. MS 843, f. 3 and v.; above, manor.

⁴¹ PRO, E 179/255/4, pt iii, f. 247.

jewellery, plate, watches, and silver spoons, besides bequests of £500 to each of his three daughters.⁴²

The wills of the Turners and similar families in the 16th and 17th centuries point to mixed farming characteristic of the area. Scythes, ploughs, harrows, harnesses and other



Manor Farm, local base of the Edmonds family

together with
and horses: the
sheep and lambs,
worth £25, and
in cots and
use fitted with
rack, and his
barrels may indicate
and small quantities



Probate inventory of Thomas Turner (d. 1611) (Oxfordshire Record Office)

of wheat and barley were frequently left to younger sons and daughters, and several Kelmscott testators left quantities of hemp.⁴⁴

By 1723 William Turner of Kelmscott, one of a lesser branch of the family, was sufficiently prosperous to endow his younger son with an annual income of £200, allowing the descent of his entire paternal inheritance to his eldest son.⁴⁵ The increasing domestic comfort enjoyed by the Turners of Kelmscott Manor is clear from George Turner's bequests of books, silverware, and jewellery, while his kinsman John Turner (d. 1763) left his daughter Mary £430, a set of china dishes, and a tortoise-shell snuff box.⁴⁶ John's son James may have over-extended himself, since in 1766 the Court of Chancery ordered sale of an estate worth £103 a year, including the rectorial tithes,⁴⁷ and in 1784 Kelmscott Manor farm (4 yardlands) was sold to James's relative John Beesley. The Turners nevertheless continued as tenants, recovering the freehold in 1816.⁴⁸

Other families expanding their holdings during the period included the Bradshaws: in 1662 Edward Bradshaw was taxed on three hearths, and in 1714 a successor had 'a house and

⁴² Ibid. PROB 11/370, ff. 82--83v.; above, manor; below, buildings.

⁴³ ORO, MSS Wills Oxon. 60/3/8, 65/3/29, and passim.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 66/1/11, 65/1/25; *ibid.* 190, ff. 49--50v.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 154/2/32.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 155/1/34; PRO, PROB 11/665, ff. 376v.--379v.; cf. *Oxf. Jnl* 27 Dec. 1783, p. 3; below, buildings.

⁴⁷ *Oxf. Jnl* 11 Jan. 1766, p. 2; above, manor (other estates).

⁴⁸ Above, manor.

estate of a pretty considerable yearly value,⁴⁹ the buildings perhaps occupying the site of the imposing farmhouse built by a later Edward Bradshaw c. 1757.⁵⁰ The family enjoyed close ties with the Turners, and in 1781 Jane Turner nominated Edward Bradshaw as a trustee for bequests to her daughter.⁵¹ John Edmonds (d. 1809), another leading farmer based in Gloucestershire, bought 130 a. in 1767 centred on Manor Farm,⁵² and by 1785 he was the second-largest land-tax payer in Kelmscott, assessed at £13, or one quarter of the total paid. Edward Bradshaw paid £9 11s. 8d. and James Turner £9, though the largest farm was by then that of Thomas Carter, who paid over £17; both the Bradshaws and the Edmondses were predominantly freeholders, while Carter's farm was chiefly leasehold under several non-resident landowners, and Turner held a mixture of freehold and leasehold under his relative John Beesley.⁵³ Following Carter's death in 1794 much of his leasehold land was acquired by Edmonds and others, leaving Kelmscott divided among three chief farms.⁵⁴

Parliamentary Inclosure (1798--9)

Some smallscale, piecemeal inclosure was carried out by freeholders before parliamentary inclosure in 1798--9: in 1735 Edward Turner owned 4½ acres of newly inclosed land called Haggots croft, taken apparently from the adjoining open-field arable,⁵⁵ while Beesley's piece (9 a.), mentioned in 1798, seems to have been a consolidated block of open-field arable immediately south of the village.⁵⁶ Except for a few small closes adjoining the houses and some small hams of meadow, there was, however, virtually no other inclosed land before 1799, most arable being still held in small scattered strips of 1 a. or less.⁵⁷

An Act for Kelmscott's inclosure was obtained by the chief landowners and farmers in 1798, and a professional land surveyor, William Church of Longcot (then Berks.), was appointed. The inclosure was accompanied by extensive laying of new roads and drains, financed partly by the sale of two parcels totalling some 15 a., and the farmers John Edmonds and Edward Bradshaw were appointed as surveyors of the carriage roads. Five new water

⁴⁹ PRO, E 179/255/4, pt iii, f. 247; ORO MS Oxf. Dioc. c 105, f. 1.

