

# Shops and Businesses in Barton

Barton had six shops.

In Pennygate Harry Watts ran a shop and a Libby Balls ran a shop after the Watts' shop was closed.

## Memories from Ivy Long

Mrs Long's father used to be sent to Harry Watts' shop to get 2d worth of cheese. As you came in from the road there was a counter for groceries and on the other side wooden slats for drapery. Brushes hung from the ceiling of the shop. Mr Watts died in 1916 and Mrs Watts kept the shop going until 1922.

Close to the Methodist Chapel was a village shop owned by a Loveday. It was closed in the 1920s and had a glass front with red and diamond windows.

Alongside it the cottage was occupied by a fish curer and seller.

The premises next to the phone box was for many years the main shop (*see photo below*) and post office in the village. The shop sold everything including boots and shoes. Next door was another small shop in two wooden huts supplying sweets, haberdashery and some drapery.



**Barton Shop & Post Office** Photo courtesy of [www.thestampbook.co.uk](http://www.thestampbook.co.uk)

Point House was a grocers and pork butchers shop. Charlie Jones kept the shop and gave the children a few Liquorice Allsorts at Christmas from a free sample a supplier sent him.

As you enter Barton on your left is what was the local blacksmith's shop. It closed around 1930, the last tradesman being Joe Salmon-Cox who lived at Point Farm.

He did general smithy work and made fittings for boats and wherries being repaired at the staithe. Boys of the village spent much time at the bellows and in the adjoining travelhouse where the local horses were shod.

In Common Road was the coal yard. At first the coal came by wherry to the staithe and then later to the station in Stalham on the Midland and Great Northern Railway.

Cox Bros could well be one of the oldest family boat building yards on the Norfolk Broads. Two generations of brothers worked under this name. At first they worked to the north of the staithe, but then acquired land known as "Holdyard" to the south of the staithe.

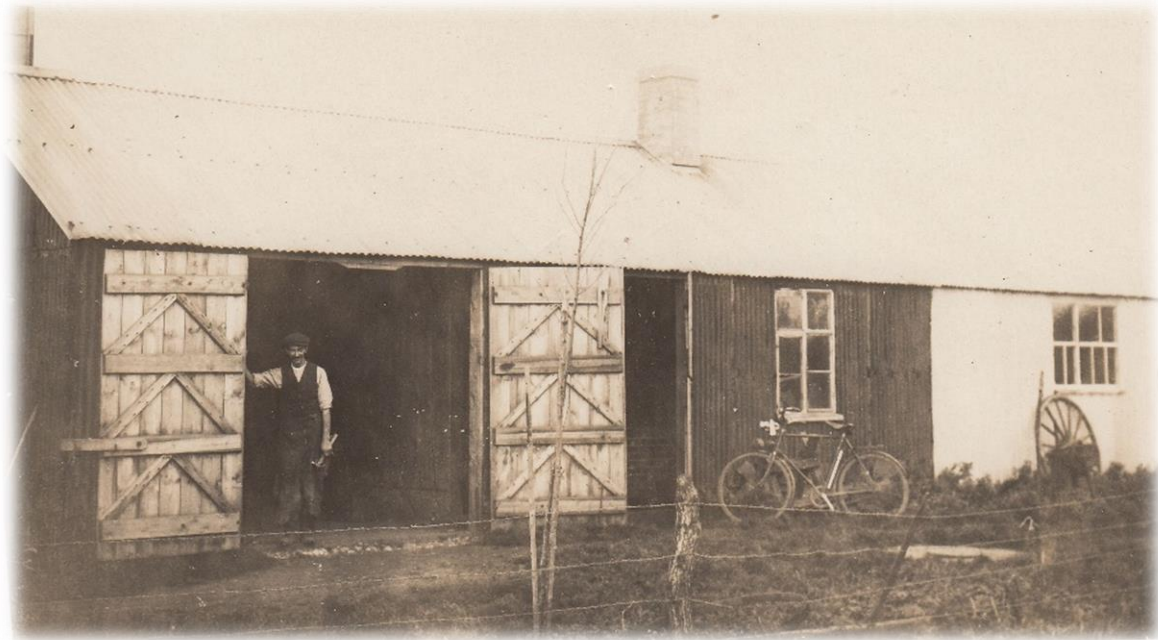
The first house in Staithe Road from the water was sometimes called "Eels Foot" but became best known as the "Hole in the Wall". An off licence, beer was obtained through a wicket (opening window) at the rear. It could not be consumed on the premises so many gallons of beer were drunk on a seat placed along a flint wall, and in the nearby area (*see photo below*). During the First World War the opening hours were reduced from 24 hours daily to a few only during the week and none on Sundays. Apparently this restriction was applied to counteract drunkenness and absenteeism in munitions factories, and a loss of wartime equipment.



*Image of men sitting outside the "Hole in the Wall" c.1930, John Yaxley, landlord on the right.*

Further up Staithe Road we come to the cottage where the last shoemaker in the village lived. Records show that in 1910 Albert Drake had a pair of boots made for 14s.

On the western corner of the road that leads to Lime Kiln Dyke was the village carpenter's shop, worked by Mr Bob Hook. The further end of the building was the workshop of Mr Ted Cousins (*see image below*), the village's last blacksmith.



*Extracts from "A Jam Round Barton Turf" by kind permission of John Yaxley and "Wherries and Windmills" by kind permission of Anne Wilson. Images from Barton Turf History Project.*