

CAKE & COCKHORSE



BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Details about the Society's activities and
publications can be found on the inside back cover

CAKE & COCKHORSE

The Magazine of the Banbury Historical Society. Issued three times a year.

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How long and how large history is! Our last issue was mostly filled with the 15th century, this with the 19th. That on the 15th century concerned those who, for their times, lived comfortably; this issue follows the modern obsession with the poor and, in the case of Cropredy, the brick houses in which they lived.

There is a reason for that, other than fashion. It is rare to find records of the poor before the introduction of parish registers in the 16th century, and little can be found before the invention of newspapers, censuses and other modern methods of monitoring the lives of all of us. The mediaeval obsession was with property and its inheritance; surviving records are filled with little else, so we know little of the unpropertied.

That does not necessarily mean that our ancestors did not worry about the poor; we just do not know. But in the hundred years war there are many incidents of violence recorded in which the defeated were all put to the sword, except those worth ransoming. Probably property did then matter more than lives. It is in fact better to live now.

What then induced Richard Bowle, yeoman of Banbury, to risk his life and his hard-won farm to travel to Kent to join Jack Cade's rising of 1450?

Our cover picture shows the North Front of Farnborough Hall, Warwickshire, taken from the National Monuments Record.

NOTICES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting will be held on Saturday July 12 at Farnborough Hall, six miles north of Banbury. At 5 pm there will be a conducted tour of the house, which is a National Trust property; those who are not members of the National Trust will have to pay the normal fee for the tour; those who are members should bring their membership cards. The AGM will follow after the tour. Any members wishing to propose any business for the AGM, including nomination of committee members, is asked to write to the Secretary not less than one week before the meeting.

ANNUAL DINNER

This year the dinner will be in the great hall at Broughton Castle on Friday October 24, by invitation of our President. The notice and application form for places are enclosed with this copy of *Cake and Cockhorse*. The arrangements will be similar to last year, with a guest speaker and entertainment. Though the great hall at the Castle will seat more diners than did the barn at Windmill Farm, numbers are limited. Please send in your forms and cheques as early as possible.

AUTUMN PROGRAMME

To save the postage involved in sending out the autumn programme of meetings separately in August, we are taking this opportunity to notify members of the four meetings arranged for September to December. Please note them in your diaries. The meetings arranged for 1981 will be notified in or with the autumn issue of *Cake and Cockhorse*. It is customary for one or more members of the committee to entertain the guest speaker to dinner after each meeting; if any member has a special interest in the subject of the talk and would like to meet the speaker at dinner afterwards, please let the Secretary know at least 24 hours before. The speaker is the guest of the Society; others pay for their own dinners.

The autumn meetings, which will be held at the North Oxfordshire Technical College, Broughton Road, Banbury, at 7.30 pm will be as follows:-

Tuesday September 16th (note change of day for this one meeting)

Christine Bloxham - Seasonal Customs.

Thursday October 9th.

David Green F.S.A. - Henry Wise, gardener to Queen Anne, and the formal garden in England.

Thursday November 13th.

Dan Chadwick - Stained Glass.

Thursday December 11th.

Sarah Gosling - Banbury Photographs.

ASPECTS OF OXFORDSHIRE POOR RELIEF: THE 1830s

'I get on very well here - and the Farmers are delighted with the prospect. The only matter I have to contend with is party & political interests - The town of Banbury is opposed in these respects to the vicinity - and they are fearful of being swamped as they term it by the outparishes'. Edward Gulson, assistant poor law commissioner, writing from Banbury, 7th March, 1835, concerning the implementation of the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834.

In early Victorian England poverty was an inescapable fact of life for many people, with perhaps 30 per cent of the population living at or below subsistence level as late as the 1850s.¹ In previous decades, the proportion was far higher. This was especially true of the old, the sick and the children of labouring families, though a number of Oxfordshire households suffered from the decline in pillow lacemaking and glovemaking as factory production undermined the prosperity of the old domestic trades.²

Some of those in need were aided by local charities; others gained from the provision of allotments on which they could grow their own vegetables and perhaps raise enough corn to feed a pig. In 1819 poor law authorities were empowered to acquire land by purchase or lease for this purpose. And although the initial response was modest, certain landowners and clergymen offered plots of their own for allotments in the belief that these would encourage labourers to become hard-working and self-dependent. At Finmere in the 1820s, the Duke of Buckingham offered land at the rate of 50s. per acre to any poor man resident in the parish who had a wife and two children living. But the plan proved unsuccessful, as the plots offered were too large to be cultivated with a spade.³ Another enthusiastic supporter of the idea was the blanket manufacturer, John Earley of Witney, who declared in 1840: 'the allotment system is a great blessing to the poor man; it saves many evils, and brings up the children to industry by the example set by the parents; it gives the poor man a feeling of respectful independence . . . independence of the poor's rates. The allotment system will not only give a man bread, but also cheese with it.'

A third, more permanent, solution to the poverty question was a resort to emigration and in a minority of parishes this, too, was adopted. Indeed, some poor law reformers saw it as the 'natural vent' of surplus population.⁴ Among the communities participating in the movement was Hook Norton, which sent about 175 persons away in the mid-1820s. A few years later thirty-six men, women and children migrated from Kings Sutton, their move to New York being financed by the imposition of a levy of 6d. an acre on land in the parish and a further special rate of 6d. in the £.⁵ That initiative encouraged the Bicester authorities to take a similar step in 1830, with the venture financed by borrowing £1,000 on the rates to cover the cost of clothing, travel, and equipment for the migrants for their journey. In the late spring of 1830 a first instalment of seventy-

one adults and forty children was carried by waggon to Liverpool ready to embark for the United States. Others followed, with a total of 217 persons sent away at a cost to the parish of £1,415 14s. 10½d. Most of them made a success of the venture, though a few faint-hearted found their way back to Bicester, where they were set to work by the parish authorities collecting coal from a nearby wharf.⁶

Deddington also shared in the upsurge of emigration in the late 1820s and early 1830s, though here enthusiasm was dampened when about fifty of those departing in 1831 travelled on a cholera stricken vessel and many died on their journey.⁷ In other cases, aid was given in the late 1830s under the terms of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act itself; thus in the period July 1836 to July 1837, 25 people were sent to Canada from Garsington and Holton and 31 from Wheatley. In all, between July 1836 and December, 1847, 315 Oxfordshire emigrants were sent away under poor law auspices from eighteen different parishes. One hundred and forty of them travelled to Canada, eight to the Cape of Good Hope, and the remainder to South Australia.⁸ But on grounds of cost and of organisational difficulty, emigration could never provide a major solution to the problem of pauperism, no matter what its supporters might claim.

For the majority of men and women in need, reliance on parish relief was still their principal standby. In 1830, the assistance available basically stemmed from the Elizabethan poor laws of 1598 and 1601. Although these had been extensively amended over the centuries, the principle remained that every year each community must appoint overseers of the poor whose task it was to collect a poor rate from the occupiers of property within their area and to use the money to give 'necessary relief' to those of its inhabitants who were unable to support themselves. However, with the sharp increase in population which occurred in Britain during the later eighteenth century, the old methods of relief proved inadequate, especially when they were accompanied in the 1790s by bad harvests at home and the inflationary effects of war with France. In January, 1795, magistrates in Oxfordshire adopted a new system based on the price of bread. Under this a man and his wife were to secure an income of at least six shillings per week 'exclusive of Rent', with 1s. per week for each child. If family earnings fell below this minimum, then they were to be subsidised from the rates. Single men received no aid beyond what they could earn with their labour - a policy which was later alleged to have encouraged early marriages.⁹ However, in at least one parish - that of Cropredy - many of the ideas of the allowance system had already been adopted by 1785, with a scale of wage subsidisation in operation and the provision of work for the unemployed under the 'roundsman' system. Hempton, too, was using roundsmen as early as 1771, with the unemployed sent to work first on one farm and then on another.¹⁰ Naturally, the men concerned lacked commitment to their 'employers' and, not surprisingly, took a minimal interest in their work.

Over the years the aid policy was extended and refined. For although it had been designed to deal with the pressures of the war years only, it continued into the post-war era as well. Indeed, in 1824, it was reported that relief in aid of wages was given in all areas on the arrival of the second or third child.¹¹ This was confirmed in 1832 by the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws. As a magistrate from Oddington informed that Commission, in his area

all [the] able-bodied labourers who have more than two children receive regular allowance from the parish . . . In some of the adjoining parishes it is carried to such a length that I have known a labourer receive 2d. per diem where he worked, and the rest of his wages made up from the poor's book. The children are usually sent round, and paid wholly by the overseer . . .¹²

Likewise at Deddington, during the 'severe winter months' about sixty men applied each morning to the overseer for work or pay: 'He ranges them under a shed in a yard. If a farmer or any one else wants a man, he sends to the yard for one, and pays half the day's wages; the rest is paid by the parish. At the close of the day, the unemployed are paid the wages of a day, minus 2d.'¹³ It was on these grounds that Assistant Commissioner Okeden, visiting Oxfordshire in connection with the Royal Commission, commented sourly on the ubiquity of what he called 'the payment of head-money'.

