

CAKE AND COCKHORSE



Banbury Historical Society

Spring 1973

20p

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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.

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Alan Pain, Librarian and Keeper of the Museum of the Borough of Banbury and Hon. Information Officer of this Society died on 13th September 1972 at the early age of 52. For many of our members he was the Banbury Historical Society. While most of the Society's officers and committee members worked either outside Banbury or cocooned from public view in offices or places of learning, Alan Pain was always available at his librarian's desk to answer queries about subscriptions, to tell people the venue of the next lecture meeting or the publication date of the next volume, or to give advice on books about the history of this or that village.

A Londoner by birth and upbringing Alan Pain came to Banbury as deputy librarian in the late 1950s when it was still recognisably a country town. He found great pleasure in the foibles and eccentricities of Banburians, and in the beauties of the nearby countryside, which he explored in the only effective way – on foot. It was to the delight of his many friends in the town that he was appointed Borough Librarian and Keeper of the Museum in 1966. He attended all of the meetings early in 1958 which led to the foundation of the Banbury Historical Society, and from 1961 until 1971 was the Society's Treasurer. On relinquishing that office he took on the post of Honorary Information Officer, one which he had long fulfilled in an unofficial capacity.

Alan Pain would never have claimed to be a scholar, although he did contribute several short articles to this journal, and was a seasoned lecturer on historical topics to W.Is. and schools. He was an amateur in the best sense – one who gained great enjoyment from his involvement in local history and who worked hard so that his pleasure could be shared by others.

At the memorial service for Alan Pain held at St. Mary's Church on 23rd October, Dr. Brinkworth gave the Address and Mr. Gibson read the Lesson, whilst the Society was well represented amongst the congregation. We extend our deepest sympathy to his widow, who has herself made a substantial contribution to the successes of the Historical Society.

Our Cover: shows a view of the High Street, Banbury, in 1859, an illustration from *The History of Banbury* by W.P. Johnson. The paving installed under the 1825 Paving and Lighting Act can be seen.

SOCIETY NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

Future Events

Thursday 29th March. Mr. Peter Fasham will speak on 'The Excavation of Banbury Castle'. Despite the enforced limitations on the 1972 excavation, Mr. Fasham did succeed in finding out a good deal about Banbury Castle. Apart from literary evidence, there has been no proof of its existence till last year's 'dig'. Throughout the winter Mr. Fasham has been diagnosing the thousands of finds from the site and the detailed records he made. These will be presented in an illustrated lecture at the Town Hall, 7.30 p.m.

Thursday 7th June. This year's **Village Meeting** at **Shenington** has been placed in June to coincide with a village exhibition. The Reverend R. Hannah, a member of the Society, will speak on some aspects of the village history and, as usual, Mr. G. Forsyth Lawson has kindly agreed to give an illustrated talk on some architectural features of this very beautiful village.

Summer Programme. It is hoped to circulate members with a list of summer visits which will be held from May to August.

Annual General Meeting. This will be held at Wykham Park, by kind permission of the Headmistress of Tudor Hall School, Mrs Blyth. It will be on Saturday 23rd June, at 5.15 for 5.30 p.m. Entrance to the school is through the prominent gateway, left, off the Bloxham Road just out of Banbury.

Exhibitions at Banbury Museum

Until the end of March there will be an exhibition of Victorian domestic life in the Globe Room. This will be followed by one on local archaeology which will include exhibits from recent excavations at Banbury Castle and the Brackley Roman villa. In May this will be succeeded by a display about Cheneys the Printers. The Canals exhibition in the main museum continues for the time being.

Archaeology Courses

The Oxford University Department for External Studies will be holding two courses this summer: 4-6 May, on Medieval Town Defences (in association with the Oxford Archaeological Excavation Committee); and 7-22 July, a further season of the Archaeological Training School at Middleton Stony, near Bicester. Further details are available from Trevor Rowley, OUES, Rewley House, Wellington Square, Oxford.

Victoria County History of Oxfordshire

The long-awaited Volume Ten of the Victoria County History, covering the Banbury Hundred, was published on 16 November last - its price of £14.00 (for 312 double-column pages, plus 20 pages of plates) will put it beyond the reach of all but the keenest of our members, though it should be stressed that in these inflationary days, for a specialised book, it remains good value and even a good investment. Amongst members of the Society concerned in its writing or research in some form or other were E.R.C. Brinkworth, N.H. Cooper, R.K. Gilkes, P.D. Harvey, M.W. Laithwaite and B.S. Trinder. Others appear acknowledged in footnotes and there are a gratifying number of references to this journal. In addition to the Borough and parish of Banbury itself, the volume covers the parishes of Cropredy (including Great and Little Bourton, Claydon, Clattercote, Mollington, Prescote and Wardington), Swalcliffe (including Epwell, Shutford, Sibford Ferris and Sibford Gower) and Charlbury. Detailed reviews of the component parts will appear in our next issue.

Nos. 17 - 19 Market Place

The buildings forming and adjacent to the archway entrance to the Unicorn Inn are an important and attractive feature of the Market Place. Their state has been a cause of concern for some years, as have the proposals of the development company owners for their replacement. Recent good news is that a purchaser has been found prepared to restore them, and for this much of the credit must go to the Banbury section of the C.P.R.E. and to the Borough Council for their steadfast and constructive opposition to the demolition proposals.

BANBURY – THE PATTERN OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT 1554–1835 [Part Two]

(Continued from *Cake and Cockhorse*, vol. V, No. 1, Autumn 1971)

Streets and sanitation – early measures

The sixteenth century was the period of provincial town development; trade increased, streets and sanitation became important, and increasingly these were the responsibility of the town government. An Act passed in Mary's reign 'For amending of High-ways being now very noisome and tedious to travel in and dangerous to all Passengers and Carriages' required every parish to elect annually two road surveyors, who were to keep roads in repair and could force labour to do so. But the job was unpaid and unpopular (refusal to serve entailed a fine) and so the work was badly done. The responsibility for paving streets was originally the tenement owner's, and at his own charge he should pave the street in front of his house as far as the middle, although there was no regulation about the quality of this paving.¹ The Market Place was no one's responsibility, but in Banbury 96 yards of the Market Place had been paved in 1556 when the first Town Hall was built, and the Corporation Accounts record further payments for this purpose in 1633, 1673 and 1677. Similar payments are recorded in 1596 for repairing the Bridge and Sugar Bar Lane, for paving the Castle Orchard Lane in 1612, and, through the Bridgemasters, for the Bridge and the North Bar Street. The Surveyors of the Highways could make an assessment at the General or Quarter Sessions for repairing the highways so long as it did not exceed the rate of 6d. in the £, or 6d. for £20 personal estate, and each year they should give an account of their expenditure, and any surplus was to be handed on to their successors.²

