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BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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publications can be found on the inside back cover

CAKE & COCKHORSE

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Much study of history is statistics. To such studies Pamela Horn's article on the census of 1811 will usefully contribute. But this magazine knows of no one who has calculated the chances of the wife of an eighty-year-old earl bearing legitimate children by him.

The Countess of Banbury had nothing to connect her with Banbury but her name. Puritan Banbury, if it knew of her, certainly disapproved. But she was the eternal woman to whom the dramatist in all of us will respond. Geoffrey Parmiter has after three centuries brought her and her sons (who have been judged not to have been the earl's) into vibrant life.

Don't forget the dinner at Broughton Castle on October 24. You will not see your editor there as he will be in far parts. But your President and Committee will welcome you with wine and song.

The cover illustration is an advertisement from Morland's Guide to Banbury and District published early this century.

THE COUNTESS OF BANBURY AND HER SONS

The lady who became the Countess of Banbury was born in the summer of 1586. She was Elizabeth Howard, daughter of Thomas Howard by his second wife Katharine, the eldest daughter of Sir Henry Knyvett. Thomas Howard, the second son of the fourth duke of Norfolk, was created Baron Howard de Walden in 1597, and in 1603, soon after the death of Queen Elizabeth I, he was elevated by James I to the earldom of Suffolk.¹

Late in 1605 or early 1606, when she was about nineteen years of age, Elizabeth Howard married, as his second wife, William Knollys, who was then aged about fifty-eight. Knollys was the eldest surviving son of Sir Francis Knollys who was closely associated with the Puritan group that supported the vicar of Banbury, Thomas Bracebridge, in 1590. William Knollys sat frequently in parliament, and accompanied Leicester on his expedition to the Low Countries in 1586 when he was knighted. Ten years later he was sworn a member of the Privy Council and appointed treasurer of the royal household; and in the same year he inherited from his father, who died on 19 July 1596, the family estates which included the manor of Rotherfield Greys in Oxfordshire and other property elsewhere. On 13 May 1603 he was created Baron Knollys of Greys in the county of Oxford,² and when, in 1608, Banbury received its second charter Knollys, then Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire and Berkshire, was named as chief steward of the borough.³ On 17 November 1616 he was created Viscount Wallingford and on 18 August 1626 Earl of Banbury.⁴

Knollys's first wife, Dorothy Braye, was the widow of Baron Chandos; as Lord Chandos died on 11 September 1573 the marriage must have taken place after that date. Dorothy Knollys died on 31 October 1605 and was buried at Rotherfield Greys; some two months later Knollys married Elizabeth Howard.⁵ Knollys had no children by his first wife, but Elizabeth Howard, some time before 1610, bore him a daughter who died in infancy, and she was also the mother of two sons, born respectively in 1627 and 1631, whose paternity has been the subject of much dispute.⁶

When Knollys was created Earl of Banbury on 18 August 1626 the patent of creation recited, not altogether truthfully, that the king, Charles I, had intended to raise him to the dignity of an earl at his coronation and to have placed him first of the earls then created; but in consequence of his illness the king had resolved to await a more convenient time. The patent therefore granted to Knollys and the heirs male of his body the title and dignity of Earl of Banbury, with precedence next after the Earl of Westmorland and next before the Earl of Manchester notwithstanding any other patent before made to the contrary. At the time of his creation the new earl was childless, but on 10 April 1627 his second wife gave birth to a son at Rotherfield Greys where the earl was then residing.

Parliament met, for the first time after Lord Banbury's creation, on 17 December 1628, and in the list of peers his name occurs between

those of the Earl of Westmorland and the Earl of Berkshire; he was not, however, present on that day. On 22 March there was a call of the House and the journals recorded that "the Earl of Banbury hath leave to be absent, and will send his proxy". On the same day the House was moved "to take into their consideration whether the precedency granted to the Earl of Banbury, before some other of ancienter creation,⁷ were not prejudicial to the rights and inheritance of the Peers of this Kingdom", and the matter was referred to the Committee for Privileges. The Committee found that the law was clear, "that all lords are to be placed and ranked according to the antiquities of their creations", and that the precedence granted to the Earl of Banbury was contrary to the provisions of the statute 31 Henry VIII, c. 10, governing precedence in the House of Lords. While the Committee was still considering the matter the king sent a message to the House in which he explained how the matter had come about. The message stated that the king, "having resolved to confer that dignity on that noble gentleman [Knollys] at the same time with the other[s] then advanced, he, being the first in quality of them, was consequently to have had the first creation; but, being at that time casually forgotten, and his Majesty afterwards remembered of him, he did but assign that rank which at first was intended". The message assured the House that it was never the king's intention to make any innovation, and desired that "this may pass for once in this particular, considering how old a man this Lord is, and childless". After further proceedings in the House during which those lords over whom Banbury had been advanced signified that they were content that he should have the precedence for his life, the House resolved, on 10 April 1628, that although "the Act of Parliament 31 Henry VIII is most strong and plain for the settling of precedency of the Peers, according to their ancienty and time of creation", they were content that "the said Earl [of Banbury] may hold the same place as he now stands entered for his life only, and that place of precedency not to go to his heirs". He took his seat in the House on 15 April 1628.⁸

The point of precedence could scarcely have been of much moment to the Earl of Banbury who was then about eighty-two years of age, and it seems probable that the king insisted upon the point in order to support the royal prerogative. The importance of the matter resides in the statement in the king's message to the House of Lords that the Earl of Banbury was childless. Doubtless it was not known at Court that the countess had given birth to a male child some ten or eleven months before the royal message, but the statement, coming from such a source, was one of the difficulties in the way of the succession of the countess's children to the Earldom of Banbury. However that may be, the earl, on 3 November 1629, executed an indenture between himself and his wife of the one part, and Henry Earl of Holland and Edward Lord Vaux of the other part, by which he agreed to settle his manor of Caversham on his wife. The indenture was executed "in consideration of the love and affection which he [the Earl of Banbury]

bearth unto the said Lady Elizabeth his wife, having been always unto him a good and loving wife".⁹ A little over a year later the countess gave birth to another son, Nicholas, who was born on 3 January 1631 at the house of Lord Vaux, Harrowden Hall in Northamptonshire.¹⁰

The earl died on 25 May 1632 when he was about eighty-five or eighty-six years of age; according to a physician, Robert Lloyd, who was present at his death, he died at the house of Dr. Grant, in Paternoster Row in London, whom he had consulted during his last illness.¹¹ Less than five weeks later the widowed countess married Edward, fourth Baron Vaux of Harrowden, then aged forty-four.¹²

It was, perhaps, inevitable that the circumstances of the births of the two sons of the countess should raise doubts about their paternity. The boys were born when the earl was over eighty years of age¹³ and after a lapse of over twenty years during which the countess had remained barren (if the birth of a child in 1610 be ignored, as it seems to have been). Moreover the younger boy was born, not at the earl's house, but at that of Lord Vaux whom his mother married so precipitately after the earl's death. Some significance, it seems, was also given to the fact that the elder boy's christian name, Edward, was the same as that of Lord Vaux; it was, however, also the name of the countess's brother. That was not all. It was known that in 1605 Lord Vaux had been on the point of marrying Elizabeth Howard, shortly before she married William Knollys. Indeed, if Vaux's mother can be believed, it was only the Gunpowder Plot that prevented his journey to London to become formally engaged to her; if that be so, the lady suffered a very sudden change of heart.¹⁴ And in March 1630 Vaux was still visiting her, if no more.¹⁵

Such doubts were strengthened by the events which followed the earl's death. He had made his will on 19 May 1630 and by it he left all his property, save for a few personal legacies, to his wife whom he appointed his sole executor. The will, however, made no mention of any children although at the date of the will the elder boy, Edward, was just over three years old. An inquisition post mortem was held at Burford in Oxfordshire on 11 April 1638 when the jury found, among other things, that the earl died at Caversham, one of his manors, without heirs male of his body, and that his next heirs were his two nieces, daughters of his brother Henry.¹⁶ Although those findings were almost certainly wrong, they supported the suspicion that the countess's sons were not the sons of the earl.