In the mid-1830s, his concern was echoed by Edward Gulson, a permanent Assistant Poor Law Commissioner, when he noted that at Garsington, where the paupers ostensibly worked in a stone pit, many were paid whether they attended or not: 'Perceiving marks against the names of most of the men occasionally - and the week before I was there, no less than four of these marks against the name of every man employed by the Parish, I enquired the meaning. The Overseer told me that these marks denoted holidays and that the men were paid just the same whether they worked or absented themselves - and on my asking how it was that they had 4 days holiday in succession in one week he replied that "they had attended a great bullbaiting those days in an adjoining Parish - and that the Paupers declared that they would have a holiday just when they pleased".¹⁴ Again, at Banbury poor house one woman had made over to the parish an annuity of 5s. a week 'on condition that they will keep her in the Poor house, knowing, as she says, that she could not be so comfortable elsewhere. The inmates are allowed as much meat as they please: the Labourers in the vicinity only getting it once a week.'¹⁵

In 1831, when perhaps one person in ten was living wholly or partly on poor relief in the country at large, national poor rate expenditure stood at £7m., or around 10s. per head of the population. But in Oxfordshire (as in several other southern and south midland counties) the level was far higher, averaging 16s. 11d. per head of population in 1831.¹⁶ And although the majority of those obtaining aid - perhaps seventy per cent of

them - were the old, the sick and children, it was the able-bodied recipients who were the prime cause of concern to contemporaries. Some parishes took the initiative by abandoning the roundsman system or its variants of their own accord, as Chadlington, Epwell, Harpsden and Headington claimed to have done by the early 1830s. Others set up select vestries, a device first given legislative sanction in 1819, following the peak poor law expenditure of 1818, when national outgoings reached almost £8m. These new bodies were elected from among the substantial rate-payers in a parish, plus the clergyman, churchwardens and overseers, and had as their aim the pruning of expenditure through more stringent policies. This included the employment of salaried assistant overseers to administer the distribution of relief.

Cuddesdon was one parish which adopted the system, taking a firm line with applicants. All those who had refused to seek work for themselves or had not kept regular hours or had been found dishonest were refused aid. In 1824, vestry members claimed that their policy would have been still more successful had it not been for the magistrates, who 'continually, and in defiance of the Act of Parliament, interfered and checked the good effects arising from the knowledge which the Vestry had of the character and means of the applicants'.¹⁷ The system continued in operation until it was overtaken by the 1834 legislation. In all, about a quarter of Oxfordshire's parishes adopted a select vestry.

By the late 1820s, therefore, concern over the operation of the poor relief system had become well-established. But in the summer and autumn of 1830 these general anxieties were reinforced when the 'Swing' riots broke out among labourers in many southern and south midland counties, as they sought by arson and machine-breaking to bring about an increase in wages and a destruction of the threshing machines which they blamed for their winter unemployment. The disturbances reached Banbury and north Oxfordshire on 29th November, when a threshing machine was destroyed at Neithrop.¹⁸ Other outbreaks followed, with some of the small tradesmen and craftsmen of Banbury playing a leading role. Overall perhaps one parish in ten in the county was affected. And although demands for higher wages were a continuing theme, in the view of the incumbent of Kidlington, the whole thing had been sparked off by 'the mal-administration of the Poor Laws'.¹⁹ Other critics, like a Hook Norton witness, considered that those men who were in casual employment and therefore much dependent upon the overseer felt 'themselves degraded' by the relief system.²⁰

Although the unrest was quickly suppressed with military aid and the swearing in of special constables, it was a severe shock to both Government and property owners. It was against this background that the Government appointed the Royal Commission of 1832 to examine the whole poor law system, since to many observers it seemed that the worst riots had taken place in areas where the relief given to the poor was at its highest. In Oxfordshire evidence was collected from twenty-eight rural

parishes and townships, plus three groups of parishes. Two years later, the Commission's main recommendations were published. As is well known, they called for the establishment of a central board to administer the nation's poor law system, while at local level out relief, except for medical attention, was to be ended for all able-bodied people. Instead, the 'work-house test' would operate, so that they would be given help only as inmates of a workhouse. Within the workhouses, paupers were to be classified and separated according to age and sex. The prime objective was to discourage applications for relief from the able-bodied by making their position 'less eligible' than that of any independent labourer.

The Government speedily acted on the recommendations and later in 1834 the Poor Law Amendment Act was passed. In addition to the points mentioned, the Act provided for groups of parishes to join together to form unions, with one workhouse to each union, and with administration in the hands of a board of guardians elected from the constituent parishes.

Within the unions, however, each parish continued to bear the cost of relieving its own poor. Consequently, where land ownership was concentrated among a few men, who were the principal ratepayers in a parish, cottages were often demolished in order to reduce the number of potential paupers who could claim a settlement there. These ideas were not, of course, new. Even under the old poor law, owners of 'close' parishes had endeavoured to minimise their rate burden. As the table indicates, they were largely successful, though, interestingly enough, there was apparently little difference in the expenditure per head of the population between a 'close' parish and an 'open' one, where population was larger and land ownership widely dispersed. It was merely the smaller number of people in the close parish which kept down its poor rate, not the benevolence of squire or parson. So, from this point of view, ratepayers' efforts to keep down population numbers in close parishes were wholly logical. Not until the 1865 Union Chargeability Act extended responsibility for relief to the whole union were some of these parish problems solved.

In Oxfordshire eight new poor law unions were created as a result of the 1834 Act, with Oxford city being allowed to continue with its old Incorporation of the Poor, though in other respects conforming to the principles of 1834. In most cases a new workhouse had also to be constructed. At Banbury, Edward Gulson noted the guardians were so 'anxious to build a W.H. as soon as possible' that he had had 'great difficulty to restrain them to the limit of 300 as resolved. They want to build it for 400 . . . I think a house for 300 will be as large as will be required'.²² His caution was to prove amply justified. In the end the Banbury workhouse was built in accordance with a model plan provided by the Poor Law Commissioners, at a cost of £4,580, plus £1,050 for the land.²³ Witney was another union which built a new workhouse, and it was from there that a guardian wrote to **Jackson's Oxford Journal** in 1835 to inform possible inmates what lay in store for them:

Table 1 - EXPENDITURE IN SELECTED PARISHES ON THE MAINTENANCE AND RELIEF OF THE POOR²¹ 1825-29

Year	Middle Aston (close) 1831 pop. = 121	Expen. per head	Steeple Aston (open) 1831 pop. = 441	Expen. per head	Ardley (close) 1831 pop. = 170	Expen. per head
		s.		s.		s.
1825	£60	10	£246	11.1	£153	18
1826	£68 6s.	11.3	£332 3s.	15.1	£179 18s.	21.2
1827	£113 5s.	18.7	£332 5s.	15.1	£116 4s.	13.7
1828	£91 7s.	15.1	£288 3s.	13.1	£107 4s.	12.6
1829	£87	14.4	£240 8s.	10.9	£123 14s.	14.5

In each case the expenditure per head is based on the 1831 population figure.

Estimated annual value of real property in parishes assessed April 1815

Middle Aston	Steeple Aston	Ardley
£1,540	£1,677	£1,583

First, I find upon entering your own clothes will be exchanged for the workhouse dress, the men in plain grey cloth, the women in a check bed gown, over their other garments. Their own clothes to be cleaned and returned when they can maintain themselves. The men are then passed to their wards, and the women to theirs, and the children to other wards, according to age, sex, and other circumstances. Your food, according to its kind will be . . . served up by weight and measure, all sitting down in large dining rooms, one of which will be a Chapel to those of the Church of England. Dissenters will be allowed to go out to their own place of worship upon condition of immediate return. No pauper will be allowed to go out without leave, and that but upon a particular occasion. FOOD. Breakfast - Bread and gruel. Dinner - Meat and potatoes, three days, the other days soup. Supper - Bread and cheese or broth. No tea or beer allowed, except to the sick. Children will have their hair shorn close, be kept clean and educated.²⁴

He failed to mention that silence had to be observed during meals or to describe the tasks which the paupers were expected to carry out - such as stone breaking, gardening and oakum picking for the men and household work for the women and girls. He did, however, observe that opposition was useless for it had all been planned 'under the authority of Parliament

. . . and [the] only resistance you or I could possible offer is to strive to maintain our own independence. '

The prime object of the reformers was to reduce poor rate expenditure. To achieve that, relief conditions must be made unpleasant enough to deter applicants. Nevertheless the authorities felt the need to proceed cautiously in the initial stages, in order to avoid provoking violent resistance. Although Oxfordshire opposition to the changes never reached the scale of that in the north of England, riots did occur in several parishes in the west of the county during May, 1835, as unionisation was proceeding.²⁵ At Bampton and Standlake the disturbances aroused particular concern, with a local landowner attacked at the former place and a relieving officer driven from the latter by a mob, together with the two cart loads of bread he had brought with him! Subsequently some of the ringleaders were arrested and received sentences of imprisonment with hard labour.²⁶ Less dramatically, a few weeks later at Wardington in north Oxfordshire two men were committed to gaol for assaulting the relieving officer of the Mollington district.²⁷ And at Shutford in the Banbury union some 'malicious persons' cut off the stirrups, crupper and one of the skirts of the saddle of the Hook Norton district relieving officer. The Banbury board offered £10 reward for the unmasking of the offenders, but they do not seem to have been discovered.²⁸

The Poor Law Commissioners, too, were aware of the need for caution. It was only gradually that pressure was exerted on guardians to toe the official line, with a flurry of letters, orders, circulars and assistant commissioners descending on the recalcitrant or laggardly. Chipping Norton was one union which incurred official displeasure. In May, 1838, assistant commissioner Hall reported visiting the local workhouse and discovering that the entrance hall was filled with able-bodied men. He hastened to express his surprise to the guardians, who were meeting in the board room, and to point out that there were more applicants for relief in that one place than he 'had seen during the whole Winter at all the Unions I had visited'. He then went on to explain the sorry story:

I was told that a Fortnight previous there had been a Misunderstanding and Quarrel among the Farmers in one of the Parishes in the Union, and that the Result of this Quarrel was that they discharged all the Labourers they could spare. The Men applied to the Board of Guardians for Relief; their Number was so great and the Circumstances of the Case were thought so peculiar, it being well known what was the Reason of their being thrown out of Work, that the Board of Guardians, unrestricted by any Rule, gave those Men Out-door Relief; the Consequence of that was, I was assured by the Guardians that on the following Board Day they had to learn that Two or Three other Parishes had followed precisely the same Course . . . they had argued: 'You see turning the Men off does not involve them in any Necessity of going to the workhouse; they get Out-door Relief as they used;' and therefore

the Men were discharged. The Third Board Day was the Day I went there. On that Day I found that the Number had more than doubled. I think there must have been between Ninety and a Hundred Men assembled. The Guardians then were one and all sensible that what they had done had been unfortunate . . . I dissuaded them from at once cutting off the Out Relief ordered to those Men, and giving them Admission into the Workhouse, but said they must gradually retrace their Steps as quickly as they could, and in Three Weeks they brought the Relief List to the State in which it had been previously²⁹.

