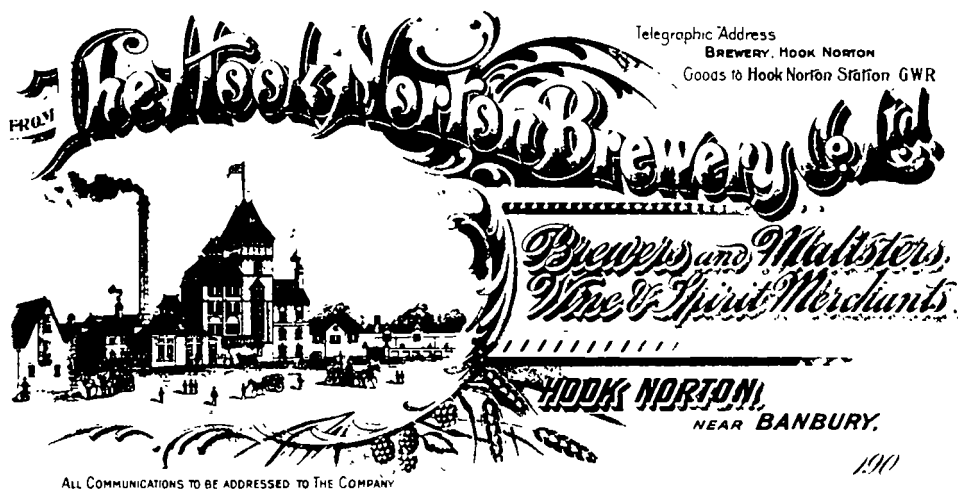


CAKE & COCKHORSE



HOOK NORTON NUMBER

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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Autumn 1982

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Hookey, as the locals affectionately call their village, has a little piece of the heart of all of us. It also has an active local history group. This issue, except for book reviews, is their work. They worked overtime; owing to lack of space some articles will be carried forward to the 1983 summer issue.

The celebration of the Society's 25th anniversary will take place at Broughton Castle on April 22, 1983, by kind permission of our President. Details will be announced later. Please keep that evening free.

The cover illustration gives its own message and date.

HOOK NORTON : BUILDINGS AND HISTORY

When our village was settled¹ by the Saxons more than 1,000 years ago it was in a little valley through which ran a stream. If we stand on the bank of that stream now and look northwards there can be seen fascinating lines of houses and cottages up the roads, Bell Hill, Middle Hill and Bridge Hill dominated by the high ground upon which stands St Peters Church. A modern picture of course: the original settlement would have been smaller, perhaps more scattered and in wood . . . but the sheltered, south facing, well watered valley would have been there.

Later, perhaps in the 12th C, expansion took place over the stream on the ridge opposite,² and the little hamlet of Southrop grew up, itself a maze of small buildings and narrow streets. The two were true rivals on opposite banks, and with independent ideas, so that even as late as the 18th C they shared Church expenses and had separate Churchwardens.³ One wonders if it was only the stream which separated the two and not some deeper problem . . . but this is not the place to pursue it.

Still later growth took place along the ridge to the north and a transverse road, east/west, connected small communities which we can see on early maps and still know as Scotland End, The Green and East End.⁴ This was an important road, but quite local, and the present extension to Milcombe for Banbury was relatively late. Along its north side can still be seen small houses backed by long "close" gardens, and sometimes outhouses, all very narrow, which backed on to the "Open and Common Fields of Hook Norton".

These fields in medieval times were styled East and West, but later became North and South Fields with the stream as the probable division; activity centred upon both Hook Norton and Southrop. By 1774, when Enclosure took place, grouped land holdings meant the building of new farms and some movement out of the hamlets, but for most workers it meant little change, and they still walked to work. The Townesend Map of 1808 shows that at that date the housing lines were still following the lines of the transverse road and the hamlets; there was no building north of a narrow band from it . . . i.e. beyond a few gardens.

There must have been some periods of at least relative prosperity, in which new building or restoration became the fashion . . . as is suggested by the number of 16th C traces we have; St Peters Church has been added to several times and, most obvious perhaps, the number of "public" buildings added in the 19th C (the School, the Methodist Church and so on), as well as a number of private houses at the turn of the century. These private houses were probably due to the railway and ironstone people and significantly in 1900 for the first time expansion took place northwards along the Sibford Road. The main feature of the 20th C has been the addition to the north of four housing developments, council and private, two each.

If there were more houses then surely there must have been more

people. In 1089, Domesday Book showed about 350 people (much the same as the original Banbury or Chipping Norton); this number had risen to 562 in 1676,⁵ and to about 700 in 1738.⁶ At the beginning of the 19th C the population was 1032 and at the close 1386;⁷ but these figures conceal expansion to around 1500 people in the 1840s and 1850s and gradual decline thereafter to the end of the century. The figures in themselves suggest periods in which there would have been pressure upon housing resources and others of dereliction, apart from any financial influences already suggested.

Wood-Jones in 1963 wrote an admirable book⁸ on local traditional domestic architecture in which a number of Hook Norton features were noted; he drew attention to the present Manor House (built 1656) in pleasing terms. This is surely our most attractive offering of its type, for our village has never been so prosperous as others to the west in Worcester or Gloucester, so that our styles are simpler and more functional.

From personal observation and Wood-Jones' comments it is possible to list characteristics of our older houses. Building patterns are conservative and traditional and there is little change. There is plenty of local stone in North Oxfordshire which has been used for building and walls are often up to 2 feet thick placed upon larger stones at ground level, not always proper foundations. In Hook Norton it seems "the stone ... being more fissile, walling is built of narrower courses, with long thin stones" Quoin stones are often big, face-bedded, and jointing is generally of earth mortar. The use of brick (which was taxed at the end of the 18th C) is rare here until the early 20th C, and the ends of houses show often a transition from the most usual thatch to later tile or slate roof, often with the addition of a loft and small window. The dripstone decoration over windows, or well weathered timber over the top is another indication of age.

Here and there thin layers of stone of different colour form an embellishment so that the houses have a "striped" effect, very simple and not unattractive, and a glance at the shape and number of chimneys also assists dating. A feature very much in evidence in Hook Norton and most unusual elsewhere is the caracole, a circular outside staircase which occurs in a number of Hook Norton houses. There are also often circular outside shapes which look rather like small caracoles but are in fact ovens! They too are quite plentiful.

Another feature seen is that most houses are "one room wide". If more space is required then rooms are added to the end or above, and again as an attic, but rarely behind the initial house. One explanation offered is "limitation of materials" and this may be so, but one wonders idly, on the way they built on, whether this is an echo of Saxon tradition.

Finally an even odder fact is how frequently one can judge the more modern houses by the size of the front garden! The old houses more often than not open on to a road or path, but frequently have a large garden

behind; those built around the turn of the century seem to have been settled with a small rectangle leading to the road; open plan building, where front gardens space the houses, is very modern.

Around the village there are some thirty or more houses and buildings where the "plaques" which date them can be tested against the above characteristics; some such as "Salfords" in the Main Street at East End we really know much about, through the interest of its occupier; it dates from the 17th C with caracole.

Tradition in the village insists that the "oldest" house is Reeves House opposite the Church, which bears many of the marks already mentioned. How old any house actually is, is difficult if not impossible to say, since the process of degeneration and regeneration goes on all the time, and if houses are skilfully restored it can be almost impossible to tell what has been done. The rendering on the outside of the Chancel of St Peters for example makes past alterations to the walls difficult to see; indeed one occasionally rejoices to find changes more obvious by noting the work of a slip-shod mason at some time or another. Many houses may have been rebuilt a number of times upon the original site along the same road line without our being aware of it, and some sites may even be Saxon if we did but know. On the other hand, some like the Manor House were probably built on new sites; tradition again has it that the old Manor House was originally behind the Church. Here and there an abrupt change of building line is intriguing if only the reason could be known.

As others will show, Hook Norton as an open village sheltered a large number of different trades and occupations, but a comparison with the trades directories⁹ and Townesend's Map of 1808 suggests that they were mostly homebased . . . the baker, the saddler or the smith presumably worked in one or more outhouses behind his house. The changing style of houses, especially at East End for example, seems however to support the idea of these artisans growing more prosperous and moving to larger houses, but the heart of the village was in the farm worker's cottages.

Much additional information is to be derived from the 1871 Census, though it suffers some shortcoming from our point of view in that we know how many people there were, male and female, children and occupations, but there are only rare addresses, mostly farms or Public Houses. It is rarely possible to link the size of family to specific houses or properties. The transverse road already mentioned formed the east/west boundary for the Enumeration Districts of which there were four, two each, north and south of the line. More than two thirds of the village population lived to the south of the line, with a ratio of 3.4 people to each dwelling, say 4, on average.

There was little evidence of large families and perhaps this is surprising; nor was there much evidence of men "sleeping in" at the farms, most of which were of course quite small. There were few farms

as big as Nill Farm (1844). formerly the centre of the Bishop's local farming interests and a manorial background, with 4 servants bedrooms, and outside a Mens' Room, and two cottages, added to private accommodation of three living rooms and six bedrooms.

An average family of 4 consisted of father, mother and one child of each sex; with a servant or two in the better class houses. Very few people lived on their own. Only Swerford House and the Manor House really differed very much and neither of these were really big houses, with many servants. At the time of the Census there were 319 dwellings in the village, housing the 1259 people, . . . and 19 houses noted as uninhabited. Since the population had dropped to this figure since about 1850 one must assume that there was little pressure upon the available housing. This could have been due to the severe downturn in agriculture generally, resulting from the by-play of such influences as wars and blockades, Poor Laws and Corn Laws, the Industrial Revolution (which tended to favour "town" against "country"), the influx of colonial meat and grain and so on, all of which depressed wages and often sent workers away to towns or the colonies.