On 9 February 1641 the countess's elder son, Edward, then nearly fourteen years old, filed a bill in Chancery for the perpetuation of testimony and for the discovery of deeds and writings; in that bill he was described as "Edward Earl of Banbury an infant [suing] by William Earl of Salisbury, his prochein amy and guardian".¹⁷ Five witnesses gave evidence as to the births of the two boys and as a result, it seems, of their testimony, the Court of Wards made an order on 26 February 1641 requiring a further inquisition post mortem to be held. Pursuant to that order the escheator

for Berkshire, Robert Cooper, held an inquisition at Abingdon on 1 April 1641 when the jury found, apart from the property of which the earl died seized, that the earl died in London on 25 May 1632 and that Edward, now Earl of Banbury, was at the time of the earl's death, his son and next heir; and that Edward was, at the death of his father, five years, one month and fifteen days old. Those findings flatly contradicted the findings of the earlier inquisition. In the second inquisition the place of the earl's death agrees with the evidence given by Dr. Robert Lloyd in the Chancery suit, and although the earlier inquisition found that the earl's nieces were his heirs, neither of them inherited any of the earl's heritable property whereas Edward did so inherit.

The countess's second husband, Lord Vaux, was the head of a notoriously recusant Catholic family; his grandfather, whom he succeeded, had spent some years in prison for harbouring the Jesuit priest, Edmund Campion, and by 1594, shortly before his death, had incurred recusancy fines amounting to £1,420 for the recovery of which most of his lands in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire had been seized.¹⁸ Moreover, several members of the Vaux family were connected in various ways with the Gunpowder Plot, in particular Anne Vaux, third daughter of the third baron, who, under the name of Mrs. Perkins, sheltered the Jesuit, Henry Garnet, and her houses at Wandsworth and Enfield were frequented by the plotters. Lord Vaux's own house at Harrowden was searched in November 1605.¹⁹ Some years later he was imprisoned as "a recusant convict" and in July 1626 he was released for six months on the orders of the Privy Council.²⁰

By 1641 the countess herself appears to have been regarded by parliament as a dangerous recusant. In June of that year she and her youngest son obtained a licence to travel abroad and to take with them twelve servants, £200 in money, and such carriages as she needed.²¹ On 20 January 1642 the House of Commons ordered four justices of the peace to search the house in Northamptonshire of Lord Vaux who was then abroad, "and such other suspected places, for recusancy, as they shall think fit, in that county, for arms." Six months later, in June, the countess again obtained leave to go abroad, apparently to France, and to take with her six coach-horses and three nags.²²

Parliament was becoming increasingly concerned about the activities of the countess and her visits to the continent, and on 16 March 1643 the House of Commons sought a conference with the Lords to discuss what a committee had reported to them "concerning the Countess of Banbury; and to desire, that in regard it is informed, that she is a recusant and one that entertains intelligence, that she may be confined to her house." On 12 July the House of Commons resolved "that the Countess of Banbury, a professed Papist, shall be secured: and that the Lords concurrence be desired therein." In the following month, on 14 August, the House appointed three of its members to open some trunks which were in the

house of a certain Mr. Trenchard. The House suspected that the trunks belonged to the countess and had been sent to Mr. Trenchard's house by the Earl of Bedford; the House ordered the three members to send the trunks to Guildhall if they found that they belonged to the countess, but if they were the property of the Earl of Bedford they were to secure them where they were. It turned out, however, that the owner of the trunks was the countess's brother, Edward, and on 18 August the House ordered that they should be returned to him. On the same day the House of Commons resolved to request the Lords to join with them to order the immediate removal of the Countess of Banbury from London, or that otherwise her person might be secured.²³

A conference took place on the following day, and as a result it was ordered that the countess should have the Speaker's warrant to go to France with twelve servants and her necessary apparel, and that she should have "a coach and six horses and ten saddle horses to pass to the sea-side, and to return to carry her Ladyship and her servants to the port where she embarks."²⁴ Despite her departure from England, parliamentary distrust of the lady continued and on 13 June 1644 the House of Commons ordered that "notice be given to the several ports, that, if the Countess of Banbury shall come into any of the ports, that they seize her, and keep her under restraint, until the House shall take further order."²⁵

Meanwhile her elder son Edward, who had assumed the title of Earl of Banbury, was travelling abroad, but he died while still a minor; he was killed in a quarrel on the road between Calais and Gravelines in or before June 1645, and was buried at Calais.²⁶ His younger brother Nicholas, then aged about fifteen, immediately assumed the title of Earl of Banbury, and he was so described in a deed dated 19 October 1646 by which his step-father, Lord Vaux, settled the manor of Harrowden and other property in Northamptonshire, on the countess for life, with remainder to her son Nicholas: the relevant passage is, "the Right honourable Nicholas now Earl of Banbury son of the said Countess of Banbury heretofore called Nicholas Vaux, or by whichsoever of the said names or descriptions or any other name or description the said Nicholas be or hath been called reputed or known".²⁷ That description is of interest, because the fact that Nicholas was known as Nicholas Vaux seemed to confirm the suspicion that he was not the son of the Earl of Banbury. On the other hand, it could be said that the proceedings in Chancery in February 1641 and the inquisition in the following April had established the legitimacy of the children of the countess, a contention that was supported by the fact that during the period of almost twenty years that had elapsed since the adverse finding of the inquisition of 1633, her sons had successively borne the title of Earl of Banbury without any question being raised. Nevertheless, the suspicions continued, and in the elaborate pedigree of the family of Knollys drawn out by Peter Le Neve, Norroy King of Arms, about 1693, he noticed the rumour that the natural father of the two sons of the countess was Lord

Vaux.²⁸ By that time, however, the countess was dead; she died on 17 April 1658, aged seventy-three, and was buried at Dorking in Surrey.

The title assumed by Nicholas was questioned for the first time in the Convention Parliament of 1660. Since Charles II had not then been restored to the throne, writs of summons to the parliament could not be issued by the crown. Nine peers met, however, and appointed the Earl of Manchester to be Speaker of the House pro tempore, and then nominated a committee to determine which lords should receive letters requesting their attendance. The committee reported the names of those peers to whom letters should be sent, and a draft of the letter from Lord Manchester, as Speaker, was entered in the journals of the House. It is not clear whether Nicholas received a letter from Lord Manchester, but it is certain that he took his seat in the House on or before 4 June 1660 and was present on 15 June.²⁹

Parliament had assembled on 25 April 1660 but Nicholas's right to sit in the Lords was not questioned until some twelve weeks later. On 13 July the House resolved "that there being a person that now sits in this House as a Peer, viz. the Earl of Banbury, it is ordered that this business shall be heard at the bar by counsel on Monday come se'ennight [23 July]". On that day he was present in the House and was appointed a member of a committee on a private bill, but no proceedings relating to his peerage took place. He was present on the three following days, and he was again appointed to a committee; he was in his place on twelve days in July and attended the House frequently until the session ended on 13 September; when the next session began on 6 November he was again in regular attendance until the 21st of that month when he obtained leave to be absent from the House. The Convention Parliament was dissolved on 29 December without having investigated the earl's title, but the leave of absence granted to him appears to be a tacit admission that he had a right to be present.³⁰

The next parliament, which came to be known as the Long Parliament, was summoned on 18 February 1661 and assembled on 8 May, but no writ issued to the Earl of Banbury. Nicholas therefore presented a petition to the king in which he styled himself Earl of Banbury. The petition, after reciting the various titles bestowed on the late earl, the marriage of the late earl to Elizabeth Howard and the birth of her children, stated that Nicholas had sat in the last parliament as Earl of Banbury and had exercised all the privileges accorded to other earls there. The petition concluded with a prayer that a writ of summons might issue to him as Earl of Banbury, and that he might "enjoy all the precedency and privilege thereunto belonging granted by the letters patent of that dignity."³¹

The inclusion in the petition of a claim to the precedence granted to the late earl was, as matters turned out, a serious error of judgment. In 1628 the House of Lords had grudgingly acceded to the king's request for precedence for the newly created earl, but had insisted that it should be accorded only during his life and should not go to his heirs. That a

claim to that precedence should now be made by a man claiming to be the heir of the first Earl of Banbury naturally excited the jealousy and antagonism of every earl whose patent of creation was dated between 5 February and 18 August 1626, namely the earls of Berkshire, Cleveland, Monmouth, Danby, Manchester, Mulgrave, Marlborough and Totnes, and holders of all those earldoms save Danby and Totnes were living in 1661. It seems clear that what excited the hostility of a large body of peers towards Nicholas was his insistence on being granted the precedence accorded to the first earl, to which the House had agreed on the express condition that it should be for the life of the first earl only.