However, as Appendix A shows, despite this optimistic assessment, by the early months of 1842 three-quarters of the adult able-bodied paupers in the Chipping Norton union were still in receipt of out relief. This is a question which will be considered again later.

Apart from providing aid in cash and kind, the poor law unions had the duty of supplying medical relief to the needy. To this end, district medical officers had to be appointed within each union. Not unexpectedly, economy was the order of the day here, too. By 1844-45 the county was employing a total of forty-two medical officers, to whom they paid an aggregate salary of £2,548 per annum, or around £60 per man per year.³⁰ But out of this sum they were expected to provide medicines under most contracts. Only in midwifery cases and for mending broken bones was extra cash available. Doctors who provided anything other than the cheapest medicaments were out-of-pocket, and in this respect paupers probably fared worse under the post-1834 regime than in that of earlier years.³¹ On the other hand, from the start prescriptions of meat, bread, wine or beer could be paid for out of the rates, and so it became common for medical officers to prescribe mutton or beer for anything from fever and tuberculosis to ovarian diseases. A medical return for the Cottisford district of Bicester union in June 1846 shows that a fourteen-year-old girl suffering from debility was prescribed mutton and half a pint of porter daily, while a woman suffering from dropsy was to secure two pounds of meat a week. There are many similar examples.³²

Free vaccination against small-pox was also provided in some unions from an early stage, even before it received government approval in 1840. At Bicester, district medical officers were being asked in October 1835 to 'vaccinate every person in their respective parishes that may require it', with the comparatively generous fee of 1s.6d. to be paid in each case. Banbury took a similar line three years later.

There were, nevertheless, problems in organising the medical districts. Banbury union, containing fifty-one parishes formerly attended by fourteen or fifteen practitioners, in 1836 entrusted the whole union to three doctors, one of whom held a district comprising thirty-three parishes, fifteen miles wide. Prompt attendance on patients was impossible and many died unvisited. Eventually in 1838 it was decided to rearrange the union into eight districts, with the same number of medical

officers.³³ But even then problems remained. As late as 1854, Dr. Griffin, the former medical officer of the Adderbury district, claimed that the poor of Avon Dasset had to walk seven miles to visit their poor law doctor: 'if a man's wife is taken ill he is obliged to go himself, and lose part of his day's work, or employ a man to go and fetch the medical man, a distance of 13 miles, there and back.' Griffin proposed instead that there should be in each union a certain number of medical officers to undertake the care of the sick, with patients allowed 'to send for any one of five or six medical men in a district'. Each doctor would be paid according to the number of cases he attended.³⁴ Needless to say, this policy, with its offer of a free choice of doctor, did not fit in with official views of the 'less eligibility' of of paupers, and was not accepted.

As with other aspects of poor relief, not all who applied for medical aid received it. Indeed, the Poor Law Commission firmly informed the Chipping Norton guardians that:

Medical relief, like all other relief, should be afforded at the expence of the Ratepayers only to such persons as are wholly unable to provide for themselves. The Comrs. [look] forward to the period when the Gns., acting on this principle, shall remove from the mind of the Labourers, the too generally prevailing impression, that they must always be dependent on the parish for Medl. attendance & to the institution of Medical Clubs as powerful auxiliaries to this end, and to the total freedom of the Labourers from a state of pauperism.³⁵

Self-reliance was to be the order of the day.

Once established, the harsh and unsympathetic philosophy of the poor relief system formulated in the 1830s and early 1840s, continued almost to the end of the century. And whilst some critics could, with Benjamin Disraeli, condemn the 1834 Act as a national disgrace, which announced 'to the world that in England poverty is a crime', most people - ratepayers and poor men alike - came to accept the system which it introduced. The fact that initially it achieved one of its principal objectives by reducing poor rates helped to make it palatable to the better-off sectors of society. In Oxfordshire, expenditure in the eight newly established poor law unions fell from an average annual outlay for the constituent parishes of £124,094 during the three years prior to union, to £73,010 per annum over the period 1841-43 inclusive.³⁶ In Bicester union expenditure dropped particularly sharply, by around 60 per cent. Estimated per capita expenditure on relief and maintenance in the county likewise fell from 15s. 10d. in 1834 to 10s. 2d. in 1836 and 8s. 5d. in 1838, though it then moved up slightly to 9s. 10d. per head in 1840.³⁷ In addition, where relief was given to old people, it was common practice to require children to contribute something towards the cost - another factor helping to keep down the relief burden. A typical example of this is provided by an entry in the Bicester Union minute book for 23rd November, 1838:

The Clerk was . . . directed to write to Hitchcock, Coachman to W.R. Cartwright Esquire of Aynho, to require him to pay 6d. a week towards the support of his father receiving relief from Cottisford parish and also to Hitchcock groom to the Duke of Sutherland, Trentham Hall near Newcastle, Staffordshire for the like purpose ³⁸.

To many critics, though, it was the disciplinary effect of the new measure which was particularly praiseworthy. This was the view put forward by a farmer from Over Norton, when he declared that his labourers were 'more civil, more attentive' than they had been: 'they come in better time in the morning, they are more obedient, in short they are anxious now to keep their places, and before they did not care about it, for they could always fall back upon the parish.'³⁹ A colleague from Bicester agreed: 'the better the labourer, the better is his condition; there is no incivility from them now, as there was before the Union, and they are all desirous of keeping a place of work.'

One further point remains. The Royal Commission of 1832 had been especially critical of out relief and had sought to limit those entitled to receive it. But that policy was never fully implemented. Some guardians argued that on humanitarian grounds it was wrong to split up families by sending them to a workhouse, if a little out relief would keep the home together. Others - probably the majority - were influenced by the fact that on a per capita basis out relief was cheaper than maintenance in a workhouse, even at the low standard of living which its inmates enjoyed. Thus in the quarter ending Christmas 1837 it cost (excluding establishment expenses) £1 6s. 2d. to maintain an indoor pauper in the Chipping Norton union but only 16s. 4d. per head for those on out relief; in the Banbury union the respective figures were £1 1s. 5d. and 19s. 1d. Similar results have been observed in other rural areas.⁴⁰ So there began to be some 'bending' of the regulations, especially on the pretext of illness, to permit the continuance of outdoor relief. Entries in union minute books show how easy it was for guardians to evade the restrictions, as they did at Bicester during 1837, when relief in aid of sickness was given to applicants who were vaguely described as 'ill' or as suffering from a rupture - three loaves being considered the appropriate 'treatment' in the latter case.⁴¹ (See Appendix A for examples of the high level of out relief).

Discipline and economy were the watchwords of the early Victorian poor law - in Oxfordshire as elsewhere - and the latter clearly recommended out relief as an alternative to be adopted wherever possible, no matter what official policy might be. This the boards of guardians quickly appreciated and they made their arrangements accordingly. It is a myth that out relief was ended by the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act. At the same time, knowing the deep unpopularity of the 'house', guardians sometimes made orders for indoor relief in cases where they wished to discourage applicants or to avoid giving aid at all, secure in the knowledge

that many of those receiving such orders would prefer to struggle along outside, relying on the help of friends and relatives, rather than expose themselves to the workhouse regime. In that sense indoor relief was seen as a weapon of last resort, to discipline the recalcitrant and to punish the idler, rather than a regular part of the poor law armoury.

Pamela Horn

FOOTNOTES

1. Geoffrey Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75* (London, 1971), 124.
2. *Royal Commission on the Poor Laws: Appendix B.1 - Answers to Questions Circulated in the Rural Districts*, Pt.I, P.P.1834, Vol.XXX, 372a and 382a. The earnings of women and children were especially affected by these developments.
3. C.R. Oldham, 'Oxfordshire Poor Law Papers' in *Economic History Review*, Vol.V, No.1 (Oct.1934), 88.
4. J.R. Poynter, *Society and Pauperism* (London, 1969), 267.
5. G.H. Dannatt, 'Emigration in 1830' in *Top. Oxon.* No.2 (Spring 1959), 6.
6. *Ibid.* and Mary D. Lobel ed., *Victoria County History of Oxfordshire*, Vol.VI (London 1959), 40. Geoffrey W. Oxley, *Aspects of Poor Law Administration in Oxfordshire in the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries*, Liverpool University B.A. dissertation, 1968, 88.
7. *Royal Commission on the Poor Laws*, Appendix A, Pt.I, P.P.1834, Vol.XXVIII, Report by D.O.P. Okeden on Oxfordshire, 2A.
8. *Return on emigration for each year 1837-47 showing those who had been aided under the Poor Law Amendment Act*, P.P.1847-48, Vol.XLVII, 19.
9. *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 24th January, 1795.
10. A. Crossley ed., *Victoria County History of Oxfordshire*, Vol.X (Oxford, 1972), 167 and C.R. Oldham, 'Oxfordshire Poor Law Papers', 96.
11. M. Blaug, 'The Myth of the Old Poor Law and the Making of the New' in *Essays in Social History*, ed., M.W. Flinn and T.C. Smout (Oxford, 1974), 145. However, there had been a fall in per capita expenditure over the period in Oxfordshire, where it had dropped from 24s. 10d. in 1812 to 19s. 1d. in 1821, at a time of good harvests. The national figures at the two dates were 18s. 8d. and 16s. 4d., respectively.
12. S.G. and E.O.A. Checkland ed., *The Poor Law Report of 1834* (London, Penguin ed., 1974), 105.
13. *Ibid.*, 112.
14. Report by Edward Gulson to the Poor Law Commissioners, 27th May, 1835 at the Public Record Office, M.H.32.28.
15. Report by Edward Gulson to the Poor Law Commissioners, 3rd July, 1835, at the P.R.O., M.H.32.28.
16. J.R. Marshall, *The Old Poor Law 1795-1834* (London, 1968), 40-41.
17. Geoffrey W. Oxley, *op.cit.*, 23.
18. E.J. Hobsbawm and George Rudé, *Captain Swing* (London, 1969), 143.
19. *Royal Commission on the Poor Laws: Appendix B - Answers to Questions*, Part V, 376 e.
20. *Ibid.*, 378c.
21. *Maintenance and Relief of the Poor 1825-29*, P.P.1830-31, Vol.XI.
22. Letter from Edward Gulson to the Poor Law Commission, 7th April, 1835, at P.R.O., M.H.32.28.
23. William Potts, *A History of Banbury* (Banbury, 1958), 190. During May, 1838, for example, there were between 125 and 160 people resident in the workhouse at any one time. See 'Banbury Cuttings 1838-42' in Banbury Public Library. Numbers rarely seem to have been much above 200.