The state of the streets was of great concern to the Council as sanitary authority. On 24 April 1564 a series of Orders and Pains was drawn up. Rubbish and filth was to be cleared away yearly before Easter by each inhabitant clearing the street in front of his own house, and then carting it away before the Feast of the Ascension to one of the prescribed dumping points – St. John's Street, North Bar, a point 20 feet beyond Cole Bar, and 12 feet from the highway and next to William Perkyn's house. Shopkeepers in the Butchers Shambles were to clean and keep clean the backside of their shops every week and carry away the filth on pain of a fine of 6s. 8d.³

The Cuttle Brook was not to be polluted by sweeping filth from the gutters into it, by allowing ducks or geese to go into it, or by using it for soaking honey barrels, or any other vessels, on pain of a fine of 12d.; and each year it was to be cleaned out. A 4d. fine was imposed to prevent unringed hogs from straying in the town, to keep swine and geese from the churchyard, and to keep all hogs, ringed or unringed, out of the Market Place on market day.⁴ Stray dogs were ruled against, and no 'saucy bitch' was to go abroad within the precincts of the town on pain of a fine of 3s. 4d. The tenant of the parsonage was to see that the churchyard gates were maintained so that anyone could have a clear and safe passage to the church, unmolested by swine and other 'indecent cattle', upon pain of a fine of 40s. for every three weeks' delay in correcting any such fault.⁵

The danger of fire led the Corporation to insist that ricks of furze, faggots, straw, or corn should not be set up except where the Bailiff and Justice of the Peace considered it to be safe. After 1727 Justices at the Quarter Sessions could appoint Scavengers for repairing and cleaning the streets, and the Corporation agreed at a Hall on 17 December 1733 to appoint a scavenger, or scavengers, and a rate should be settled at the next session. From 1603 to 1824 the Bridge, which divided the counties of Oxford and Northampton, or one half of it, was kept in repair by the Bridge-masters, who used for this, and for making repairs to streets and highways, the rents of certain lands and premises within the Borough.⁶

The 1825 Paving and Lighting Act

In answer to a petition from certain inhabitants of the town, the Mayor, John West, called a meeting at the Town Hall at 6.00 p.m. on Monday 8 February 1824 to consider petitioning Parliament for a Bill for paving, lighting, cleansing, watching and improving the Borough. There was unanimous agreement that such a petition be made and that the Town Clerk should set the ball rolling. Also, a Committee of 22 members was set up to secure preliminary estimates of the cost of getting the Bill, of paving, lighting (by oil and gas) and subsequent maintenance costs. To defray the cost of preparing estimates a fund was started and the Committee was to report back as soon as possible. The cost of obtaining the Act of Parliament was put at £500; the estimate for paving was £4,270 15s. 6d.; lighting the streets with 75 gas lamps alight for 120 nights of the year until 4.00 a.m. would cost £236 a year, while the repair of the carriage ways and sewers and cleansing them would amount to £400, with a further £126 added to cover repairs, watching and incidental expenses. An advertisement for tenders appeared in *The Times* on Thursday 2 December 1824, the Warwick newspapers and Ariss's *Birmingham Gazette*, and replies were received from T. Bradley, Thomas Roberts, both of Warwick, W. Inman of the London B.G.L. Co., George Leach of Oxford, John Buchan of Devonport, and Messrs. Rofe and Sons of Reading.⁷

At a public meeting held at 11.00 a.m. on Friday 4 February 1825 the final form of the Paving and Lighting Bill was agreed. The Bill received the Royal assent on 10 June 1825.⁸

Forty Commissioners were appointed for carrying out the Act, the form of oath was prescribed, they were to meet each month, and they were empowered to appoint and to pay 'reasonable' wages to the necessary officials – surveyors, paviours, scavengers, rakers, cleansers, lighters of lamps – to put the Act into execution. The Commissioners were to take over all pavements, and all foot- and carriage-ways were to be 'pitched, paved, flagged, or otherwise repaired or amended' and drained; posts, rails, or trees obstructing pavements and streets could be moved, but others could be put up if needed to ensure the safety of pedestrians, or other traffic. All turnpike roads now came under the Commissioners as public highways, and they, and the streets and lanes, were to be kept in repair with stone, sand and gravel, which could be obtained from any waste land, common, river, or brook within the Borough, or, indeed, from any enclosed land, so long as the owner received compensation for any damage done. Pumps were to be moved from streets and lanes 'to more convenient and proper places', and great care was to be taken to avoid contaminating the water supply from pipes laid to serve the gas lighting. Water from private property was to be conveyed into public drains at the owner's expense.⁹

The erection of gasometers – the Commissioners could buy up to two acres of land for this purpose – and the laying of pipes was to be carried out under skilled supervision, with a regular quarterly inspection of the gasworks; waste products from the making of the gas were not to be disposed of in the River Cherwell, or in the Oxford Canal, or indeed into any river or stream connected with them, and the fine of £200 laid down indicated the concern of the Commissioners. When the town's wants had been supplied, private persons could be connected up on payment of a rent.¹⁰

Cleaning the pavements in front of their houses was still the responsibility of the occupiers; at least three times a week, before 9.00 a.m., they were to clean the front, sides and back of their property; refuse, dirt and dung the occupier could keep for his own use, but it was not to clutter up the street. No 'necessary house, or boghouse' was to be emptied at any other time than between 10.00 p.m. and 5.00 a.m. in summer, and between 10.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. in winter, nor must the soil be put in the streets. Ice and snow in winter were to be cleared away daily on pain of a fine of 20s. Provision for cleaning the streets, watering them, and supplying transport for the removal of refuse from all lanes and streets was the responsibility of the Commissioners.¹¹

Stray animals were to be impounded, and if not claimed within five days were to be sold, the owner receiving the proceeds of the sale, less the cost of the animal's keep and the expenses of its sale. The Pound, 8 yards square, which had been built of oak by the Constables in 1744 near the Chapel Well, and which was afterwards leased out at 10s. a year, was now to be moved far

6 GEO. IV.—Sess. 1825.



AN

A C T

FOR

Paving, Cleansing, Lighting, Watching and otherwise Improving
the several Streets, Lanes, public Passages and Places in the
Borough of *Banbury*, in the County of *Oxford*.

[ROYAL ASSENT, 10 June 1825.]