The petition was referred by the king to the House of Lords where it was read on 6 June 1661 and referred to the Committee for Privileges. The Committee met on 10 June and on various days thereafter, and heard counsel and witnesses on behalf of Nicholas, and the submissions of the attorney-general. The law as it then stood was enshrined in the maxim *Pater est quem nuptiae demonstrant*, that is, if a child be born in lawful wedlock the law would presume that his father was the husband of his mother. On that basis, Nicholas was the legitimate son of the first Earl of Banbury, and the Committee resolved to report to the House "the matter of fact" that "according to the law of the land he is legitimate". Probably because it was thought that that phraseology drew a distinction between "legitimacy in law" and "legitimacy in fact", as if there were two kinds of legitimacy, the report was altered before it was presented to the House, and on 1 July 1661 the Committee reported their conclusion to be "that Nicholas Earl of Banbury is a legitimate person."³²

The House of Lords refused to adopt the report and proceeded, on 9 and 10 July, itself to investigate the matter. Counsel were heard for and against the claim, and "after long debate" the House once more referred the matter to the Committee for Privileges which was ordered to meet on 15 July. After meeting again the Committee reached the opinion that "the Earl of Banbury is, in the eye of the Law, son of the late William Earl of Banbury", and therefore they thought that the king should be advised by the House to issue a writ of summons to him; as to the point of precedence, the Committee was of opinion that he should have precedence from the date of his patent.³³

That report of the Committee was presented to the House by the Earl of Northampton on 19 July, and it was ordered to be taken into consideration on the following Monday. The matter was not then considered but on 28 November the House resolved to postpone debate on the report until 9 December. On that day a bill "declaring Nicholas, called Earl of Banbury to be illegitimate" was read a first time but, presumably because of the injustice of such a course, the bill was abandoned.³⁴

Thus the matter rested for some years, but under the date 26 October 1669 the following entry appears in the journals of the House of Lords: "Upon the calling of the House of Peers this day, the House taking

notice that the Earl of Banburie's name is not in the list by which the Lords are called: it is ordered that it be referred to the Committee for Privileges, to examine why the said Earl of Banburye's name is left out of the said list, he having formerly sat as a Peer in this House; and to peruse all former proceedings in this House concerning him, and to make report thereof unto the House." The report of the Committee was made to the House on 25 November 1669 by the Earl of Essex; after reciting the previous proceedings in the House concerning the Earl and the evidence given by Garter King of Arms, it concluded by stating that "they leave the business to the consideration of the House."³⁵

Following that unsatisfactory outcome, Nicholas presented a petition on 23 February 1670 to the House of Lords in which he stated "that he had the honour to be a Peer of this Realm by descent, and is legally entitled by right of inheritance to the dignity and honour of Earl of Banbury", and he prayed that he might receive his writ of summons. After the petition had been read, the House ordered that it be referred to the Committee for Privileges, but no further proceedings had taken place when Nicholas died less than four years afterwards; he died on 14 March 1674 and was buried at Boughton in Northamptonshire.³⁶ The parish register recorded the event as follows: "The Right honourable Nicholas Earl of Banbury departed this life March the 14th, about eleven or twelve o'clock in the night, 1673-4."³⁷

The two sons of the Countess of Banbury died without having established their right to bear her husband's title. The claim was not, however, abandoned by their descendants, but as their attempts to regain the title are outside the scope of this article they can be only briefly noticed here. Nicholas's son and heir, Charles, soon after attaining his majority, petitioned the House of Lords for a writ of summons, but he had no more success than his father.³⁸ So matters stood for some years until the claim was again made in unusual circumstances. Charles killed his brother-in-law, Captain Philip Lawson, in a duel and was indicted for murder on 7 December 1692; the indictment charged him in the name of "Charles Knollys, esq." Charles thereupon presented a petition to the House of Lords praying that, as Earl of Banbury, he might be tried by his peers. After counsel had been heard, it was proposed that the judges be consulted on the points of law in the case; that motion was rejected, but immediately afterwards the House resolved that Charles had no right to the Earldom of Banbury and his petition was dismissed.³⁹ Charles petitioned for his writ on three further occasions without success and no more was done in the matter for many years. In 1806 William Knollys renewed the claim and petitioned the crown for his writ of summons. The petition was referred to the attorney-general who made his report in January 1808. The House of Lords then referred the claim to the Committee for Privileges which, after considering the matter for five years, eventually reported to the House "that the Petitioner hath not made out his claim to

the Title, Dignity and Honour of Earl of Banbury." When the House considered the Committee's report it came to a conclusion that differed materially from the report; on 15 March 1813 it resolved "that the Petitioner is not entitled to the Title, Honour and Dignity of Earl of Banbury." Whereas the Committee merely reported that the petitioner had not discharged the burden of proof that lay upon him and so left the way open for a future claim, the House proceeded to a judgment on the claim and rejected it. Since then no further claim to the earldom has been made.⁴⁰

Geoffrey de C. Parmiter

NOTES

1. See G.E.C., **Complete Peerage**, i, 401; **D.N.B.**, s.v. Howard, Lord Thomas. The precise date of Elizabeth Howard's birth is not known; she was baptized at Saffron Walden on 11 Aug. 1586. Thomas Howard, who distinguished himself against the Spanish Armada, died on 28 May 1626. All dates hereafter are Old Style, but the year is taken to begin in 1 Jan. The relevant evidence relating to the Banbury peerage, given during the hearing of the last claim to the peerage in the early 19th cent., is printed among the House of Lords sessional papers as **Printed Evidence given before the Committee for Privileges in the Banbury Peerage Case**. The printed evidence [hereafter cited as **Printed Evidence**] is paginated continuously so that it could be bound into a single volume, but sections of it, as issued, are distributed among various volumes of **House of Lords Sessional Papers, 1801-1833**; see vols. 22 (1808), 31 (1809, 1810), 46B (1811) and 47 (1811).
2. See G.E.C., **Complete Peerage**, i, 400; **D.N.B.**
3. For the charter, see P.R.O., C. 66/1769. Alfred Beesley, in his **History of Banbury** (London, 1841) printed an abstract of the charter on pp.254-58. On p.255, apparently quoting the charter, he stated that the king appointed "our wellbeloved and trusty counsellor William Lord Knoles of Gray's Inn, & Treasurer of our Inn, the chief steward." That is obvious nonsense. Knollys was never a member of Gray's Inn (he was admitted to the Middle Temple on 26 Oct. 1565; see **Middle Temple Records**, i, 149), but he was Baron Knollys of Greys in the county of Oxford. The phrase "Treasurer of our Inn" is meaningless; Knollys was treasurer of the royal household. Unfortunately Beesley's errors have recently been repeated: in William Potts, **A History of Banbury**, 2nd ed., Banbury, 1978, p.172; and **Banbury Corporation Records: Tudor and Stuart**, Banbury Historical Society, vol.15, 1977, p.98.
4. G.E.C., **Complete Peerage**, i, 400; **D.N.B.**
5. The date of the marriage is unknown, but it was after 23 Dec. 1605 when Knollys executed a pre-nuptial settlement, for which see **Printed Evidence**, 6 et seq.

6. G.E.C., **Complete Peerage**, i, 401.
7. Banbury took precedence of the earls of Berkshire, Cleveland, Mulgrave, Danby, Tonnes, Monmouth, Marlborough and Manchester.
8. Lords Journals, iii, 686, 696, 703, 705, 708, 715, 732, 734, 739.
9. **Printed Evidence**, 12 et seq. For Lord Holland (Henry Rich, first Baron Kensington and first Earl of Holland) see **D.N.B.** s.v. Rich, Sir Henry. For the Vaux family, see G. Anstruther, **Vaux of Harrowden. A Recusant Family**, Newport, Mon., 1953.
10. G.E.C., **Complete Peerage**, i, 402.
11. See the evidence of Robert Lloyd, sworn in a Chancery suit to perpetuate testimony (commenced on 9 Feb. 1641 by Edward, elder son of the countess). Five witnesses gave evidence, for which see **Printed Evidence**, 28, 103, 108.
12. The date of the marriage is uncertain but she is described as the wife of Edward, 4th Lord Vaux of Harrowden in an indenture dated 2 July 1632, made between herself and Lord Vaux of the one part and Edward Wilkinson and Christopher Wilton of the other part; see **Printed Evidence**, 251-55. Edward Vaux was the grandson of William, 3rd Baron Vaux, whom he succeeded in 1595.
13. At least one member of the earl's family remained vigorous in old age. In a letter from John Pory to Sir Thomas Puckering, dated London 23 Feb. 1632 (three months before the earl's death) the writer stated, "the Earle of Banbury aged four skore and six is sayd not to lye upon his death-bed; but I hear that his sister, my Lady of Leicester, being six years elder, can yet walke a mile in a morning." See H. Ellis, **Original Letters illustrative of English History**, 2nd ser., iii, 266, at p.268.
14. Anstruther, **Vaux of Harrowden**, 457.
15. See Countess of Banbury to Viscount Dorchester [Dudley Carleton], 23 March 1630 (P.R.O., S.P. 16/163/38): "My Lord Vaux will be here tomorrow"
16. The funeral certificate at the College of Arms stated that he died **sine prole**; see note 35.
17. For the Chancery suit, see note 11. William Earl of Salisbury was the uncle of Edward Knollys, having married Lady Katherine Howard, sister of the Countess of Banbury.
18. cf Catholic Record Society, vol.57, pp.xxxi, 1, 9, 88, 113.
19. **D.N.B.**, s.v. Vaux, Anne; P.R.O., Gunpowder Plot Book, no.92.
20. **Acts of the Privy Council**, 1626 June-Dec., 132 (25 July).