24. **Jackson's Oxford Journal**, 3rd October, 1835.
25. See Nicholas C. Edsall, **The anti-Poor Law Movement 1834-44** (Manchester, 1971), for an account of the opposition to the 1834 legislation.
26. **Jackson's Oxford Journal**, 23rd May and 4th July, 1835. **Oxford University, City and County Herald**, 23rd May, 1835.
27. **Jackson's Oxford Journal**, 20th June, 1835.
28. **Jackson's Oxford Journal**, 16th May, 1835.
29. **Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Operation of the Poor Law Amendment Act**, P.P.1837-38, Vol.XIX, Pt.I, Evidence of Richard Hall on 10th May, 1838, 86.
30. Ruth G. Hodgkinson, **The Origins of the National Health Service** (London, 1967), 105. There were also three paid nurses who received £43 per annum between them.
31. For a discussion of the difficulties of doctors over the 'expensive medicines' issue see Pamela Horn, **Labouring Life in the Victorian Countryside** (Dublin, 1976), 191.
32. Bicester Union: Cottisford District Medical Officer's Report for 25th June, 1846, at Oxfordshire Record Office, DEW.IV/1.
33. Ruth G. Hodgkinson, *op.cit.*, 107-108.
34. **Report of the Select Committee on Medical Relief**, P.P.1854, Vol.XII, Evidence of Dr. J. Griffin, 9th June, 1854, Q.1645-1648 and Q.1656-1657.
35. Records of Chipping Norton Poor Law Union at P.R.O., M.H.12.9637, letter from Poor Law Commissioners dated 4th March, 1837.
36. **Average Annual Expenditure of Parishes in Unions: England and Wales**, P.P.1844 Vol.XL.
37. **Seventh Annual Report of the Poor Law Commission**, P.P.1841, Vol.XI. The decrease in relief per head of population for England as a whole was 2s. 8d. comparing 1834 with 1840; in Oxfordshire it was 6s.
38. Bicester Poor Law Union Minute Book, 1837-39 at Oxfordshire Record Office, T/G.II/1/2.
39. **Second Report of the Poor Law Commission**, P.P.1836, Vol.XXXIX, Pt.I, 267.
40. **Appendix to Sixteenth Report from the Select Committee to Inquire into the Administration of the Relief of the Poor**, P.P.1838, Vol.XVIII, Pt.I, 33, for the basis of these calculations.
41. Bicester Union: Bicester District Relieving Officer's Application and Report Book, January-September, 1837, at Oxfordshire Record Office, DEW/III/1, entry under Caversfield.

APPENDIX A

(i) NO. OF PAUPERS RELIEVED IN UNIONS DURING QUARTER ENDING LADY DAY 1842

Union	Indoor			Outdoor			% of adult able-bodied paupers on out relief
	Adult Able-Bodied	All other classes incl. children	Total	Adult Able-Bodied	All other classes incl. children	Total	
Banbury	119	243	362	720	2,253	2,973	85.8
Bicester	49	128	177	441	820	1,261	90
Chipping Norton	74	129	203	208	1,280	1,488	73.7
Headington	57	106	163	348	994	1,342	85.9
Henley	124	227	351	372	1,330	1,702	75
Thame	231	276	507	712	1,468	2,180	75.5
Witney	137	337	474	398	1,413	1,811	74.3
Woodstock	68	182	250	256	978	1,234	79

From: P. P. 1843, Vol. XLV.

(ii) OXFORDSHIRE PAUPERS RELIEVED DURING QUARTERS ENDING LADY-DAY IN EACH YEAR

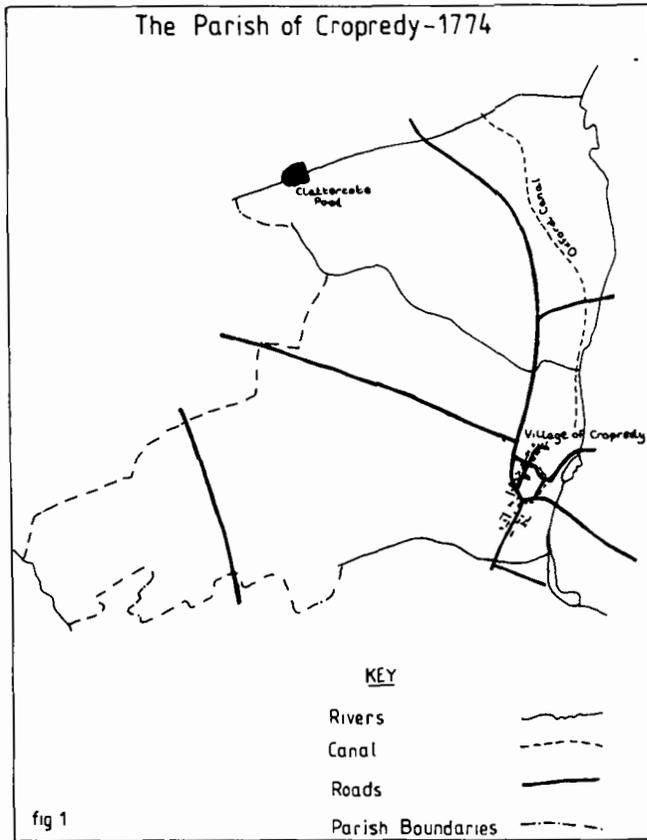
	Total No. of paupers relieved in the quarters ending Lady Day	Total No. of adult able-bodied paupers relieved during the quarter		% of all paupers who were able-bodied	% of adult able-bodied paupers on out relief
		Indoor	Outdoor		
1842	16,478	859	3,455	26.2	80
1843	19,043	1,090	4,510	29.4	80.5
1844	19,245	1,160	4,576	29.8	79.8
1845	22,046	1,200	5,426	30	81.8

Calculated from the **Annual Reports** of the Poor Law Commission.

Jack Cade - the Rising of 1450

The largest numbers of Cade's army came from Kent. It is generally known that substantial contingents joined him from Sussex, Surrey and Middlesex; a contingent from Essex arrived at Mile End to coincide with Cade's arrival at Southwark, South of the river Thames. It is less well known that the pardon lists show minor support from as far away as Leicestershire, Shropshire, Derbyshire, Herefordshire and Cornwall.

In the list is Richard Bowle of Banbury, eo Oxon, Yeoman. Can anyone identify him?



CROPREDY. The Brick Era 1775 to 1855

Cropredy is a small village in the north of Oxfordshire. For most of the eighteenth century the buildings were predominantly of stone and thatch. The farming community dwelt in the village, well supported by tradesmen. The fields were still open fields and the roads roughly maintained by the parish.

Change when it came was sudden and rapid. The landowners wished to enclose the fields and a survey of the whole parish was drawn up in 1774. On this map was also included the first part of the proposed line of the Coventry to Oxford canal. It entered the fields from Clattercote Parish to the north. The enclosure of the fields awarded in 1775 and the building of the canal soon after had an enormous effect on the future of the village.

The enclosure of the fields soon led to the farmers moving out to live near their farmland, and the canal brought a new phase to the buildings of Cropredy. Three of the new farms were built of stone and three of

brick, but many of the farms used brick for the homestall or farmyard buildings.

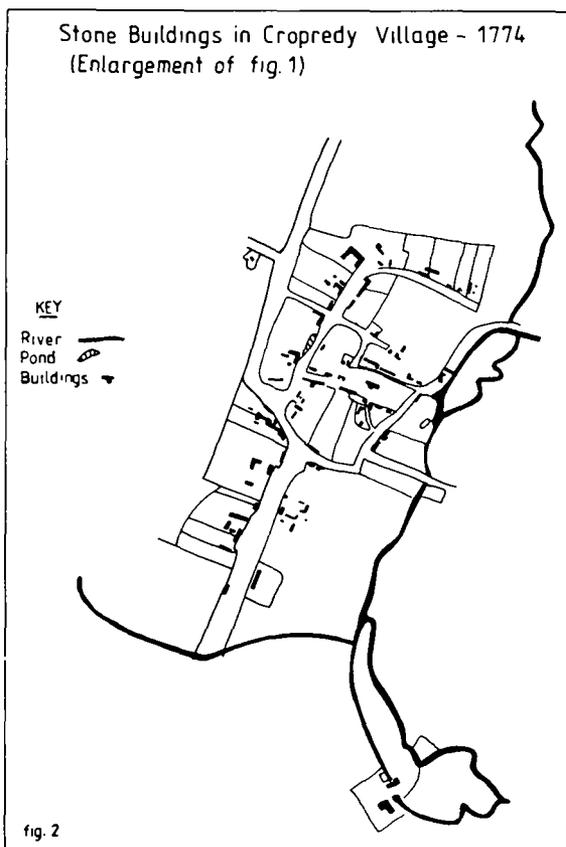
The canal builders made thousands of bricks for their bridges, and two lock houses were built. One at Cropredy Lock and the other at Verney's Lock. Whether the brickyard at Cropredy Mill was opened at this time I am not sure, but it was soon to produce a quantity of bricks for local consumption. This brickyard remained open and used by the Hadland family for some time. In 1840 to 1854 the Golby family of masons pay the Vicar £6 a year for the "Brickyard/field/kiln" tithes.¹ In 1853 it was enlarged - "land added to Brickfield".² Perhaps to build the school at the end of the lane to the mill.

