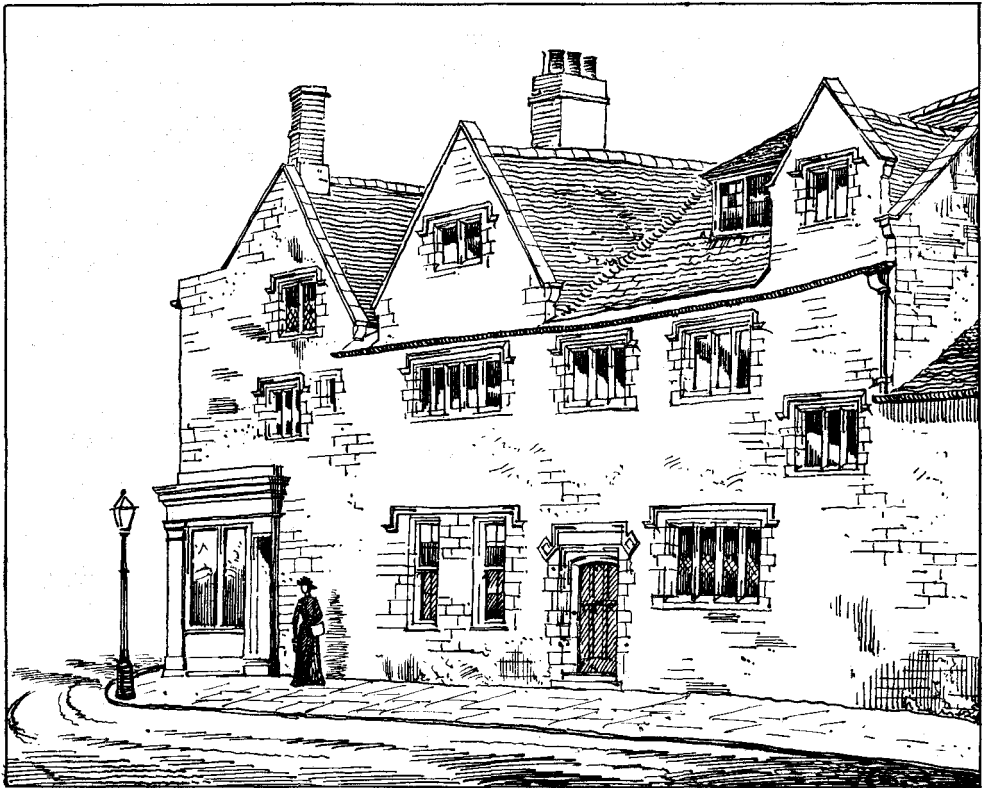


CAKE AND COCKHORSE



Banbury Historical Society

Spring 1972

20p

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Society was founded in 1957 to encourage interest in the history of the town of Banbury and neighbouring parts of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.

The Magazine *Cake & Cockhorse* is issued to members three times a year. This includes illustrated articles based on original local historical research, as well as recording the Society's activities. Publications include *Old Banbury - a short popular history* by E.R.C. Brinkworth (2nd edition), *New Light on Banbury's Crosses*, *Roman Banburyshire*, *Banbury's Poor in 1850*, and *Sanderson Miller of Radway and his work at Wroxton*, and a pamphlet *History of Banbury Cross*.

The Society also publishes records volumes. These have included *Clockmaking in Oxfordshire, 1400-1850*; *South Newington Churchwardens' Accounts 1553-1684*; *Banbury Marriage Register, 1558-1837* (3 parts) and *Baptism and Burial Register, 1558-1723* (2 parts); *A Victorian M.P. and his Constituents: The Correspondence of H.W. Tancred, 1841-1850*; a new edition of *Shoemaker's Window*; and *Wigginton Constables' Books, 1691-1836*. *Banbury Wills and Inventories, 1591-1650*, *Bodicote Churchwardens' Accounts, 1700-1822* and *Banbury Politics, 1830-1880* are all well advanced.

Meetings are held during the autumn and winter, normally at 7.30 p.m. in the Town Hall. Talks on general and local archaeological, historical and architectural subjects are given by invited lecturers. In the summer, excursions to local country houses and churches are arranged. Archaeological excavations and special exhibitions are arranged from time to time.

Membership of the society is open to all, no proposer or seconder being needed. The annual subscription is £2.00, including the annual records volume, or £1.00 if this is excluded. Junior membership is 25p.

Application forms can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary or the Hon. Treasurer.

CAKE AND COCKHORSE

The magazine of the Banbury Historical Society. Issued to members three times a year.

Volume Five

Number Two

Spring 1972

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This is the fiftieth issue of *Cake and Cockhorse*. While many old-established historical and records societies have published many more than 50 annual volumes, the mortality rate among local historical journals, whether published by societies or by commercial concerns, has been high, and the Banbury Historical Society can take some measure of satisfaction from its successful support of a journal which has steadily grown in size over so many issues. That the magazine has achieved some success is due to the work of many members of the Society. Without research findings to be published and activities to report the magazine would lose its *raison d'être*, and those members who have been busy investigating various historical topics and those who have organised excavations deserve thanks for their contributions. Without a large membership the magazine would not be viable, and those who have attracted members through meetings, excursions and records publications have indirectly done much to aid the progress of *Cake and Cockhorse*.

Cake and Cockhorse began in 1959 as a simple, duplicated, quarterly record of the activities of the Banbury Historical Society, then less than two years old. Before long, reviews and short articles were added to the historical notes and queries which appeared in it, and some short extracts from records were published. In 1962 the adoption of offset litho printing instead of duplicating greatly increased the magazine's scope, and its appearance has steadily improved as our printers, Messrs. Express Litho Service of Oxford, have acquired more sophisticated plant, the use of justified margins and better processes for half-tone illustrations being particularly notable landmarks.

It is fitting that this fiftieth issue should feature not an individual work of scholarship, but a record of one of the Historical Society's meetings, with which a number of the Society's officers and members have been concerned. We are most grateful to our new secretary, Mr George Fothergill, who arranged the reminiscences meeting in November 1970, to our treasurer, Dr George Gardam, who transcribed tape recordings of the meeting, and above all, to the four contributors, Miss D. Bromley, and Messrs. F. Anker, G.D.M. Braggins and N. Scropton for their lively recollections. The chairman of the meeting, Dr E.R.C. Brinkworth, and the members of the large audience who made the occasion so memorable, also deserve our thanks.

We are sure that all of our readers will find these impressions of Banbury at the turn of the century full of fascination, and we would remind our older readers that should they have anything to add to what appears here, we should be glad to include it in a future issue. The reminiscences about the first cars, the first cinema, Mafeking night, the outbreak of the Great War, are useful contributions to local history, but they could be paralleled anywhere in England. More important to the historian than memories of this sort are the impressions of Banbury as a community which come from the four sets of recollections taken together. Banbury at the turn of the century was a place where everyone knew everyone else, or, if this is a slight exaggeration, where everyone in public or business life knew everyone else so situated. In 1972 this, perhaps, seems more strange than Penny Pops or timber hauling with horses. These reminiscences are offered here not just as entertainment for our members, but as raw material for future historians, and they may prove as valuable for an understanding of Banbury in the 1900s as *Shoemaker's Window* is for the 1820s and 30s.

Our cover: shows the Prebendal House, on the corner of Parsons Street and the Market Place, which has recently been restored, as it was in August 1885, drawn by Thomas Garratt.

SOCIETY NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

The Autumn Lecture programme has been well supported and the audiences have enjoyed two fine lectures by Mr Christopher Hill and Miss G.H. Dannatt. Contributing to the Reminiscences evening were Mr N. Scroton, Mr A. Cheney and Mr H. Sanderson under the Chairmanship of Dr E. Brinkworth. A tape-recording of their interesting talks has been deposited at the Museum. The Annual Dinner on November 19th was highly successful with two delightful and contrasting speeches by Mr J. Brooke-Little and the Rt. Reverend D.G. Loveday.

This year Mr T.G. Hassall has already spoken on 'Recent Excavations in Oxford'. The remainder of the spring programme consists of:—

Thursday, 24th February. 'Mop Making in Witney'. This lecture by Mr B. Crawford will be of special appeal to all with an interest in local crafts and industry. Mr Crawford will be illustrating his lecture with a film on the past skills of his firm. 7.30, Town Hall.

Tuesday, 7th March. 'The Excavation of Banbury Castle'. A meeting to discuss plans for the forthcoming excavation (see notice below). 7.30, Reference Library.

Tuesday, 14th March. A Reception to mark the publication of *Shoemaker's Window and the Wigginton Constables' Book, 1691-1836*. 7.30, for 8.00, Globe Room, Banbury Museum.

Thursday, 23rd March. 'S.P. Cockerell, Architect of Banbury Church'. St. Mary's present church celebrates its 175th anniversary this year and Mr N. Cooper, of the National Monuments Record, will enlighten us on the architect of this distinctive church. 7.30, Town Hall.

Thursday, 27th April. 'Kings Sutton village meeting'. Mrs Coxon of Kings Sutton will speak on the waters and wells of this once famous spa, and Mr G. Forsyth Lawson will again give an architectural survey of the village illustrated with his slides. 7.30, Kings Sutton Memorial Hall.

Saturday, 3rd June. Annual General Meeting at Bloxham School.