21. **Printed Evidence**, 25-28.
22. **Commons Journals**, ii, 387; **Lords Journals**, v, 156.
23. **Commons Journals**, iii, 4, 163, 204, 210.
24. **Commons Journals**, iii, 211-2.
25. **Commons Journals**, iii, 528. That was the last occasion on which the countess figured in the Journals.
26. G.E.C. **Complete Peerage**, i, 402.
27. For the dead, see **Printed Evidence**, 219-30.
28. The pedigree is in Br. Lib., Harl. MS 5808.
29. **Printed Evidence**, 37; **Lords Journals**, xi, 52, 64.
30. **Printed Evidence**, 37, 39, 41.
31. **Printed Evidence**, 43, 44.
32. **Lords Journals**, xi, 272, 301, 304, 305.
33. **Lords Journals**, xi, 315; **Printed Evidence**, 56, 60, 61.
34. **Lords Journals**, xi, 339, 346.
35. **Printed Evidence**, 65-7; **Lords Journals**, xii, 256, 274-5. Garter had produced to the Committee, from the records of the Herald's Office, a certificate made apparently by one of the Pursuivants of Arms, which stated that William Earl of Banbury had died on 25 May 1632 without issue. Garter also told the Committee that there were two sessions of parliament in 1640, in the proceedings of which the Earl of Banbury was not included in the list of peers; that, of course, was accounted for by the fact that Edward was then a minor.
36. **Printed Evidence**, 67-8; **Lords Journals**, xii, 293; G.E.C., **Complete Peerage**, i, 404.
37. **Printed Evidence**, 29.
38. **Printed Evidence**, 68-74.
39. **Printed Evidence**, 75-82. The indictment was removed by **certiorari** into the King's Bench and, after a long series of procedural applications, the prosecution lapsed.
40. A long, critical account of the claims made to the earldom of Banbury by successive members of the Knollys family is to be found in Sir Harris Nicolas, **A Treatise on the Law of Adulterine Bastardy, with a Report of the Banbury Case, and of all other cases bearing upon the subject**, London, 1836. pp.289-554. See also G.E.C., **Complete Peerage**, i, 400-08.

Gossip Column

There have been, says a correspondent, an immense number of bad, fatal fevers, lately, of which many have died in and about the metropolis: the Hon. Mr. Twisleton, son of the Lord Saye and Sele, had been violently attacked with an ulcerated sore throat, and putrid malignant fever; but was happily snatched from the jaws of death, by the medical skill of Dr. Rowley, of Harley-street. A son of Lord Hawke, who visited the above young gentleman has been likewise dangerously ill, but has recovered under the care of the above physician; and both the young gentlemen are now at Broughton, solemnising the happy marriage between the amiable and Hon. Miss Twisleton and Mr. Leigh, nephew to his Grace the Duke of Chandos.

Unidentified press cutting December 1786, in the Wyatt MSS at Broughton Castle.

[Dr. William Rowley (1742-1806) was a "man-midwife" on the staff of the Queen's Lying-in Hospital. He also had a considerable London practice in general and ophthalmic surgery at 66 Harley Street. He wrote many medical pamphlets and books. In the view of the DNB, "his books contain nothing of value, and many of them are mere advertisements."]

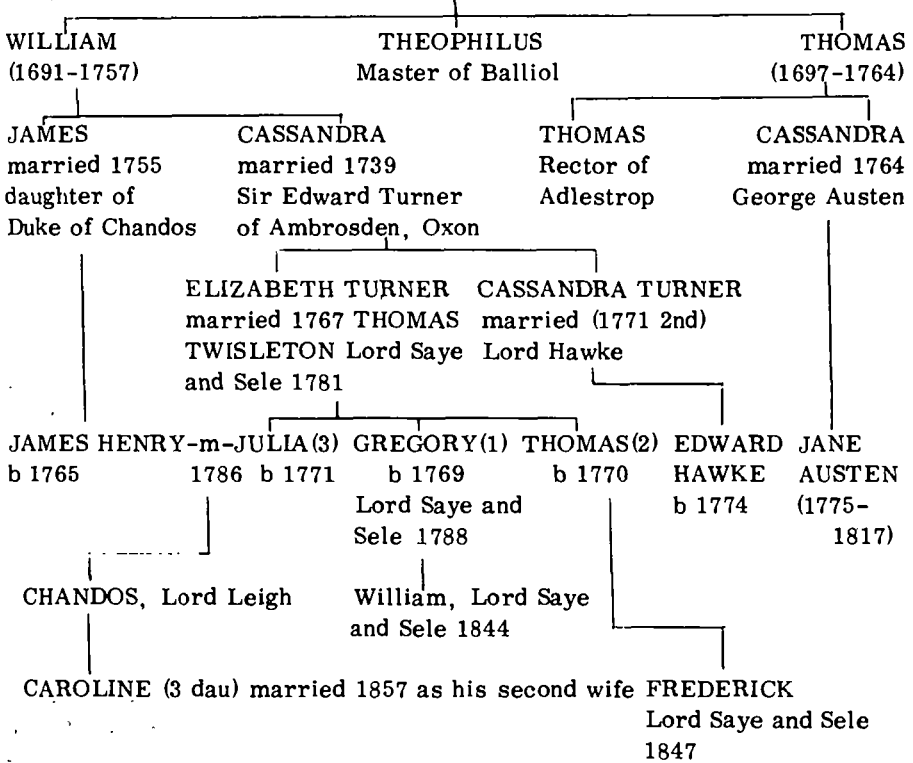
The following extract is from 'Mrs Thomas Leigh's narrative relative to the marriage of James Henry Leigh with Miss Twisleton', quoted in a letter in the Broughton MSS dated 13 June 1886.

"It was late in October 1786 on a dark drizzling night, having just returned from a journey to Adlestrop House that impelled by native civility he hastened to pay his devoirs to Lord and Lady S & S then staying at the Rectory. On entering the room he was instantaneously shot! – shot in a vital part by the bright mischievous eyes of his fair cousin Miss Julia Twisleton, altho' those eyes were partly hid under the umbrage of a redundancy of bright ringlets which marked her early age, for the sorceress was not quite 15! What could he do? He was no martyr – no silent Stoic! – He disclosed the wound. Maternal balsam of ready approbation was at once administered – while bandages of hope and comfort were applied by all the Family! It is said that the perpetrator of this deed remained unrepentant tho' not unmerciful, for on the 9th of December following she extended her hand in sign of Amity to her cousin Mr. Leigh, who leading her to the Altar received her from the hands of her noble Family as his own darling property for life. The attendant Gossips relate that when the officiating Minister Mr. Thomas Leigh had pronounced them to be Man and wife, the Bridegroom looked back upon his mother with a glance of ineffable joy. Of our Benedict I will now say no more but of his lady the Hon^{ble} Mrs Leigh I may retail the general opinion that she resembles her beautiful grandmother Lady Turner in externals, and possessing like her the highest qualities of head and heart, promises to emulate if not excel her in all the virtues of domestic Life."

The Broughton registers show that the bride Julia Twisleton was baptised at Broughton 24 October 1771 and married there on 8 (not 9) Dece-

mber 1786, when she was 15. The bridegroom was 21. The 'young gentlemen' were aged 17 and 12. The marriage service was taken by Thomas Leigh, Rector of Broadwell and Adlestrop, whose wife wrote the above account. The witnesses were Lord Saye and Sele and Lord Hawke. It is possible, even likely, that Jane Austen, then aged 11, was at the wedding; her mother was sister to the Rector of Adlestrop. The table below tries to simplify the cousinly confusion.