Cropredy had a second brickfield made soon after the enclosure award. This lay to the south of the new road to Mollington in the old Oxy Field. It was on land allotted to four Cropredy people in lieu of their lost common rights,³ which land later became part of the Anker farm of Cropredy. The parish records mention a brickkiln for it was used as a landmark in the Surveyor of the Highways Accounts when stone was being distributed about the roads for maintenance. The last record came in the 1843/44 book.⁴ In 1827 Saml Anker was paid £7-12-0 for 4000 bricks from here.⁵ Three years earlier the church repair bills include "Ankers bill for bricks" £1-12s and "Hadlands bill for bricks £7-6s."⁶ This was in 1824.

Of the brickmakers themselves little is known. One family did however leave rather a mark, to the tune of about £44. We first hear of Elias and Alice Astell when they have two daughters baptised in 1820.⁷ Elias gives his occupation as Brickmaker. Then sometime in the winter of 1828 Elias is taken to the Oxford lunatic asylum. Left at home Alice had help from the Overseers for there were seven children. Not that this would have gone very far with the high price of bread. The costs from the asylum obviously cause alarm and a removal order is requested by the vestry. It states that "Elias Aston (sic) and Alice his wife and William aged 17 years Sarah aged 12 years, Prudence aged 10 years, Hannah aged 8 years, James aged 6 years, Solomon aged 4 years, Priscilla aged 2 years and Phoebe aged one month or thereabouts their children born in wedlock and who gained no settlement in their own right ... to Halesowen in the County of salop."^{7a}

The other family of brickmakers had a son William Barnett also a brickmaker married in 1841, but further records in 1846, 1847 and 1857 show he descended via boatman to labourer.⁸

Going back to the buildings themselves the style of building at that time for the larger building appears to have been a through passage with stairs leading straight up in the hall. A room on either side each with a fireplace. Later lean-tos or extensions were added. Not until the 1830's did the demand for more accommodation produce a 'double-pile' type of house with the four rooms downstairs. The Vicarage was the only excep-



tion. The dislike for brick did not seem to reach Cropredy for there are no rendered buildings.

The canal belt of brick buildings began with the two lock houses. The larger one at Cropredy has two rooms downstairs and a stair extension at the rear which may be later. The bond is a rather irregular Flemish garden bond. The roof is tiled. An early postcard shows windows with shutters. The panes were small and the opening was a swivell part in the centre of the window.⁹

The second lock cottage at Verney's Lock was built beside the towpath. It had a stable. This fell into ruin and only the foundations remain.¹⁰

The Canal Company purchased from Brasenose College Oxford, Read's house and close which ran down to the Cherwell from Round Bottom.¹¹ His house was built of stone and thatch. Edward Read was the vicars clerk; he and his family leave three inventories for this site.¹² Samuel Simcox demolished their house and built a south facing two storey

brick house on the site. Originally it was of the two rooms downstairs style with a through passage. A toll office was built at the east canal side. The windows were sash and the roof hipped. He chose the Flemish bond using the headers to make a pattern. This wharf house was licenced as the Navigation Inn from 1778.¹³ The next innkeeper and wharfinger was Thomas Walker and his son George.¹⁴ The Walkers carried on quite a prosperous business at Cropredy, becoming very involved with village affairs. The shop by the canal was originally built as a dwelling house by the Walkers.¹⁵ It had a central passage and two rooms on either side. A cellar was made. Was this to store the brew? For the Walkers added the trade of making malt to many others. This roof is gabled and the eaves have an angled cogging pattern. It has lately been rendered but in the cellar the brick pattern is English garden bond.

One of the farmers to move out of the village to his land was Edward Elkington. His family records go back to the start of the registers in 1538. The old family farm was in Creampot Lane.¹⁶ The new farm at Oathill had again the two rooms downstairs and central hall and stairs. Later a wing extended to the north. This house had a cellar and was until recently three storeys high. The roof is gabled and the windows a narrow sash.¹⁷

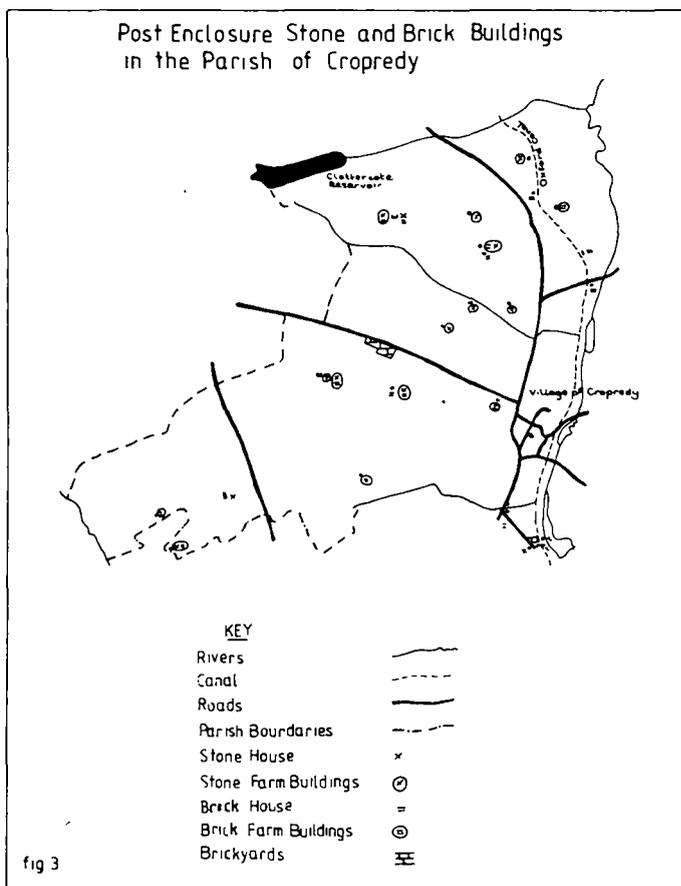
A purpose built building at the Canal Company wharf is the corn wharf and stables. This still has part of the roof tiled; it was built in Flemish garden bond with straight cogging at the eaves.

Over the road past the old stone wharf is a small weighbridge 'cottage', on the Brasenose wharf. In 1814 this land was "inclosed with a brick and (already) having a small brick cottage weighing house . . . there on".¹⁸ Lamprey's of Banbury rented the wharf. In 1891 they agree with the Bursar that as the Inspector had condemned their weighbridge they will not use it.¹⁹ A larger replacement is requested as the "Present weighbridge will weight about 5 tons "and it's platform is 10ft by 6½ft which is "not always long enough for a horse & cart. "Formerly a stick was placed under the "cartshaft, and the horse stood off the "machine. . . "²⁰

Meanwhile customers had to weigh at the Canal Company's wharf causing a large trade loss to Lamprey's. "Our customers find it awkward to weigh there & load at another place - turning about or requiring a thorough waggoner to avoid accident".²¹ Mr Anker suggested moving the whole business to the railway station and after many years this was done.²²

Just up the road from the wharf cottages had long been built on the Lord's waste. After purchasing part of the Boothby Estate the Cope's of Hanwell repaired and rebuilt Copes Cottages and the Plantation cottages in brick with thatch roofs.

Further down the canal towards Banbury, the lower Cropredy Mill



was extensively rebuilt in brick. In the sale of the Boothby Estate the miller Michael Pratt had purchased his mill.²³ In his will of 1804 he desired the mill to be sold and the money divided amongst the children. His sons carried on as tenant millers. In 1813 the Land Tax Assessments give Hadlands as the new owners.²⁴ A site plan of 1818 shows the three new cottages and the large stable block. The brickyard is marked and also the close where the miller's new house was later built.²⁵ This close was 'Windmill Close'. It was at this time still owned by the Allens of Slat mill in Bourton. The close is actually in Great Bourton on the Parish boundary with Cropredy. Perhaps they owned it as Slat mill suffered from flooding, and also once the Allens were millers at Cropredy. In 1793 Avis Allen a widow left to her son William "my windmill standing in Great Bourton"²⁶ William in 1807 likewise mentioned the same mill. He leaves it in trust to his executors to use the profits from it to support his wife Elizabeth and their children, until the youngest should be 21 years old. Then the mill

could be sold. If this child was baptised soon after birth this would take place in about 1818/19.²⁷ Mr Hadland built his house there in 1832 but that was not until he had greatly improved the mill site, building the new mill next to the canal, but still alongside the old stone one on the mill stream. The vicar noted in his account book in 1824 that there had been "great additions to the mill" and raised the tithe from £1-1s to £3 per annum.²⁸ Perhaps the vicar was more zealous in this because in 1822 Mr Hadland had built a new brick chapel in Cropredy. Mary Smith describes its building "A rich miller more liberal and less prejudiced than most people, had allowed them to build up a lane behind some property of his".²⁹ This is now the post office, as a new chapel was built in 1881 next to the first.³⁰

Mr Hadland had in his employ George Mobbs whose house had been licensed as a meeting place up to this time. Did this influence the Hadlands?³¹ The Hadland family at this time lived at Clattercote and farmed there. They were used to a large house and when their new house, Bourton House, was built in 1832³² four rooms were built on the ground floor with two more storeys above. Sash windows and a hip roof face eastwards towards the mill.