Excavations at Banbury Castle — Spring 1972

The Banbury Market Square Redevelopment scheduled to start in 1973, will almost certainly destroy valuable archaeological material belonging to Banbury Castle. This Castle was important up until the Civil War when it was slighted. The exact siting of the castle defences has never been determined, it is therefore vitally important that excavation take place at the castle prior to its final destruction. The Department of the Environment is to finance some preliminary work on the site (March 25th—April 23rd, 1972), but a substantial sum of money from local sources will be necessary if the work is to be properly carried out. Volunteers are required for this work and anyone interested should write to Trevor Rowley, Oxford University Department for External Studies, Rewley House, Wellington Square, Oxford.

Mr J.S.W. Gibson

This is an historic issue of *Cake and Cockhorse* not alone because it is the fiftieth. It is also the first in which the name of Jeremy Gibson does not appear on the inside cover as secretary. Members of the Historical Society will be sad to hear that Mr Gibson has now given up his home at Bloxham and moved to Chichester. He will be in Oxfordshire much less frequently than before and has therefore felt it necessary to give up his post as secretary. Jeremy Gibson was instrumental in the founding of the Historical Society in 1958 and his boundless energy has launched the society in the direction of many new successes. His own achievements in securing the publication of the Banbury Parish Registers were recognised some years ago by his election as a Fellow of the Society of Genealogists. In recent years much of the work of organising meetings has been taken over by Mr George Fothergill, and it is fitting that his contributions have been recognised by his appointment as the new secretary. Mr Gibson will continue to act as editor of the Society's Records Series, and to handle transactions with printers. Every member of the Society will wish to thank him heartily for all he has done to add to the enjoyment of living in the Banbury area and for his contributions to local historical scholarship, as well as to wish him happiness and prosperity at his new home in Sussex. B.S.T.

Exhibition at Shipston

Shipston-on-Stour and District Local History Society are proposing to stage an Exhibition on 6th and 7th May, 1972. Anyone in that area with possibly suitable exhibits is urged to contact the Hon. Secretary of that Society, Mrs P.J. Gardner, Park Cottage, Ilmington, Shipston-on-Stour, Warws.

BANBURY AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

On 26th November 1970 the Banbury Historical Society held a meeting at which memories of Banbury in the early years of the 20th century were revived and discussed. The meeting proved so popular, and the discussion so interesting, that it is reproduced here with only a very slight degree of editing. These memories are important not just for the factual information which they record, but for the manner in which the speakers described the society in which they grew up. The meeting was chaired by Dr E.R.C. Brinkworth, and began with the playing of a tape recorded conversation between Dr Brinkworth and Miss D. Bromley. This was followed by live contributions from Mr F. Anker, an insurance broker, Mr G.D.M. Braggins, a timber merchant, and Mr N. Scroton, a headmaster. There followed a short general discussion, which is reproduced here, and we have also added some notes sent to us after the meeting by Mrs D. White.

Dr Brinkworth: Well, I expect you remember, Miss Bromley, a lot of the old customs – old English customs – because they did last well into this century.

Miss Bromley: Yes, well to go back to old remembered customs. Every May Day morning children went about the town from door to door carrying May garlands. These were made with two small hoops tied together and covered with flowers and greenery. The Queen of the May, a decorated and crowned doll, sat in the middle. The whole was covered by a small sheet and on payment of a copper or two put into a tin box, the sheet was slowly raised and the garland could be viewed. The owners were always very proud of their pretty handiwork.

Dr Brinkworth: Well of course this is tremendously interesting in Banbury because the story of Banbury Cross started with the May Queen: that was the original Lady on a White Horse. That's awfully interesting.

Do you remember any other customs in Banbury?

Miss Bromley: There were frequently quite exciting events to be seen in the streets. Sometimes a Swiss or Austrian in National costume would stand by the town gates and play some kind of instrument and clumsily dance. At other times a German band would appear and play really good music by well-known composers. An occasion for wonder was a one-man band, one man having various instruments attached to different parts of him and somehow he managed to play them all at once. Drum sticks to his elbows, triangles, cymbals, bells on his ankles, pipe to blow and so on. Barrel organs or hurdy-gurdies made weekly rounds playing topical tunes often accompanied by dark pretty Italian women with bright-coloured head scarves and shining earrings. On or by the organ would be a cage with colourful love birds which we now know as budgerigars. If not birds there would be a small monkey wearing a little suit of scarlet and perhaps a feathered cap. He would hold a tin cup and chatter when a copper was put in.

Dr Brinkworth: Yes, I remember I think the last one, an Italian, to bring a barrel organ round the streets was Tusio? Do you remember that one? Mrs Tusio is still alive.

Now I just do remember the Steeplechase they used to have round Crouch Hill. The man they had to start them off was Tom Page of the White Lion. You couldn't miss him with his grey bowler. Quite a good race meeting; they came from all over the place.

Miss Bromley: Once a year in April steeplechases were run round Crouch Hill which formed an excellent natural grandstand. Crowds of racegoers came into the town to attend this and it must have been quite a pretty sight to watch.

Dr Brinkworth: Yes, thanks very much. Well now to come indoors and the sort of entertainments people had then. I seem to remember something about 'Penny Pops' – concerts I think they were. Could you tell us something more about them?

Miss Bromley: A series of entertainments which gave pleasure to a number of people was given on Saturday nights at the Cadbury Memorial Hall in Bridge Street. They were known as the 'Penny Pops', for only a penny was charged. Quite a good class of entertainment was given by the musical people in the town.

Dr Brinkworth: And then people were getting up things you know as fêtes. We have fêtes now but when you read for instance old Parish magazines about fêtes they had it does seem they put on a tremendous show, far bigger than ever we do today. Could you tell us something about them?

PRICE SIXPENCE.

In aid of the Funds of the Parish and St. Paul's
Churches and Schools.

PROGRAMME OF THE

Fete al Fresco

TO BE HELD IN THE
GROUNDS OF NEITHROP HOUSE, BANBURY,
(By kind permission of COL. ROTHE,) from
Tuesday, July 26th, to Monday, Aug. 1st, 1898
(Bank Holiday), inclusive.

W. POTTS, PRINTER, BANBURY.

Fig. 1.



Miss DOROTHEA BAIRD as ROSALIND.

Fig. 2.

Miss Bromley: In 1898 and 1901 there were fêtes in what is now the People's Park, but then a field and the grounds adjoining Neithrop House. They were in aid of St. Mary's Church. They were great events in the town and lasted from Monday to Saturday. Each day the opening ceremony was performed by a notable person. On the first day the opener was the Duchess of Marlborough accompanied by the Duke. She was very tall and elegant, the former American heiress Consuelo Vanderbilt. Lady Gordon Lennox, the sister of the Countess of Warwick, then living at Broughton Castle, opened the fête one day of the 1898 fête, looking very fair and beautiful. She was unable to come to the second fête but sent her little daughter the Hon. Ivy to take her place, a very daintily dressed little girl of 10 years old who won all hearts by the charm with which she performed the ceremony. The chief event of each fête was a performance by the Oxford University Dramatic Society and Mrs H.B. Irving of the Pastoral play 'As you like it'. These were acted in the part of the grounds where a stream and the surrounding trees made a beautiful setting. They were beautifully put on, the chief actors with Mrs Irving were Frank Lascelles and Ben Levy, later pageant producing king. Frank Lascelles lived at Sibford and used to drive into Banbury with a tandem of ponies.

Gwen Nelli was the elder daughter of the Vicar of Wroxton and Curate of St. Mary's when I was young. Lance Sweet was an unforgettable Malvolio. The jester in 'As you like it' was a Mr Loveday, probably the father of the present Bishop of Dorchester. Mrs John Cheney, a very musical lady, trained a troupe of children as gypsies and pickaninnies to sing songs accompanied by several older people. A dummy house was erected, filled with sticks and inflammable material. On a platform there were some children of the firemen and others lighted by limelight, and intended to be rescued by the firemen before light was set to the house. By some mistake the fire was started before the children were all down, causing some tense moments to the attendants and the people watching, but they descended just in time. One boy, Tommy Fortescue, son of the captain, coming down last by himself, was singed and scorched slightly. *That* exhibition was not repeated at the second fête. It was Canon Porter who arranged with Oxford friends for the pastoral plays.

Dr Brinkworth: You mentioned Canon Porter. I have seen photographs of him; it seems that he was a very outstanding man.

Miss Bromley: Yes, those who met Canon Porter were not likely to forget him, as he had a striking personality. He was rather tall with white hair and side-whiskers, but one time when on holiday abroad he injured the ligaments of a leg and after that he always carried a tall stick.

Dr Brinkworth: That's in the photograph I have seen of him, standing at the Vicarage door with his stick.

Miss Bromley: Yes, I have one. I was interested last year to see this stick again. It now belongs to Mr Arnold. When I saw it, it belonged to his mother, Mrs F. Arnold, and was lent to her father by Canon Porter and returned to him when no longer needed. Canon Porter was rather inclined to be irritable at times and would rap the ground with this stick when provoked by lack of answers or slowness by the children in the Catechism on Sunday afternoons.

Dr Brinkworth: Quite a historic stick. It should go into the museum along with one or two other sticks, for example one of the sticks of the Banbury Walker. I wonder what is your earliest memory?