⁵⁰ Below, buildings; cf. Queen's Coll. Mun., 4.O.118, p. 119, implying that the earlier ho. may have adjoined the college's homestead near the Plough Inn.

⁵¹ ORO, MS Wills Oxon. 155/2/37.

⁵² PRO, CP 25/2/1388/8 Geo. III Mich.; above, manor (other estates); for residence, cf. W. Sussex RO, Cap. I/28/134, leases 20 Jan. 1814, 13 Jan. 1841.

⁵³ ORO, QSD L.170, s.a. 1785.

⁵⁴ Ibid. s.a. 1785--1831; *ibid.* MS Wills Oxon. 124/1/30; PRO, Kelmscott incl. award.

⁵⁵ ORO, MS Wills Oxon. 154/3/41.

⁵⁶ PRO, Kelmscott incl. award; Bodl. incl. map (photo.).

⁵⁷ e.g. Queen's Coll. Mun., 4.O.118, pp. 119--20.

courses were laid to improve drainage, each 6 or 8 feet in width, their future maintenance being charged to the landholders through whose allotments they ran.⁵⁸

The allocation of newly inclosed land, totalling some 970 a., reflected the ascendancy of the chief farming families and of a few non-resident landowners. The absentee lord of Bradwell Odyngsell manor received 53½ a. in the south-east for his residual rights, but the largest allocation was 347 a. to John Edmonds as freeholder and lessee, 35 per cent of the land allotted, comprising the whole of the former Great and Kingsham fields and adjacent meadows. Frances Bradshaw received 118 a. north-west of the village in the former common pasture, and Charles Turner (d. 1833) a total of 142 a., including 80 a. rented with Kelmscott Manor from his cousin John Beesley.⁵⁹ The vicar of Broadwell received 79 a. of glebe in lieu of tithes, the remaining land being mostly allotted to non-resident proprietors including John Coles (79 a.), Fanny Jeffries (47 a.), and Francis Grain (12 a.), who let it to local farmers. Five people receiving 2 a. or less may have been cottagers, as may one or two others paying under 5s. land tax, but there seem to have been no other resident smallholders, and by the 1840s there were apparently none.⁶⁰

Inclosure was reckoned by the early 19th century to have increased Kelmscott's arable by 50 a., and John Edmonds, reflecting the conventional view of large commercial farmers, asserted that it had increased both arable and pastoral productivity and had doubled rents, which he claimed were 'paid with more ease'.⁶¹ His own farming methods, reported with approval by the agriculturalist Arthur Young, included rotations of turnips, beans, seeds, wheat, and oats or vetches, with some sainfoin; on former common pasture he burnt off the grass, planted two successive turnip crops which were grazed with sheep, then planted rye grass, hops, or honeysuckle clover. Other improvements included erection of model farm buildings, and selective breeding of Cotswold sheep.⁶² The effects of inclosure on labourers or cottagers may have been less beneficial: the decline in Kelmscott's population between 1801 and the 1820s perhaps in part reflected a gradual exodus following loss of common rights,⁶³ although the number of families supported by agriculture nevertheless rose from 26 to 28,⁶⁴ and Kelmscott remained a predominantly agricultural community. Out of 35 households in 1841, 27 (77 per cent) were headed by agricultural labourers, and the proportion remained similar in 1861 and 1881, when the only householders not supported

⁵⁸ Kelmscott Incl. Act, 38 Geo. III, c. 27 (Priv. Act); PRO, Kelmscott incl. award, with Bodl. incl. map (photo.), on which this and following para. based; cf. ORO, QSD L.170; *Oxon. Poll, 1754*, p. 11.

⁵⁹ Turner apparently rented another 23 a. from the Queen's College, Oxford: PRO, Kelmscott incl. award; ORO, QSD L.170.

⁶⁰ ORO, QSD L.170; PRO, HO 107/872; HO 107/1687.

⁶¹ Young, *Oxon. Agric.* 88--9, 94.

⁶² *Ibid.* 129--30, 217--18, 249--50, 281--2, 314.