WH E R E A S the Borough of *Banbury*, in the County of *Oxford*, is large and populous, and it would greatly tend to the accommodation, benefit, convenience and safety of the Inhabitants of the said Borough, and of Persons resorting thereto and passing through the same, if the several Streets, Lanes, public Passages and Places therein were well and sufficiently repaired, paved, cleansed, lighted, watched, regulated and otherwise improved, and all Obstructions Nuisances and Annoyances removed, and for the future prevented throughout the said Borough; B U T the same cannot be effected without the Aid and Authority of Parliament;

Preamble.

May it therefore please Your MAJESTY,

That it may be Enacted: **And be it Enacted** by The KING's most Excellent MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, THAT

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Fig. 1 The first page of the 1825 Paving and Lighting Act. (Banbury Museum)



Fig. 2 The corner of Horse Fair and High Street (formerly Sheep Street) in 1839, showing one of the gas lamps erected by the Paving and Lighting Commissioners in 1825, as well as pavements and rails or hitching posts. On the left-hand corner, *The George and Dragon* until recently, there was formerly a grocery shop 'kept by Mr. Garrett – "Twisty", they used to call him'. Of the houses in the High Street running down to the Post Office, George Herbert comments they were 'a good type of general respectable houses of the time which were much in character the same, with this exception that some houses were a few foot further back, or in advance of others. There was no regular order how to build, therefore every man appeared to build as he pleased – the authorities seemed to take no notice of a few feet or so of any encroachments. Some had steps up to them, and others with bow-windows, but I never knew anyone paying any rent for them until the Paving and Lighting Act came into operation.' (*Shoemaker's Window*, pp. 85–86)

enough away from the dwelling houses so that the noise made by the impounded animals did not create a nuisance.¹²

Numerous other provisions were also made by the Paving and Lighting Act in 1825: all houses were to have gutters and drainpipes to take rainwater clear of the pavements, no new buildings in the town were to be thatched; cellar doors and gratings were to be of iron and not to be left insecure or open; doors and gates were to open inwards — not on to the pavements; streets were to be clearly named, houses clearly numbered, and by way of ornament trees were to be planted in the streets and other public places.¹³

It only needed the appointment of watchmen to ensure that the streets were cleared of malefactors, rogues, vagabonds, idle and disorderly persons, prostitutes and disturbers of the peace. The watchmen were to receive 'reasonable wages' and compensation should they be injured or disabled whilst on duty; disturbers of the peace could be temporarily lodged in the watchboxes, and then the watchmen, who were to have the same powers as a Constable, could take them before a Justice of the Peace. Watchmen had been appointed and paid in Banbury before the Paving Act of 1825. Two 'Bellmen', as they were also called, were chosen in 1775 to serve for one year, at a wage of 10 guineas a year each, to keep watch in the night. Four watchmen were appointed to serve 'during pleasure' at a General Vestry in 1785; from Michaelmas to Lady Day they were to patrol the town, two at a time, from 11.00 p.m. to 5.00 a.m., and from Lady Day to Michaelmas from 11.00 p.m. to 3.00 a.m. They were to be provided with watch coats, but each was to receive a wage of only £7 10s. 0d. a year. Two years later the number of watchmen appointed was again two.¹⁴

To implement all the provisions of the 1825 Paving and Lighting Act would cost money — around £1,245 a year — and this the Commissioners were empowered to raise by a rate, not exceeding 4s. 6d. in the £ in any one year, and from which assessment tolls of fairs or markets, schools, the gaol, Town Hall, and workhouse were exempt. £100 was to be set aside each year for a sinking fund, and any surplus up to £50 on the year's working was to go into it, although any surplus above the £50 was to be paid to the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor. Extraordinary expenditure for purposes under the Paving and Lighting Act, however, could be met by the Commissioners' borrowing up to £4,500 on the security of the rates.¹⁵

Relief of the Poor

The Act for the Relief of the Poor, 1563, required the Bailiff of every borough and town corporate to list annually, on the Sunday after Midsummer Day, all the needy, aged and impotent people in the town; then two Overseers of the Poor at Divine Service were to 'gently ask and demand' of every man and woman a weekly donation for their relief. In 1612 Banbury was divided into six or seven Poor Wards with one Overseer appointed in charge of each, and already the cost of poor relief was becoming a borough burden, £149 15s. 0d. being collected for this purpose in 1631. The burden would have been much greater had it not been for the assistance of charitable bequests.¹⁶

A Decree of the Commissioners of Charitable Uses, made at Banbury and dated 20 January 1603, states that the Overseers were to receive, employ and bestow rents and profits of lands and tenements held by the Corporation for charitable uses, and each year were to render their accounts to the Corporation auditors. The Decree speaks of almshouses, situated near the churchyard where the most poor, old and impotent people were lodged; there were twelve apartments, each occupied by a poor person put there by the Chamberlain on the recommendation of the Overseers; of John Knight's Gift of a tenement on the East side of Colebar Street to the use of the poor; Edward Brytwell's Gift, 20s. a year from a house in Barkhill Street, and 20s. a year given by John Knight from part of a lease of Ensham Meadows. Henry Halhead's Charities provided 20s. a year from a tenement in Sheep Street to supply the poor with frieze, and a further 10s. a year from a shop adjoining Barkhill Street to maintain the true preaching of the Gospel weekly in Banbury, or, in default of such lecture, to the teaching of poor children there. Walter Calcott, by his will dated 10 November 1574, left 20s. yearly to the poor of Banbury to be paid out of a stock of £100 which was to be lent to poor artificers or occupiers in Banbury, or the villages around.¹⁷