In the village Mrs Eagles of Poplar farm was left a widow and having a property next door she decided to build in brick³³ a smaller edition of Bourton House. This was in the 1830's. The house replaced a stone one once the home of the weaver Watt's family.³⁴

The Vicarage I have left out until now as it was built in stone but the vicar did use some brick for the lesser buildings. At the enclosure the vicar then carefully exchanged land to acquire the close opposite the old Vicarage.³⁵ John Taylor drew up Particulars & Estimates for a new stone Vicarage to be built of part "new Finy compton stone and part with sound and well burnt bricks, with good lime and sand mortar, and covered part with old slate, and part with new stonefield slate and part with new Tyles ..."³⁵ Bricks were used for the Coal and Knife house with a tile roof in 1785. This cost £1-14-6.³⁶ Other bricks were tucked behind the new wall of stone built around the old site then turned into a vegetable garden. Since then the stone Vicarage has gone and the vicar again lives on the original plot.

Brasenose College purchased the manorial rights of the Boothby Manor and some land with it in 1788. They put the old tenants³⁷ the Toms family in a stone farm house of the two rooms and through passage style. Whether the two north extensions were made at the same time has not been looked at yet. In the homestall there they put three brick buildings. A carhouse, brick and tiled and a gighthouse and wagon shed both brick and slated; the last was valued at £50 in 1865.³⁹ The brickfield on the Mollington road was conveniently near them. It was also just above the Grisold's new freehold at Oxey Farm which was built as a small dwelling house of brick and slate, the Grisold's themselves living at a large house in the village on the Brasenose Estate (Springfield Farm).

Up at Cropredy Lawn the Chamberlin's have plans drawn up in 1826 for several brick extensions including a new water closet. A cow hovel was made at this time on their fields by the old Boddington Way, in a field called Wyatt's Park or the Rough. This was in English garden bond with a tile roof. Very little remains of most of the cow-hovels since change in farming practices. Some were only built when corn prices reached very low prices in the 1880's⁴⁰ and farms relied on dairying. While these new buildings were going up others thought to improve their dwellings. One man had no option. In 1814 the Bursar reported that "Wm Checkley's copyhold property in Church Lane was out of repair and "Wm Checkley requested (at the Manor Court just held) to be allowed to diminish his building in length and to increase them in height".⁴¹ He had been given six months to put it in repair. By the September he writes to the Bursar of Brasenose College:-

"Gentlemen,/I take the Liberty of writing
"to you to inform you that the House is finished Building
"and I could wish to have it Liv'd as soon as it is
"convenient to you"

W.H. Chamberlin of Cropredy Lawn, Surveyor and Farmer thought a fair rent to be £5 per annum. The house also had a cow house and a small plot of land. The new repairs were a brick front to the house, although the rear wall of stone was kept and the whole was thatched.⁴²

There are other brick infills and extensions,⁴³ and brick fireplaces and chimneys abound, but I will end with a building just over the parish boundary: the new school built in 1854/5.⁴⁴ It was designed by Henry Hatton and built by a local carpenter Robert Smith for £545. The school house is very decorated, the black bricks outlining the diamond paned windows. The front of Flemish bond, and the rear of rather irregular English garden bond. The roof tiles are diamond shaped. There is no mention in the bills of the cost of transport for these bricks so I am presuming they came the short distance down Mill Lane.

Later bills for repairs at the Brasenose show that there is too much outside competition for Cropredy bricks and later bricks come from bigger brickyards in the area.

Pamela Keegan

References:

1. M.S.D.D. Par Cropredy c28 page 173ff of Vicar's Tithe Accts. Bod.
2. M.S.D.D. Par Cropredy c29 page 29 " "
3. Cropredy Enclosure Award 1775. O.R.O. & Bodleian.
4. M.S.D.D. Par Cropredy Surveyor of the Highways b17 page 74 & M.S.D.D. Par Cropredy c14. Bodleian.
5. M.S.D.D. Par Cropredy Surveyor of the Highways b17 page 42.
6. Cropredy Parish Register. Bodleian.
7. M.S.D.D. Par Cropredy c item s/40 Removal Order. Bodleian.
- 7a. Overseers to Poor Accts b14 & Cropredy Baptism Reg. Bodleian.

8. Marriage & Baptism Regs. of Cropredy. Bodleian.
9. Old post card in Cropredy collection.
10. Local information: Mr Feltham.
11. Brasenose college map & Hurst Calender Vol. VII 266 at B.N.C.
12. Read's Inventories: 50/3/II (1692): 50/3/33 (1721): 50/4/33 (1767)
Last Read died Jan 1767 a Bach. Bodleian.
13. Victuallers Recognisances 1753-1821 Vol. QSD/V 1-4 O.R.O.
14. As above.
15. Local Information.
16. B.N. coll archives Hurst Calender Vol. VII 218 & Cropredy Registers.
17. Local information: Mr Culimore.
18. B.N. Coll 620.
19. B.N.C. 209 letter dated 4 Feb 1891.)
20. B.N.C. 209 letter dated 3 Mar 1891.) Cellar 1st ser.
21. B.N.C. 209 letter dated Sept. 26 1891.)
22. B.N.C. 209 letter dated 12 March 1891.)
23. Pratt's will made 2 April 1804. Proved 10 July 1806. Bodleian.
24. Land Tax Assessments Q.s.D. L90 1785-1831 at O.R.O.
25. Stilgoe A4 'A plan of Cropredy Mill with Buildings' at O.R.O.
26. Will proved 15 Oct 1802 by son Wm. Bodleian.
27. Will proved 17 Aug 1807 by Joseph his brother. Bodleian.
Baptism Register for Cropredy.
28. M.S.D.D. Par Cropredy c29 page 1a Vicar's Acct bk. Bodleian.
29. The autobiography of Mary Smith. p 12.
30. Post Office Deeds.
31. Meeting House Licence.
32. Major Donner's Deeds. V.C.H. Vol. X p.167.
33. Lyndhurst Deeds.
34. Watt wills. 54/2/2 (1616): 55/3/19 (1701): 56/1/31 (1742).
56/3/32 (1784). & Enclosure Award 1775 Bodleian.
35. Enclosure Award 1775 for Cropredy.
36. M.S.D.D. Par Cropredy c34 itema.
37. M.S.D.D. Par Cropredy c28 page 178 & c29 page 1a. Bodleian.
B.N.C. Hurst Calender Vol. VII 282-287.
39. B.N.C. 470. Cellar 2nd Series.
40. O.R.O. Stilgoe.
41. B.N.C. 620 Cellar 1st Series.
42. B.N.C. 329 (Red) Court Baron 16 Mar 1814 & 873 & 458 2nd Series.
43. Aplin Hunt accession no 469 B Bundle Box 26, O.R.O. &
Deed in Cropredy Chapel.
44. M.S.D.D. Par Cropredy c24 itema.

TRADE UNIONISM AMONGST RAILWAY WORKERS IN BANBURY

In *Over the hills to glory* Mr Hodgkins gives an account of trade unionism in Banbury based primarily on oral sources, the press, and such surviving MSS. as he could trace locally.¹ It may be of interest to supplement the information he gives with some available from national archive sources deposited in the Modern Records Centre in the University of Warwick Library. The scope of this note is limited to railway workers and further limited by the fact that whilst the records of the National Union of Railwaymen and the Transport Salaried Staffs Association have been deposited in the Centre, those of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers & Firemen have not.

The details of the founding of the Banbury branch of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (the main constituent of the NUR) as recorded by Mr Hodgkins from a founder member are confirmed and expanded by the branch balance sheet, 1903, preserved in the NUR records in the Centre. It confirms that the branch with a membership of 38 met at the Bell Inn and also reveals that of the 38 members, 14 had belonged to the ASRS prior to the formation of the Banbury branch, whilst the other 24 were new members. The officers were W. Neville, Causeway, Grimsbury, Chairman; W.G. Grant, 15 Centre Street, Grimsby, Secretary; T.H. Giles, Cherwell Terrace, Treasurer.² *The Railway Review* of 4 December 1903 carried a short report (p.2) on a meeting of the Banbury ASRS branch held on 29 November, at which there was a "good attendance" with "contributions well paid up", 5 new members joining, with others promising to join at the next meeting. It is not entirely clear from the report that this November meeting was the inaugural meeting of the Banbury branch, but it may well have been. Annual branch balance sheets for the period 1904-12, which are also on deposit in the Centre, would provide information on fluctuations in membership and changes in office bearers.³

The Railway Clerks' Association, as the Transport Salaried Staffs Association was known until 1950, catered for its Banbury membership through a branch in Oxford, at least until 1926.⁴ The Oxford branch had been formed by A. G. Walkden, General Secretary of the RCA, in 1912 when he was in Oxford on Ruskin College business and decided to take the opportunity to establish a branch there.⁵ This Oxford branch of the RCA was formed on 1 March 1912 and immediately sought members in outlying stations, amongst which Witney and Abingdon are specifically mentioned, although Banbury is not.⁶ By 1918, however, there was at least one member in Banbury.⁷ By 1920 there were several, for the branch Secretary was "pleased to welcome the stalwarts of Banbury" to the July meeting, whilst chiding non-attending Oxford members.⁸ Sometime between December 1917 and May 1919 the Oxford RCA branch had been divided into two.⁹ It is possible that the Oxford No.2 branch catered for outlying stations, whilst Oxford No.1 comprised city members. Similar exercises on other

national trade union records in the Centre (or elsewhere) would probably yield further information on union organisation (and the lack of it in some industries) in Banbury.¹⁰

Alistair Tough

1. J.R. Hodgkins, **Over the hills to glory**, Southend, Clifton Press, [1979].
2. Presumably the same T.H. Giles who was Secretary of the Banbury & District Trades Council in 1907 (Labour Party Archives : LP.GC/18/6). The same source shows an attempt by the Trades Council to form a Banbury Labour Representation Committee in February 1905 (LRC.20/40).
3. MSS.127/AS/2/1/31-50.
4. MSS.55B/4/AR/6-8 : RCA **Annual Report** series, 1908-25.
5. **Railway Clerk**, Mar 1912, p.59.
6. **Railway Clerk**, Apr 1912, p.104.
7. **Railway Clerk**, Feb 1918, p.39.
8. **Railway Service Journal**, Jul 1920, p.174.
9. MSS.55B/4/AR/7 : RCA **Annual Report**, 1917, p.47, 1919, p.65.
10. For a general description of the Centre's holdings see R.A. Storey & J. Druker, **Guide to the Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick Library** (1977); the same writers discuss sources for the local historian in **Local Historian**, vol.12, no.8 (November 1977), pp.394-400.

OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY COMPETITION AND EXHIBITION

The weekend of April 18th-20th saw the culmination of a year or more's work, increasingly feverish in the final weeks, for some twenty-five local history societies throughout the county. The Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, with sponsorship from the "Oxford Journal" and with substantial cash prizes donated by Halls Oxford and West Brewery Company, and four small special prizes from the Midland Bank, were mounting the first-ever (in the U.K.) Local History Competition and Exhibition.

Oxford Town Hall that Thursday presented an amazing sight, with display screens and more home-made carpentering being erected in organised chaos by a motley collection of the young, old and middle-aged, but all clearly wearing the look of dedicated local historians. Somehow by the end of the day, or at least by 10 pm, the displays were all erected, the lights and tape commentaries all connected and working, ready for opening twelve hours later.

The standard of display throughout was astonishingly high, and the most frequently voiced comment was how nobody envied the judges' their choice. The judges were David Vaizey, Keeper of the Department of

Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Crispin Paine of the Oxfordshire County Museum, and Molly Harris of "Archers" fame. At first it seemed almost impossible to distinguish between the excellence of various exhibits, but for those who managed eventually to assimilate the overwhelming amount there was to see, a measure of agreement on the outstanding displays was reached which in the event accorded closely with the final decisions.

Our own Banbury Historical Society, as readers will know, was mounting an exhibit of the history of Banbury and Shutford Plush, and the booklet to accompany this was distributed to members before the exhibition. This will already have given a good idea of the range of display and of the very hard work put in by Christine Bloxham and her fellow sub-committee members, Dr Asser, Mrs Nan Clifton, Nick Griffiths, and Mrs Vera Hodgkins. We were fortunate in having several who were already experienced in display techniques, which allied with the many exhibits loaned by Mrs Hodgkins (whose father was the last plush manufacturer and weaver at Shutford) enabled us to put on an impressive exhibit. Its excellence was recognized by the judges, and we were delighted to be awarded Third Prize in the whole exhibition, a prize of One Hundred Pounds. In awarding this the judges commented particularly on the booklet, which was considerably more ambitious than anything attempted by other societies. Although it will not be possible to mount the display (as hoped) in Banbury, it is expected that part will be on view at Broughton Castle in due course.

But our Society was by no means the only local display. The first prize (£200) went to the other end of the county, a magnificent "reconstruction" of Wallingford Castle by Wallingford and District Historical and Archaeological Society, but the second (£150) was nearer home, to the Tackley Local History Group, with a wonderfully emotive display on pauper emigration from that village to Tasmania in 1845 with its tragic aftermath of shipwreck and death of all the emigrants in the Bass Strait.

From Banburyshire proper three groups mounted displays. These were the Hanwell Village Research Group, the Hook Norton Evening Centre and the Swalcliffe Parish History Group. It is hoped that we will be able to publish accounts of the work that went into the preparation of each of these in due course. Suffice to say that each was excellent in its different way. The Swalcliffe exhibit illustrated Swalcliffe National School, complete with desk and blackboard, Hook Norton showed various themes worked on by the group - archaeology and field-walking, land use and ownership, the household of a 17th century baker as shown by his probate inventory (with superb illustrations of each room, which we hope to publish eventually) - and Hanwell, effectively the work of just three people, a delightfully and intentionally cluttered "cottage room" of photos and other "living memory" mementoes. Hook Norton won the special prize for the best presentation of an exhibit, but in truth both Swalcliffe and Hanwell, and for that matter

every other exhibit, deserved a prize too. The "prize" that all exhibitors did receive to the full was the tremendous satisfaction of working on and preparing their display, being present for much of the public open hours, and meeting the many other exhibitors from all over the county. It was a truly memorable event and a fitting climax for the activities of the O.R.C.C. Local History Committee. This has now been replaced by an independent Oxfordshire Local History Association, to which the Banbury Historical Society amongst many other groups already belongs, and which is open to individuals at an annual subscription of £3.00. The Hon. Treasurer is Mrs M. Hewitt, Chestnut Cottage, Church Lane, Adderbury, Banbury OX17 3LR, and members will receive a quarterly newsletter and an annual journal, as well as being able to attend meetings organised by the Association.

J.S.W. Gibson

The prize-giving at the Oxfordshire Local History Exhibition on 20th April was preceded by a speech of wide-ranging content by the Chairman of the Judges, David Vaisey.

In awarding the special prize for the best presentation of an exhibit to the Hook Norton Evening Centre for its 'Parish Survey of Hook Norton Village' he said:

"Here the judges had great difficulty, but taking into account an ability to present complicated matters in a visually simple way and the use of graphics to heighten interest, we have awarded this prize (as above)."

The third prize in the whole competition was awarded to the Banbury Historical Society, for

"an exhibit for which a publicly-available booklet was produced and which successfully combined artifact, document, and personal memory in a theme with colour and original material content."

BOOK REVIEWS

Over the Hills to Glory : Radicalism in Banburyshire, 1832-1945, by J.R. Hodgkins (1979). Published by Clifton Press. £5.99.

Banbury has been fortunate indeed in the attention paid to it in the works of historians and contemporary observers. This has transcended the purely local account of happenings in the town and its rural hinterland and has given Banbury a wider importance. For Alan Everitt, (The Banburys of England, **Urban History Yearbook** (1974), it is an archetypal example of the ancient market town of England, a quintessential instance of his 'primary town' in its size, form, function and historical development up to the present day. The character of the town has encouraged its choice as the subject of major local studies which have made substantial contributions to their respective disciplines, notably in the work of Margaret Stacey,

Colin Bell et al, **Tradition and Change** (1960) and **Power, Persistence and Change** (1975), and Michael Mann, **Workers on the Move** (1973), a study of the relocation of General Foods to Banbury and its reaction with the local community. In addition Banburyshire can offer the thorough, but firmly locally orientated history of men like Potts and Beesley, and the powerful individual evocations of Flora Thompson, Mabel Ashby or George Herbert. Where in this encouraging historical spectrum does John Hodgkins' book belong?

This book tackles a major historical theme, radicalism and the labour movement 1832-1945, using the evidence of Banburyshire. One hopes that, because of the interesting wider potential illustrated by Everett and others, and because of the overwhelmingly urban, as opposed to rural, emphasis of so much existing labour history, one might have in this volume a general contribution to labour history filling these gaps. Mr. Hodgkins' book does not offer such an approach. Rather he starts firmly with what local evidence he can find and sticks to that, with occasional, somewhat spasmodic, excursions into national events. There is no feeling of the general relationship between what was happening in Banbury and more widely, with the result that it is difficult to draw any general conclusions, for example, about the relationship between Banbury's trade unionism and political radicalism, although this clearly played a key part throughout the events covered in the book. Rather there are references to outside happenings when they are brought to bear in the most direct way, as when the London Dockers, following their famous strike of 1889, came proselytizing local agricultural labourers in favour of the General Workers Union. This was part of a major change of pace in the labour movement in the 1880's as the great armies of the unskilled began to come within union organisation for the first time. It would be nice to add some muscles to the bare bones of events in order to convey the dynamics of what was happening locally and further afield. Similarly, the importance of co-operation to Banbury radicals in the 1850's and 1860's may not be fully appreciated from the figures of their shop profits, unless one hears something of the wider political credo of working class production, as well as shop retailing, which it was argued was to lead to direct ownership and social change.

However, if Mr. Hodgkins' book disappoints on this level, it remains as a most welcome addition to purely local studies of Banbury's past. 1832-1945 is a long period and the author deals relatively fleetingly with the earlier years. The interesting sources for these are already known through the work of Brian Harrison and Barrie Trinder (e.g. **Drink and Sobriety in an Early Victorian Country Town**), and some are extensively used by the Open University in their teaching material (further evidence of Banbury's general interest). It is in dealing with more recent years, specially those between the wars, that Mr. Hodgkins' book comes into its own. It is all too easy to dismiss these as too recent to be of

interest. This neglects the fact that the community is constantly changing. As Mr. Hodgkins shows, the coming of Alcan to Banbury in the 1930's, and the strike there of 1936, radically altered the life of the town and, in particular, of its labour movement. Also we have in the memoirs of those who lived through those times, and in contemporary buildings, leaflets, posters, notebooks, an immediate record of the past, lost for most of the town's history and constantly shrinking. This book, with its quotes from participants, should bring home the need to talk to, and record as much as we can, of what older people have to tell us. Indeed the biographies of Banbury radicals are one of the most fascinating features of the book, confirming once again the paradoxical characters of so many labour pioneers. Herbert Payne, a founder of the local ILP, sums up this radicalism coupled with conservative respectability - a Congregational lay preacher, a tradesman on his own account, a teetotaler yet an ardent socialist, Banbury's first Labour councillor, nicknamed the 'Cow Fayre Roarer' and a conscientious objector, imprisoned during the 1st World War.

