

## FINDING OUT WITH WVCC 1. BALDWIN VILLAGE

*Wilden could arguably be called a Baldwin Village even though its origins can be traced back to Domesday Times. Under Alfred's patronage the ironworks prospered, providing employment and financial clout to build a church, school and sport field and in doing so, created the Parish of Wilden*

The factory was the life blood providing a very noisy, hot and somewhat dangerous environment, where children were the porters of food and beer supplies delivered in half gallon jugs to their working parents. It was common practice to use the shovels as make shift frying pans, with the furnace the oven to cook eggs and bacon.

The men folk who were *rollers, doublers, furnacemen or humble catchers* were often referred to as *minkers, offers, yeduts and shammies* and were paid on Saturday nights with their wages placed in tins. These tins were returned by the children on Monday mornings tossing them into the wicker basket behind the main door.

Prior to there being a church in Wilden, burials were held at the Parish Church at Hartlebury with the adults being carried up *Bigbury Lane* and the infants taken up the parallel bridleway named *Littlebury Lane*.

The village fields were all named, with the *Slad* and *Leap Gate* names still in use today. Others were the Vartel (now the nature reserve), the water meadow (further along the lane towards Kidderminster), Romney, the Big Hill, the Little Hill, the Tennis Lawn and the Far Field.

THE IMAGE IS ALFRED BALDWIN 1875