THEOPHILUS LEIGH of Adlestrop, Glos
(1648-1725)



D. E. M. F.

Sarah Markham (of Tamarisks, Symn Lane, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos) has sent the following appropriate extract –

Loveday family papers.

Extract from a letter from Mary Wilbraham Bootle to Dr John Loveday of Williamscoote. February 16th, 1795.

...
"When you do me the favour to write next do mention Lord Saye and Sele's family who live at Broughton Castle,, near Banbury; I am curious to hear how they go on; I know the late good humoured Weak Man and his romantic Wife; the present Young Man was a Schoolfellow of my Sons at Eton, and he married Miss Eardley who tho' an amiable, Sensible Woman yet is, I think, ill suited to make the wife of a man of very small fortune. I shall be glad to hear they set out with prudence and steadiness."

N. B. Mrs Wilbraham Bootle was a formidable lady whose husband, Richard Wilbraham of Rode Hall, Cheshire, had had to take the name of Bootle so that she could inherit Lathom House, in Lancashire. Their eldest son was the first Lord Skelmersdale. She was a second cousin of John Loveday, their grandmothers having been sisters, Mary and Sarah Lethieullier.

The "late good humoured Weak Man" was Thomas Twisleton, Lord Saye and Sele, who had died in 1788. As he was an active soldier, rising to the rank of major-general, Mary Bootle can hardly have meant that he was weak either professionally or physically. As a colonel he had played a leading part in suppressing the Gordon riots in London in 1780.

It is likely that she meant he was weak in his relations with his "romantic wife", daughter of Sir Edward Turner of Ambrosden. She too was a formidable lady. It was certainly she who pushed him into the expensive redecoration of Broughton Castle by Sanderson Miller after their marriage in 1767.

Fanny Burney, in a letter of 1782, gives "a little account of a rout I have just been at, at the house of Mr. Paradise". She describes the romantic wife thus. "She seems pretty near fifty – at least turned forty; her head was full of feathers, flowers, jewels, and gee-gaws, and as high as Lady Archer's; her dress was trimmed with beads, silver, persian sashes, and all sort of fine fancies; her face is thin and fiery, and her whole manner spoke a lady all alive."

Later – "Mrs. Paradise now came up to me again, followed by a square man, middle aged, and humdrum, who, I found, was Lord Say and Sele, afterwards from the Kirwans; for though they introduced him to me, I was so confounded by their vehemence and their manners, that I did not hear his name."

After many paragraphs of lively cattiness Fanny Burney "took the first opportunity to make away from this terrible set."

So much for the 18th century cocktail parties and the unfortunate husbands who were dragged to them.

Many years later in 1806, when the "romantic wife" was 64 and long widowed, Jane Austen's mother wrote from Stoneleigh where they were all staying:- "Poor Lady Saye and Sele to be sure is rather tormenting, though sometimes amusing, and affords Jane many a good laugh, but she fatigues me sadly on the whole."



"His romantic wife"

References

The Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay (Fanny Burney) 1778-1840,
Vol. II, pp. 60-66.

Jane Austen by Elizabeth Jenkins - Gollancz 1938 (re-ed 1948) p. 125.



"The good humoured weak man "

OXFORDSHIRE AND THE CENSUS OF 1811

Students of early nineteenth century demographic history are much dependent for their researches upon the findings of the published decennial Census returns and upon information derived from parish registers of baptisms, marriages and burials. Unfortunately, the first Censuses were very limited in scope, recording merely the total size of a community, the number of families, housing provision and a very broad outline of occupational groupings, under the headings of agriculture; trade, manufacturers or handicrafts; and all those 'not comprized in the Two preceding Classes'.¹ Parish registers, likewise, have occasioned some unease in that given the large increase in population which took place in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, there are fears that not all births and deaths have been included in them. This applies to non-Anglicans, in particular, (especially Quakers) who were often not prepared to countenance the ceremonies of the Established Church.

Given this background, therefore, anything which throws light on either population size or the accuracy of parish records is to be welcomed. One little-known source to that end is provided by returns made in response to the 1811 Population Act (i.e. the 1811 Census); these are now preserved in two bound volumes at the British Library.² In this article, entries relating only to parishes in north and west Oxfordshire have been included, though, of course, information is also available for other parts of the county. Those items which appear in square brackets have been deleted in the manuscript, either because they were regarded as 'improper' by the central authorities or because they related to the 'local' militia regiment. (This latter should, incidentally, be distinguished from the regular militia, which was at that time engaged on garrison duty at the Tower of London.)³ The local militia was essentially a part-time organisation established on a county by county basis under an Act of 1808 and similar in many respects to the Home Guard of World War II. When the 1811 Census was taken on 27th May, two of Oxfordshire's four battalions of local militia were away on their summer training. These were the Northern regiment, which had assembled on the 13th May for fourteen days' exercise, 'to the number of 735 (Officers included); and the Southern Regiment on the 20th May, to the number of 688'.⁴ In the published Census report their total - 1,423 - appears at the end of the Oxfordshire section, but without any reference made to the villages from which they were recruited. Yet, if a true picture of the customary male population of a parish is to be obtained, it is essential to include these men under their usual place of residence. It is on these grounds that the deleted entries have been restored.

Details of village populations were provided by the parish overseers; entries relating to the accuracy of baptismal and other records were supplied by the respective incumbents. However, as can be seen, the clergy did not always confine their remarks to that narrow area. The vicar of Bloxham, for example, suggested that there should be a national system

of collecting information on births, etc., quite separate from the churches. This was something which was only achieved in 1836 following the appointment of T. H. Lister as the first Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages. At the same time he recognised the religious difficulty which this might pose, referring to 'the recent violent alarm manifested on Lord Sidmouth's Bill'. That measure had sought to compel all dissenting ministers to be licensed, and to restrain unlicensed preachers. As such, it would have pressed heavily on nonconformists, particularly the Methodists with their widespread use of lay preachers. But so great was the outcry raised by the proposal that it was thrown out at the second reading without a division.⁵

In other entries there are reminders of the economic hardships of these inflationary years of war with France, when harvests, too, often failed. In 1801, a year referred to by the incumbents of both Bladon and Chesterton, bread prices reached a hitherto unprecedented peak of 1s. 3¼d. for a quarter loaf (weighing 4 lb. 5½ oz.), as compared to an average of about 6d. to 8d. per loaf prior to the outbreak of war in 1793.

Before the manuscript returns relating to village populations are reproduced, the relevant printed entries from the 1811 Census are given. It is, of course, important to remember that not all parishes provided additional comments; thus there are no entries for the Banbury hundred in respect of general population levels (Table B), though that omission is rectified when the parish registers are discussed.

TABLE A - PARISH POPULATIONS IN 1811

From Abstract of Answers to the Population Act of 1811, P.P.1812, Vol.XI.

Parish	Males	Females	Total Population
<u>Bampton Hundred</u>			
Burford	634	708	1,342
Hardwicke	66	59	125
<u>Bloxham Hundred</u>			
Alkerton	84	90	174
Barford St. John	64	56	120
Bloxham, North)	195	276	471
South)	332	354	686
Hornton	212	241	453
Milton	65	68	133
Newington, North	130	132	262
Sibford Ferris	109	125	234
Sibford Gower	205	220	425
<u>Chadlington Hundred</u>			
Fulbrook	168	165	333
Chipping Norton	968	1,007	1,975
Sarsden	59	61	120
Swinbrook	92	75	167

Ploughley Hundred

Bicester (Market End)	886	1,035	1,921
Lillingstone Lovell	81	63	144
Souldern	226	223	449
Tusmore	13	10	23

Wootton Hundred

Aston, North	127	131	258
Aston, Steeple	167	179	346
Begbrook	39	79	118
Ensham (Eynsham)	682	736	1,418
Glympton	47	67	114
Hempton	69	59	128
Shipton-upon-Cherwell	58	46	104
Woolvercott (Wolvercote)	201	228	429

TABLE B – ANSWERS FROM PARISH
OVERSEERS CONCERNING POPULATION

From Add. MSS. 6897 at the British Library.

Bampton Hundred

Burford	1516 - 1801
	1342 - 1811

The Decrease is owing to a large Boarding School having been given up, and from the little Trade carried on in the Parish, which has occasioned many persons to leave the place.