⁶³ Above, intro. (pop.).

from agriculture were the publican, a housekeeper at Kelmscott Manor, a widow on poor relief, and a domestic groom. In 1851 the chief farms employed a total of 37 labourers and in 1881 a total of 45, suggesting that continuing population decline was not entirely due to agricultural under-employment.⁶⁵

Farmers and Farming: the 19th and 20th Centuries

The Edmondses, Bradshaws, and Turners remained the chief farmers until the 1820s, when Albert Edmonds briefly took over Bradshaws farm, though by then the family had sold its freehold land.⁶⁶ In the 1830s the Edmondses moved elsewhere, and throughout the mid

19th century there were four farms of between Home Farms, Bradshaws, and Kelmscott only freeholders, farmed some 550 a. bet decades of expansionism with the purcha the combined Turner holdings were farmed James's great-nephew R.W. Hobbs (d. 19 owner, the land having been purchased w Hobbs farmed 600 a. and employed 30 la of £440, although of that more than half w Kelmscott remained divided between the H successively to the Brains, Simpsons, Mac



*The Hobbs family's bottling plant
(from a publicity brochure of c.1914)*

The increasing emphasis on arable farming noted after inclosure continued until the 1870s, when Kelmscott was over 80 per cent arable,⁷⁰ but in the late 19th and early 20th century R.W. Hobbs and his sons built up a substantial farming enterprise which concentrated on dairying and speciality breeds, including horses and a flock of Oxford Down sheep. The principal output of the flock was chearling rams and ram lambs, of which 300 were sold annually, mainly at Oxford, Cirencester and Northampton, but also as far afield as Kelso (Roxburghshire) and Edinburgh. Despite the considerable sums invested in their stud, the Hobbses seem not to have profited from this aspect of their stock-breeding, their greatest

⁶⁴ *Census*, 1811--21.

⁶⁵ PRO, HO 107/872; HO 107/1687; *ibid.* RG 9/728; RG 10/1258; RG 11/1278; RG 12/0975. A few other female inhabitants were domestic servants: below (trade and ind.).

⁶⁶ ORO, QSD L.170, s.a. 1799--1831; above, manor (other estates).

⁶⁷ PRO, HO 107/872; HO 107/1687; *ibid.* RG 9/728; RG 10/1258; V.J. Hollands, *Kelmscott, a Village Hist.* (priv. print. 1990), 60--9; above, manor.

⁶⁸ *Achievement of an Ideal: Kelmscott Dairy Farm* [c. 1914], 8--9; copy in Bodl. G.A. Oxon. 8° 977; Hollands, *Kelmscott*, 69--75; Soc. Antiq., Kelmscott box 3, inland revenue succession duty 4 Dec. 1884, surveyor's rep. 22 Jan. 1895, conv. 31 Jan. 1895; PRO, RG 11/1278; above, manor.

⁶⁹ PRO, HO 107/872; HO 107/1687; *ibid.* RG 9/728; RG 10/1258; RG 11/1278; RG 12/0975; ORO, DV I/3; *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883 and later edns).

⁷⁰ OS *Area Bk* (1877).

successes being with their herd of Dairy Short Horn cows, which won numerous awards before the First World War. Bulls and heifers were sold for overseas export, cows were sold domestically, and milk was sold for the London market, fifty of the least productive milk cows being sold off annually. The quality of the calves and heifers was maintained through a special diet of cream substitute, bran, crushed oats and linseed cake. Pioneers of industrialized milk production, the Hobbses built a dairy and bottling plant at Kelmscott in 1900, their innovative production techniques including tuberculosis-testing of livestock and the refrigeration and sealed bottling of milk, which was transported to London by rail, and distributed from their own outlet at 20 Connaught Street.⁷¹

In 1905 Hobbs sold most of his land, continuing thereafter as a tenant farmer:⁷² by 1916 he farmed 2,300 a., much of it in neighbouring parishes, and all but 4 a. of it leasehold. From the turn of the century the emphasis shifted from milk production to cattle breeding, three-fifths of the family's income by 1914 coming from sale of stock; they then had 506 cows, 1,667 sheep and 117 horses. The partnership continued to pioneer industrialized, capital-intensive farming: by the First World War annual expenditure on cattle feed was £4,000--£5,000, and £100 was spent on superphosphates, while high wages and much-valued training attracted labour. A commentator in 1916 remarked on the business's consciousness of product-development and cultivation of overseas markets, concluding that there were 'several farms in other parts of the county where the management is highly efficient, but none on which it has been so strictly and formally adhered to'.⁷³ Following R.W. Hobbs's death in 1920 his son Robert (d. 1967) succeeded, dissolving the family business, and forming a partnership with his brother-in-law Vaisey Davis.⁷⁴