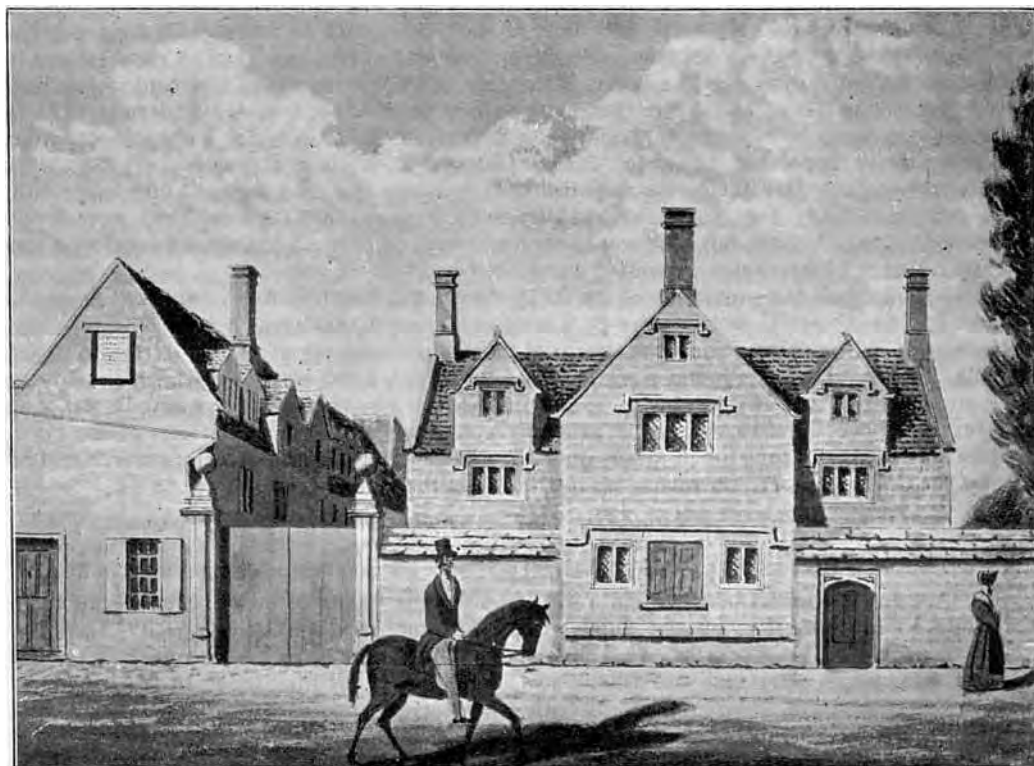


Fig. 3 The Workhouse in South Bar, the successor of the Scalding Lane Workhouse. Wincott's Café is now on the site. The gabled building next to the gateway was also part of the Workhouse, as was an older portion to the rear which was destroyed by fire in 1931.

Thomas Hall of Bodicote gave 3s. per annum to the poor of Banbury to be bestowed in bread. Then there was the coal fund, £22 18s. 6d., given by various people to buy coal in summer and sell it in the winter to the poor, at a price which would preserve the stock and any surplus would be given to the poor; the Widows' Groats – 4d. a week to twelve poor widows, Richard Plestow's Charity of 1681 to pay 40s. a year to buy the poor bread, and Captain Smith's Bread Money, a 4d. loaf to twenty poor people on the first Sunday of every month.¹⁸

Some of this charity money was invested in South Sea annuities, more was paid out to individuals for employing the poor, or loaned, and the interest applied to the upkeep of the workhouse. Lord Guilford borrowed £500 on 28 July 1708, Lord North £382 7s. 6d. on 4 June 1744, and £750 on 29 September 1750, the latter for a year only, but both at the rate of 4%.¹⁹

Casual gifts were also made for the care of the poor. Lord Guilford gave the Mayor, Edward Box, £10 10s. 0d. to be distributed to poor families at Christmas 1733, and a further £10 on the death of Lady Guilford in 1734. He gave £78 15s. 0d. in 1733 for the benefit of poor families distressed by smallpox, as did James West £20 for the payment of nurses for those afflicted by the disease, and burial expenses of those who died of it.²⁰

The treatment of smallpox victims presented a problem in the town, and as a temporary measure in 1743 a General Vestry agreed that the Overseers of the Poor should have power to take the Castle, or any other convenient house, as a Pest House, while suggestions were being made in 1794 for a Pest House to be built, the old one being in too ruinous a condition to be used. In 1760 it had been agreed that all persons within the Borough could, if they so wished, be inoculated and provided with 'physick' at the expense of the parish (5s. per head), the poor as well; but a year later concern was expressed at the injurious effect on the trade of the town of the townfolk's practice of taking people into their homes to be inoculated against smallpox, and more than £500 was raised to enable such individuals to be prosecuted.²¹

The workhouse

£50 given in 1642 for the benefit of the poor by the will of Samuel Hall went towards the furnishing of a house at the East end of Scalding Lane, lately bought from William Turton, a Banbury ironmonger, which was to be used for setting the poor of the town to work. Joshua Sprigge, of Crayford; Kent, left £100 for stock for the poor in his will dated 6 June 1684, as well as £400 for building a workhouse, and the Banbury Workhouse Book under the date 25 November 1707 records a total of £440 11s. 8d. spent on the purchase of a workhouse from Mr. Newlove, for repairs carried out to it and the legal costs involved in the transaction. The Scalding Lane workhouse, however, continued in use until 1731.²²

A governor, or governors, were elected by the Vestry in 1743 at 14 pence per head of the inmates. Mrs. Draper, who had been governess since 1744, and had been retained in following years, was voted out of her post by a General Vestry in 1750, and a group of twelve inhabitants of the town was elected to govern, manage and inspect the workhouse and to consult for the better regulation of the workhouse and care of the poor of the parish. Robert Rewley, the governor appointed in the first instance on 30 March, and on 19 August 1753 retained for a further three years, was allowed first 1s. 2d, then 1s. 3d. a week to feed, lodge, and clothe each of the workhouse poor. In 1755 governor Samuel Sale was paid £200 a year, and from this he was also liable for the payment of the funeral expenses of paupers dying in the workhouse, though this did not include smallpox victims who were the responsibility of the Overseer of the Poor. He was allowed £4 10s. 0d. a week in 1757, besides the profit of the work and labour of the poor. After a return to the per capita basis from 1 September 1763, John Grant as governor was to provide for the wants of the poor, their surgeons' and apothecaries' bills and funeral expenses for 300 guineas a year, but he was discharged in 1765 after the Overseers had complained that he had supplied the poor in the workhouse with 'unwholesome food', obviously an attempt to feather his own nest by exploiting his position as Clerk for the Market. Nevertheless, he was reappointed governor – for three months in 1766, at 16s. a head, and for a further three months at £420 a year in 1768.²³

The duties of governor were comprehensively set out by the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor in 1780; now the governor and his family were given accommodation in the

workhouse, and besides his salary of £25²⁴ he and his family were to enjoy certain perquisites – a joint of fresh meat every Sunday and sufficient ale, in addition to the normal workhouse fare.²⁵ He was to visit those poor receiving outdoor relief,²⁶ was to collect the poor rate (with one of the Overseers), and on the first Wednesday in every month he and the Overseers were to produce their accounts. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday he was to instruct the children in the workhouse in reading, and on Sunday in learning the Catechism.²⁷