Miss Bromley: Going back to my early childhood, one of my first recollections is the cry 'Hot Cross buns all hot, all hot!' on Good Friday mornings from about 6 o'clock, as the bakers' boys went round with baskets or trays of hot cross buns. Each year I went with the maid to Betts the baker in Butchers Row to fetch the buns for breakfast. Great trays of brown buns smelling deliciously being warm from the oven and then we scuttled home with the bag to eat them whilst hot.

On Easter Sunday the volunteers in their scarlet uniforms always attended Matins. They assembled in Bridge Street and marched with their band up Parsons Street. At the side of them by himself marched a soldier in Scottish uniform and a kilt. This was a Mr Sullivan who lived in Banbury with his family. The service was very joyous and colourful; the hymn 'Onward Christian Soldiers' was always sung in procession with the cross leading and a great white cross. One Sunday which stands out in my memory was an occasion when the Crown Prince of Siam

who was then an undergraduate at Oxford, came accompanied by the Mayor and sat in the pew the Mayor occupied on Mayoral Sunday.

Dr Brinkworth: Every old town has a town crier.

Miss Bromley: Yes; notices of lost property and announcements of coming events were often advertised by the Town Crier. The last one was Mr George Hutchins. He would stop at intervals and ring a huge bell and then shout the announcements as loud as he could. There were no amplifiers then, yet what he said could be distinctly heard, which tells how much less noise was made by the traffic. Yet when there was serious illness in a house, the road outside was covered deeply with straw to deaden the noise of horses and traffic. The roads were dusty, carts went round the streets and perforated pipes sprayed showers of water to lay the dust.

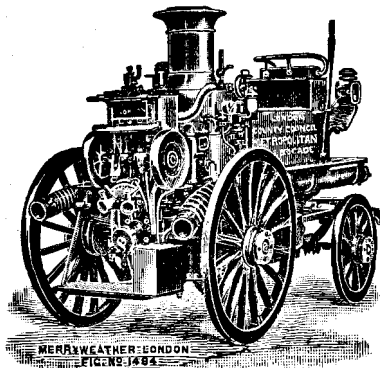
I remember watching from somebody's window in North Bar the first horseless carriage I had seen in the road. He doubted whether they would ever come into working society and watched with some dismay. That would have been in 1894.

Before the days of wireless in peoples' homes, news of events of especial interest was telegraphed to the Banbury Guardian office in Parsons Street and immediately posted up in the window. Crowds assembled in the street eagerly awaiting the results. I remember seeing the announcements of the relief of Mafeking and Ladysmith in this way during the Boer War. After these two events, large bonfires were lighted in the Cow Fair in front of the Town Hall.

Mr F. Anker: I remember Miss Bromley when she lived in North Bar where the Cromwell Lodge Hotel still is, and it was owned by Lieut. Bromley, her father, and I believe he was a member of the Banbury Fire Brigade in its early days. Don [Braggins] next to me, I remember so well because I had the privilege and pleasure to propose his election as Mayor of the town in 1946. I, unfortunately, didn't follow in his footsteps but I was at that time President of the Banbury Rotary Club and I did welcome him into the chair as President of the Club the following year. Norman [Scropton] and Dr Brinkworth I remember at the Banbury County School.

I remember Banbury when the population was about 11,000, about one third what it is today, and there were many green and open spaces. I remember the Banbury races that Miss Bromley has spoken about, the Banbury Fairs, of which there were many. The Sheep Fair and the Horse Fair; the Horse Fair in the Horse Fair. They were weekly events. The cows in the streets in Bridge Street. The carriers' carts, of which there were many. It was a sight to see the carriers' carts standing outside the licensed houses which provided accommodation for the horses in their stables. The fêtes and fairs, the fêtes which were held on the Green in South Bar, when usually the Lady on the White Horse was part of the affair. The fêtes at Wood Green, the home of the Gillett family, and I particularly have memories of Lord North. Lord North of Wroxton Abbey used to come into Banbury in his carriage, drawn by a pair of horses and with outriders to visit his friend Colonel Rothe at Neithrop House, which Miss Bromley has mentioned, in Warwick Road. There were stables with double doors which opened and he drove into the grounds of Neithrop House. That, later, as many of you will know, became part of the People's Park, and is now the clinic in Warwick Road. The stables were pulled down; the entrance gates were built and ornamental gardens maintained with bowling green and other facilities. Miss Bromley mentioned the Fire Brigade and Capt. Fortescue. My father was a member having joined, I think, about 1894 or 1896 and consequently I took a big interest in fire-fighting. Miss Bromley has told you of the fête in the Park when some of the Fortescue family nearly lost their lives. My wife's father, Mr Fred Ginger, was a friend of my father. He was a jeweller with a shop and premises in Parsons Street. In either 1907 or 1908 or thereabouts he moved into High Street, and for 25 years he was the only qualified optician. He was a member of the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Society and was a Freeman of the City of London. In 1911 he thought to help to improve the town and he bought a turret clock in Brighton, and re-erected it in the High Street, Banbury. Shortly afterwards in the Press there appeared the riddle 'Why is High Street like an apple pie?', 'Because it is improved by a little Ginger'. I remember him also in those very early days. He had one of these crystal wireless sets in order to obtain the time from Greenwich - I think it was at one o'clock - in order to set the clock. He was most anxious to keep the clock in regular and good time. Unfortunately we don't do the same today. He was, I believe, one of the first motorcyclists in the town, and he was certainly one of the earliest car owners. In 1903 - this I know because I have it in front of

FRIDAY, JULY 29TH.



FIRE BRIGADE COMPETITION

BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE

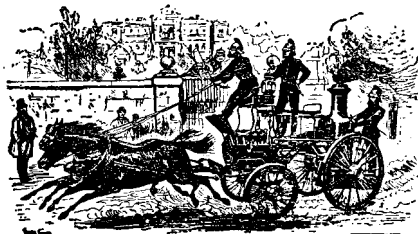
BAMPTON, BLOXHAM, BRACKLEY, CAPE HILL (BIRMINGHAM),
CHIPPING NORTON, COVENTRY, DEDDINGTON, HOOK
NORTON, HODDESDON, STRATFORD-ON-AVON,
TOWCESTER BRIGADES.



At 8.45 on the same day (Friday) the

BANBURY FIRE BRIGADE

(Under CAPTAIN FORTESCUE),



WILL GIVE

A DISPLAY

ILLUSTRATING

A Call to a Fire,

And showing the methods of saving life and extinguishing a
building actually in flames.

Fig. 3. Events from the Programme of the Fete al Fresco, 1898.

me – he was summonsed – prosecuted rather – for doing a speed of 19 miles per hour up Deddington Hill and was fined five shillings, costs seven shillings, total twelve shillings.

Miss Bromley has mentioned Canon Porter. I remember of course Canon Jones. He had a very good influence on many people in Banbury. He was a bachelor, a boxer, and in St. Mary's Church I do recollect very large congregations.

1914 the war broke out and at this period my mind immediately thinks of the horses – of course one remembers there were very few motor cars – the horses, particularly the field kitchens. I can see field kitchens going along the Warwick Road towards Edge Hill where they had the drills. The soldiers were billeted during the war time, I remember. We had a very large house. We did have four or five soldiers including stabling the horses. The parades on the Sunday, the Army going to St. Mary's Church I also remember. I have mentioned the Fire Service and my father, during the war I remember there was a special code to be rung on the bell should there be an air raid. I don't think it went more than twice, but I believe on one occasion a Zeppelin did come over the district, in fact it passed over, I believe, Daventry.

During the war came the first cinema. Martin Blinkhorn's grandfather opened it where Mansfield's Arcade is now. I remember going to the first film, the title being 'A soldier and a man'. During the war I had the privilege and pleasure of joining the Wolf Cubs. The Wolf Cubs were started by Miss Phyllis Robeson and had various Headquarters. They were probably thirty to forty strong. I can think of two or three names which you will know. Peter Walford, optician; George Clark, miller; Ted Clark, newspaper editor, and quite a number of others.

When peace came along in 1918, I remember the parades through the town, marching, behind the Scouts with their band. During the war my father was Inspector of Munitions with the Munitions factory here. Sometimes I used to go along with him along the Causeway to see the premises. I didn't go in; he had to go in and go round to report to the Government. He was also a contractor to the Ministry of Labour as the manager of the Employment Exchange, as we would know it today. It was in 1908, I think, that the Lloyd George Act brought in National Insurance, and so he provided local facilities for National Stamp cards and unemployment benefits when they later were provided. I have quite a number of posters that were exhibited during the 1914–18 war, it's not much fun to look at them now, but here are some of the posters – Kitchener's posters, the Royal Proclamation of the Request to join the services, 'Your King and Country needs you' and various others, particularly addressed to women. War Services for Women, 10,000 women wanted for farm work and the wages offered were 18 shillings a week.

I remember taking part in the Guard of Honour at Martin Blinkhorn's father's wedding at St. Mary's Church, as a Wolf Cub.

