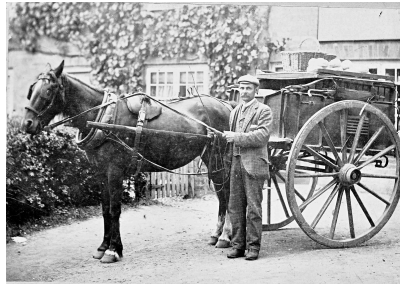


Shops and Traders

For centuries North Marston was virtually self-sufficient. Families could buy food and fuel in the village; the blacksmith, pictured, repaired broken items like pots and pans; village shoe-makers made and mended boots and shoes. North Marston had its own tradesmen: carriers, builders, carpenters, wheelwrights and undertaker.



Fresh bread and milk could be delivered to homes daily and local butchers ensured a continual supply of fresh meat. Without refrigerators, food had to be bought on the day it was to be eaten, especially in the warmer weather. Most shops sold sweets and tobacco. The occasional travelling salesman would arrive bringing items not usually available in the village.

By the 1880s there were at least six shops in North Marston. This picture shows Elmer's Sweet Shop. People seldom left the village to buy things as there was little need.



Baker's Stores, situated at the top of the High Street, was a very popular place for village children to buy their sweets before walking up the hill to school. This picture shows Vida Baker standing outside the shop she ran with her sister, Emily.

The most successful and largest of North Marston's shops was A J Franklin's. In this picture a group of men are sitting on the front step of the shop.



Gradually, as more people had access to their own transport and home freezers, village shops started to decline as they were no longer viable because of the competition from large supermarkets. Many people felt, however, that North Marston was incomplete without a shop so, as an alternative to a commercial concern, a community-run shop was opened in 2011, enhancing the village and providing an outlet for local produce.