Between 1784 and 1814 the total burden of the poor rates leapt from £2 million to over £8 million in England and Wales, and the demand was for the administration of the Poor Law to be taken out of the hands of the democratic Open Vestries and entrusted to those who had a direct financial interest in enforcing economy. In 1833, when the Whig Government appointed a Royal Commission on the Poor Law, the poor rate for the municipal borough of Banbury with a population of 3,737 was £3,513 11s. 6d., and rose to £3,763 13s. 10d. in 1834. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 provided for the election of Boards of Guardians in Poor Law Unions of parishes; the Banbury Union comprised fifty parishes, of which thirty-five were in Oxfordshire, eight in Northamptonshire, and seven in Warwickshire, and by 1838 the cost of Poor Relief had dropped to just over 11s. per head of the population of the Banbury Union.²⁸

Reform of the close Corporation

By 1834, too, the days of the close Corporation were numbered. The Reform Act of 1832 directed attention to 'these chartered hogsties . . . so many component atoms of one great mass of political baseness and corruption', for if that Act was to have any meaning at all, it was essential to take the municipal corporations out of the hands of the Tory groups which controlled them in most of the chartered boroughs. In 1833, on the recommendation of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, a Royal Commission was appointed 'to inquire into the existing state of the Municipal Corporations in England and Wales, and to collect information respecting the defects in their constitution'. As all but two of the carefully selected Commissioners were in favour of reform and looking for defects, not merits, the Commission's Report was biased and unfair; nevertheless, there was enough wrong with local government to bear out its general strictures.²⁹

The town of Banbury was reported by the Commissioners (Peregrine, Bingham and David Jardine) to be in a flourishing and improving state; its fairs and large weekly markets attracted trade, as did the proximity of the Birmingham and Oxford Canal. Since the Paving and Lighting Act of 1825 causeways had been well paved, carriage roads had been put in excellent order, drainage had been much improved, and the Paving Commissioners had agreed a contract for lighting the streets with gas, a Gaslight and Coke Company having been formed and gasworks erected in 1833.³⁰

The conflicting interests of the Corporation as Lord of the Manor and the Paving Commissioners, responsible under the Paving and Lighting Act, for the streets, lanes, and other public places of the town, were, however, observed. Frequent clashes had occurred; the Corporation, anxious to increase the income from its own property, encouraged all kinds of building, or projection into the streets on which a rental could be charged, while the Commissioners' duty was to prevent all encroachments on the highways, which might interfere with public safety and convenience.³¹

The governing charter was that of 1718; the title of the Corporation was 'the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Banbury in the county of Oxford', and the corporate body consisted of a Mayor, twelve Aldermen, six Capital Burgesses and thirty Assistants; only these members of the Corporation were Freemen of the Borough, for which privilege they had paid £5 14s. 0d. to the corporate fund – the cost of the stamp upon admission and a guinea fee to the Town Clerk. For all municipal purposes, however, the Common Council – the Mayor, Aldermen and Capital Burgesses, eighteen people in all – constituted the ruling body of the Corporation.³²

When the Commissioners reported, the Corporation was not in debt (although it was agreed at a Hall held on 10 November 1835 that the silver bowls and ladles belonging to the Corporation be sold for the purpose of raising a fund to pay the outstanding debts of the



Fig. 4 A view of Cornhill drawn by John Austin, an Oxford architect, in 1857, clearly showing the pavement. It is entitled 'The Vine' and presumably shows the buildings replaced by the Corn Exchange on that site that year – itself now the Vine Inn. According to George Herbert the Vine Tavern 'was kept by a person the name of Judge, and afterwards by Mr Thomas Taylor who was formerly a saddler . . . also the shop kept by Mr Scrivener, a grocer and tallow-chandler, and at this he did a large business. His premises ran through at the back of *The Plough*, and this was where the tallow-chandlery and melting-place was situated, and a most stinking place it was to pass, especially when their melting was going on. The next to this in the corner was about then as now – *The Plough*. This was kept by a man the name of Dobbins. . . After him came James Kinzett: he had been a gentleman's coachman . . .'. Evidently by 1859 Kinzett had taken over *The Plough*. On the right is the Beesley family's chemist's shop, where Alfred Beesley, the historian, lived. (*Shoemaker's Window*, p. 93)

Corporation), and the accounts kept by the Chamberlain showed an average annual expenditure of £110 17s. 3d., against an average revenue of £125 a year. But they found that the state of the gaol, and the provision of police, most unsatisfactory; the Mayor was nominally Keeper of the Gaol, although the duties were, in fact, performed by a deputy he had appointed. The Gaol had been enlarged in 1817, and some improvements had been made, the cost being met from the poor rate, but it remained 'an insecure and insufficient building'. Prisoners were not classified, and until a treadmill was provided (again, out of the poor rate) no means of imposing hard labour existed. The Court of Record was little used, but if its business should increase and debtors be confined to the Gaol, then the situation would be especially serious, as the corporate funds were inadequate to meet these additional costs, and the Corporation was so unpopular that to use the poor rate again would be most inexpedient.³³

Provisions for watch and ward in the town made by the Paving Commissioners were also considered inadequate; too much was expected of the part-time street-keeper and the night watchmen – the street-keeper was also a night watchman, beadle and crier, and carried on the trade of basket-maker and porter, which meant that he was often absent from the town. Robberies were not infrequent, and the numerous fairs attracted many undesirables to the town. Sometimes, as on the occasion of the agricultural riots in 1830, and the general election in May 1831, the local magistrates tried to recruit special constables, but prejudice against the Corporation was so strong that local men would not serve, and order was restored by the intervention of a few influential inhabitants who had no connection with the Corporation.³⁴

Particularly obnoxious to the Municipal Corporations Commissioners, however, was the political subserviency of the Corporation. From the first Charter of 1554 to the first Reform Act of 1832, the Corporation had enjoyed the exclusive privilege of returning a Member to Parliament, and since 1754³⁵ this privilege had been exercised under the direction of, first, the Earl of Guilford, and then the Marquis of Bute, both of whom held office as High Steward of the Borough. For his part the patron assisted the town by supporting charities, carrying out improvements, and by paying (until 1831) the salary of the Deputy Recorder and some inferior corporate officers, and by defraying the expenses (again until 1831) of two annual Corporation Dinners – the 'Venison Feast' and the 'Mayor's Election Feast'; the accounts of the Earl of Guilford in the nine years prior to 1811 show that his average annual expenditure on behalf of the Borough exceeded £110.³⁶