It seems to have been a curious century and not the happiest for agricultural villages like Hook Norton. Yet we cannot overlook "public" building such as:

- 1835 · Cottages built from the old Workhouse when closed
- 1840 : the Anglican Vicarage rebuilt (became "Rectory" 1866)
- 1845 · St Peters Church extensively restored
- 1854 · School House (and Headmaster's House) built
- 1873 · Baptist Schoolroom built
- 1875 : new Methodist Church built.

Each of these must have had some kind of influence upon village life. Conditions were very hard; how hard is difficult to say. To a Northumbrian come to Oxfordshire there seems little difference between mining cottages in Northumberland or Durham and those of the field workers of Hook Norton; if the first had ample heat from spare coal, there would have been less country fare, or access to it, than for his agricultural counterpart. Their children still died of TB or rickets or the like.

Towards the end of the century two changes may have helped Hook Norton – the arrival of the railway and the ironstone excavation.¹⁰

It seems possible that the two activities were connected for the earliest plans for the railway would have taken it much further north through the Sibfords; but the attraction of the iron stone freight may have decided the matter. In the event it made for a much more difficult task, an immense cutting and the viaduct of which stems, too difficult to remove, still stand, for neither railway nor ironstone workings survived far into this century. Many local properties in the East End were auctioned by the Liquidator of the Brymbo Steel Co. Ltd. in February 1949, when the need for ironstone ceased. The loss of this traffic and the growth of the petrol engine and the local bus probably did the same for the railway.

Details of the properties disposed of remind one that Hook Norton, even in 1949, was still some distance behind the rest of the country in amenities. Electricity was by then available, but sewage was still by cesspit or "Elsan", and water was in most cases only available by pump (even when electric) from a well. The fact is that the village had been served for centuries with water from well or spring of which there were some hundreds, only a few of which in the end proved to be really fit for drinking. Water was tackled first and provided in 1955. Sewage was to cost more to a village without great resources, and was not available until 1965. The necessary rate impost was just too much.

Because of modern labour mobility many of Hook Norton's people work outside it and it is no longer so dependent upon the vagaries of farming. Those who do this frequently keep going the process of restoration and maintenance of the houses they have bought, mostly in keeping with its old style. There are those who find this not to their taste feeling it to be merely a modern attempt to ape the old ways. On the other hand, as another view has it, conscientiously to restore is after all a compliment to the old houses themselves and their builders. It helps to keep the village smart and attractive. The towns which once drew villagers away are sending people back and not for the first time "foreigners" are helping with regeneration. Hook Norton was, and is, an "open village", and should in the end benefit from it.

Reg Dand

References and Sources

1. The battle with the Danes took place c 914 AD (Anglo Saxon Chronicle - Garmonsway pub. Dent reprint 1977 pages 98-99). The settlement must therefore have been appreciably before that, to provide a force sufficient to give battle.
2. Southrop, the "south hamlet" first noted in the 13th C (Dickins History of Hook Norton page 2. Feudal Aids 1316AD) as such; but among the Osenev Register names c 1230 AD there is a Suddenham = either "south hamlet" or if it had been hamme "the southern meadow". Miss Dickins thought the -throp element was Danish, but this is not generally held, though not impossible.
3. Miss Dickins' History page 2. The alterations are to be found in the Burial Register 1313-1367.
4. Townesend (of the village, and a Churchwarden) produced a map in 1308, which was reproduced for the Bishop's agent, Godson, in 1326. The name East End seems to be quite old, c 16th C but Scotland End less so; and the source of the latter is unexplained.
- 5, 6 Population in 1676 from Compton's Census, in 1733 from the Bishop's Visitation Return.
7. Population figures from the Censuses of 1901 to 1901 incl.
8. "Traditional Domestic Architecture of the Banbury Region" by Raymond B. Wood-Jones, pub. Manchester Univ. Press (1963) page 240 etc.
9. Trade Directories - Pigots, Post Office, Harods and Kelley's various dates from 1830/1895. The earliest are for Chipping Norton, and include Hook Norton.
10. The railway was opened in April 1837, and closed as a Beeching cut in 1961, perhaps partly in tune with the ironstone working which began around the time the railway came (there seems some evidence that it was diverted to take the trade) and went into liquidation, in 1949.

A HOOK NORTON FAMILY THE CALCOTTS

This family is undoubtedly Anglo-Saxon. Cald meaning Cold and Cot meaning a hut or enclosure. There appear to be over thirty ways of spelling the surname Caldecot being the earliest, recorded in 1195.

Perhaps the name originally meant a person who lived near a cold shelter for animals or a place of shelter for wayfarers. Caldecott is also a place name first recorded in 1197. There are eight villages of this name within a fifty mile radius of Hook Norton.

Between 1611 and 1728 there were 49 members of this family recorded in the Parish registers: 23 baptisms and 29 burials. All their relationships are not clear as the registers are damaged and incomplete.

However, the Calcotts are recorded in Hook Norton long before 1611. In the memorial records of 1490 is found a note "Robert Calcote his pledge to repair the tenement well and sufficiently before the Feast of St John the Baptist next". In the court rolls of 1539 Calcot is mentioned as one of the fifteen man jury.

In a will of 1574 Walter Calcott left to Hook Norton a sum of 15/- yearly of which 10/- was to be paid to the minister for a sermon at Christmas and 5/- to be given to the poor.

Although there were Calcotts in Hook Norton for generations they seem to have disappeared from the village altogether so there is doubtless great scope for further research.

ALEXANDER CALCOTT (1616-1682)

Alexander Calcott died in the Autumn of 1682 and was buried in the Parish Church at Hook Norton. The Parish register records both his baptism in 1616 and his burial in 1682. He had a wife, Dorothy, a daughter Margaret and a son George who pre-deceased him in 1670. He had a sister, Alice, married to a Mr Child.

Alexander was a village baker. His life style was comfortable but modest. His house was a typical 17th Century North Oxfordshire cottage with 3 rooms on the ground floor, a parlour, a hall, and a backhouse. Over each of these there was a chamber. The house also had a cellar.

The chamber over the parlour was the best bedroom, a comfortable room where they had a feather bed with red curtains, a red rug on the floor, a fireplace complete with a fireshovel and tongs. The next bedroom, over the hall, had a 'joyned' bedstead with curtains and a feather bed, a truckle bed and a table. The contents of this room were considered to be worth £3 in 1682, compared with a valuation of £8 for the contents of the main bedroom. The third bedroom was situated over the backhouse, the bed here had only a flock mattress and the main contents of the room were old coffers, 2 boxes and a bolting mill (for sieving coarsely ground flour to free it from bran before baking). Besides this there was other lumber.

Downstairs the parlour was a sparsely furnished room with a trestle table, chairs, two stools and a court cupboard. The contents of this room were valued at £1 compared with a value of £5. 10. 0 for the

contents of the hall.

The hall was where all the activities of everyday life took place - cooking, spinning, eating and all the many household tasks involved in running a house and business. Here were the spinning wheels and all the basic food stuffs, including one and a half fitches of bacon, the cooking utensils, kettles, pottage pots, posnets, spits and pans. The tableware consisted of pewter plates, flagons, porringers, wooden trenchers and four pewter candlesticks.

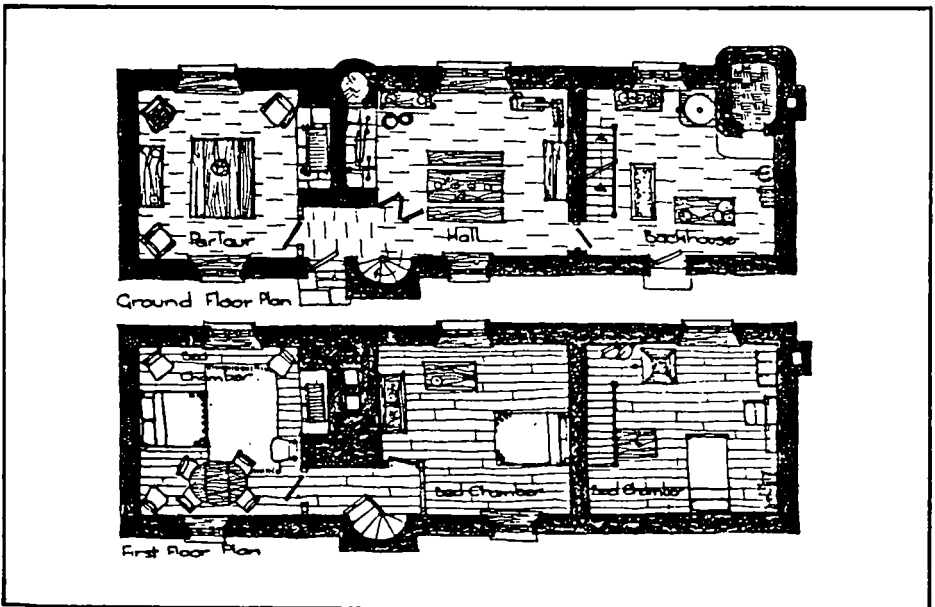
The room next to the hall - the backside - contained the tools of Alexander Calcott's trade - a furnace, dough trough, moulding boards. Outside stood 500 bundles of gorse which were ready for use as kindling.

The total worth of Alexander's goods and chattels was £72, about £40 of which was on account of debts due to him and the lesser part (£32) was the worth of his actual furniture and belongings.

From the detailed description in his will it can be surmised that he took a pride and pleasure in his household. He was a conscientious man, he left no debts, and bequeathed with great care to his daughter Margaret some of the best articles from the household to ensure, no doubt, that she would have a good dowry. He did not own his own house or land and, compared with other wills of his time, he was not a wealthy man but he appears to have been moderately prosperous.