Hardwicke	121 - 1801
	125 - 1811

The Family of the Reverend Mr. Clare who has lately resided at Cokethorpe House is not included in the Number above mentioned. His Family consists of fourteen persons, seven Males and seven Females.

Bloxham Hundred

[Alkerton	174 - 1811
Three Local Militia not included.]	

[Barford St. John	120 - 1811
We have two embodied Local Militia who are not included in this return.]	

[Bloxham South	686 - 1811
Bloxham North and Bloxham South form only one Parish - eleven Local Militia not included.]	

[Hornton	453 - 1811
Sixteen Local Militia not included.]	

[Milton	133 - 1811
Two Local Militia not included.]	

[Newington, North 262 - 1811
Seven Local Militia not included in the above return.]

Sibford Ferris 225 - 1801
234 - 1811

An excess of twenty one persons, (sic) sixteen of which belong to three families resident nonparishioners, the other five, suppose an increase of population.

[Sibford Gower 425 - 1811
Seven Local Militia not included.]

Chadlington Hundred

Fulbrook 320 - 1801
333 - 1811

The Increase is occasioned by five more inhabited Houses - nearly half of the forty seven Families receive weekly relief from the Parish.

Chipping Norton 1872 - 1801
1975 - 1811

The Increase since 1801 is attributable to the sundry Schools since established.

[Sarsden 120 - 1811

The Increase in this Parish is owing to young children begotten and born on the Bodies of five young Persons unmarried in 1801, who are still living here, and now married.]

Swinbrook 132 - 1801
167 - 1811

The Increase is principally owing to a School having been established in this Parish since the year 1801.

Ploughley Hundred

[Bicester 1921 - 1811

The Increase is occasioned by the number of Births exceeding the number of Burials since 1801.]

Lillingstone Lovell 135 - 1801
144 - 1811

About a fourth part of the Females are employed in making Lace.

Souldern 394 - 1801
449 - 1811

I attribute the Increase of Population since 1801, to the settling of Handicraft Men, and also of Agricultural Labourers in this Parish.

Tusmore 31 - 1801
23 - 1811

Part of the Family of William Farmer Esquire were returned in London (Baker Street, Portman Square).

Wootton Hundred

[Aston, North 258 - 1811
Two Local Militia not included.]

[Aston, Steeple 346 - 1811
Five Local Militia not included.]

Begbrooke 80 - 1801
118 - 1811

The Increase is owing to the establishment of a School for young Ladies.

Ensham 1166 - 1801
1418 - 1811

The Increase may in some measure be owing to an Inclosure of the Common-able Lands within this Parish, which took place about ten years ago, and consequently settled several Families here. Here is also a paper Manufactory which within a few years past has been rebuilt and extensive Machinery erected; this no doubt is another cause of the Increase of Population. [Twenty of the number of Males as above are serving in the Local Militia, which must be deducted from this return.]

Glympton 96 - 1801
114 - 1811

Mr. and Mrs. Wheate and eight Servants were returned at Saint Mary le Bone Parish, London.

Hempton 154 - 1801
128 - 1811

The Decrease is in consequence of the removal of a large Family from Hempton to Deddington.

Shipton on Cherwell 106 - 1801
104 - 1811

The Increase (sic) is owing to the improved state of Agriculture, which has enabled the Farmer to pay higher Wages for his Labour; thereby encouraging a greater proportion of marriages in Country Villages.

Woolvercott 341 - 1801
429 - 1811

A considerable Increase has taken place in this Parish on account of the Erection of a Paper Mill, and the business thereof much increasing.

TABLE C - REPLIES FROM INCUMBENTS CONCERNING THE NUMBER OF BAPTISMS, BURIALS AND MARRIAGES WHICH TOOK PLACE WITHOUT BEING ENTERED IN THE PARISH REGISTERS

Add. MSS. 6896 at British Library.

Bampton Hundred

Burford. There are Dissenters of different descriptions in the Parish, who alone can give an accurate account of the Number of unentered

Baptisms, Burials, and Marriages, in the Parish.

Witney. There is in the Parish of Witney a Society of Baptists, and also one of Quakers, and the average Number of Unentered Baptisms, I suppose to be 20 Annually.

Shifford. Unentered Baptisms annually 1; Burials, 1, in the last ten years; the Baptisms and Burials which have not been entered are children of Dissenters. The Number of Baptisms in the Register appear to have decreased in the last Ten years, in a small degree; but it may be accounted for from the two principal Families being Dissenters whose children are not registered here.

Shilton. There are very few unentered Baptisms and Burials in the Parish.

Yelford. There is a Dissenter in the Parish who has five Children unentered in the Register.

Banbury Hundred

Banbury. The Presbyterian Minister in Banbury has sent the following of Baptisms of Children baptized by him, viz. in 1801 Two; in 1802 Thirteen; in 1803 Nine; in 1804 Eleven; in 1805 Sixteen; [in] 1806 Eight; in 1807 Seventeen; in 1808 Nine; in 1809 Four; in 1810 Sixteen; in all 105.

Charlbury. The Quakers neither Baptize, Bury, nor Marry at the Church; and are not included in the Parish Register; nor has the Clergyman any account of their Number. Many Families in Chilson Baptize and Bury at the Mother Church at Charlbury.

Claydon. There are no unentered Baptisms, Burials, or Marriages, in the last sixteen years, except one Family of Quakers, who are resident in the Parish; but they have no place of public worship within the Parish.

Cropredy. Great Bourton is in the Parish of Cropredy, and there is no distinct Register for the former; The Baptisms, Burials and Marriages for G. Bourton are included in the return from Cropredy.

Swalcliffe. Unentered Baptisms annually 2; Burials none; Marriages 1 in two years; At the Quakers Meetinghouse situated at Sibford Gower in this Parish, there have been within the last ten years five Marriages; and about Twenty births unentered in the Parish Register, according to a statement delivered by one of the Friends; but no account of any Burials. The Parish of Swalcliffe consists of the Hamlets of Broad Sibford and Burdrope, and Sibford Ferris, together with the Village of Swlacliffe containing a population of 954 persons, exclusive of the Chapels of Shutford, and Epwell which have separate Registers.

Bloxham Hundred

Adderbury. Unentered Burials annually 2; Marriages 1; Amongst the people called Quakers, who are I suppose One fourteenth part of the population of Adderbury, East and West. The Parish of Adderbury consists of Adderbury East and West, the Hamlet of Milton, and the Chapelries of Bodicot and Barford St. John. The Chapel yard of Bodicot is consecrated, that of Barford St. John is not. The Marriages are Solemnized in the

Church of Adderbury.

Bloxham and Milcomb annexed. As far as I can learn from our Presbyterian Minister, who has been resident in this place above Twenty years, his annual average of Baptisms are 4. It seems expedient in a civil point of view, that all Baptisms should somewhere be Registered, and surely an Act to that effect could not with any decency be deemed intolerant; tho' after the recent violent alarm manifested on Lord Sidmouth's Bill it is difficult to judge, how far all Toleration is to be expected on one side, & none on the other.

Hanwell. There are no Dissenters in the Parish of Hanwell, at least none who profess themselves to be.

Horley. Unentered Baptisms annually 1; not entered because Baptized by a Methodist Preacher and not desired to be entered in the Parish Register.

Milton. There are some Quakers, whose Burials and Marriages are not entered in the Register, the Burials may amount to two annually, the Marriages to one in the average of three years.

Wroxton. The return of Balscot chapelry is included in Wroxton, the same Register serving for the Parish and Chapelry.

Chadlington Hundred.

Enstone. Unentered Baptisms annually 5; as being Catholics or Dissenters.

Fulbrook. There are a few Dissenters in the Parish of Fulbrook.

Heythorpe. Unentered Baptisms annually 1; There is one Family denominated Baptists in the Parish.

Hooknorton. Annual average number of unentered Baptisms 2; Children of Dissenting Families who are not brought to the Baptism of the Established Church; unentered Burials annually 2; Dissenters who Bury in their own meeting yard.

Leafield. The offices of Marriages and Funerals not being executed within this chapelry they are included in the Return for the Parish of Shipton.

L. Rollright. The Number of unentered Baptisms, in all for the last ten years, is 4; principally thro' either the Clerks, or a former Churchwarden's neglect: There is one Family in this place who are Baptists, and for the last ten years have had no Children or Burials. The population of the Parish has rather encreased (sic) than diminished; most of the Burials are of persons extremely old.

Spelsbury. Annual average Number of unentered Marriages, very few, perhaps one in about three years, by reason of Marriages having been solemnized in distant Parishes (generally Oxford) without legal residence.