Small wonder, then, that the Commissioners found that the inhabitants of the town had no confidence in the Corporation and in the self-elected local magistracy. The dismissal in 1831 of Andrew Amos, appointed Deputy Recorder on 20 October 1828, ostensibly because he belonged to the Midland, and not the Oxfordshire Circuit, but more probably (as several members of the Corporation admitted) because his political opinions were not those of the majority of the Corporation, together with the Mayor's alterations in the panels of jurymen for the October Sessions of 1832 – also at a time of great political ferment – further poisoned relations between the members of the Corporation and their fellow citizens.³⁷

The new Council of 1835

The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 destroyed the old oligarchy, and a new Council was to be elected by ratepayers of three years' standing, by means of signed voting papers. There were to be twelve Councillors, elected for three years, one-third retiring each year on 1 November, and four Aldermen, elected for six years, two retiring every three years; candidature for these places was limited to burgesses holding real or personal property worth £500, or land assessed at £15 or more. The Council was authorised to legislate by by-law; was required to appoint a Town Clerk and Treasurer, and was given administrative powers over police, finance and property. Jurisdiction and administration were separated, Justices no longer being elected by the Corporation, but appointed by the Crown.³⁸

The election of the new Council took place on 26 December 1835, when 148 out of 275 voters went to the poll and returned the twelve nominees of the Reform group in the town. The four Aldermen were elected by the Councillors on 31 December 1835, and on 1 January 1836, one of them, Thomas Tims, who 'although he is of known Liberal Principles he is not a violent

First Return of Councillors for the

BOROUGH

OF

BANBURY.

I do hereby give Notice, that the undermentioned Persons have been elected Councillors for the Borough of Banbury, pursuant to the Act, 5 & 6 GUL. IV., Cap. 76.

Christian Name and Surname of each Person.	Place of Abode.	Trade or Occupation.	No. of Votes.
Timothy Rhodes Cobb,	Horse Fair,	Banker,	147
James Wake Golby,	High Street,	Solicitor,	145
Thomas Tims,	Bridge Street,	Solicitor,	144
John Munton,	West Street,	Solicitor,	144
Thomas Golby,	Bridge Street,	Carrier,	144
John Hadland,	The Green,	Wool Dealer,	142
Lyne Spurrett,	Horse Fair,	Seedsman,	141
William Potts,	Parson's Lane,	Bookseller,	140
Thomas Gardner,	The Green,	Gentleman,	139
Richard Grimby,	High Street,	Grocer,	138
James Hill,	Parson's Lane,	Currier,	138
John Wise,	High Street,	Surgeon,	136

Given under my Hand, this 26th Day of December, 1835.

HENRY TAWNEY, Mayor.

J. G. RUSHER, PRINTER, BANBURY.

Fig. 5 The return of the new Councillors after the first election held under the reforms of the Municipal Corporations Act in 1835. The return is signed by Henry Tawney, the last Mayor under the old Corporation, who was displaced by Thomas Tims six days later. (Potts Collection, *History of Banbury, Political, Social and Unsocial*, Vol. 3, p. 62, Banbury Borough Library)

partisan nor is he in the habit of acting professionally as a Political Agent', was elected Mayor. The necessary by-election to choose four more Councillors was held on 8 January 1836, only 151 burgesses voting.³⁹

Not all the members of the old close corporation were thrown into the wilderness: Henry Tawney, elected Justice of the Peace in 1833, and Mayor in 1834, although he was 'a Tory or Conservative', was nominated for the Commission of the Peace in 1836.⁴⁰ But the new men had no intention of being dependent on patronage, so they dispensed with the Marquis of Bute as High Steward, and with the office itself, until it was revived in 1850 in the person of the Rt. Hon. and Rev. Lord Saye and Sele. Andrew Amos, formerly Deputy Recorder, 'and from which office he was unceremoniously dismissed without any assigned cause', was invited to become Recorder,⁴¹ and he agreed when the Council's petition to the Crown for a Court of Quarter Sessions was accepted.⁴²

The Municipal Corporations Act destroyed the usefulness of the Court of Record, which had been granted by the governing Charter of 1718 to meet every Monday, as it was not clear who was to be the judge, or judges of the Court; but in 1837 an Act was passed enabling the Recorder, whose visits to the town were only quarterly, to appoint a barrister or attorney of five years' standing as his deputy.⁴³

The new corporations, slowly created after 1835, were not, however, spectacular new brooms. Their main concern was to avoid the evil ways of their scandalous, if amiable, predecessors, exercising their new powers with restraint and a minimum of display; there was generally, indeed, a great deal of urban negligence in the next thirty years. Gradually, however, in Banbury, as in other municipalities, the earlier civic initiative of the sixteenth century reasserted itself, and the creation of representative authorities for special purposes – Boards of Guardians, Public Health Boards, etc., augmented the power of the localities at the expense of the principle of centralisation. By 1888 the 'chartered hogsties' had become an integral part of English democratic local government.

Bristol

R. K. Gilkes

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The co-operation of the Banbury Reference Library and Museum and assistance with illustrations is most gratefully acknowledged.

Northamptonshire Record Office

Recent accessions to the Northamptonshire Record Office, at Delapré Abbey, Northampton, through the good offices of the Northamptonshire Record Society, include two items of potential interest to members:

John Loveday of Caversham's Notes on visits to Northamptonshire 1731 (May 19th) and 1735 (June 11th and 12th) – the Loveday family subsequently lived for two centuries at Williamscoate near Banbury – from our member Mrs Sarah Markham.

Rules of Aynho Grammar School, c. 1668 – from papers of Mrs W.D. Cartwright.

Kings Sutton Station

I am looking into the history of Kings Sutton railway station. Having written to one or two members individually and drawn a blank I would like to ask the assistance of members generally.

The station was opened in 1872, long after the building of the Oxford – Banbury line. The buildings were basically standard for Great Western small stations of the period but for some reason were given extra architectural embellishments, the most prominent of which were three very large and ornate chimneys. It has been suggested that the station was built in connection with the opening of the Banbury – Cheltenham line. But the latter did not reach Kings Sutton until 1887, i.e. 15 years after the opening of Kings Sutton station. There is no reason why a station would be required at the junction since trains generally started or finished at Banbury (Kings Sutton had no facilities as far as I am aware for dealing with the branch services). Nor would the opening of the branch explain the reason for the special architectural treatment.

Summing up, if anyone can throw light on the two related questions (i) what caused a station to be opened at Kings Sutton in 1872, and (ii) why was it given special architectural treatment? I would be most grateful to hear from them.

