

Hargrave Occupation Data Derived from National Censuses 1841-1911

The Census provides individual information on residents of a defined area. One of the criteria recorded is occupation. The amount of detail and level of coverage can vary from census to census. In addition there can be differences on interpretation of entries depending on the reader. However even allowing for these factors, there are strong indications of trends in occupation particularly for Hargrave women in the mid-19th century.

Occupations Captured By the 1841-1911 Censuses for Hargrave Expressed in Numbers and Percentages

Type of Occupation	Census															
	1841		1851		1861		1871		1881		1891		1901		1911	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Land	82	65	143	77	133	70	127	58	107	69	113	70	100	66	89	72
Clothing	7	6	6	3	30	16	49	22	20	13	20	12	18	12	6	5
In Service	19	15	17	9	7	4	30	14	15	10	16	10	13	9	11	9
Building	10	8	9	5	8	4	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Food/Drink	3	2	6	3	6	3	6	3	5	3	7	4	10	6	11	9
Services	5	4	5	3	6	3	4	2	4	3	5	3	9	6	5	4
Total	126	100	186	100	190	100	218	100	154	100	162	100	151	100	123	100

For the majority of the working population in the early Victorian Hargrave employment would have meant working the land and or tending livestock. Long hours of heavy manual labour could potentially involve all members of the family from the very young to the elderly, particularly at harvest time.

Throughout the 1841-1911 period whilst the local population waned from a high of 479 in 1871 to 304 in 1911 agricultural activities in various forms consistently accounted for around two thirds of the active workforce.

A significant proportion of these lost jobs in agriculture over the century were brought about by greater use of horses and the introduction of steam power traction.

Some of these lost jobs were balanced by the abolition of child labour resulting from the enactment of reforming legislation requiring the young to receive formal education.

Hargrave Child Employment 5 to 13 years old

Occupation	Census						
	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911
Employed	41	24	4	0	0	0	0
Scholar	56	33	76	83	54	61	46

The next significant area of employment peaked in 1871, but had begun with the construction of clothing manufactories in Chevington and Barrow in the 1850's. These provided opportunities for onsite and homeworkers. In that year the census recorded over one in five Hargrave workers being involved in the garment trade.

Apart from a minor dip in 1861 the other constant source of employment for around one in ten of the workforce was almost exclusively for females, i.e. those working as household servants. Their roles would be mainly as maids, cooks or housekeepers. This was only set to seriously decline later in 1914 with the need for women to take on roles normally reserved for men due to the demands of the Great War.

The other group of occupations showing a gradual decline in Hargrave were those associated with the construction and maintenance of buildings. From a full range of professions including bricklayers plasterers, carpenters and thatchers in 1841, only a solitary thatcher remained in 1911.

One sector which did show growth over time was that relating food and drink. Whilst millers and publicans were ever present, there were an increasing number of butchers and bakers recorded as well as those involved in retail, recorded as shopkeepers or grocers.

Finally there appears to have been a constant need for support trades and services, such as blacksmiths, saddlers, wheelwrights and hurdle makers, although with increasing mechanisation over time these would be replaced by agricultural mechanics and engineers.

The next major survey for which data is available is the 1939 Register. Whilst this is an incomplete record of occupations, agricultural employment still appears to take a major role, with several entries of Agricultural Labourer and Stockman.

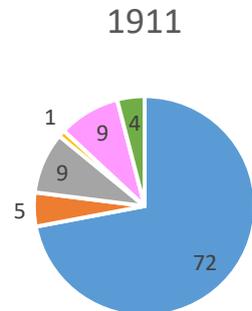
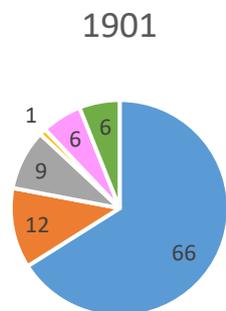
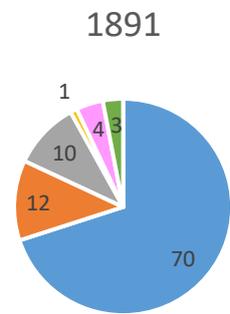
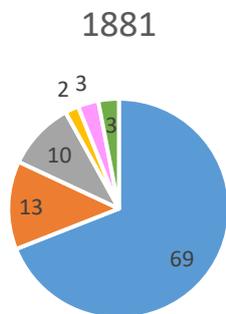
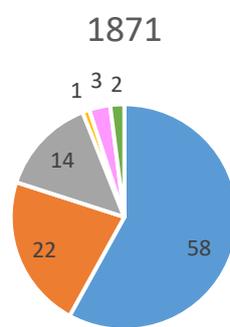
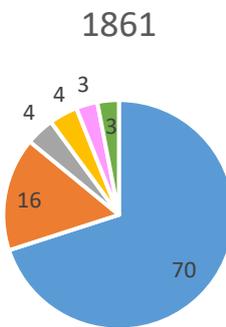
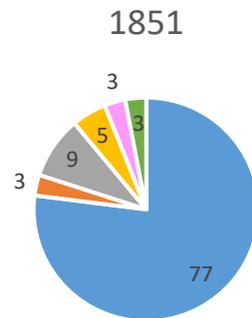
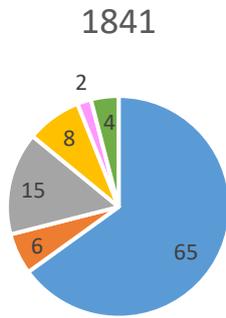
More Recent Employment Trends

