

Census returns for these trades show changing trends

In 1841 there were 16 male tailors in Keinton, 3 young female dressmakers and one young furrier

By '59, Morle Bros had opened and William Chaffey, a tailor had a draper/grocer's store, too.

In '71, Mrs Dorothy Chalker had opened a drapers in Prospect Place.

*By 1881 no tailors at all
But a Draper, John Dark aged 53, at the corner of Coombe Hill/High Str.*

*Why did the male tailors disappear?
Was it the readymade clothes at the drapers?*

In addition, 6 young female dressmakers, 3 seamstresses single/widowed, and 2 plain sewers both over 70 years

In 1891, 9 mostly young women were employed as dressmakers and 2 older ones as seamstresses.

Anyone with recollections of dressmakers or tailoring?

*Who remembers a treadle machine or, later, electric ones being used in the village?
Any original 'Singers', once made in Shepton?*

D is for Drapers, Dressmakers and other stitchers.

In 1881, on the corner of High Street and Coombe Hill, stood a **Drapers** owned by Mr. *John Dark*, whilst his daughter, Georgina, was a **machinist** (using a Singer perhaps??). Meanwhile, from Prospect Place, *Isabella Chalker* and daughters *Annie* and *Emma* also had a **Drapers/Haberdashery**. In addition, *Caroline Perry* (53, from Puddimore) is listed as a 'shopkeeper', selling Berlin Wools... for decorative work.

By 1891, a **Drapers/Milliners** in Prospect Place was owned by *Jacob Watts* with *Anne Masters* assistant. Hats were important:

No-one went out without one! Workingmen wore flat caps and perhaps a trilby for Church occasions (with a borrowed suit for funerals/weddings), business owners might prefer bowlers. No-one remembers top hats in the village!

The main **Drapers** at the crossroads, now *RM Smith*, is remembered during the '20s+30s for fabric and ready-mades.

This **Drapers and Outfitters**, from the early 40s, changed to *Leonard Hughes* who came from London (several families were evacuated at this time). The shop sold ready-made clothes, believed to be often bankrupt stock, as well as bed-linen and other household necessities. Many travelling salesmen were supplied here as well as the village. The shop closed in the '60s.

In the early 60s the **Haberdashery**, in the Prospect Place complex, became '**Babettes**' and run by *Mrs Barbara Cox* together with her sister-in-law, *Betty*.

Anyone got any memories/connections with any of the drapers?

G for Gloving

Next to Cobblers(then Rawene) *Mrs Maud Brown nee Culling* mother of *Ida Brown* co-ordinated the gloving outworkers. Later, *Miss Doris Cook* carried on this work from the now Stone Mason's Cottage. Gloving was a cottage industry similar to the Clark's operation.

"Ready-cut glove backs and palms came from Yeovil, Martock and West Camel. Most were hand-stitched, with square-top needles, sharpened to penetrate the leather. The needles and strong cotton was usually provided. The backs had decorative stitching to complete. Some gloves were machined. Most of the gloves were of fine leather which were later lined with fabric and completed in the factories. The worst were the 'lambies'. These had lambswool on the inner sides. They were much thicker, much slower, so more difficult to do and the wool spread itself everywhere! The delicate kid gloves were sewn by specialist workers. Glove-making needed nimble fingers and a lot of patience! Many women took a dozen gloves a week or as many as they could manage. They were paid on collection. It was just 'pin money'. Mothers put it aside for extras and were proud to be able to put it aside and buy some treats for the family...."

No glovers are mentioned in the censuses... perhaps as this was a much needed 'extra' done by many housewives and also unmarried women in the villages in order to supplement the men's meagre wages from other occupations .