4 Horbury Crescent,
Notting Hill Gate, W.11

Robert Humm



Fig. 6 Kings Sutton railway station in August 1966.

Museum News

The Museum has been the recipient of much generosity from local people during 1972, and it is pleasing to be able to record a number of the donations here.

The Globe Room is now graced by a fine late 17th century black lacquered corner cabinet with raised figures in gold, presented by Miss G. Bolton. Ideally the Globe Room should be completely furnished with period furniture so donations like this are most gratefully received.

Mr. and Mrs Carvill of Woodford Halse presented a treadle lathe and carpenters' tools used by Mr. Carvill's grandfather, who was a carpenter and wood carver. They also gave the museum some examples of his work, including picture frames, a carved owl and an intricate money box.

The Museum's collection of Victoriana was much improved by a very generous donation from the Misses D. and M. Robeson of Banbury, which comprised various small items and a magnificent silver chatelaine. Chatelaines were worn hanging from the Victorian housewife's waist, with useful items hung on chains from a central decorated clasp. Our chatelaine clasp was made in Chester in 1898, and has hanging from it a silver notepad with ivory leaves (Chester, 1898), a silver needle case (Birmingham, 1895), a folding button hook, a propelling pencil and a series of tiny retractable blades. A chatelaine appears to have been rather like a charm bracelet, in that the accessories could be collected separately.

Dr. C.F.C. Beeson gave the Museum a fragment of a manuscript describing an agreement for working the common fields of West Adderbury and Milton, signed by the Rightholders in 1653 – this is a most interesting addition to the local history collection.

Christopher Hone has collected a number of items such as parish magazines and stained glass from the now demolished Christ Church, which will provide valuable archive material.

Miss D. Loveday, formerly of Bloxham, presented a riding whip of plaited horsehair, with a silver knob, decorated with an etching of a man on horseback and the name 'J. Bowler'. Apparently the whip was made for the protection of a rent collector who had to ride up Culworth Hill at the time when the notorious Culworth Gang terrorised the locality towards the end of the 18th century.

Christine Bloxham

BOOK REVIEWS

The Wigginton Constables' Book, 1691–1836, edited by F. D. Price. Published for the Banbury Historical Society (Records Volume 11) by Phillimore, London and Chichester, 1971. xxx, 146 pp., 1 illus., 2 maps, 1 chart. £2.50.

With this work Douglas Price has put all social historians of eighteenth-century rural England greatly in his debt. The parish constable is a figure who links the old manorial administrative system and the new administrative pattern of the rationalising nineteenth century. It has not hitherto been easy to discover much of the work of this important official, but we now have a lucid account of the development and nature of the post, and we are able to see precisely what the constable did in a very typical English village.

It is a truism to repeat that England before the nineteenth century was rather a federation of counties than a unified national state, but the fact remains basic for local and national historians, and it is well demonstrated in this volume. A man's county was still his country. Only ten places outside Oxfordshire appear in the index, and four of these are only just outside the county. And it was the constable who linked the parish with the shire.

Local history flourishes at present, in publishing and in teaching. Extramural lectures on local history are always well attended, and, more important, in many areas classes of students spend an evening a week during the winter transcribing, editing, and publishing material from parish chests and town-hall strongrooms. Local history, too, is the basis for countless academic exercises, ranging from junior school projects to Ph.D. theses. These active workers will find this book most valuable, for they will come across the parish constable as an elusive figure, whose exact role and function are difficult to assess. Among students of parochial

administration the churchwardens and overseers have previously been the chief figures for investigation, but now we may confidently hope that enthusiasts in other counties will investigate Dogberry's activities in their villages. This work can now be done with the clear assistance of Douglas Price's introduction, which must become the standard authority on the subject, tracing, as it does, the evolution of the officer from village head-man to member of the county constabulary.

The effect of enclosure, in 1796, is well underlined, and it is interesting to notice that the holders of this non-stipendiary post were usually men of substance. We cannot here make a summary of the constable's many functions, but one does note, perhaps above all, the large number of vagrants, or passengers, in this fairly remote village – an indication of the working of the Settlement Acts, which have themselves given rise to possibly the most widely studied local records. Passengers were the constable's responsibility, as were problems of defence and of keeping peace in the open fields. From time to time national events are reflected in the accounts, as in the sudden interest in papists after the '45, but on the whole the world beyond 'Banbry, Southnoon, and Hokennorton' can go its own way.

'The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there' (L. P. Hartley). The best history is like a journey, taking us into another age, another social and economic system, perhaps another language, and it can be a real holiday. Travellers are here provided with a well-reproduced map of the Wigginton area, showing the village just before enclosure. A map of north Oxfordshire contains exactly sufficient information for us to make the most of the transcribed accounts. The diagrams on page xii will clear up many problems for teachers and students of local history. While we are grateful for the editor's help over seemingly unknown place-names, one wonders whether a glossary of some of the technical terms in the actual transcription might have been provided. At first sight the index is difficult – an indication might be added to page 134 that separate indices of names and places are provided. 'See *Names*' is at first baffling.

The editor refers to Holdsworth's remark that the system of local government which the constable represented had its merits as well as its defects. Perhaps the merits have tended to eclipse the defects in Douglas Price's introduction, but possibly this is justifiable, for we all know, either consciously or subconsciously, the defects of the old system. No one surely would wish to turn back the clock to the old parochial system, but we can salute the generations of individuals who served their community in this important office, and also salute the historian, their fellow villager, who has temporarily forsaken his work in earlier centuries to the great benefit of all his readers.

St. David's University College
Lampeter

William Price

From A to B (Antrim to Bermuda) by Bishop Anthony Williams. Dorset Publishing Co. (Milborne Port, Sherborne), 1972. 215 pp. Illus. £2.75.

Bishop Anthony Williams was born in 1892 in County Antrim, the grandson of a Dean of the Church of Ireland. He was educated at public school and Oxford, and ended a varied career in the Church of England as Bishop of Bermuda. In 1931 at the request of Bishop Strong he became Vicar of Banbury, and remained in the town until accepting the living of Bournemouth in 1946. While he was in Banbury much of Easington was built, many immigrants from Lancashire and Nottinghamshire arrived to work in the aluminium factory, the U.S. army was encamped in and around the Blacklocks Hotel, the gasworks was bombed and victory parties for children were held in the streets.

It is interesting to see in Bishop Williams's memoirs that Banbury was regarded as one of the key parishes in the Oxford diocese in the 1930s. Certainly he provides ample evidence of the vitality of church life in the town at the time. Among other important events described are the establishment of St. Hugh's church, the rationalisation of church charities, and the attempts, frustrated by the outbreak of war, to build an Anglican secondary school on Southam Road.