Swerford. Unentered Burials annually 2; Buried in the Ground belonging to the Meeting house at Hooknorton: It is not customary to enter in our Parish Register, the Burial of any Person not buried in our Church yard.

Taynton. There is but one Family of Dissenters in this Parish, calling themselves Anabaptists; they have had Four Children Baptized elsewhere in the course of the last five or six years. There are perhaps Six Baptisms

in the years 1809 and 1810, more than belong strictly to this Parish, owing to the adjoining Church of Great Barrington being in a state of repair; this will slightly affect the proportion of Baptisms and Burials in this Parish.

Ploughley Hundred

Bicester. Unentered Baptisms annually 3; Burials 2; baptized & registered by the Dissenting Minister from 1801 to 1811. Eleven Males & Twenty three Females; Burials during the same period Eight Males and nine Females.

Charlton upon Otmoor. There has been only one Baptism unentered for the last Ten years, being a Catholic: All Burials and Marriages are regularly entered. The Villages of Fencott and Murcott are in the Parish of Charlton upon Otmoor, and tho' they constitute a Hamlet maintaining its own poor, have neither Church or Chapel of Ease. The Baptisms, Burials, and Marriages are registered at Charlton upon Otmoor.

Somerton. Unentered Baptisms annually 2; children of Roman Catholics baptized and Registered at their own place of Worship, viz. at the chapel at Tusmore Oxon. All Burials and Marriages are regularly entered.

Souldern. Number of unentered Baptisms for the last Ten years 3; viz. Two Females and one Male. There are no unentered Burials or Marriages; the Baptisms unentered belong to Roman Catholics.

Stratton Audley. Within the last ten years, Five Children have been baptized by the Roman Catholic Priest. All the Burials and Marriages are regularly entered.

Chesterton. The large proportion of Burials in the year 1801 was occasioned by a malignant Fever, which then raged in the Parish of Chesterton.

Wootton Hundred

Begbroke. I have no reason to think that there are any Children borne in Begbroke, who are not baptized and entered in the Register of the Parish. There has lately been established there a very respectable Boarding School for young Ladies; but no deaths have occurred (sic) in that establishment, so that the population is considerably greater thereby, no difference whatever has taken place in the average of Baptisms, Burials, and Marriages registered.

Bladon. In the year 1803 no marriages were Solemnized in the Church of Bladon from its being then rebuilding. I have only to remark what I apprehend will be verified by the returns from other places, that in the year 1801, when provisions were both dear and scarce, there were fewer children born and more persons died.

[N.B. The Bladon rector also held Woodstock and made a similar comment for that parish regarding the year 1801.]

Deddington. There has within the Ten years, been baptized by a Catholic Priest in Number about Six: And at the Methodist Meetinghouse by an Occasional Preacher about Six, within the last three years. All the Burials

and Marriages are duly and regularly entered in the Register.

Ensham. Perhaps there may be a few unentered Baptisms in two or three Families of Baptists; I should suppose not ten within the last ten years.

Hanborough. Annual average Number of Unentered Baptisms; not more than two or three Baptisms have taken place for some years without being entered; and in these instances the Children were baptized at a Dissenting Meetinghouse. The Burials and Marriages are regularly and correctly Registered.

Kidlington. Unentered Marriages Annually 2; the reason generally I believe is to avoid publicity. The names of all persons who are baptized as Members of the establishment, are I believe duly entered; and there are no Dissenters, in the Parish, who allow of a different Baptism.

South Newington. Annual average Number of unentered Baptisms, Burials, and Marriages; not above one of either in Seven years.

Tew, Great. Probably four Baptisms may not be registered in consequence of their not being Members of the Church. People in Country Villages frequently keep their children till the Wake or Easter Sunday, for the convenience of meeting their Friends and Sometimes a whole Family are Christened together.

Long Coombe (Combe). There have been the fewer marriages at Coombe on account of some of the Inhabitants having been unduly married in Oxford at St. Giles's Church, who ought to have been married in their own Parish Church at Coombe where they had resided.⁶

Pamela Horn

FOOTNOTES

1. See **Abstract of Answers to the Population Act of 1811**, P.P.1812, Vol. XI.
2. British Library, Additional MSS.6896 and 6897. I am indebted to Professor M. Flinn for drawing my attention to this material.
3. J. M. Davenport, **Sketch of the History of the Oxfordshire Militia** (Oxford, 1869), 14. Lt. Col. F. Willan, **History of the 4th Oxfordshire Light Infantry Militia, 1778-1900** (Oxford, 1900), 48-49.
4. **Abstract of Answers to the Population Act of 1811**, 265. Men who did not attend could be 'apprehended or otherwise proceeded against as defaulters', having incurred a penalty of £20. Lt. Col. F. Willan, *op.cit.*, 51.
5. **Dictionary of National Biography**, entry relating to Viscount Sidmouth.
6. Other incumbents made complaints about the practice of peoply marrying in Oxford. The Holton and Horsepath incumbents believed it to be an 'irregular practice', and their counterpart at Great Milton in the Thame hundred declared of these Oxford marriages: 'two if not three couples have every year been irregularly married by Banns in some of the Churches at Oxford. They profess to pay for Lodgings there for a month previous to their Marriage, but in fact they never reside there a single day.' British Library, Additional MSS.6896.

THE OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION (OLHA)

The new Association was formed at a meeting in Oxford on March 19th 1980, and will provide important services to its members, of interest to anyone involved, at any level, in local history in the County.

An Oxfordshire Local History Committee existed as a committee of the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council from 1948 until this year. In response to the growth of interest in local history, it increased its activities to such an extent in recent years that it became clear that an independent County Association should be formed to continue and expand its work. The main purpose of the OLHA will be to promote links between amateur local historians and academic and professional bodies involved in local history.

The Association will have 7 main functions:

to organise **meetings** in Oxford and around the County on current work in local history in general and Oxfordshire history in particular, continuing the pattern familiar from the former Local History Committee's activities;

to **publish** a twice-yearly journal **Oxfordshire Local History**, a successor to **Top.Oxon.**, and a quarterly newsletter for members;

to compile and update **directories** of speakers, of local societies and of work in progress;

to encourage **exhibitions** and other local history events;

to act as a **clearing-house**, assisting local historians by putting them in touch with others working on similar themes, with expert help or with new material;

to **encourage** the publication of completed work and to **sponsor publications** specifically for Oxfordshire historians;

to **liaise** with other local historical organisations and, at national level, with the Standing Conference for Local History.

The Association is, and will have to be, independently financially viable, and will therefore need as broad a base of amateur and professional support as possible. Membership costs £3.00 for individuals and £5.00 for organisations and societies; anyone interested may join. These rates include 2 journals and 4 newsletters. Full members of the OAHs may join at a special concessionary rate of £2.00; all these subscriptions run through to Spring 1981.

Subscriptions (cheques payable to Oxfordshire Local History Association) should be sent to Mrs Mary Hewitt, Hon. Treasurer, Chestnut Cottage, Church Lane, Adderbury, Banbury, Oxon OX17 3LR.

I am at present on the Committee of the new Association, representing Oxfordshire Museums, and would be glad to answer any further enquiries and to forward articles and/or diary items to the editors of the Journal and Newsletter.

Sarah Gosling
Banbury Museum.

LOCAL HISTORY EXHIBITION - APRIL 1980

HOOK NORTON

In addition to the various Technical Colleges in Oxfordshire there are 26 Adult Education Centres supported by the Education Committee. The smallest of these is at Hook Norton and a few years ago there was a whisper that this Centre might be closed as an economy measure. A review of the distribution of aid to the various Centres revealed that Hook Norton, the smallest Centre, had the least financial support per student of all the Centres. How like life!

The threatened closure was put off, more support was offered, a wider programme was arranged and last Autumn 17 classes with over 250 students were held.

Among these classes was one on a Parish Survey led by Kate Tiller, following a successful general class on Local History the previous Autumn when Hook Norton village was used as an example of how a Local History project could be undertaken.

This new class was sponsored jointly by the Oxford University Department for External Studies and Hook Norton Evening Centre and enquirers were told that numbers would be restricted to about 15 and the class would involve detailed individual work by all members on some aspect of Hook Norton history.

Despite inviting hints for a local historian, ranging from pre-historic sites and finds to a rich body of vernacular architecture and documentary sources starting with an Anglo-Saxon chronicle reference of 913 AD, there has been no full, modern investigation of Hook Norton's history. Neither has any local history group existed in the village. The parish has not yet been covered by the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire.