Unfortunately, the reader will not immediately be able to find references to Herbert Payne or to other characters in whom they are interested. The book has no index, full references or bibliography. Sadly this detracts from its use as a catalogue of all the known information on its subject. As we have said, evidence may be dwindling, so it is very valuable to know exactly where specific information quoted is lodged for future reference and preservation. This should be recorded.

In conclusion then, Mr. Hodgkins offers a welcome addition to Banbury's local history, but it is not so useful as it might have been. This style of history tells us much about the formal, institutional, dateable events of the labour movement, but leaves a lot unsaid. For example, what interesting conclusions may be drawn about the high proportion of incomers dominating Banburyshire's labour leadership? Are these identifiable with the large part played by the railwaymen's union, and later by workers coming to Alcan? Finally, what of the agricultural labourers? Here are the ever-present, indigenous working class of the area. We hear relatively little of them. Why? What was their role by 1945? As always more questions remain to be answered.

Kate Tiller

ANNUAL REPORT 1979

Your Committee have pleasure in submitting the 22nd Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year 1979.

The officers of the Society continued unchanged throughout the year. However, after two years' Chairmanship Alan Donaldson relinquished this and Jeremy Gibson (after 22 years serving in other capacities on the Committee) was elected to succeed him. David Smith and Julian Barbour left the Committee - we are grateful to both for their work, both officially as Secretary and Editor respectively, and variously in the organisation of visits and carriage of chairs to meetings; and we are glad to continue to receive much help in the production of "Cake & Cockhorse" from Julian. Nick Griffiths was a welcome addition to the committee.

Membership has again remained constant. A gratifying feature has been the regular high turn-out for meetings, aided in the 1979/80 season by mild weather. Attendance of 50 or more is normal, filling the usual meeting room at the Methodist Church to capacity. On several occasions it has been necessary to overflow into the adjacent badminton hall, and on the occasion of Christine Bloxham's talk on "Flora Thompson's Oxfordshire" we were kindly allowed to use the church itself to accommodate our 'congregation' of over 150.

Other well-attended talks, most of them illustrated, were given by Mrs Dorothy Grimes, on "Oxfordshire Dialect"; Eric and Margaret Eustace, on "Discovering Village Chapels"; John Steane, of the City and County Museum, on "Mediaeval Brickwork of Oxfordshire"; Bill Simpson, on "Local Railways", particularly the Banbury and Buckingham line; Nick Griffiths, of the Ashmolean, on "The Roman Army, a Soldier's letters home"; and, to conclude the "Banbury" season, that ever-popular documentary film, "Twenty-four Square Miles", showing work, play and social conditions in the villages between Banbury and Chipping Norton at the end of the 2nd World War. The suggestion was made that a fresh survey, 25 years later, be made, and anyone who would be interested in helping with research into present-day land use, occupations, and the life of the villages now, preparatory to any filming considerations, is asked to let Jeremy Gibson know.

During the summer visits to several churches, including Epwell and Shutford, were arranged, with Geoff Lawson as usual to explain the architecture. A day trip to the caves at West Wycombe, and on to Stonor Park was thoroughly enjoyed by a large party.

For the A.G.M. we made a welcome return to Wykham Park, Tudor Hall School, by kind invitation of Mrs Blythe, when Mrs Snowden told us something of the history of the house. But the high spot of the year undoubtedly was the Annual Dinner at Woadmill Farm, Broughton, home of David Fiennes. The "Great Hall", newly created from a barn, was filled to capacity by members and guests, who during an excellent meal were entertained appropriately from the minstrels gallery. The evening was

concluded by the guest-of-honour, Leslie Wood, an inspired choice for after-dinner-speaker.

Under David Fiennes' continuing editorship of "Cake & Cockhorse", contributors included (in addition to members of the committee) Barbara Adkins, Dorothy Grimes, Colin G. Harris, Charles S.H. Hawkes, Dr Pamela Horn, Pamela Keegan, B. Keith Lucas, Sarah Markham, Kate Tiller, and Barrie Trinder.

The accounts for 1979 again show an encouraging surplus, though in fact ordinary subscription income, at £655, falls by almost £100 to cover the £600 cost of printing and distributing the magazine together with £150 cost of meetings and other administration of the Society. The short-fall is more than made up by refunds on income tax from covenants and bank interest on our present healthy balance. The latter is entirely due to the accumulation of funds for delayed records publications, and the production of these will quickly wipe out this helpful "cushion". As it is, production costs of the magazine have risen and will continue to do so, although some saving was made on some issues by the usual few over-worked officers undertaking the collation and stapling normally done by the printers. Somehow less was spent on postage, but this item is sure to rise steeply in 1980. For the first time ever a profit was made on the Annual Dinner, and although this event is not designed to exploit attenders, it certainly helps if a loss is avoided. The greatly increased cost of petrol makes it more than ever necessary to recompense speakers adequately for travelling to Banbury, so this too is likely to increase.

Once again conflicting demands on the records series editor prevented the issue of new publications, but an unexpected volume, an index to Northamptonshire Probate Administrations in the 18th century (published jointly with the British Record Society) should be issued to members by the A.G.M., and it is hoped to publish other volumes too this year. A grant of £250 towards the Banbury Burial Register, 1723-1812 has been received, which with subscriptions and sales, boosted the publications reserve by £820. Finally, a financially successful year was helped by generous donations of over £100. Once again, we are most grateful to our Hon. Auditor, Geoffrey Ellacott.

Although not within the year under review, it would be inappropriate not to mention the exhibition of Banbury and Shutford Plush mounted for the County Local History Exhibition and Competition at Oxford Town Hall in April 1980. A tremendous amount of work was done for this by Christine Bloxham and her committee of helpers, Dr. E. Asser, Mrs Nan Clifton, Mrs Vera Hodgkins, and Nick Griffiths. A booklet of the same title has been produced and sent to all members. This contained a reprint of Mrs Hodgkins' article on Shutford plush (originally in the magazine), an article by Jeremy Gibson embodying entirely new findings on Banbury shag and plush in the 18th century, and Christine Bloxham's catalogue for the exhibition. Illustrations came from her Majesty the Queen

and from the Victoria and Albert Museum as well as the City and County Museum, to make perhaps the Society's most attractive publication to date. The exhibit won third prize in the competition, with a cheque for £100.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Revenue Account for the Year ended 31st December 1979

1978	Expenditure	1978	Income	
478	"Cake and Cockhorse"	537	1109	Subscriptions 1,055
<u>49</u>	Less: Sales	<u>26</u>	511	Less: Attributable to
429			495	Records <u>400</u>
				655
2	Subscriptions	6		
161	Lecture and Meeting	38		Deposit Account Interest 147
	Expenses, printing,			
	stationery, telephone	58		Income Tax Refunds on
	and sundries	148		Covenants 58
108	Postage	92		
10	Excess of Ordinary Income	-		Annual Dinner Receipts
	over Expenditure	<u>160</u>		Less Expenses <u>57</u>
<u>710</u>		<u>917</u>	<u>710</u>	917
	Extra-ordinary expenditure			Extra-ordinary income
18	Repairs to typewriter	-	44	Coach Trip 65
			2	<u>42</u> Less Expenses <u>62</u> 3
60	Cheese and Wine Party	-		
19	<u>41</u> Less Receipts	-	13	Donations 103
	Excess of extraordinary income	<u>106</u>	<u>22</u>	Excess of extraordinary
	over expenditure	<u>1,023</u>	<u>747</u>	expenditure over income
<u>747</u>				<u>1,023</u>

Publications Account for the Year ended 31st December 1979

473	Baptisms and Bural			Publications reserve,
	Registers	-	878	balance at 1.1.79 1,311
33	Postage and packing	-	495	Subscriptions 400
			253	Sales 170
			1	Royalties 1
				Grants:
	Publications reserve,		250	British Academy 250
<u>1311</u>	balance at 31.12.79	<u>2,132</u>		
<u>1817</u>		<u>2,132</u>	<u>1817</u>	<u>2,132</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 1979

1978	Liabilities	1978	Assets	
81	Subscriptions in advance	21	411	Cash in current account 438
1311	Publications reserve	2,132		
			700	Cash in deposit account 1,700
	Capital account			
269	at 1.1.79	281		
	Add: Excess of Income			
<u>281</u>	over expenditure	<u>266</u>	<u>15</u>	
<u>1111</u>		<u>2,138</u>	<u>1111</u>	<u>2,138</u>

We have prepared the above accounts from the books, records and explanations of the Society, and certify them to be in accordance therewith.

31st March 1980

ELLACOTT, STRANKS & CO.,
Chartered Accountants.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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**, **Banbury Castle - a summary of excavations in 1972**, **The Building and Furnishing of St Mary's Church, Banbury**, and **Sanderson Miller of Radway and his work at Wroxton**, and a pamphlet **History of Banbury Cross**.

The Society has also published fifteen records volumes to date. These have included **Banbury Parish Registers** (in six parts: Marriages 1558-1837, Baptisms 1558-1812, Burials 1558-1723); **Banbury Corporation Records: Tudor and Stuart**; **Banbury Wills and Inventories 1621-1650**; **A Victorian M. P. and his Constituents: The Correspondence of H. W. Tancred 1841-1860**; **South Newington Churchwardens' Accounts 1553-1684**; **Wigginton Constables' Books 1691-1836**; and **Bodicote Parish Accounts 1700-1822**. Volumes in preparation include **Banbury Wills and Inventories 1591-1620 and 1661-1723**; **Banbury Burial Register 1723-1812** and **Baptisms and Burials 1812-1837**; and an edition of letters to the 1st Earl of Guilford (of Wroxton, father of Lord North the Prime Minister).

Meetings are held during the autumn and winter, normally at 7.30 pm. 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 £4.50 including any records volumes published, or £3.00 if these are excluded.

Application forms can be obtained from the Hon. Membership Secretary.

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