Sue Coltman

The will and inventory of the goods of Alexander Calcott are printed below, with drawings by R. C. Coltman reconstructing his house.



Plans and Interiors of Alexander Calcott's House based upon his Will and Probate Inventory.

In the nam of God Amen The Eleventh day of Aprill Annoq. Dm 1682
 And in the ffoure & Thirtieth yeare of the Raigne of o^r: Souaigne Lord
 Charles ^ey second by the Grace of God King of England etc: I
 Alexander Calcott of Hookenorton in the County of Oxon Baker being
 weake in body but of sound & perfect memory praise be therefore given
 to Almighty God, doe make & ordaine this my present Last Will &
 testament in manner & forme ffollowing (that is to say) first and
 principally I Comend my soule into the hands of Almighty God hoping
 through the merrits Death & pason of my Saviour Jesus Christ to have
 full & ffree pardon & forgiveness of all my sins & to Inheritt
 everlasting life, And my body I Cumitt to the earth from whence it
 came And as touching the disposson of all such temporall estate as
 it hath pleased almighty God to bestowe upon me I Doe order give &
 dispose thereof as ffolloweth

Item I Give and bequeath unto my Daughter Margaret my furnace my spice
 mortar & pestell my best Brass pottagpott three pewter platters & three
 parring dishes with her name upon them, my greate Carved Chest, And All
 the ffurniture belonging to the parlor Chamber (That is to say) One Joyned
 Beadstead One ffeatherbead Two ffeather bolsters one sett of scarlett
 Curtaines & vallins to the same One Red Rugg One red Counterpen one
 paire of blanketts two paire of sheets & All other ffurniture belonging to the
 said Bead & Beadstead, One ofell Table & fframe Eight Red leather
 Chaires One ffireshouell one paire of ffiretongs And one paire of Iron dogs
 and my Will is that my said daughter shall enter upon the said Goods when
 shee shall Attaine to the Age of twenty years-----

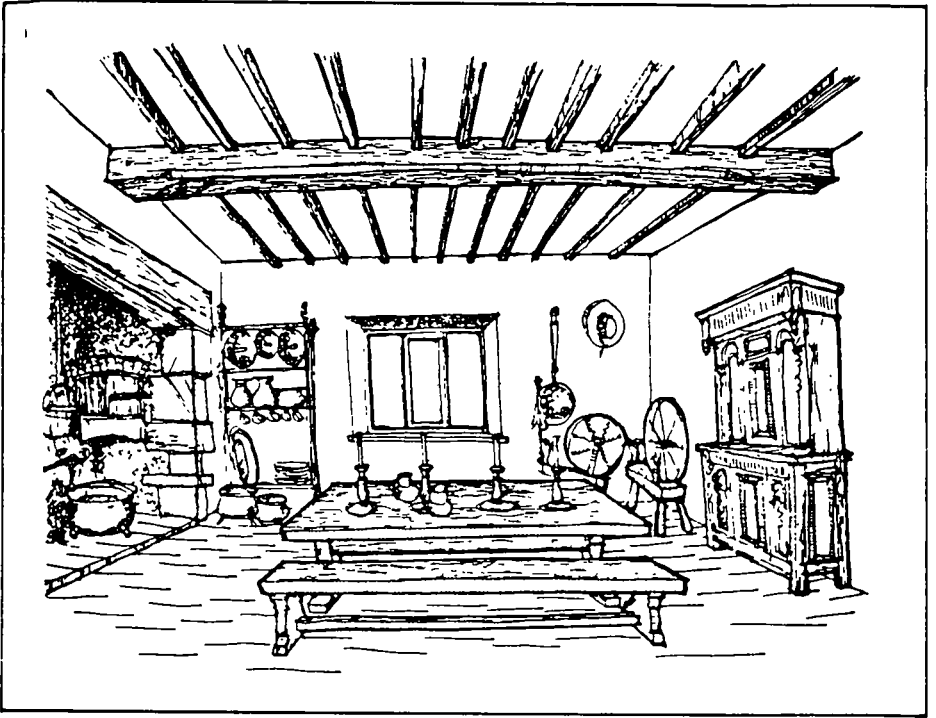
Item I Give and bequeath unto my loving sister Alice Child the sume of
 Twenty shillings of lawfull money of England to be paid her within one yeare
 next after my Decease--

Item All the rest of my Goods Chattells household stuffe & ymplements of
 houshold what soever moveable and unmoveable of what nature or Kind
 soever they bee I doe give & bequeath unto my loveing wife Dorothy whome
 I Doe make my whole & sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament
 & Apoynt to pay my Debts & Legacies In Witnesse whereof I have hereunto
 sett my hand & seale the day & yeare ffirst above written

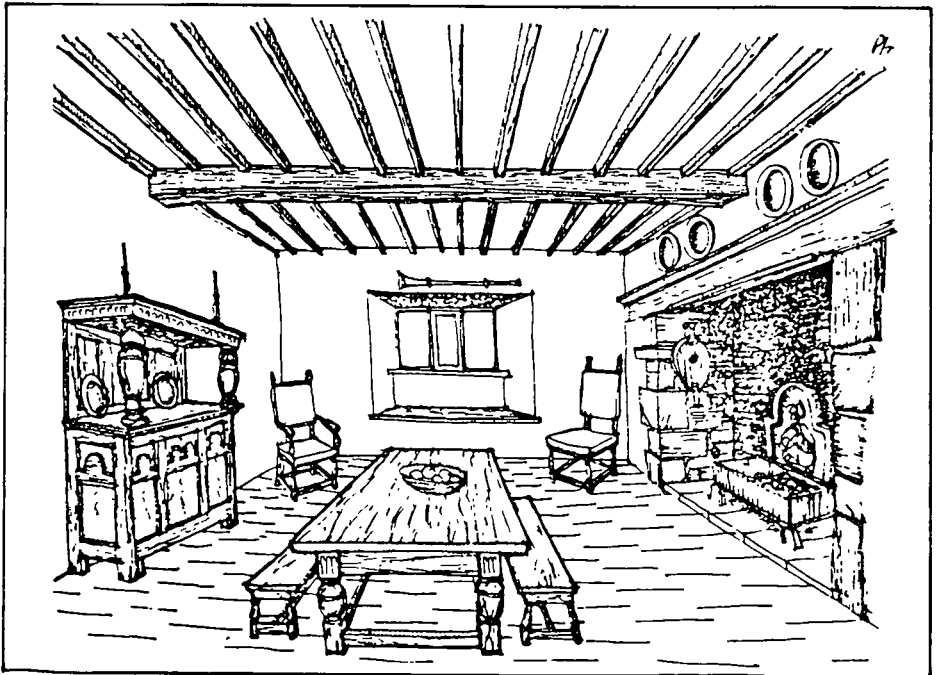
Signed sealed published
 & declared in p^{re} sence of
 Tho Nibb

Alexander Calcott
 his marke

Daniel Calcott
 his marke
 Thomas Child
 his marke
 Tho: Woodford

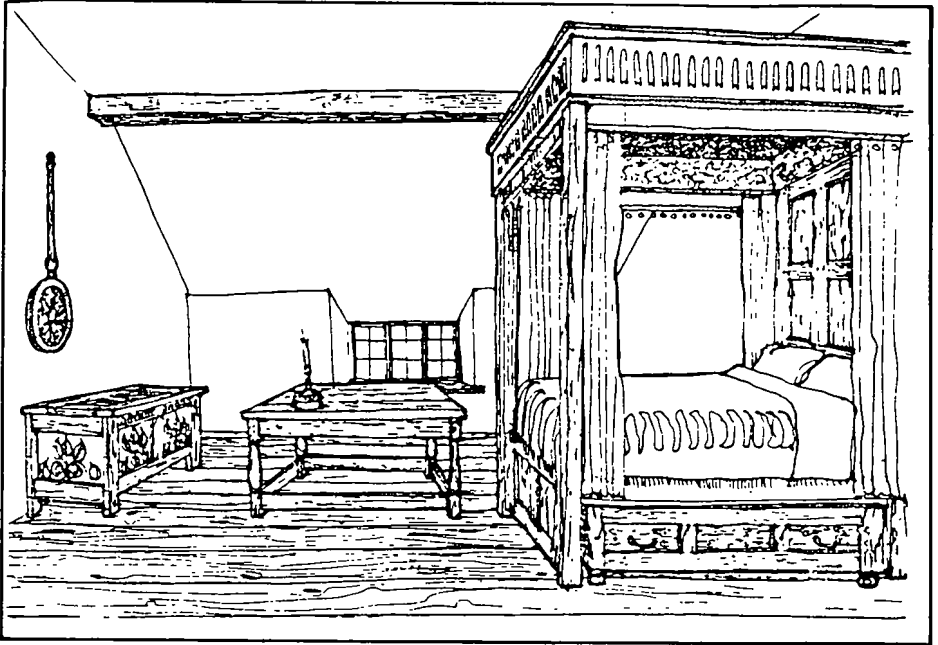


Above, the Hall, below, the Parlour.