Many new residents of Hook Norton are interested in its history and were eager to join the class. Some Hook Norton born people also joined to make a successful mix.

As the weeks went on various themes for study were developed - the physical setting of the village; bronze and iron age settlement; fields in the landscape; the impact of enclosure; field names; the lifestyles of a 17th Century village baker and 19th Century agricultural labourer; the Baptist community from 1644.

The class entered for the Local History Exhibition and Competition arranged by the Oxon. Rural Community Council for April 1980 and as they prepared the material it became obvious that unknown talents in the class were being discovered as well as facts about Hook Norton.

The resultant exhibit won the special prize for the best presentation of an exhibit at Oxford Town Hall and the winning entry was on show at the Hook Norton Study Centre, opened specially for the occasion, the following week.

The class is to continue for the 1980/81 session.

Alan Sibson
Prews Close, Park Hill,
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SWALCLIFFE

The Swalcliffe Parish History Group started life in Autumn 1977 as a one year W. E. A. course under the tuition of Dr Kate Tiller and Mrs Sarah Gosling. The interest and enthusiasm they generated in the first session carried us forward for a second year of such practical activities as the study of local wills and inventories, field walking, a churchyard survey, a map of local field names and a survey of buildings in the area.

Thus it was that when the news broke of the forthcoming Local History Competition and Exhibition and the tocsin was sounded, group members came swarming in to the meeting on every hand, all seven of us, and agreed to take up the challenge even though it meant pitting ourselves against the giant B.H.S. whose entry, it was believed, was to be a very plush affair.

The choice of subjects presented some initial difficulties since we had already mounted two small exhibitions of our findings to date and we did not wish merely to repeat ourselves. Finally we decided to centre our display on the village school and its connection with the life of the local community. It was, we reasoned, a topic of considerable intrinsic interest and one which could be effectively presented in a visually appealing way. We had already amassed a quantity of visual material and had made use of contemporary documentary records, extracts from which could be used to illustrate the effects at local level of national developments. Enough material objects were known to exist to give a solid reality to the texts and photographs and we felt that we had hit upon an attractive and effective form for the display, a reduced version of the old school-room.

At this point we adjourned for Christmas. By the next meeting, we had bought from a demolition contractor the basic materials for the 'scenery' and a campaign of persistent mendacity had secured promises of the loan of display boards and items of furniture and equipment. More detailed planning of the contents of the displays began and tasks were allocated of further research, of the preparation of explanatory texts and of location and selection of photographs. At the same time, work continued on the construction of the stand itself so that it was soon possible to assemble it, as yet unpainted, so that dimensions could be finally checked and colours chosen. Very detailed layouts for each panel were now prepared, texts and photographs mounted and orders placed for special photographic work. Disquieting rumours began to spread that the B.H.S. planned an eye-catching display of the ceremonial plush breeches worn by the Chairman at their A.G.M. but we worked on, undaunted. A final dress

rehearsal on the eve of sending-in day went smoothly even though some vital items were still awaiting delivery.

By the following evening everything had, miraculously, arrived and we all set off for Oxford. At least, we thought we did. Arrived at the Town Hall, we joined the other weight-lifters staggering up the three thousand convenient steps and fell to frantically assembling our masterpiece. We realised that the last vehicle, conveying all the graphic materials had failed to arrive and became prey to horrible imaginings, confirmed by a 'phone call telling us that the party was stranded in Banbury. A spirited dash by taxi and train followed and the graphics arrived with at least an hour to spare before closing time. By 9.59, everything was in place: our careful rehearsals were more than justified. A quick look at the other stands showed us that competition would be fierce though we were relieved to find that the breeches, though splendid, had merely graced the limbs of some aristocratic flunkey.

We won no prizes but enough people came and looked closely at our exhibit to make all the work seem worthwhile and we had enjoyed the co-operation on a cherished venture. The process of arranging the exhibits and writing up the explanatory texts had made us organise our ideas and we had become aware of areas where knowledge was sketchy and further research required. I personally felt a certain fulfillment, even in defeat, though I was so tired that when Jeremy Gibson asked me to write this, I couldn't think of an excuse.

Ray Hubbard
Woodview, Shenington

HANWELL

The Hanwell Village Research Group was formed in July 1979. A preliminary enquiry was made into the interest in such a group and at the first meeting nine members were enrolled.

It was agreed that the first study the group would undertake would be of the village within the memories of the villagers themselves. This we thought would be of general interest and would produce a valuable record of information regarding changes in village life, much of which would be lost with the passing of the older inhabitants.

It was decided to hold an exhibition of the material collected in the village hall in the Spring of 1980 under the title "Hanwell within Living Memory", 1890-1980. A letter was sent to every household asking for the co-operation of all who were interested in helping with the project. Large envelopes were then distributed to those who wished to participate into which they were asked to put photographs, documents and lists of items relevant to the project.

The group received an invitation to enter the competition organised by the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council to be held in Oxford in April 1980. As our Project appeared to fulfil the necessary requirements

we decided to enter.

Monthly meetings were held at which members reported information and devised the lay-out of the exhibit. It was thought that the material should be displayed in three sections; physical aspects of the village, old families, and work and social changes. In order to make the best use of the 10' x 6' space allotted to the exhibit at Oxford, it was decided to try to construct a stand representing the three walls of a cottage circa 1900. With our very limited financial resources (nine pounds members subscriptions!), it was a test of everyone's ingenuity to produce the necessary materials.

We were fortunate in having the use of a workshop in which to construct the stand and this became our second home in the ensuing months. A wooden frame was made to outline each section and filled in with hard-board in the top half and cardboard in the lower half. A shelf was fitted three feet from the ground onto each section on which to display objects and a chimney breast and replica of a Victorian fire-place was made for the centre section.

One of the most enjoyable and informative parts of the project was the recording of the voices of some of the older inhabitants. Seated comfortably in their homes and using only a very simple tape recorder, we obtained some delightful word pictures of the village in by-gone days. One could smell the Sunday roast being collected from the communal bake-ovens! The spontaneity and content of their recordings enabled us to use them unedited.

The envelopes were collected and the photographs etc. selected for each section. Although the material was adequate, it was necessary to take further photographs of the village in order to complete section 1. Three families were chosen as representative of the inhabitants and used as the linking theme.

The time factor became rather a problem when illness, pressure of other commitments and gremlins in the cameras caused us to fall behind our work schedule. However, with much burning of the mid-night oil (and the witnessing of too many dawns!), the valiant few had the exhibit ready in time. A villager very kindly offered to transport the exhibit in his van. This was much appreciated as it had outgrown the proportions suitable to car roof racks.

We erected the exhibit at Oxford without too many problems and those of us who manned it over the three days of the Exhibition enjoyed ourselves very much. The response of the public was very gratifying and the experience gained from viewing the other entries and talking to other competitors invaluable. It was apparent to us that our entry lacked the advantage of a longer standing group and a prior exhibition of our material. From the latter we could have produced a more concise exhibit by using one representative family and a selection of objects.

However, the staging of the exhibit in the village hall in May was

very rewarding. Eighty percent of the villagers attended plus visitors from neighbouring villages. Their obvious enjoyment of the exhibit and a chance to talk of old times over a cup of tea made us feel that we had achieved our aim.

The production of the catalogue and the data files will make a valuable record on which to base further studies and the voluntary contributions made by the villagers to our project fund will enable us to acquire materials such as display stands for future exhibits.

It was a sad occasion when we dismantled the exhibit for the last time. The now familiar objects and photographs were returned to their respective owners with our sincere thanks for their generous co-operation in our venture.

Fiona Foster
Nethercott, Hanwell.

Book notice

Railways are fixed to their tracks. Never did The Witney and East Gloucestershire Railway (Fairford Branch) penetrate Banburyshire. But railway enthusiasts may like to read an account of it by Stanley C. Jenkins; they will do so with pleasure. It may be obtained from the Oxfordshire County Museum for 60p plus postage.

WELCHMAN

Colonel J.R. Welchman DSO of Wootton Courtenay, Minehead, Somerset, would like information on the Welchmans who lived at Deddington in the 16th and 17th centuries, and on the family of Edward Welchman, a baker, who was mayor of Banbury in 1660. There is some information in the Banbury Corporation Records published as records volume 15 in 1977.

Annual Dinner

Members are reminded that the annual dinner will be in the great hall at Broughton Castle on Friday October 24. For any remaining places please contact the Membership Secretary at Banbury Museum.

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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