There are some interesting impressions of the Second World War in Banbury, and in general this is a useful new source for the history of the town in the 20th century.

As a whole the book is perhaps rather overloaded with anecdotes, but Bishop Williams has led an interesting and varied life, one which his memoirs show that he has thoroughly enjoyed, and anyone interested in the history of the Church of England in this century will read his work with great pleasure.

E.D.

Shakespeare and the Bawdy Court of Stratford, by E.R.C. Brinkworth. Phillimore, Chichester, 1972. 184 pp., illus. £2.50.

Members of the Banbury Historical Society will know that a meticulous standard of scholarship and a masterly command of the English language are to be expected in any work by our Hon. Historical Adviser, and in this new book they will not be disappointed. The main conclusions have already been aired in the press. In February 1615/16 Thomas Quiney was about to marry Judith, younger daughter of William Shakespeare, when the rumour spread through Stratford that one Margaret Wheeler was pregnant by him. The situation was aggravated when mother and baby died in childbirth, and on 26 March 1616 Quiney was tried by the Church Court at Stratford. He was ordered to perform public penance in a white sheet before the whole congregation at the parish church on three successive Sundays. In part the sentence was commuted, but such a sentence would have brought a sense of shame, impossible to convey in the 20th century, on the criminal's family. Dr. Brinkworth convincingly argues that the Quiney case was probably the cause of the seizure which medical authorities have postulated preceded Shakespeare's death on 23 April 1616.

The interest of the book is not just in its Shakespearean references. It is a model exposition of the sorts of information which can be gleaned from the records of the bawdy courts on such varied topics as church attendance, Sabbath observance and sorcery. It will be sad if this book with its important new factual information about the Shakespeare family is upstaged by the latest theories about the Dark Lady of the Sonnets. It will also be unfortunate if it is regarded as just another piece of Shakespeariana, for it is a most important work of local history, effectively demonstrating the value of a neglected series of records.

B.S.T.

The Trade in Lunacy. A Study of Private Madhouses in England in the 18th and 19th Centuries, by William Ll. Parry-Jones. Routledge and Kegan Paul, Studies in Social History, 1972.

This is a worthy and interesting addition to a series which already includes some distinguished works of scholarship. It is also a book of some considerable local interest since it deals extensively with the Hook Norton Madhouse which was established about 1725. The Madhouse is mentioned in Margaret Dickins's *History of Hook Norton* published in 1928, but this is the first work to draw on the official records. The Hook Norton madhouse was licensed for the first time in 1775 by Joanna Harris, daughter of the founder, who was then assisted by her son James, a surgeon and apothecary. Its capacity was then reckoned to be up to ten patients. It remained in the Harris family until 1825 when it was taken over by Henry Tilsley, surgeon of Chipping Norton. In 1842 Tilsley was succeeded by Richard Mallam, but in 1846 the county lunatic asylum had been opened and Oxfordshire pauper lunatics were no longer sent to private asylums, although some from other countries continued to be sent to Hook Norton until its final closure in 1854. In the 1840s it was licensed for as many as 98 patients. One of Tilsley's assistants was a Banbury man, Thomas Pearce Beavan, a qualified apothecary and surgeon. The book can be commended for much more than its local references. At a time when our society's whole approach to the problems of mental health is changing, an account of how the problems were faced by private enterprise makes fascinating reading.

B.S.T.

Archaeology and the M40 Motorway. An interim report edited by Trevor Rowley and Max Davies. Oxford University Department for External Studies, Rewley House, Wellington Square, Oxford, 1973. 40 pp. Illus. 25p.

A criticism often levelled at archaeologists is that they frequently get substantial public support in labour services, and a little money from public funds, but that the public have to wait many years before the results of excavations are made known in print. No such criticism can be made against those responsible for the rescue campaign mounted in advance of the M40 motorway from Stokenchurch to Waterstock. It is most commendable that such a full interim report on work carried out between November 1970 and September 1972 should be in print at the very beginning of 1973.

Few people interested in local history and archaeology can now be unaware of the density of archaeological sites in the English countryside, and of the sad fact that on average two of them are destroyed by every mile of new motorway. The scale of the task confronting the archaeologists is therefore no longer a matter of surprise. The sites they encountered include medieval houses at Tetsworth, a large Iron Age settlement at Heath Farm, Great Milton, a Romano-British farmstead at Lewknor and a 4th century cemetery at Beacon Hill. There is a helpful account of the organisational problems encountered in 'motorway archaeology' and of the necessary preliminary field reconnaissance, documentary research and aerial photography.

The significance of this booklet for members of the Banbury Historical Society is not in the knowledge which it adds to Oxfordshire history, interesting as that is, but in the lessons which can be learned for the rescue campaign which must be organised in advance of the extension of the M40 north of Oxford. While it would be pleasant to think that the pleas in the conclusion of the book, that more money and more professional resources should be made available for archaeology, might be heeded, it is doubtful whether this will happen to any significant degree, and the campaign in north Oxfordshire, like that between Stokenchurch and Waterstock, will have to be fought by a largely volunteer army. The more people available with some archaeological training the more fruitful the campaign. Anyone who would like to help with the rescue of sites on the extension of the M40 would do well to take advantage of some of the courses offered by the Oxford University Department of Extension Studies.

B.S.T.

Broughton Castle. Jarrold and Sons Ltd., Norwich. 1972. 16 pp. + 4 pp. cover. 18 illus. (including 10 in colour). n.p.

Broughton Castle has recently been redecorated, and to mark the occasion a new guide book is on sale at the house. The redecoration is attractive, and is worth seeing even if you think you know the house already. The man responsible is also responsible for work at a number of National Trust houses, and some people will recognise his style. But the new guide book is also excellent, and it is almost worth a trip to Broughton just to buy a booklet which is a model of its kind.

Many guide books are too long or too chatty. They may be useful to read before or after a visit but they are often too long-winded to take round a house. (They are often patronising as well.) This one is admirably concise and yet contains a good deal of information of just the right kind. Broughton Castle is a house more interesting architecturally than for the things it contains, and the guide book rightly concentrates on the architectural history of the house. It incorporates up-to-date research, the text is clear enough for everyone to understand it and the photographs that illustrate it will be a useful *aide memoire* for scholars (though a picture of the top of the staircase down from the long gallery would have been useful.) Go to Broughton, or go again if you've been there already, and leave your old guide book at home.

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. Anscorb, 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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