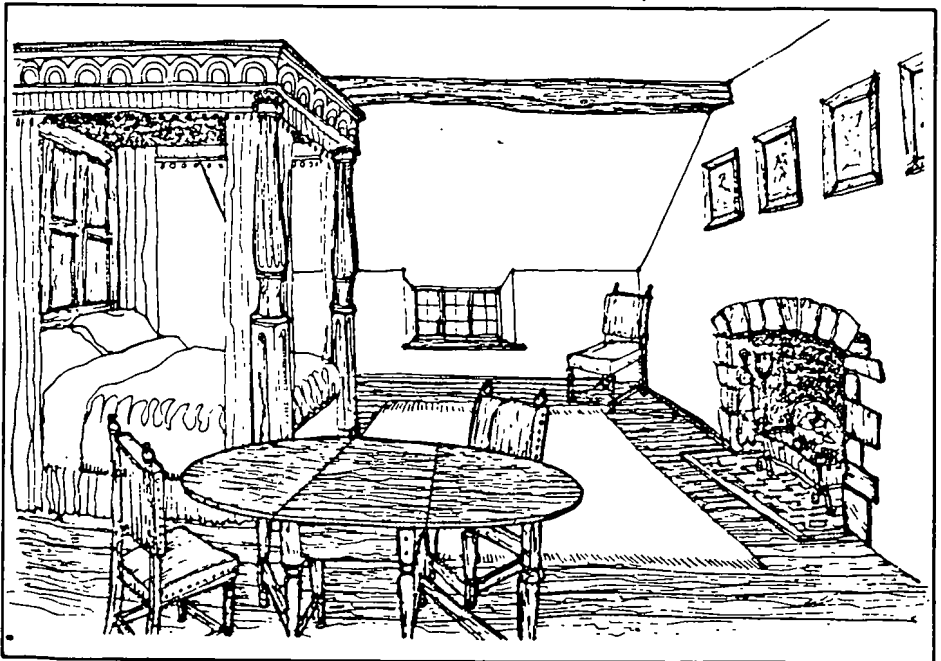
A True and perfect inventory Taken by Daniell Calcott and Thomas Child
 ye 20th. day of december Anno: Dm 1682 of All and singuler ye Goods
 Chatles That Alexander Calcott late of Hookenorton in the county of oxon
 Baker Died seased of as ffolloweth:

	f.	s.	d.
Imprimis his weareng apparell & money in his purse	2.	10.	0.
It- In the Chamber over the parlor one Joyned Beadstead one ffeatherbead one strawbead under it one ffeather Bolster one ffeather pillow and sett of scarlett Curtaines and walins to the same one Red Rugg one red Counterpane one paire of blankets Two paire of sheets	6.	0.	0.
And in the same Roome one offill table & fframe Eight Red Leather Chaires ffoure pictors one litlepaire of dogs one ffire shovell & one paire of ffiretongs	2.	0.	0.
It- In the Chamber over the Hall one Joyned Beadstead one Trucklebead one ffeatherbead one sett of Curtaines & other furniture belonging to the sd bead, one Table & fframe one great Chest & some other ymplomts in that roome	3.	0.	0.
It- In the Chamber over the Backhous one Beadstead one fflockbead with the furniture thereunto belonging ffive old Coffers Two Boxes One Bolting mill & other lumber & ymplements in that roome	2.	10.	6.
It- Three paire of sheets two Table cloathes one Dozen of Napkins two pillow beers & all other small Linnen	1.	10.	0.
It- In the parlor one table & fframe one Cortcuberd ffive Chaires & two Joyned stooles	1.	0.	0.
It- In the Backhouse Onr ffurnis One Dowtrofe two moulding bords & other tooles of trade	4.	0.	0.
It- In the sellor six Barrells two yeilling ffats & other Brueing vesell & two Dozen of hemp Two dozen of glas botles	2.	0.	0.
	0.	2.	0.
It- In the Hall one Table & fframe One Cubbard Too formes one screene one bacon rack one paire of Andirons & other ffire irons One woollen wheele one Linnen wheele One fflich & halfe of Bacon and two shilfes	2.	0.	0.
It- Three Ketles 3 Pottage potts 2 posnets & one warming pan two spitts & two tin pans	1.	10.	0.

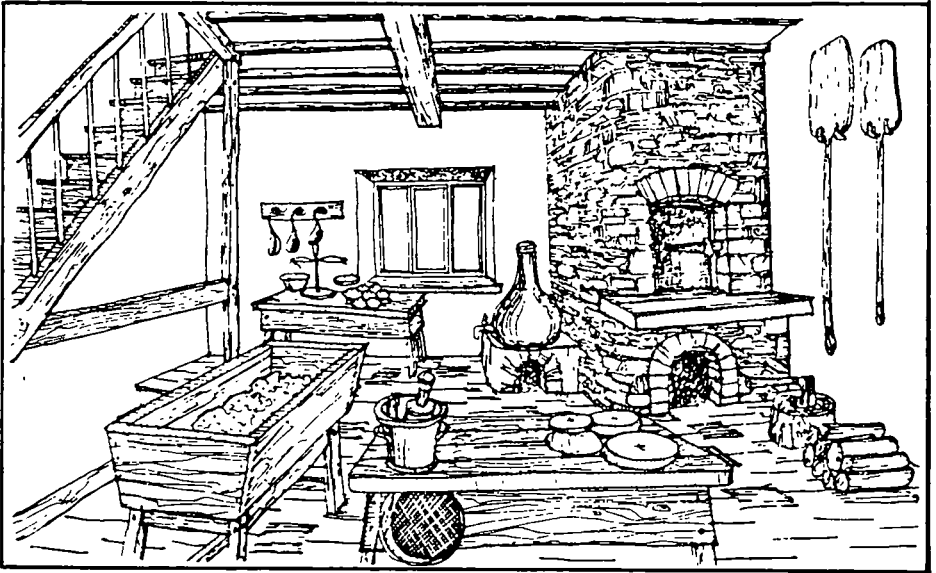


The chamber over the Hall.

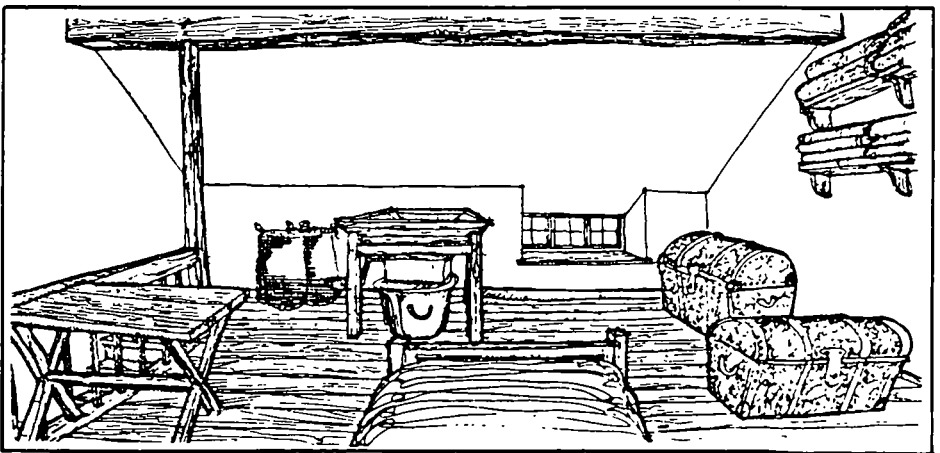
The chamber over the Parlour.



It- Ten pewter platters Eight fflagons 4 pewter candelsticks 4 pewter plates 2 Chamber potts six paringgers & other small pewter & 2 dozen of Trenshers	2. 0. 0.
It- In the stable ffewelhouse & without Doores 500 of furze one hogg & hogswesh ston and all other wood ymplements & lumber about the backside & within doores nott before named	3. 0. 0.
It- Due upon desparat Debts	39. 12. 6.
total is	72. 15. 0.



The backhouse, above, and the chamber above it, below.



THE HOOK NORTON IRONSTONE COMPANIES

The earliest that serious quarrying started at Hook Norton seems to be 1889. However, before this, the presence of ironstone in the area had helped in the final plans for the Banbury and Cheltenham railway in 1874 and the instructions to Mr. Edward Wilson to buy land for a station at Hook Norton, amongst other places. The proposed carriage of ironstone by the railway helped to make it a viable proposition.

Hook Norton Ironstone Partnership.

In 1884, 3 years before the railway opened, the Oxfordshire Ironstone Co. owned land on each side of the railway station site, south of the Banbury road. This land had previously been farmed by the Hiatt family; it was transferred to the Partnership in 1889. Other land at Bloxham and Hook Norton was held on a mortgage by the Bloxham Ironstone Co. and in May 1889 they leased it to the Partnership, with an option to buy, for 21 years at a rent of £75 p.a. plus a "further yearly rent of twopence per ton (of 2520 lbs) for every ton of Ironstone which should be gotten or carried away from or out of the said lands." The Bloxham Co. granted to the Partnership "all the minerals lying and being in or under the said pieces of land and premises and all the liberties which the Bloxham Co. had of getting and removing the minerals with power for that purpose to lay trains and to use such Engines and machinery and make use of such other means as should be found expedient, doing as little damage as might be to the surface of the said lands."

One year later, in May 1890, the Hook Norton Ironstone Partnership paid off the Bloxham Co's mortgage and took absolute title to the mineral rights, buildings and lands. At the same time they took out a mortgage of £1500 with interest at £5% p.a. from Eliza Roberts, a widow of St Johns Wood Road, Middlesex.

Amongst these buildings were the old Hiatt farmhouse and the former Workhouse buildings.

Initially the ore appears to have been dug and loaded straight into mainline rail wagons, for on the eastern side of Hook Norton station a standard gauge rail system was used, operated by a locomotive bought new in November 1889 from Manning Wardle and Co. Ltd., and named 'Hook Norton'. Water for this locomotive was supplied from the stream in the valley, being pumped up by a Blake's Hydrum pump. This pump was in later years connected to East End farm for watering the cattle and providing bath water.

In Station field, now Austin's Way, the ironstone was dug and loaded into horse drawn carts and then taken the short distance to the station yard where it was tipped on to the ground. It was then loaded into railway wagons, initially with the loading flaps down. This was hard work as the wagon floor would be about shoulder height. As the wagon filled the flaps were raised and the ore was loaded over the sides of the wagon, making the work even harder. At times there would be staging and the ore

would be thrown up to this and a second man on the staging would load it into the wagon.