Then the celebrations after the war. These took place in 1919. There were fêtes and there were processions. I still have the programme that was printed for one procession, and I remember it from the fire service angle. In those days there was a fire steamer, 'The Fire King'. I still have the brass plate. In the procession the steamer went first, then a horse-drawn manual, a second manual decorated in a comic way – 'Send us a postcard', 'Call us', and so on, and the fourth turn-out was an open touring car, provided by Mr Joe Bustin. One of his daughters, Gwen, dressed up as Britannia, with a brass helmet and trident, sat on the back seat. On one running board was a young lad Thomas of North Bar – dressed up as a sailor, and I had the privilege of being got up as a soldier to stand on the other. We had to ride round the town on a Saturday for the Peace Celebrations. Unfortunately the tableau I was on was not included in the photographs, so Martin Blinkhorn's father said 'Dress up again on Tuesday', which we did, and Mr Bustin arranged that we should be placed in front of the Cross and the photograph, which I still have, shows the tableau, but you cannot see a dog, a person or a horse or a cart in the whole of the Horse Fair. This gives some idea of what the Horse Fair was like on a Tuesday afternoon in 1919.

I mentioned school and the Banbury County School. Next to the County School there was the Mechanics Institute, which provided facilities for art classes; on the first floor there were billiard tables and of course the library on the ground floor, which was the centre of the town for the young people. There wasn't much in the way of facilities in those days. Young people of course had to make their own entertainment in their own homes.

The Drill Hall in Calthorpe Street, where the car park now is, near Cheney's, was used both by the school for gymnastic lessons and other purposes, but on Saturday nights there were frequently dances there which you could attend for, I think, one shilling and sixpence, which included refreshments. Between the wars there were quite a number of popular dances held at the Town Hall, the Cricket Club, the Rigger Club, the Hockey Club, the Warwickshire Hunt. In those days when adults *were* adults and children *were* children, there were no teenagers.

Now to return to the Fire Brigade; it was 100 years ago this year that Fire Brigades were formed in provincial towns, replacing the Fire Insurance firemen and equipment. Before 1870 one wore – if one was appointed by a Fire Insurance Company – a very resplendent and decorative uniform, with a cockaded hat of the beaver type – a top hat. When the brigade was formed in Banbury in 1870, the helmets were ornamented leather with a lion on the top. You notice how small they are, they won't go on, because of course, 100 years ago the men were smaller, they weren't so tall and we've all grown up a little since then.

The Fire Station in those days was in the Horse Fair, where the Whately Hall Hotel is now. That was the home of Charles Fortescue, solicitor, who at that time was chief officer. The station housed two manuals; later just before the 14–18 war, a fire steamer – a steam propelled engine, and there was an escape also. The horses were provided either by Tom Bates, White Lion or by Sheasbys' stables in Castle Street. To call the brigade one had to ring the bells outside the fire station or the bells on the Town Hall. In earlier days they used St. Mary's Church bells – two of the bells. But as soon as the bell either at the Town Hall or at the Horse Fair was rung, call-boys – there were two of them – would proceed, if it was in the night, to run round to knock up the members of the Brigade who might not have heard the bell rung. A little wallet was used by each call boy and although he probably remembered the names, the names were printed out for him on a card there and that he would put on a belt, as he ran round. Again in early days, to clear the streets for the horse-drawn appliances they used a rattle, before the days of bells on the engines.

If you stand outside the Town Hall, back to the station and look up on the left hand side, you will see two little hooks toward the top. They were used to tie the escape which stood outside the Town Hall in position. And if you stand with your back to Lampreys, again looking at the Town Hall, towards the top you will see a bracket from where the bell hung, and down the wall of the Town Hall there are two rings through which the metal chain was dropped (*Voice*: Over the Ladies Toilet). Outside the Fire Station there was a gas lamp, which was illuminated, and that is one of the glass founder lamps and told you where the Fire Station was.

I mentioned the escape outside the Town Hall; this is the spoke from one of the wheels (showing) which was given to my father. It was kept by a man named Dunnell, who was at the Brewery in North Bar – Dunnell's Brewery. It was handed on to some one at Hunt Edmunds; Hazelwood was his name.

Buckets were the general utensil for the firemen as the old horse-drawn manuals needed the water to be brought to them – very early type manuals. Later hose was introduced which did away to some extent with the large numbers of buckets which were used in the Fire of London and many hundreds of years afterwards.

I thought you perhaps might like to see a brass helmet. These were used from about 1890. I have shown the earliest helmets. These were introduced about 1890, and in Banbury ceased to be used in 1935. We then went over to a leather type, composite type helmet, the reason being that, although it was lined, electricity was beginning to be used much more after the 14–18 war and a number of firemen were killed, electrocuted, and so one had got to do away with the metal on the helmet. I actually wore five helmets in all. This is my first one in 1931. I can still just get it on. 1935 we went to a leather helmet, right through the war 1939–1946, a steel helmet. After the war, or during the war, it was nationalised, so after the war we had a cork type helmet – the National Fire Service. It was then de-nationalised, the first nationalised service to be de-nationalised, and then we had composite type helmets of the Oxfordshire County Fire Service.

I have tried to remember some of the early recollections of my life and one or two that happened afterwards, but we do forget, you know. I am very happy and privileged to be able to address you.

Chairman: Now, Mr Braggins, may we ask you to reminisce?

Mr G.D.M. Braggins: What Miss Bromley said and what Mr Anker said must have brought back one or two memories. So, before I deal with what I had thought of saying, I might touch on one or two of them. This is the 1898–1899 year book, Borough of Banbury. You might be interested to know just how much it cost to run Banbury in 1898–1899. The Recorder, the Hon. Alexander Stavely Hill, Q.C., M.P. £52.10.0.; Town Clerk, Oliver James Stockton, £300; Clerk to the Justices, Charles Fortescue, £210. This is all per annum. Clerk of the Peace, Daniel Pelham, £18; Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances and Canal Boats, Nathaniel Holmes Dawson, £200. How many people remember Mr Dawson? (*Many voices:* I do.) A little old chap about that high, and he had a little bicycle, the front wheel a bit larger than the rear wheel, he used to step on the back and old Dawson got round all Banbury, looked after all the roads, and they were probably as well swept as they are today. Borough Accountant and Registrar of the Burial Board, T. Edwin D. Garrett, £150. Office hours 10–12, 2–4, but the Surveyor and the Clerk to the Peace, their office hours were only 11–12 daily. Medical Officer of Health, Innes Griffin, £50. Farm Manager George Sharpe (I knew a Mr Hewison) with residence, £100. Rate collector, Ernest Hine Sellars, £100; Office hours 10–1, Mondays and Wednesdays, 9–1, Saturdays. Sergeant of Police, Inspector of Weights and Measures, Explosives under the Petroleum Acts, and of Public Lamps, Daniel Preston, £185. Coroner and Collector of Quit and Encroachment rents, James Tainton, by fees and commissions, no sum here, so it didn't cost the ratepayers anything anyway. School Attendance Officer, Andrew Lovatt, I remember him, he was an old boy used to wear a sort of military type cap and a great heavy walking stick, also later on he was Mace bearer, was it? Sergeant at Mace. He had £48 and another £20 later on for being Sergeant at Mace. Collector of Piccage and Stallage of the Sheep Market, J.W. Prescott, Hall Keeper, £35 with residence and fees; Cemetery Keeper, with residence, £75; Sergeant at Mace, Andrew Lovatt; Veterinary Inspector, C.N. Page, £20; Borough Treasurer, John P. Gillett. Well, of course Gillett's Bank did all the monetary transactions necessary for the Borough for nothing; and elective auditors, Henry Page and John Fingen. What was the name of the Prudential Chambers – Fingen was manager of that. Henry Page was probably father of Walter Page, who was manager of Lloyd's Bank, and when it is all added up; £1,600 to administer the Borough of Banbury. It would hardly pay for the Town Clerk's secretary now! Miss Bromley mentioned the bonfire on Mafeking night. I was 5 years old then and just remember being taken round on somebody's shoulders and Miss Bromley might confirm that even then the front of the Town Hall was some sort of bitumen compound. It was set alight and I believe rumour had it that it scorched the doors of Havenfield, that is Hunt Edmunds. I don't know whether that's true but it was a fantastic bonfire and they put lots of the old sprinkler bottles that had the glass ball in. The air expanded and shot the ball into the neck, and these bottles were going off all over the place.

And then the penny 'Pops' – Yes, I remember one or two; they were rather vulgar songs – bawdy – 'Put a bit of powder on it, Father' and 'Father papers the parlour'. And the first sort of cinema we ever saw I suppose. Did you ever see Alf Balls? (*Mr Anker:* 'Yes'.) He was a showman that used to come to Banbury Fair with a couple of dancing girls and a couple of dwarfs, and he got some sort of cinematograph which used to click and chatter and flicker all over the place. You know – get the crowd there for about half an hour, inside for about ten minutes to see some show, Harold Lloyd, something like that and out again. Fred Kilby's father used to have a roller skating rink where the Palace is now, the shopping arcade, and he occasionally had people come with a film show. I remember seeing Ned Kelly there, I should think about 1909.

Then you mentioned the Library, I expect lots of people remember the Misses Boss who were there for years and years. The floor in the drill hall in Calthorpe Street, which Fred mentioned, is now the floor of one of my bedrooms and bathroom over at Chacombe. We used to drill on it with old Sarg. Castignola, he was a recruiting sergeant in Banbury. I saw this floor when the place was being pulled down and it is beautiful pitch pine flooring, one and an eighth thick with secret nails, and there was just enough of it. A lot of it had to be scrapped, the way it was pulled up. In fact it was used when Cheney's had their fire about 1925 (*Mr Anker's voice:* 1923). They went into there and put in their printing machines, and you can see the



Fig. 4. View from St. Mary's church tower of the Horse Fair, Cross and Green. Note the house on the right now replaced by the Essoldo Cinema, and the present County Garage on the corner of West Bar, here called The Pytchley Autocar Co. Ltd., also the fields in the distance beyond Bear Garden Road. (VF/1)



Fig. 5. High Street. Note the Red Lion (now replaced by Woolworths) and the gabled building on the corner of Butchers Row. (VF/4)

stain of the printing ink on the floor now, but it is still a good inch thick – it wouldn't half burn!