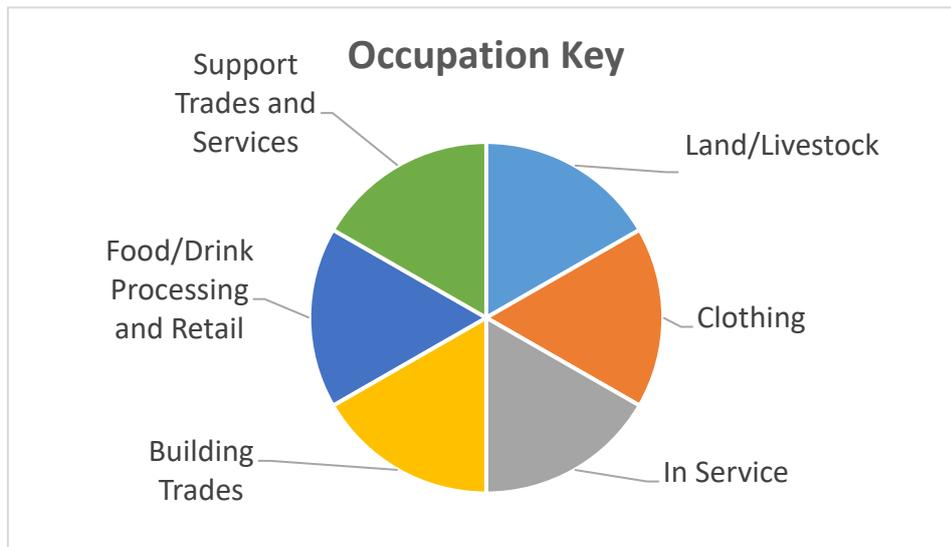
What is clear is that over the course of the 20th century those seeking work had to increasingly look further afield than Hargrave for employment. Some of the new opportunities came from major local employers, such as the British Sugar (sugar beet refinery), Barber Greene (road making machinery), Sainsbury Spillers (poultry processing and animal feed manufacturer) and West Suffolk Hospital in Bury St Edmunds, plus Calor Gas at Saxham, and Haverhill Meat Products.

Today significant local employers in the food and drink industry include long standing businesses such as British Sugar and brewers Greene King who have expanded greatly, along with newer companies such as Treatt food ingredient producers who relocated to Bury in 1971 and Direct Table Foods at Saxham. In other areas there are Atalian Servest facilities managers, Vitec computer hardware and software and Amot valve engineering. The expansion of the town centre offer has also seen opportunities in the retail and service sectors. There is even a nod to agriculture with Claas UK and Shellbourne Reynolds involved in tractor and advanced farm machinery manufacture.

As such, if it were possible to examine the most recent 2021 census returns we would probably find a completely different picture of employment types in Hargrave from those in 1911. The balance will not doubt have moved completely from agriculture to more jobs in retail, education, health, local government, construction and manufacturing, together with types of employment requiring advanced professional, technical or financial skills. In the case of these latter skill sets there would also have been a trend to greater self-employment.

Occupation Data Percentage Charts– Hargrave Censuses 1841-1911





Key:

Land and Livestock – includes Farmers, Agricultural Labourers, Shepherds, Horse Keepers

Clothing – includes Dressmakers, Shoe/Boot Makers, Tailoresses, Milliners

In Service – includes Servants, Housekeepers

Building Trades – includes Bricklayers, Thatchers, Carpenters

Food/Drink Processing and Retail – Includes Millers, Butchers, Publicans, Grocers

Support Trades and Services – includes Blacksmiths, Wheelwrights, Gardeners, Carriers

NB Due to low numbers the clergy, schoolteachers and those professions that only appear once have not been included.

Nicholas Newman – June 2021