By 1892 these initial quarries were worked out, so further workings were started north of the Banbury road opposite Station field. Ore was loaded into narrow gauge wagons which were then run on a cable system under the Banbury road, across Station field, and down to a tipping dock. There the ore was tipped into full size rail wagons and then taken back under the Banbury road again and up the other side of the embankment to the mainline.

These new sites were known as Townsend Quarry and Hiatt's Pit. An engine house provided the power for the cable system, and in Hiatt's Pit the tramway was worked by the locomotive 'Florence', transferred in 1892 from Adderbury, where the Partnership had opened workings in 1890.

Working continued until the winter of 1902/3, when at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Hook Norton Ironstone Partnership on 23rd February 1903 a special resolution was passed "That the Partnership be wound up voluntarily and that Sidney Thomas Ellis of 55 Thurlow Park Road, W. Norwood S. E., be and he is hereby appointed Liquidator for the purposes of such winding up."

Mr. George Allen, who had taken over the mortgage on the Partnership lands in 1900, was owed £1700 plus interest, a total of £2030. In May 1904 the Partnership and the Liquidator made over the premises to Mr. Allen. A notable piece of equipment, the locomotive 'Hook Norton', was transferred to the main Railway, another creditor, and thereafter worked for the G. W. R. at Weymouth Docks.

H. W. Baker and Sons worked some of the lands and in 1909 Mr. Allen sold the remainder to the Brymbo Steel Co. Ltd. Whether any ore was quarried from this Brymbo land in the intervening 5 years is not clear at present.

H. W. Baker and Sons.

H. W. Baker and Sons were the second concern to extract ironstone at Hook Norton in any quantity, starting about 1895 and continuing to about 1918. They were alone among the concerns in staying with horse and cart transportation from the quarries to the main railway. H. W. Baker was originally from Worcester and moved to Hook Norton upon marrying a member of the Minchin family, who had owned East End Farm since the previous century.

Two pits were worked: the Top Pit on the Sibford Road, which had the better quality ore, and the Bottom Pit, north of the road past the Station and Station field. The Bottom Pit was probably not worked until after the liquidation of the Hook Norton Ironstone Partnership, since they excavated the site of the cable engine house and used the tunnel under the road to Station field.

For most of the time about 20 men and boys were employed, Toppers removed the soil from over the ironstone, keeping the topsoil and

subsoil separate. After the ore was removed the soil was replaced in the correct order, resulting in the reclaimed land quickly recovering for the growing of crops. This practice reflects the farming background of the Baker's, in contrast, it was claimed, to the later Brymbo practice of not keeping the soils separated and so resulting in the Brymbo ground recovering more slowly.

In the early years the ironstone was levered out manually with pickaxes and long levering bars. Later, 'Rockite' was used for blasting and breaking the face more quickly. The ore was then loaded with 7 tine forks into two wheeled horse-drawn tipping carts. With both pits in operation there were about four carts at the Top Pit and three at the Bottom Pit. When full, the horse and carts were led by boys to the siding in the station yard. Whilst the carts were away the men at the face continued to dig out the stone for the next load. The boys were supposed to lead the horses on foot when the carts were full and only ride when they were empty. In all probability, though, they rode on the shafts at all times when they thought no one was looking.

At the station the ore was tipped out and then shovelled into the railways wagons. This was easier than in earlier years with the Hook Norton Ironstone Partnership, as a loading platform was built level with the floor of the wagons. The ironstone was then transported to ironworks at Wrexham and Cardiff.

Work often started at 6 a.m. In the early part of this century the Toppers were paid piecework rates, so no work due to bad weather meant no pay.

Wages were about £1 to 25/- (£1.25) per week, and were paid at the Office, a wooden building, now demolished, at the west end of East End farmhouse. The old Ironstone Partnership tunnel under the Banbury road was used for storage and stables. The horses were once kept in the fields at night, but by 1916 they were kept in the yard and hovel at the back of East End farmhouse.

Operations finished in 1918 with the end of the 1st World War and the decline in demand. However a connection with the industry was kept in later years as Brymbo made a payment to Baker for each ton of Redlands quarry ore transported by tramway across Baker land to the Brymbo kilns.

Earl of Dudley Quarries.

Only brief details are remembered about these quarries, situated at the south side of the southernmost Hook Norton viaduct, by Grounds Farm, which were in occasional operation from 1901 to 1916. A siding came off the mainline at the south end of the viaduct parallel to the Swerford road. From here down to the bottom of the valley and a kiln, and along the valley to the quarry faces, ran an endless metal cable hauling tubs on a tramway. Part of the system fed coal from the sidings to the kiln and engine house using gravity, whilst the main part of the system fed the kiln from the quarry faces and loaded the calcined ore from the

kiln into the railway wagons and was powered by steam. The tubs were pegged to the cable and so could be stopped and started as required.

The main record of the quarries so far seems to be details of the track of the tramway on Ordnance Survey maps of the time.

Brymbo Steel Co. Ltd.

We now come to the biggest and longest lasting of the companies to quarry at Hook Norton.

The Hook Norton Ironstone Co., as distinct from the 'Partnership', started operations in about 1896, becoming the Brymbo Steel Co. Ltd. from 1901. In August, 1898, land south of the main railway line just out of the village on the Banbury road was purchased, together with Park Farm and an access route joining the two sites by the present Brymbo cottages. All this was bought from the Faulkner family.

Initially two kilns were built to dry the iron ore and a two foot gauge tramway was used to move the ore from the quarry site to the kilns.

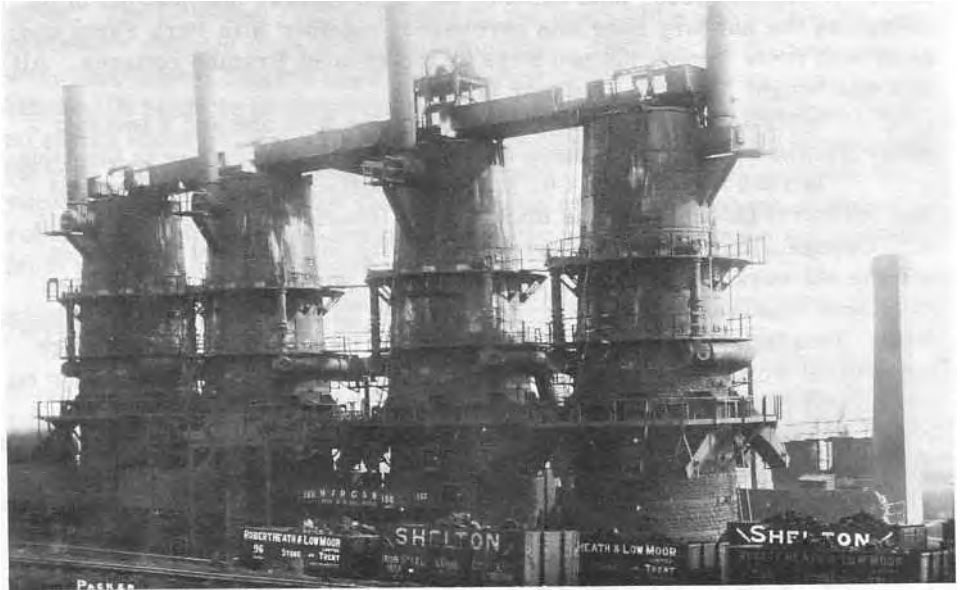
In 1909 the Brymbo Co. bought property and a large amount of land formerly belonging to the Hook Norton Ironstone Partnership from Mr. George Allen. This property included the former Hiatt farmhouse and the old workhouse cottages next to it down Workhouse Lane. Station field (now Austin's Way) and land north of the Banbury road opposite Station field. This latter piece of land reached from the Banbury road, through the present Hollybush road, up through Redlands farm to Wincotts farm on the Sibford road, in all at least 120 acres.

Two months after the above purchase 2 small parcels of land were sold. The first, of 18 acres west of the Sibford road, was presumably sold since it was uneconomical to extract the ironstone. The second parcel comprised the two fields between the south side of the railway station and the stream, and is interesting in that these were part of the original recorded purchase by the Hook Norton Ironstone Partnership and possibly the site of the first ironstone workings in Hook Norton. It is still possible to see behind Glead's, the motorcycle dealers, the remains of the embankment for the Partnership line leading up to the mainline.

In 1911 a small amount of land was bought at Milcombe and then about 1913 two more drying kilns were built, one on each side of the two originals.

With the start of the 1st World War more iron ore was required, so the kilns were worked 24 hrs a day. This was the time of the Ruston Bucyrus steam navvy working the Park quarry. This large machine excavated the quarry face, stone and overburden together, riddled the latter out, and then loaded the stone into the trams to be taken to the kilns. Progress was slower in the wet weather since the riddle tended to become blocked with mud. Enough stone was quarried during the day from Park and Redlands sites to keep the kilns going through the night. The Brymbo kiln site produced its own electricity and so the plant, being all lit up, provided a spectacle to a village without electricity itself at this time.

The 1st World War was also a time when more land was acquired. In February 1916, 60 acres were bought at the north end of Redlands, including Whitehills farm. Later in the year, over 100 acres were bought in Milcombe and Bloxham. This seems to be the last of the land purchases by the Brymbo Co., and with the end of the war production dropped. The park quarry became the only site worked, until July 1925 when Brymbo closed its operations down. Those put out of work had difficulty finding work, and many drifted away from Hook Norton and the surrounding villages during the next few years seeking work. Some were taken on by



Kilns at ironstone workings.