Well now, there is just one thing. I remember Gustav Hamel, you will some of you remember, he was lost just after the '14 war started – coming to Banbury and giving an air display with his little monoplane down at what was the Britannia Works field; I think it is now the Banbury United ground. But if I might say, I was born in Banbury in 1897 in Albert Street, and I think my grandfather was, but I am not sure about my great-grandfather. We emanated from Silverstone, and I don't know whether it was great or great-great (grandfather). We came to Banbury at the time Samuelson's were starting up. I think it was about when Queen Victoria came to the throne. They started making the Gardner Turnip Cutter and a few of them including my ancestor came to pit-saw the timber for Samuelsons, for them to make their turnip cutter. Then a bit later they came with the old portable engine and rack-saw bench. About 1850 we decided to stop here. Grandfather went to New Zealand, and came back. My father was born in New Zealand, but my grandfather was the one who built up the business that I unfortunately had to close down in 1959. I have got a little model of a gate made there, that I would like to show you shortly. Just one other thing, I could go back to Banbury 60 or 70 years ago. We always cut standing timber around Banbury and hauled it in. Well of course in those days it was all horses. On a still night when the horses had been up say to Tackley or the Woodstock area (they had to leave about four in the morning, and the pubs were open all day then) they probably didn't get home till twelve o'clock at night. Father and Grandfather couldn't get to bed till they were back. As a kid of 11 or 12 I've been down at the yard gates waiting for them to come home, and you could hear those horses somewhere by Cotefield on the Oxford Road, the clip-clop of their feet. I don't say I could hear them but they could. They would say 'Here they come' but it would be three-quarters of an hour before they got to Banbury. I think it was something in Miss Bromley's memories that made me think of silence.

I went to the Marlborough Road Banbury Municipal School as it was called then. It was a great hobby of Mr Whitehorn – it was called Whitehorn's folly. It was a shame really, because Mr Lampitt Whitehorn, who was a solicitor in the town, he was very keen on that and fostered it, and it has become in due course I suppose, Banbury School. Before that there were two private schools – boarding schools – one at the top of the lane down to the Park – The Leys – which was originally called Durhams. Some of you may have heard of it. When I went there – it was where Curtis and Henson are – there was a man called Walbry Walker kept it for quite a few years.

At the bottom there was Ark House School, kept by a man named Beale. There was a certain amount of enmity between the boys of the two schools. Now if Walker's Schoolboys were at the top, sort of *en masse*, then our boys would go down North Bar and round the bottom end, and vice versa, the boys coming from Warwick Road to Walker's. They would find some other way to get there.

One other thing that sticks in my mind is the roads in and out of Banbury in the early part of the century. The entrance into Marlborough Road was very little wider than from here to that wall. Where the wall is now set back from the Wesleyan Chapel and comes on to the corner of Midland Marts, it then came straight out – it was a great big wall, with a big coping, and there was a lovely red May tree and a laburnum tree growing the other side of the wall. Where Jones' wine and spirit shop is was a brick building, the date is on that, it was built by some people who opened an antique shop about 1905 or 1906. That was a brick built building sticking out much more at right angles. It was a bakers and confectioners, owned by some people named Hudson, but was run by the Miss Maycocks (Ernie Maycock and his family had his hairdresser's on the opposite side of Parsons Street) and I know that our horse-drawn vehicles, if they had some very long timber they had to go right over High Street to where the White Horse was, and the carpet shop is now, and make an absolutely straight line to get along there.

Bloxham Road where 'The Case is Altered' is before that piece was cut off where the hoardings are; that was very narrow. It wasn't much wider than this room and beyond that was Bear Garden Road. Before Woodstock Terrace was built there were no houses at all except Springfield. No houses at all. Bear Garden was what it looked like; terraced and a stone wall all



Fig. 6. South side of the High Street and the narrow entrance to Marlborough Road. Note Maycocks, 'Pastry Cook', now occupied by Jones' wine and spirit shop. (B.20)



Fig. 7. Marlborough Road looking into the High Street, in April 1910. Note the laburnum tree. (B.20)



Fig. 8. Oxford Road, looking south, at the junction with Bloxham Road. Note the houses on the corner. (B.16)



Fig. 9. The corner of Parsons Street and the Market Place. The Palace Cinema, where the Blinkhorn family showed the first films in Banbury, lay behind Francis' draper's shop. (B.16)

round — a broken down stone wall with posts and barbed wire all round it. I know I had just been and bought a new suit, I suppose I was 11 or 12, and had it on the first Sunday, and of course along with other boys walking along this wall, I ripped it on the barbed wire.

On the Oxford Road, there was nothing on the right hand side beyond the water tower. Well most of you probably remember the water tower there, except Mr Robins built the house just beyond the tower in the early 1900s. There were no houses at all on the right hand side till you got to the Bodicote first turn. The same on the Bloxham Road, there was nothing on either side of the road, the whole lot was farmed as far as from the Bloxham Road corner to where Reg's Cafe is and up to Salt Lane and back it was all farmed by a Mr Denchfield, who lived in that stone house opposite the top of Old Parr Road.

The Warwick Road was finished beyond the workhouse as far as anything residential was concerned. I think there was one small farm house. The other side was a long spinney and a big white gate which led to Withycombe farm. On the Southam Road there was nothing past the cemetery except Hardwick Wharf. Of course the canal was busy then and there always were barge loads of stone being dumped on the side with big lumps of Hartshill stone, which blokes who wanted a night at the workhouse had to go and break to earn their night's keep. The Middleton Road, there was no Fergusson Road or Manor Estate. There was nothing down there. On the Broughton Road, there was nothing beyond Wood Green. Oh, I don't know whether Mr Kimberley built Old Quarry, that was the first place built on the left hand side, and there were the few cottages by the old brick yard.

The roads of course were made with these Hartshill stones, 1½ to 2½ inches and then they put some fine chippings on and rolled it in; they had a water cart all the time. Then of course it was all horse-drawn traffic and most of the vehicles had narrow wheels, so it churned it all up, but eventually it all got rolled in. But when it was very wet it used to be swept with a long horse-drawn roller broom about twelve feet long, and this used to make lovely great piles of beautiful mud, and then of course if they got it rather close to the pavement, and they didn't come along with a sludge cart to pick it up, along would come a horse and trap, go through it and everybody get smothered with this muck. As I've said before, I think the roads were just as well kept as today. Another thing I remember was the postal services, they're rather in the news at the moment. There was one old boy, some of you might know him, his name was Richardson, I don't know when he left off, but he used to go to Woodstock twice a day, winter and summer, with a horse-drawn Post Office gig. My only Scotch ancestor was my paternal grandmother, and she came from right up in the north-west of Scotland, about 50 miles south of Cape Wrath. My grandfather used to go up to Scotland before the 14-18 War and had been known to stop up there for six months — go in July and come back at Christmas — Dad used to have to write to him every night. And if Dad put a letter in the post before nine o'clock at night, despite the fact that the letter had to go from Inverness on the East Coast 50 miles by coach to Lochinver on the West Coast, and then another eight miles by bicycle or on foot, he wouldn't get it the next day, but he got it the morning of the day after. When my son Donald was at Cheltenham, you could *not* get a letter either way in less than two days and the same when he was at Cambridge. So that's progress. In fact further than that, in 1914 if you received a letter from a customer in London in the early post, and you replied to him almost straight away, they would get it in London at 4 o'clock in the afternoon same day. And then the new lines through Bicester; I think that was about 1909 or 10, they were doing the run from London in an hour and ten minutes. The 6.10 from Paddington slipped a coach at Banbury and arrived 7.20. It took them Lord knows how long, at least ten years to get back to that speed. It took them even longer after the last War.

Miss Bromley mentioned the cattle market. Well, of course there was a terrific mess in the streets, not only Bridge Street and Broad Street, but all the Horse Fair in front of the George and Dragon and the Woolpack, where the sheep were. In earlier years there were lots of horses also on the other side, but of course when I was young there weren't so many. They were gradually dying out just before and after the 14-18 war. But I do remember seeing them from right up by Curtis and Henson's up to where the Poodle Parlour is — where the vet used to be — horses all the way. All this was washed down by the Corporation employees by about 6 o'clock at night, when all the animals had gone, winter and summer.

Fred mentioned the War. Colonel Stockton was in charge of the Oxfordshire and Warwickshire Light Infantry Territorials. He came down on a Friday, probably it would be the 27th or 28th August 1914, and he was second in charge and Colonel Ames was colonel in charge, and he wanted 200 men, and he took 200 men back from Banbury between Friday and Monday morning. I was one of them, I was only 16 and I took old Jack Thomas around. I had a driving licence in 1913, the day I was 16, so I was driving a motor bike and side-car, which belonged to my uncle in 1914. We were in camp with the Scouts at Heythrop, and I came in on the Monday to try to join the motor cycle dispatch riders at the time, but old Jack Thomas, who was the recruiting officer at the time, knew my age and wouldn't take me, and so I drove him round calling up the reservists from Hornton, Hanwell, Balscote and Edge Hill.