Notwithstanding the Hobbses' initiatives, in 1916 Kelmscott as a whole remained fairly evenly divided between arable and pasture, the chief crops being wheat and oats (25 per cent each) and turnips (10 per cent). The Hobbses had over 400 a. under wheat and barley, besides oats, beans, and fodder crops.⁷⁵ Mixed farming with a pastoral bias continued in 1941, by which time arable had further declined to 41 per cent: of 605 a. on the Hobbs-Davis



Women haymaking in Kelmscott in 1916: publicity for the War effort (Oxfordshire Studies)

farm, 22 per cent was under wheat, 27 per cent under mixed corn, and 10 per cent under barley, with 17 per cent under sainfoin and 12 per cent under

deal [c. 1914]: copy in Bodl.; Hollands, *Kelmscott*, 90--

an Ideal [c. 1914], passim.

oats. Peas, turnips, swedes, mangolds, kale and vetches were planted for stock feed, while small crops of sugar beet, potatoes, carrots, maize and pears were also grown. The dairying tradition continued with a herd of 201 cows and 56 bulls, and there was a substantial flock of 354 sheep and lambs. Manor farm practised similar agriculture, growing wheat, oats, barley, sainfoin, and fodder crops, maintaining a herd of 73 dairy cows, and, like Hobbs and Davis, keeping poultry. Both farms were well-managed, though Eavis at Manor farm was 'handicapped by a bad landlord', and buildings were in 'a very bad condition'. The Hobbs farm continued to be labour-intensive, employing 27 full-time workers compared with Eavis's six, though both farms were thoroughly mechanized and used chemical fertilizers.⁷⁶ Following the Second World War Roland Maughan succeeded Davis as Hobbs's partner at Home Farm, and in 1969 sold the milking herd to concentrate on pigs, cereals, and potatoes. Manor Farm's Shorthorn herd was sold in 1953, and a later Friesian herd in 1981.⁷⁷

Trades and Crafts

A villein in 1279 surnamed 'smith' may have been a blacksmith,⁷⁸ but from the Middle Ages Kelmscott remained a predominantly agricultural community, with even the usual rural trades infrequently documented.⁷⁹ One of the Cockbill family of Filkins was established by the 1840s as a wheelwright, carpenter, and beer retailer at the Plough Inn, and in the 1850s there was also a basket- or sieve-maker. A blacksmith's shop was recorded from the 1890s to 1920s. During the late 19th and early 20th century some wives or daughters of agricultural labourers worked as dressmakers, and in 1871 one was a laundress. Several other women were domestic servants, mostly in the households of the principle farmers: in 1891 there were ten such, only one of them born locally, including a nurse, cook, governess, and general servant all employed by R.W. Hobbs. A grocer's shop existed by 1841, and from the 1860s the Cockbills ran another at the Plough. In the 1890s a former shopkeeper and agricultural labourer became a coal dealer, presumably using the railway, and another coal dealer continued in the 1920s.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ PRO, MAF 32/914/250/1--2.

⁷⁷ Hollands, *Kelmscott*, 104, 107.

⁷⁸ *Bampton Hund.* 44--5.

⁷⁹ ORO, Kelmscott wills; PRO, HO 107/872; HO 107/1687; *ibid.* RG 9/728; RG 10/1258; RG 11/1278; RG 12/0975; *above* (agric.).

⁸⁰ *PO Dir. Oxon.* (1847 and later edns); *Lascelles' Dir. Oxon.* (1853); *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1883 and later edns); *Sale Cat., Manor Fm. Kelmscott* (1898): copy in Bodl.; PRO, HO 107/872; HO 107/1687; *ibid.* RG 9/728; RG 10/1258; RG 11/1278; RG 12/0975; ORO, DV I/3.

Most traditional trades seem to have disappeared during the 1920s: by the mid 1930s there was only a recently established cabinet-maker, and in the early 1960s Kelmscott still offered only agricultural employment, a chief factor behind its falling population.⁸¹ A shop adjoining the Plough continued to sell groceries until the late 20th century, but by 1990 there was no shop or post office, and except for a few farmworkers almost all the population were commuters working elsewhere.⁸²

VCH DRAFT

⁸¹ *Kelly's Dir. Oxon.* (1920 and later edns); W. Tadd, 'Cotswolds Stone's Fading Glory' (undated cutting from *Daily Telegraph* in COS, c. 1964).

⁸² *Thames Valley Countryside*, vol. 5, no. 17 (1965), 12--13: copy in COS; Hollands, *Kelmscott*, 111; local inf.