Hook Norton Railway Station

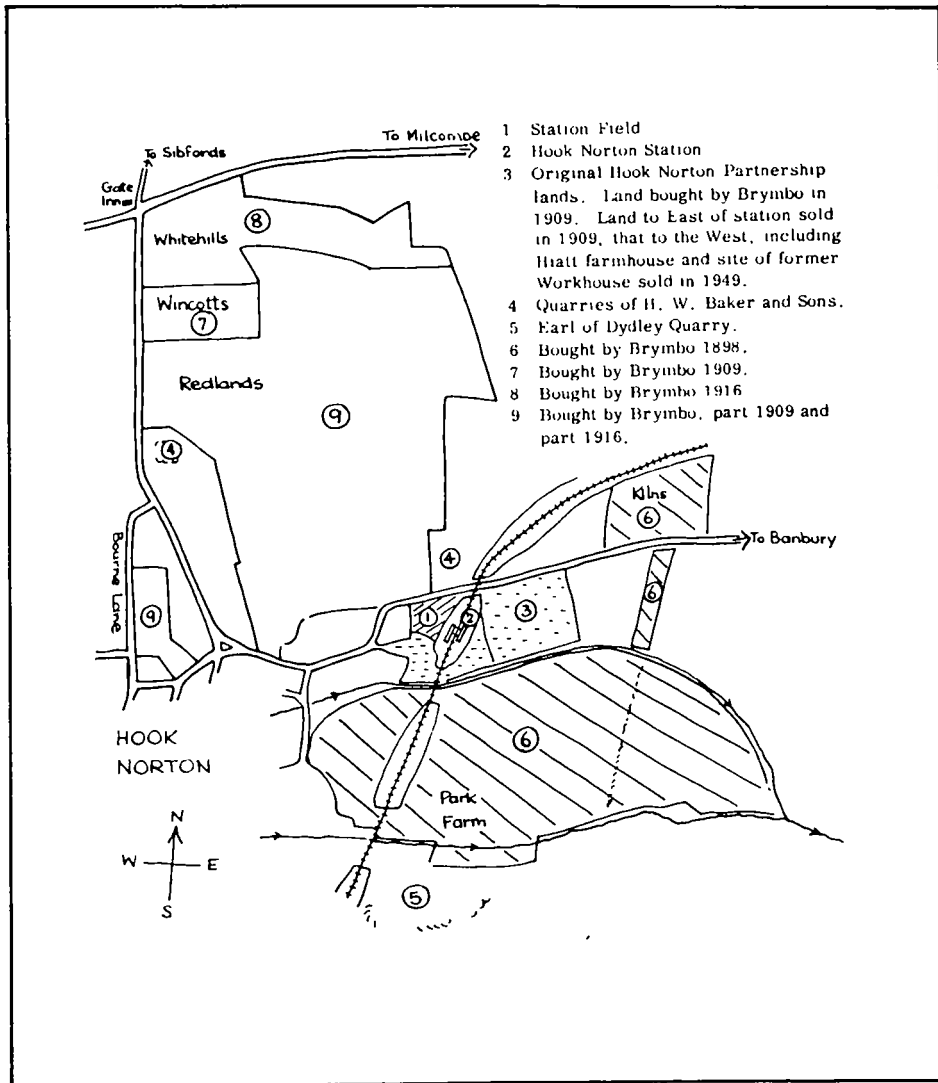


a Contractor digging trenches for a telephone cable, being well used to strenuous work, and many stayed with the Contractor when he moved on to other areas.

In the 1930's Mr. Harmer-Brown took a lease on the workings from Brymbo and restarted one of the kilns for drying the stone.

With the start of the 2nd World War production was increased under the guidance of Brymbo. The Steam Navy had long gone, so two diesel powered diggers were introduced. The end of the war decreased the need for iron and once more production was uneconomic, so the

SKETCH MAP OF HOOK NORTON IRONSTONE WORKINGS



quarries were closed down, this time for good. In 1948 G. Cohen Sons and Co. Ltd. bought the plant and dismantled it the following year. The tramway wagons went to Tanganyika for the groundnuts scheme. The kilns were demolished, except for the bases of the last two built, still visible today. The bases of the earlier two kilns had lime mortar as opposed to cement mortar for the later ones and so were easily demolished. Material from these two was incorporated in the building of the house 'Kilnstone' in Hook Norton village. Most of Brymbo's land was sold by auction back to agricultural use in February 1949.

Now is the time to look more closely at the extraction of the ironstone. The following relates largely to the late 1920's and 1930's but the procedure changed little from the beginnings. Only during the war years were mechanical diggers used, for the rest of the time it was hard manual labour. It tends to be forgotten these days that not so long ago there was no mains water or central heating in Hook Norton. Men would have to get up very early in the morning to walk to work, carrying their cold tea (no vacuum flasks) and food for the day. In the evenings in winter on their return they would be cold and maybe wet through, hands worn and cracked from the work at the frosty face.

The two Brymbo quarry areas differed in ironstone types and the railway wagons had to be labelled accordingly.

The stone from Redlands was known as 'limey' and had to be blown. However, it did not need lime flux in the kilns. The stone from the Park was non-limey and could be excavated with hand tools as it was fairly loose. On the other hand, it did need lime flux in the kilns.

The ironstone in the region is in a well defined layer. First, two foot of earth or 'overburden' on top, then up to 20 foot of ironstone, all on top of a thick bed of clay or marl.

The tramway was laid up to the face and as the face moved back the tramlines were levered sideways to keep them up beside the face. The rail gauge was a nominal two foot.

One locomotive was bought new in 1899 followed by a second in 1915. The third arrived in 1919 and two more came in 1942 during the 2nd World War.

The overburden was cleared first by the 'Toppers', working in pairs and paid by the cubic yard. In 1915 the rate varied from 3d to 4d a cu. yd. with the weekly wage paid usually being just over £1. The Toppers used a navy wheel barrow with an iron wheel and took turns, one filling the other 'running the plank'. 12" planks were laid on trestles over the face and tramway. When the wheelbarrow was full the Topper would run along the planks with it 'seeming to bounce along with the spring of the plank'. At the end the barrow was tipped, usually sideways, the Topper would turn and bring the barrow back after him. The piles of overburden were afterwards levelled out over the marl.

The moving face changed the landscape to that which can be seen

today. Hedges disappeared and the new level surface was up to twenty feet lower than before.

The overburden also contained a certain amount of ironstone for which the Toppers were paid extra for separating. In later years safety regulations required the plankway to be wider, so two planks were placed side by side. The planks became well grooved with the iron wheels of the barrows.

At the Park the face could be broken and loaded without explosives, but in Redlands blasting was required.

Compressed air drills made the holes for firing, the air being piped to the face from a steam driven compressor.

When the train came up the tramway the foreman would set out the tram tubs. He would uncouple three trams, plus an extra one if required, for each pair of Fillers. There were about 15 teams of two men each, paid by the number of trams filled, so they could have extra trams to fill if they wished. Each tram held 20 to 30 cwt. The stone was loaded with 18" wide forks, the earth falling through the tines and so not loaded. The larger pieces of stone were broken with sledgehammers. Since pay depended on the number of trams filled, pieces too large were often loaded until complaints came back from the kilns that too many pieces were too large for the kiln entrance.

With the trams full, one of the engines would take them back to the kilns. The saddletank engines were preferred to the sidetank engines since the latter tended to be unstable on bends and frequently became derailed. At the kilns stone quarried in excess of the immediate capacity of the kilns was stored in the stockshed. When the weather was too bad to work in the quarry men would load this stored stone to keep the kilns working. There was also another refuge in poor weather for men at the top of Redlands, the Gate Inn. The landlady and her mother complained the muddy boots made a mess but it was still business. In bad weather men could quite easily walk from Sibford and Swalcliffe, find they could not work and then walk back home all for no pay as the rates were piece-work.

The Brymbo kilns used the 'American' method. The old method used by Lord Dudley's was to alternate the ironstone with layers of coal and then fire the lot so that when the ore was taken out it was mixed with ash. The Brymbo kilns consisted of steel containers on stone bases in which the stone was dried with burning gas. The gas producer, called the 'Bell' on account of its shape, used coal to produce the gas. It had to be loaded with coal every 10 to 15 minutes. In later years one gas producer was in use, though when all 4 kilns were working there may have been two. The gas was fed to 2 rows of jets inside each kiln.

The quarry trams were lifted to the top of the kilns by a steam driven lift to a gantry running along the line of the kilns. At each kiln was a rotary tippler to tip the trams and load the stone into the kilns.

Younger men were usually in the team at the top of the kilns. The stone passed through the kiln from top to bottom passing two rows of 3 gas jets, being dried in the process. It stayed at the bottom for 2 to 3 hrs. and was then loaded, relatively cool, via the 6 chutes of each kiln into railway wagons for transporting to the steelworks, where up to 26% iron was extracted.

The team operating the kilns moved from one to the other as required. The team consisted of 1 man at the steam boiler, 2 at the gas producer, 1 to load the lift at the bottom and another to operate the lift. At the top 2 or 3 Tippers put the stone into the kilns and finally 2 men operated the chutes to the railway wagons.

In the early days a 6 day week was worked, each "day" being two 12 hr shifts from 6 o'clock to 6 o'clock. In the 1920's a 3 shift system was introduced. Each Saturday the plant was shut down at 2 p. m. until 2 p. m. on Sunday. During this 24 hrs. tar was cleaned out of the kilns and the gas jets cleaned. Entry was through a special hole, which afterwards was re-sealed with fireclay. The gas jets were then re-lit by holding a lighted paper and rag torch through a hole in the side of the kiln.

When the use of the kilns was discontinued in the 1920's the ironstone was loaded directly into the mainline railway wagons. The tramway was built up on to a gantry so that the trams could be tipped directly into the wagons.

In 1915 the weekly pay for most men was just over £1, with variations due to piecework. In later years when weekly pay could include a £5 note some men took a delight in annoying the landlord of the Sun by offering this, knowing he would be short of change. By 1937 wages had crept up to £21 for a 48 hr. week.