Mr Norman Scroxtton: My family have lived in Banbury for 130 years in a very humble sort of way. I was born in what is now Wincott's Café, South Bar, which was then my Father's shop in 1902, the year Dashwood Road School was built. And my father, when I was a little boy, decided that Wincott's Café, South Bar, was on the very edge of the town. It was too far out to do any good, so he moved into the town! But from 'The Case is Altered' as Don Braggins said, there wasn't a bit of brick, not a building, from 'The Case is Altered' till Joynson's Springfields, which is lately Springfields School, and opposite where the Easington Hotel is now was the playing field of the Banbury Nomads Football Club, quite a legendary football club, of which I was a playing member. But although I can't remember everything that has happened in the last 130 years, my wife's grandmother, who comes from a long line of schoolmistresses – my wife was one, and her grandmother was at the age of 21 a college-trained qualified teacher when this was very unusual, an aristocrat of the profession, if you were college trained – and at the age of 21, straight from college, she was appointed head mistress of South Newington village school, and she was met at Banbury Station, fairly newly built – this was 110 years ago – by one of the school managers, a farmer named Colegrave.

When Dashwood Road School was first built in 1902 it was Banbury's pride and joy. It was formally opened by the Earl of Jersey, Jane Early of the Witney blanket making family, and Sir Robert Perks of Wykham Park. And here is a bit – I don't remember it but my mother told it to me, she was pretty truthful, she can remember Sir Robert Perks, who was a great Methodist, driving in from Wykham Park on Sunday mornings to the newly built Marlborough Road Methodist Church, which he had subsidised very heavily, and he drove in with a powdered footman on the back of the carriage and pair, and my mother remembered seeing him do that.

We were friends of the Blinkhorn family, because they lived at 5 South Bar and we lived at 11, and there were other reasons too. Blinkhorns had one of the earliest motor cars in Banbury, though not *the* first, it was a French car, and the number was BW 1066, and they drove me and my brother to Swalcliffe. It was the first time I ever rode in a motor car. My other memories, which have all been thoroughly dealt with by Fred Anker and Don Braggins, are of the hurdles that were put up on the Horse Fair – quite wrongly named because every week it was a sheep fair. Every Wednesday evening men came and put the hurdles up. Bernard Blinkhorn and my brother, Harold Walker and Tom Hankinson used to organise races over the hurdles. We, the same boys, played a sort of football and cricket with a tennis ball in South Bar, just in front of Blinkhorn's shop. I don't fancy the chances of boys playing football there now! South Bar was a lovely entrance to the Town. But the roads were yellow as Don said, they were more dusty in summer – clouds of dust came up. There were not only hurdles, but railings. The railings were permanent, an engineering sort of job, running down Broad Street from the junction of Marlborough Road and Gatteridge Street, all the way down both sides of Broad Street, down to the High Street, round the corner by Barclay's Bank, which was then the Old George – a very old inn, past the Baptist Church, right down both sides of the Cow Fair – and they were just vaulting height, Ted Brinkworth – Dr Brinkworth – was in my form, which dates him, if not me, I don't think he vaulted much, but I did.

Another thing the previous speakers haven't mentioned is that at Banbury Fair time, none of this took place in the Market Place. All the markets were still held, but on the first day of the Fair all the cattle were put in special pens in Gatteridge Street and Newland and Marlborough Road – Gatteridge Street particularly. I remember with what pleasure I saw a cow fall down the basement of a house just about half way along Gatteridge Street, there were little basements at the front and it fell down and I was pleased about it.



Fig. 10. Lord North inspecting recruits going to Oxford, September 1914. (B.21)



Fig. 11. South Bar, as it was when Norman Scropton played cricket in the road! (VF/3)



Fig. 12. A typical scene on market day in the Market Place, superficially not much different from today – but note the fashions and the transport! (VF/2)



Fig. 13. The last Banbury '12th Fair', held in the Horse Fair in 1900. (B.21)

Now this year, Mr Anker says it is the centenary year of the Fire Service. It is also a great year for centenaries, Dickens centenary year. And it is the centenary year of public education – the 1870 Education Act, and I will just say a word about Banbury schools, because it is one of the things, probably the only thing, I know more about than the other two speakers. Crouch Street British School – which my father and mother both attended – was till recently a garage half way up Crouch Street, and it has just been pulled down. It was the *British School*, that is the British and Foreign Schools Society were responsible for it. The church schools were, of course, the National Schools. St. Mary's was the National School. My mother and father being nonconformists went to Crouch Street British School until in 1902, the nonconformists surrendered their school under the 1902 Act and built Dashwood Road which became a Council School. The same thing happened 9 years later at Grimsbury. Grimsbury Methodist Chapel, in West Street, included a day school till 1911, when they built Grimsbury County School of which I was Headmaster for 31 years. Dashwood Road had some famous headmasters then. Dr Brinkworth knows as much or more about some of them than I do. Arthur Bolton was the famous headmaster then at Dashwood Road. He made Dashwood Road in the first years. He was a Town Councillor and a lot of other things. But he had an unfortunate voice, rather a croaky voice – a great headmaster. And of course, being a nonconformist, he would use extempore prayers, he would never use the Prayer Book prayers. I'm a nonconformist but I always used the Prayer Book prayers because I think they're lovely. He would use extempore prayers, and if it was a nice morning he would always say: 'Oh Lord, we come before thee on this beautiful morning . . .' but if it was raining like billy-o he used to say 'Oh Lord we come before thee [pause] this morning . . .'

Every headmaster of a State School has to keep a log book. In my log book at Grimsbury, which of course began in West Street Methodist School, not at my school – my predecessor but four, was a man named Dommitt, a very fierce man, the boys and staff were fearful of him. There is one entry which says 'February 3rd 1895 I this day caned Corkett for writing a note (improper)' and I am not ashamed to say that the penalty for writing improper notes at my school was the same till the day I retired.

I went to the Municipal School which was really Banbury Grammar School, with Don Braggins' younger brother Alec. He was Captain of Football when I was a little boy, but I was head boy in 1919 at the Peace Treaty and helped the headmaster to run up the Union Jack. The war of course ended in 1918 but peace was not signed till 1919. We had a day's holiday. I was Captain of Football and Cricket, and the teams always travelled by wagonette from Banbury to play matches – to Sibford, to play Sibford School and to Buckingham Royal Latin School and Rugby Lower School and Magdalen College School, Brackley. We always went by wagonette, usually two wagonettes. But there were other kinds of vehicles called 'brakes' – bigger things with two horses, and they had rather grandiloquent names such as 'Victory' or 'Coronet' more like battleships, and we had great fun in these wagonettes. I always think of wagonettes, the first – the Great War, there was a big fête in Banbury for the Red Cross and Jack Stockton – is it Col. Stockton now? was at Uppingham Public School and his great friend was A.P.F. Chapman, and if the ladies don't know who he was – they ought to be ashamed. A.P.F. Chapman was invited down, he was a boy of 16 or 17, to this fête which was held in South Bar, both sides of the Green and in the People's park and so on; and they organised a cricket match. These rather grand public schoolboys versus very ordinary lot of Grammar School boys like me and I had the distinction of having dropped A.P.F. Chapman!

Don was speaking about Gustav Hamel. Sir Alan Cobham came down here, it might be about 1920, and gave cheap flights – five shillings or ten shillings – and my brother and I went up with him. We were tied in. But I remember him saying 'Do you wish to wear the helmet?', and I said 'Is it generally done?' and we went up for half an hour.

My grandfather, Alfred Scroxtton, was a very great preacher, and he had preached at Adderbury Methodist Chapel about the turn of the century, perhaps before 1895, in the days of very long sermons. And he said – he'd only been preaching for about three-quarters of an hour – he said: 'Brethren, what more shall I say?' and a man in the back pew said 'Brother, you can say what you like, but I'm off'.

In 1919 as we mentioned there was little entertainment in Banbury and in the villages, and therefore we had to make our own entertainment. Being a member of the Wolf Cubs or Boy Scouts, the Scouts organised a concert party, the Black and Whites. In 1919 and 1920 we went round the villages in, I don't think it was Joe Bustin's Ford Car, but anyway we did go in a car. It was chain driven; when the snow was on the ground one had sometimes to get out to put the chain on again. I remember one or two names – Wrigley, the Borough Surveyor at the time, was pianist. I strolled along as the deputy pianist when needed; Norman Blinkhorn was the conjuror, Mr Mellors, a Bank official, the tenor. After the War, Mr Jack Robeson was the comedian. He took off George Robey. We all began in pierrot costume, half white, half black, pommels, skull caps and opening chorus. We had to take our own footlights, acetylene lights which we had to fix up before we began and the money that we did get went to charity. My turn was as a dancer, two turns in costume. I did the sword dance in Scottish costume and the Sailor's hornpipe. We did our turns and then we all finished up with a final chorus in our white costume. I have still got my costume.