So ends a general description of the Hook Norton ironstone workings. There are still many signs of the former workings in view, but with time the plant and buildings are disappearing leaving just the old quarry faces and lower field levels. Memories too are going, so any further details, stories etc. would be gratefully received before they fade altogether.

Roger Gorton

Sources

The Banbury and Cheltenham Railway by J. H. Russell.

The Ironstone Railways and Tramways of the Midlands by E. S. Tonks.

OCRO Misc. Allen 1/1 - 1/5 for mortgages relating to the Hook Norton Ironstone Partnership.

OCRO Sale Catalogue 1909, and 1949 Sale catalogue for purchases and sale of land by the Brymbo Steel Co. Ltd.

Miss M. Baker for details concerning H. W. Baker and Sons.

Mr. F. Beale for details concerning working methods.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

The files of the 'Banbury Guardian' are a useful source of information about Hook Norton and the happenings in the village in the last century. The quantity of news per annum varies considerably. This may be because there was not much news or because the correspondent was not very active. Here is a selection of items:-

1858

April Officers of the parish elected. Overseers: J. Lockett, J. Williams. Surveyors: J. Pearce, E. Walford, S. French, H. Checkly. Guardians: W. Minchin, J. Godson. Constables: H. Heydon, S. Osborne, E. Phipps.

1859

July Terrible storm with hailstones as big as pullet's eggs. Gale blew down trees and haystacks.

July and

October Sale of Nill Farm - 317 acres of growing corn, 58 acres of grazing. Stock and implements - 27 carthorses, mares and foals, 9 wagons, 18 ploughs.

1870

Sept. Banbury Agricultural Society award of long service prize of £1 to George Busby for 37 years service with Mr John Bury of Hook Norton.

1872

Jan. Presentation of gold watch to Rev. J. Allen on leaving the Baptist Chapel after 8 years ministry.

April Hook Norton choir annual concert in the National School. Soloist Miss Burr from London.

May Two open air meetings to try to start a branch of the Labourers' Union. About 70 men joined.

Sept. Hook Norton Post Office open for telegraphic business, 20 words for one shilling. Office open 8 am to 7 pm weekdays; 8 to 10 am Sundays.

Dec. Out of 150 children at the village school 110 have measles. A soup fund started to give 2 distributions to needy families.

1873

May Annual Club Day celebrations. Extra policemen called in but not needed.

1874

April Well attended open air meeting of the Agricultural Workers Union. 3 Speakers and 20 joined.

Value of rector's living increased to £200 per annum.

Three carriers operating into Banbury weekly - Mr Hall 3 days, Mr Lockett every day, Mr Waterman 3 days.

1875

May A large gathering at the laying of the foundation stone of the new

- Methodist Chapel. Public tea and meeting in the Baptist Hall followed. Collection £224.
- Aug. Mr Joseph Arch, founder of the Agricultural Workers Union spoke at an open air meeting in Whichford, over 2,000 people present.
- 1876
- Jan. Free passages to New Zealand offered to farm workers, navvies, nurse maids and dairy maids.
- Feb. Sale at Cowpasture farm of 37 oak trees, 58 ash trees and 7 elm trees.
- March Spelling Bee held in the National School. 19 competitors. "finalists were Mr J. Osborne and Mr H. Minchin. The prize of £1 was won by Mr Minchin for spelling Authentic, Atheneum, and Automation correctly."
- April Tollkeeper at Gagingwell fined for making a Methodist minister pay the toll of 4p on a Sunday.
10 inches of snow fell on Good Friday.
William Cross who fought at Waterloo died aged 83. He had a pension of 1/3d. per week.
- Sept. The Banbury and Cheltenham Railway shareholders were given a report on the extensive work of building the line through Hook Norton. The South Hill cutting was the deepest yet cut in Britain. It was 76 feet deep and an estimated 800,000 cubic yards of rock and clay were to be excavated. There were over 2,000 men and 120 horses working there at that time.
A young man was injured in the 'Cutting'. He was taken by horse drawn wagon to Banbury Hospital but bled to death on the journey. Mr W. Gilkes of Hook Norton was killed when clay fell on him in the 'Cutting'.
Hook Norton was reported to be a very lively place at this time with hundreds of hard drinking navvies living in and around the village.
- 1878
- May Concert arranged by the Headmaster for the Schoolmasters and Mistresses Benevolent Institution. Proceeds £7.
- 1880
- Jan. Reports of very bad weather added to the depression in the farming industry. In August 1879 an average of only 4 hours sunshine per day, and 40 inches of rain that year against an average of 26 inches.
- Nov. A second delivery of mail has started as the result of a petition signed by every resident.
- 1881
- Jan. The much loved Rector, the Rev Rushton died. He was found kneeling by his bedside with an open Bible in front of him. He had been Rector for 40 years.

- Terrible blizzard and several local deaths. A miller's drayman was found in a lonely shed after a whole week.
- Feb. Ivy House Close with 1 acre sold for £162.
Mrs Minchin hurt by a run-away horse which was caught by 3 publicans.
- May Census returns for Hook Norton show Males 623. Females 609.
Inhabited houses 308, uninhabited 34.
- Sept/Nov. To let, Rectory Farm 125 acres : Marsh Farm 90 acres.
- 1882
- Mar. For Sale : 2 cottages in Down End, one including a lime house.
Serious trouble reported from the National School. Mr Etchells the Headmaster was forced to resign because he would not conform to the High Church teachings that the new Rector, Rev Cox, wanted to introduce. Mr Etchells had been Headmaster for 15 years and had always had glowing reports from his Inspectors. At a meeting of the shareholders of the Banbury and Cheltenham Railway Company it was decided to raise more money to be able to complete the line. Work had been closed down for several years as they had run out of money owing to the high cost of the section through Hook Norton.
- 1883
- April A new churchwarden, Mr Lovell, was not appointed in the correct manner. A poll was held. The 2 candidates held banners - 'Lovell and the Truth', 'Hiatt and the People's Privilege'. Result of Poll Mr Hiatt 169, Mr Lovell 98.
- July 3 day sale of timber and tools for Mr John Hatton, carpenter and wheelwright.
- May Another sad death of a railway navvy. He was eating some fried pork at his evening meal at the 'Bell' when he choked to death before a doctor could be fetched.
- August Near riot of navvies. They held their manager hostage when their ganger disappeared with their wages. A large number of police from Banbury and Chipping Norton were called to restore order.
- Nov. Navvy working on the railway sentenced to 2 months hard labour for stealing 6 fowls from Whitehills farm.
- 1885
- June Reported the railway was to be completed by the Great Western Railway Co.
- Dec. 2 more men killed at the railway workings, this time by the collapse of scaffolding on one of the piers of the viaducts.
- 1887
- Feb. Bridge House to let - 3 sitting rooms and 11 bedrooms.
- April On the 6th of this month the GWR started the first passenger service with 4 trains each way to Banbury and Kingham. This was

after 12 years of stop-start building and 5 fatal accidents. There was no opening ceremony.

A monthly cattle market was started in Mr Hiatt's field, near the new railway station. 314 sheep, 25 cattle and 50 pigs were sold. Buyers came from Banbury, Leamington and Chipping Norton. Sheep £2 each.

- June Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee celebrations on June 16. Church bells at 6 am, church service at 11 am, procession, sports all day, meat tea, bonfire at night. Special late train from Banbury. First railway excursion to Portsmouth. 500 tickets allocated to Hook Norton, Bloxham, and Adderbury and all sold quickly.
- July Scotland House for sale with small farm of 23 acres pasture and 36 acres arable. Mr John Harris, owner of the brewery, bought it and moved in from the small farm nearby where he had founded the brewery in 1849.

Fred Beale

A FOOTNOTE ON HOOK NORTON BREWERY

In 1849 John Harris, a young farmer, moved from Chilson, near Charlbury, to a farm at Scotland End, Hook Norton. The farm had a malt house so he was able to set up in business as a maltster and supply brew houses in the area. At that time many farmers, publicans and large house owners brewed their own beer as a matter of course.

John Harris found that Hook Norton had abundant spring water and he began brewing himself in about 1856 (when records begin). He enlarged the malthouse in 1865 and in 1872 he constructed a small brewery.

He died in 1887 and his son John Henry Harris and nephew Alban Clarke took over and expanded the business. Trade increased to such an extent that new stables, offices and a complete new brewery were built between 1894 and 1899. All these premises still stand and are in regular use.

In 1917 Alban Clarke had a fatal accident on his bicycle. His son William Alban Clarke was at the time too young to join the firm but by 1928 he was old enough and in that year he began his long life as a brewer at Hook Norton. He carried on until his death in 1982 - nearly 54 years of brewing. His son, David Clarke, is the present Head Brewer.

VILLAGE DISSENTERS:

Hook Norton Baptist Chapel and its Chapelyard

Religious dissent has long played a major part in developing the distinctive character of Hook Norton. The strength of nonconformity helped to stamp its character as an 'open' village in the 19th century, with a broad and varied range of landholding, occupations and religious allegiance and with no big house, in marked contrast to nearby smaller, 'closed' villages dominated by landowners and parson, like Swalcliffe, Swerford, and Broughton. The particular flavour that nonconformity lent to local affairs comes over vividly in the memories of older villagers today.¹ For example trips to Banbury were a rare excursion for many villagers in the 1910's but one exception for the Baptist Sunday School children, who competed in the annual area scripture examination, was a trip to the Banbury prize giving and tea. All piled into Mobley's horse drawn, four-wheeled carrier's van. Teas played a large part in the local nonconformist memory, especially for chapel anniversaries or the annual Sunday School treats, often held in the grounds of one of the influential local supporters of the chapel, like the Baptist Gibbs family at Cowpasture farm.