When the Palace Theatre was a cinema – the Blinkhorn family, as I said, owned the cinema – in silent days, I played the piano there. I ought hurriedly to say that my parents wouldn't let me play right through performances, but I played through the break for about half an hour with a trio – a very nice trio, a cello and a fiddle – and I was glad to earn a shilling or two. I was a pupil teacher at the time, about 18. Don Braggins I think mentioned the 'Pops', these popular things, and there was a local comedian who lived at Hanwell – which he always called 'Anell' – and he did a sort of rustic comedian act. His name was Teddy Taylor – would you please indicate if anyone remembers the name of Teddy Taylor (*Chorus of Yes*). He became, not nationally, famous, but certainly he did a season at Aberystwyth (*Voices: Barmouth*) but one of his famous jokes was: 'Well, what were your Father's last words?' and they said 'No he didn't have no last words. Mother was with him to the end'.

Chairman: How very much I have enjoyed all this. We haven't got very long but we should like to hear from anybody here who has got a particular reminiscence to bring up.

Mr Sanderson: Mr Chairman, I do not think you realise the significance of the beautiful model gate. Mr Braggins went off in rather a hurry and I don't feel he has done himself justice because when I first came to Banbury, Mr Braggins had still and was still operating a very extensive gate department with workshops. I believe that they exhibited at the Royal Show and got the highest award for year after year until they finally still exhibited but would not compete and this is a little model of the sort of gate that you can still find up and down the country, made by Braggins, which will last for a long, long time.

Chairman: While you are up, can you give us a little bit of light on early motors in Banbury?

Mr Sanderson: I don't think I can. There was always a little argument which was the first garage, Wrenchs used to declare they were. I have got a photograph and an old directory of Banbury, which I think was about 1908, which has got what was the County Garage – I think it was then called the Banbury Motor Company or the Banbury Cross Motor Company – and it has got two 1906 A.B.D.s, an agency which they handled then. But whether Wrenchs were earlier than the County or vice versa, I have never been able to settle.

But as for who was the first in motoring – I wasn't here, motor cars were well established when I first came. Nearly everybody had got one, or seemed to.

Dr Hudson: Dr Penrose told me that Dr Faulkner had one in the earliest days of motor cars about 1906. You could either have a hood or a wind screen, but you couldn't have both. He drove this car and came back one day in 1907 and told Penrose that he had driven all the way to Cropredy 'without changing gear', but he used to have to change gear going up the hill from what is now Farmfield Road to the Horton Hospital. There is a very slight incline but he always had to change gear along there.

Mr Scroxton: A Mr Philibee who lived in Strawberry Terrace, Bloxham, and was the son-in-law of Dr Ennis Griffins, who was Medical Officer of Health, claimed he had the very first.

Dr Brinkworth: A very old friend of mine, Joe Bustin, now 95 and still very much with it, thinks he was the first although he says he is not quite sure, but he was anyway one of the very first to have a car in Banbury. He used, in addition to his electrical business, to do a rather high class taxi service for very special people, particularly guests at Broughton Castle, and one of his

clients, more than once, in fact several times, was Edward VII himself, when he was King, visiting Broughton Castle quite incognito, absolutely nothing known officially in Banbury about him. But Joe Bustin used to meet him at the station down here and take him over to Broughton Castle and he said the King would talk to him all the way, a great talker, and they became good friends. He was very, very ordinary and he seemed to know an awful lot about this neighbourhood, going through Banbury for instance he would make remarks about the landlord of the Red Lion, and the landlord of the White Lion. Coming back to London, the King would say when they entered Banbury 'Now I must take back one of those nice pork pies from the pork pie lady', and she lived on the bridge, Waddoups, an old Banbury name, and she made marvellous pork pies, and he must have one of those pies to take back with him. I suppose he used to eat it on the way to keep the wolf from the door until he got home and had his eight-course dinner.

Mr Scroxtan: There was less use of carriages and pair and that's where the electrical work came in. But regarding the motor car, I always understood it was either Blinkhorn, Ginger or Dr Faulkner in Banbury. It goes back earlier in Bloxham.

Communicated by Mrs D. White, who lived for many years at 38 Bridge Street, opposite the Town Hall.

The Horses were only in the Horse Fair once a year, at the Twelfth Fair which occurred about the 19th of January and lasted four days. In later years there was a yearly 'Carriers Parade' in August. The Horse Fair and the Cow Fair were quickly cleaned after the Thursday auction sales once a fortnight and a dealers' sale every week.

Dr Fortescue (nephew of Mr C. Fortescue, Captain of the Fire Brigade) and Dr Johns, who practised and lived in the Horse Fair, were the first two people to own cars in Banbury. I must have been one of the special people to be taxed by Mr Bustin in 1911. I saw him many Saturday nights drive Edward VII and the Countess of Warwick to Broughton Castle, where Lady Warwick's sister, Lady Lennox, was living.

The County Garage was first called the Pytchley after the Pytchley Hunt and was started by a Captain early in the century.

The boys school in the Horse Fair mentioned as Walkers was owned by a Mr Hartley and called the 'Academy', afterwards owned by Mr Durand for many years. The school at the bottom of the Leys was called Ark House School, and was a boys boarding school. They would have up to 50 boarders and it was owned by a Mr Beale. His brother was Science master at the Technical School in Marlborough Road, next door to the Library.

No one mentioned the Waits who were a band of local musicians who went round the town on Christmas morning between 4.30 a.m. and 7.30 a.m. playing Christmas music. This went on for many years before the First World War.

Acknowledgement. We are most grateful to the Banbury Borough Reference Library for the loan of and permission to reproduce all the illustrations to this article.

A Short History of Wroxton, by E.R. Lester. Privately published, 1971. 20 pp., 4 illus., n.p.

This booklet has no scholarly pretensions. Although it is intended as a 'background' to the village of Wroxton, it is in fact almost entirely concerned with the Abbey and its tenants: three pages of 'Genealogical Synopsis of the Pope and North Families', two more of pedigree, and four on the Manor and Abbey. Two are devoted to lists of Priors and Vicars of Wroxton, two to the Church, and scarcely more than two to the village itself.

This will disappoint readers, and especially the villagers for whom the book is written. The writing of village histories is no easy matter, and takes considerable research. As it is, Mr Lester has presumably based all his work on printed sources – though unfortunately he does not include a bibliography, something surely essential to encourage readers to find out more for

themselves. It is not even clear if the recently published Volume IX of the Victoria County History, which covers Wroxton, has been consulted.

Given these limitations, it is useful to have a guide to the sometimes complicated relationship of the Pope and North families, and particularly to the descent of the North and Guilford titles. The pedigree is clearly laid out, and there are four good photographs of village scenes.

It is to be hoped that its sale not only aids Wroxton Church and Wroxton Preservation Society but also inspires readers to make rather more thorough investigation into the village's past.

J.S.W.G.

Joseph Arch (1826–1919) – the Farm Workers' Leader by Pamela Horn
(Roundwood Press, x + 261 pp., illus., 1971), £3.75.

Joseph Arch was born at Barford near Warwick in 1826. Like his forebears he became a farm labourer, but unlike most of his contemporaries, he had his own freehold cottage, and was able to work as a freelance. He became a Methodist local preacher. In 1872 he was asked to speak at a meeting of farm labourers at Wellesbourne, and became almost overnight leader of a national trade union for agricultural workers. After some initial successes, the fortunes of the union began to wane in 1874–75, but Arch was by now a national figure. In 1880 he stood for Parliament, he was elected M.P. for North-West Norfolk in 1885, lost his seat in 1886, regained it in 1892, and remained in the Commons until 1900 when he retired. He lived at Barford until his death in 1919.

The need for an up-to-date biography of Joseph Arch has long been evident. In more general historical studies he makes only fitful appearance: as speaker at the great meeting under the chestnut tree at Wellesbourne in 1872 (which by any standards must rank as one of the most dramatic events in English social history), as a familiar object of execration among the wealthier classes in the mid-1870s, as a besotted and ineffective M.P. in the 1890s. Arch's autobiography, re-published in a rather inadequate edition in 1966, is beautifully written, but is in part imbued with the rancour of fratricidal disputes within the farmworkers' trades unions, and, furthermore, it first appeared in 1898 when Arch still had 21 years of his life left.

The first virtue of Dr Horn's biography is its completeness. Arch was active in public life for less than 30 of his 92 years. Apart from his autobiography he left few records of his career as trade union leader and M.P. and still fewer of his first 46 and last 19 years. In spite of these handicaps, Dr Horn has succeeded in giving a remarkably full picture of his public and private life. In describing his last years she has made good use of the recollections of people in Wellesbourne who remember the aged Arch. The only important aspect of his life about which it might be possible to uncover more information than appears here is his religious activities. Methodist records might well reveal precisely when he became a local preacher, and what other offices he held in the church.

Dr Horn gives a full picture of 'Joseph's Brethren', of the mass of farm labourers whose conditions Arch strove to improve. Arch is well portrayed in a national context, but a little more attention to his local environment might have been worthwhile. Why did the Warwickshire labourers' movement begin in Wellesbourne and Harbury and not in other villages? Why was the latter known as 'Hungry Harbury'? Why did Arch succeed in gaining election to parliament for North-West Norfolk and not for his native Warwickshire? Perhaps it is unfair to demand that a biography should also be a sophisticated local history, but clearly there are questions about the nature of the communities from which Arch's union sprang which need to be answered.

In the last years of his life Arch was an embittered and somewhat irritable old man. He had no enthusiasm left for agricultural trade unions, and he forsook Dissent for the Established Church. If one read only the last chapters of this book it would be difficult to understand why he was once such an important man. Dr Horn describes well the charismatic qualities which attracted thousands of labourers to hear him in the early 1870s, and the resilience which

enabled him to resume work for the union immediately after his election defeat in 1886. She shows also how much of thinking was based on folk memories of the Civil War, and how he identified his cause with that of Cromwell and the Parliamentarians. Arch's adherence to the Liberal Party emerges as a vital factor in his career, showing once more how Gladstonian Liberalism was a political creed which attracted members of the *working* as well as the middle class. Dr Horn does not fail to give attention to Arch's vanity which increasingly revealed itself in the late 1870s, and she faces up fairly to the rather unkind comment in the *History of British Trade Unions since 1889* that 'Joseph Arch, a loyal Liberal satellite, sat in the House from 1892 to 1900, drinking his bottle of whisky a day but hardly opening his mouth for any other purpose'.

Arch's home at Barford lies just outside the hinterland of Banbury, but he spoke at meetings in Banbury, and his union attracted considerable support in the locality. Anyone investigating the labourers' movement in the Banbury area will find this book a useful aid. There are two particularly interesting local references. At Tadmerton, a farmer Garrett flogged a middle-aged labourer because he joined Arch's union. One of Arch's organisers called the women of Cropredy 'men rulers' because they would not let their husbands join the union.

The standard of production of this volume, as with all of the publications of the Roundwood Press, is impeccable.

This is a book which will be useful to the local historian as well as to the student of the trade union movement. Dr Horn has succeeded in a most difficult task. Her book on 'The Country Child in Victorian England' will be eagerly awaited.

Oxoniensia, vol. XXXV, 1970. Oxford Architectural & Historical Society, 1971. 116—iii pp. illus. Price to non-members £2.65

The latest edition of *Oxoniensia* has just been published and includes articles on two Saxon swords found at Drayton, Berks., on excavations in Oxford in 1969, on Minchery Farm, Littlemore, on sealed bottles from All Souls College, and on Sir Frederic Madden at Oxford. By far the longest article is an account by Andrew Saint of three 19th century Oxford architects, William Wilkinson, Harry Wilkinson Moore and Clapton Crabbe Rolfe. Wilkinson's buildings included the former police station at the corner of Newland and Marlborough Road, Banbury, Nos. 23—24 Cornhill, Banbury, and The Holt, Middleton Cheney. There are notes on archaeological developments in 1969—70, and a number of reviews, including two of publications of the Banbury Historical Society.

A CHIMNEY-PIECE AT BANBURY?

One of Horace Walpole's closest friends, George Montagu, was in August 1753 living at Greatworth. In a letter to him then Walpole added this postscript: 'Mr Miller told me at Stowe, that the chimney-piece (I think from Steane) was he believed at Banbury, but he did not know exactly. If it lies in your way to inquire, on so vague a direction, will you? Mr Chute may bring me a sketch of it.' (*Correspondence*, ed. W.S. Lewis, Vol. IX, 156).

Unfortunately there appears to be no subsequent reference to this chimney-piece in later correspondence, and Walpole's next letter to Montagu does not occur until December 1753.

'Mr Miller' was of course Sanderson Miller of Radway (*C & CH*. IV. 77—110), whom Walpole knew slightly (but did not like), and this reference is interesting evidence of Miller's familiarity with Stowe. 'Mr Chute' was John Chute, of the Vine in Hampshire, another great friend of Walpole.

Steane, between Farthinghoe and Brackley, Northants., was formerly the home of Nathaniel Crewe, Bishop of Durham and third Baron Crewe, who died there in 1721. The estate falling to co-heiresses, the Manor House became deserted, and was taken down between 1740 and 1750. Nothing is known of the house except that it was a large quadrangular building with a balustraded gallery round the inner area, though there is a record of armorial glass from the dining-room. It was doubtless from this house that the 'chimney-piece' to which Walpole referred came. (Baker, *Northampton*, I, 686).

Can any reader suggest what might have happened to this chimney-piece, or if it might still be in Banbury? The immediate supposition is that it might be that in the Globe Room, now in

Banbury Museum. However, M.W. Laithwaite (*C & CH.* II. 161) considered that the panelling of this room was almost certainly *in situ* at the Reindeer Inn from 1637; and by the mid-eighteenth century the inn was in decline, and hardly likely to be a suitable place to install panelling from a local mansion, albeit of what must then have been of an unfashionable style. And would Walpole's 'gothick' tastes have been attracted by such panelling?

J.S.W.G.

Archaeology – DEDDINGTON

Work was resumed in September 1971 on the Roman site at Deddington which was examined in 1969 and 1970 (*C & CH.* IV. 6. Winter 1969, p.78).

In an attempt to locate structural features, the Oxford University Laboratory for Archaeology and the Arts carried out a magnetometer survey over 150 sq. yards in the presumed centre of the site. A number of irregularities were located and plotted, but subsequent excavation by keen diggers from Banbury School failed to locate anything of interest except in one hole which struck a black layer at 18in – 2ft depth and about 6in thick. This was largely composed of unidentified black grains which could be carbonised cereal.

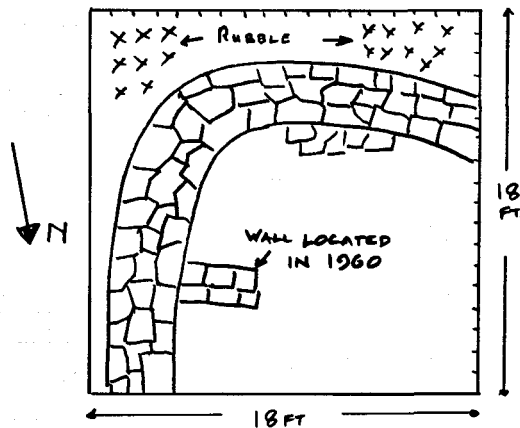
In subsequent ploughing Mr J. Gardner uncovered portions of a wall at the southern extremity of the site and the location has been marked for examination after lifting of the crop in 1972.

J.H. Fearon

Archaeology – PIKE FARM REVISITED

Excavations at Pike Farm, Broughton in 1960 uncovered a small portion of wall and large quantities of Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon pottery (*C & CH.* I. 8, March 1961). By courtesy of our President, the site was reopened briefly in October, 1971, principally to provide training for junior members of the Society and local schools.

After one false start, the original wall was located and the top soil removed in a trench 18ft by 18ft (see diagram). We quickly discovered that, by a quirk of fate, the grass baulk in the



original excavation was overlying a larger, curved, wall which has now been uncovered.

The identity, and even the shape, of the building are not yet apparent. It could, conceivably, be a circular watch tower or possibly the corner of a marching fort. What is clear is that the site at the junction of two prehistoric trackways is likely to be of some importance. This is confirmed by the amount and variety of pottery found at the site.

It is hoped to resume excavations in 1972. In the meantime pottery from the 1960 excavation and also from this year's work is being cleaned and classified in Banbury Museum.

J.H. Fearon

The activities and publications of some or all of the following bodies should interest readers:

- Arts Council of Banbury (Miss Rosemary Hall, Flat 33, 20 Calthorpe Road, Banbury).
Minimum £1.05
- Banbury Art Society (Hon. Sec., R. Edgson, Print's Cottage, Bloxham, Banbury) £1.00
- Banbury Geographical Association (B.E. Little, 2 Burlington Gardens, Banbury) 53p
- Bicester Local History Circle (Hon. Sec., Miss G.H. Dannatt, Lammas Cottage, Launton Road,
Bicester, Oxon.). 50p
- Buckinghamshire Record Society (Hon. Sec., E.J. Davis, County Record Office, New Council
Offices, Walton Street, Aylesbury, Bucks.). £2.10
- Council for the Preservation of Rural England, Oxfordshire Branch (Mrs E. Turner, Woodside,
Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon.). Minimum 50p
- Dugdale Society (publishes Warwickshire records) (Shakespeare's Birthplace, Stratford-upon-
Avon). £2.10
- Heraldry Society (59 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.). £1.50; or to include 'The Coat of
Arms', £2.50
- Historical Association (59a Kennington Park Road, London, S.E.11.) (Oxford Branch: A.J.P.
Puddephatt, 93, Old Road, Headington, Oxford). £1.00; or to include *History*, £1.75
- Northamptonshire Record Society (Délapre Abbey, Northampton). £2.10
- Oxford Architectural and Historical Society (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford). 75p or to include
Oxoniensia, £2.10
- Oxford Preservation Trust (The Painted Room, 2 Cornmarket Street, Oxford). Minimum 50p
- Oxfordshire Record Society (Dr W.O. Hassall, Hon. Sec., Bodleian Library, Oxford). £2.00
- Shipston-on-Stour and District Local History Society (H.G. Parry, Hon. Sec., 8 Stratford Road,
Shipston-on-Stour, Warw.) 50p
- Warwickshire Local History Society (47 Newbold Terrace, Leamington Spa.) £1.00
- Woodford Halse Historical Society (J.W. Anscomb, 7 Manor Road, Woodford Halse, Rugby,
Warw.) 50p

The Local Historian, published quarterly is available from the National Council of Social
Service, 26 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.-single copies, 28p
annual postal subscription £1.05

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