One feature of village nonconformity was its great variety. When Britain's only official census of religious worship was taken in 1851 Hook Norton had 365 Church of England sittings (claimed attendance at the main service on census Sunday 375); 120 Quaker sittings (attendance 11); 300 Baptist sittings (attendance 140); 260 Wesleyan Methodist sittings (attendance 174); and 100 Primitive Methodist sittings (attendance 100).² The range and local history of the chapels represents what is virtually a microcosm of the development of nonconformity nationally. 'Old dissent' (pre-Wesleyan Methodist) is represented chiefly by the Baptists who claim the foundation of their local congregation as early as 1644³ and, despite the persecution of its preachers and adherents between 1660 and 1689, emerged to establish a substantial chapel building and other property and to play an important part in local affairs down to the present day. Old dissent is also represented by the Quakers who opened a meeting house at Hook Norton in 1705⁴ which persisted until 1880, with revivals up to 1932. The coming of a major wave of 'new dissent' is epitomised in the village by the fact that it was to the Primitive Methodists that the Quakers leased their then unused meeting house as a chapel in 1882.⁵ Methodism was first recorded in Hook Norton when the Wesleyans were licensed to meet in the house of Robert Heydon in 1794.⁶ They gradually grew in strength, progressing to a separate chapel at Down End and then, in 1875, to the present and grander Gothic building in what is now Chapel Street. The Primitive Methodists came later. They are first mentioned in local directories in 1854 and met at various places, finally in a now disused building at East End. They tended to be less prosperous than the other chapels, with more working class members and particular reliance on lay preachers. However

it is difficult to characterise the different nonconformist congregations. There were the four main groups and each had its own distinctive character and its fluctuating fortunes. In addition there were at various times less long-lived but interesting groups. At the turn of the century two Salvation Army girls tried to set up a mission in the village in two cottages still called the Barracks by some people. The Zion Strict Baptist chapel also made its mark. It was sternly Calvinist, with only unaccompanied singing at its services, which were addressed for up to two hours at a time by visiting lay preachers from as far away as Cheltenham, Leicester and Coventry. Its mainstay for many years was Mr. Lightfoot, Excise Officer at the Brewery.⁷ The variety of dissent meant that whilst some families were, for example, Baptist families for generations others sampled the varying religious styles, beliefs and social ethos of several or all the local places of worship at different times, or even went to the parish church on the Sunday morning and chapel later!

Whatever the individual or family allegiance, or lack of it, church and chapel were important in Hook Norton. Education was dominated from its opening in 1855 by the Anglican National School. Mr. Fred Beale recalls how 'five years' perfect attendance at school, never absent, never late' earned you a silver watch. George Matthews achieved this:

'He did seven years' perfect attendance, never absent, never late. And his watch came. And he was a Baptist. Staunch Baptists, his parents were; and they went to (Baptist) Sunday School, he and his brother ... he was told to go up to the Rectory one evening ... and he went to the back door ... and the servant handed it to George out of the back door of the Rectory. A year or two after, another lad ... left school and he'd done six or seven years. His name was Gardner ... and he was at work for Mr. Baker - there was jobs for boys at Mr. Baker in those days. They were hauling iron ore by horse and cart up the Sibford Road, hauling it to the station, and then a man shifted it into the truck. And he was given a half day, I think it was on a Friday afternoon, to come to school and be presented with his watch in front of the whole school by the Rector.'

The Gardners were not Baptists.

Local politics were also a lively business closely linked with church and chapel allegiances. There was the memorable occasion when Mr. Thomas, a Methodist and Liberal who kept one of the local shops, woke up to find his premises had been completely blue-washed overnight. The 'Brewery gang' were blamed, 'because they had the ladders you know'. Certainly the Clark and Harris families who ran the Brewery were leading Tories in the village whilst if you were a nonconformist the chances were you would also vote Liberal.

Direct memories of this kind bring home the large part noncon-

formity played in village life early this century but the written and printed record emphasises a much longer tradition of three hundred years. The Baptists are particularly lucky in the extent of their surviving records, which include a membership list as early as 1699, and which are safely deposited in the Oxfordshire Record Office⁸ with transcripts available in the village. Because of this availability, because of restrictions on space and because of their intrinsic interest, it is intended to spend the rest of this account in looking at the Baptist chapel in Hook Norton and at its graveyard. They can reveal much about village dissenters and, because of weathering to gravestones and the possibility of changes to buildings, it was on this aspect that the Hook Norton Parish Survey Group concentrated its attentions.

The present chapel is a simple box-shaped building with a hipped roof and elegant delicate iron traceried windows. It was built in 1787 and retained until recently a typical, although repainted, interior of the period with box pews, galleries and a sunken baptistry in front of the pulpit which holds the central position at the east end. The chapel lies at the centre of the village, not tucked away, and this illustrates the relative social importance of many dissenters, particularly benefactors like William Horwood who in 1718 gave the site, made 'a commodious decent place of worship' and gave a house for the minister, three almshouses, 'and some land besides'⁹, an endowment of almost Anglican proportions. So despite the fact that in 1669 the Hook Norton Baptists were facing persecution and about 60 of them led by 'persons such as were soldiers under Lambert' were meeting monthly in James Wilmot's house,¹⁰ and that in 1738 the local incumbent told Bishop Secker that there were 18 families of Anabaptists 'of mean rank'¹¹ (led by Daniel Wilmot son of James), the Baptists were in fact well established materially.

One way in which we can be sure that the original Horwood chapel stood on the present site is by looking at the 75 gravestones in the chapel yard. They date from 1719 to 1874,¹² showing the yard in use for burials very soon after Horwood's gift in 1718, the date of which appears on a stone reset into the north wall of the later chapel. The yard also had a yew tree, a Victorian gothic schoolroom of 1873 and a notable absence of gravestones near the roadway. This is explained by the fact that the schoolroom stands on part of the site of earlier cottages fronting the road, which are also evidenced by a covered well in this otherwise empty part of the yard.

The 75 gravestones are nearly all of the local orange-red ironstone which is subject to weathering and lichen growth. It was therefore decided to survey all the stones. A location plan was prepared and the orientation, size, condition, decoration and inscription of each stone recorded on a record card, using the Council for British Archaeology format.¹³ With care it was possible to make some record of 73 stones (two were broken off leaving a stump).

The date distribution of the stones is as follows:

1719-49	10
1750-99	24
1800-49	27
1850-99	7
Uncertain	5

The majority thus date from the time of the present chapel although there are some fine early 18th century stones, like the one to Matthew Turner of Pudlicott in the parish of Charlbury dated 1753. Whilst the numbers for each period reflect church membership in some measure they also show the growing accessibility of memorials as more people could afford them. The marked fall at later dates reflects the opening up of a second burial ground in Bury Orchard, yet another benefaction to the chapel and separated from the adjoining parish churchyard only by a low wall. The stones show that changing tastes applied equally to Baptists and Anglicans: Matthew of Pudlicott's stone is every bit as grand as those found in Anglican plots. There is however a marked contrast between the elaboration of such stones, employing the familiar imagery of resurrection in the winged cherub, and the stark simplicity of the chapel itself, a contrast which seems to stress the nonconformist emphasis on simplicity of earthly life in the hope of the joys of heavenly life.

The inscriptions reveal that Hook Norton Baptists did not go in for elaborate epitaphs or, more surprisingly, biblical quotations. Only 9 of 73 stones bear a biblical text and 5 of these date from after 1848. In this later period the memorials generally follow 'pattern book' conventions of design to a much greater degree.

The stones cover a period when the chapel was still a 'gathered church'. As one of the longest established congregations, at a time when there were relatively few other Baptist chapels in the area, it was still normal for preachers and worshippers to travel considerable distances to a meeting house such as Hook Norton. Matthew Turner seems to be a case in point. 16 stones relate to non-Hook Norton families of which 10 date from before 1799, 4 between 1800 and 1850 and 2 are undated. This seems to reinforce the evidence for an increasingly localised membership, particularly as more chapels opened, like the Particular Baptist Chapel at Chipping Norton in 1773. The 'outside' places mentioned here and in church records show an interesting catchment area, concentrated to the north and east of the village.

An interesting approach is to look for groupings of stones. Non-conformist chapels are often said to be particularly dependent on continuity of support through family networks. Only 13 of 73 stones commemorate particular single families. No less than 60 are accounted for by family groups. 44 of these are in groups of 3 or more. Several families have 4-5 stones and one, the Walfords, 12. In these cases they are not all clustered together, the date grouping suggesting they simply ran out of

space to keep all the family in one area of the yard. The only other significant grouping is that of the chapel's ministers, appropriately clustered in the SW corner nearest the chapel door.

In 1795 the parish gravedigger of Kingsbridge (Devon), Robert Phillip, left the following epitaph:

'Here lie I at the chapel door,
Here lie I because I'm poor
The farther in the more you'll pay,
Here lie I as warm as they.'

Not everybody was commemorated in the Baptist chapelyard. The wall tablets in the chapel were examined to see who did get in there and if the same rules of social status and wealth applied as in most churches. There are 12 wall tablets, dating between 1720 and 1907, at first suggesting that commemoration (but not burial) in the chapel took place for as long as memorials were being put up in the yard. However nobody was commemorated in the chapel before 1790 with the two major exceptions of William Harwood, who gave the meeting house site (1720) and George Westbury who gave Bury Orchard (1728). Major benefactors did get in obviously, but it is not until the very end of the century that others, in the shape of the wife of a member of the Clockmakers' Company of London in 1790, appear. The other, later tablets all relate to families already appearing in the yard, including 3 more Walfords. The only exception to these rules is the remarkable Hannah Luckett who died in 1897 aged 103, and whose longevity is attributed to warm beer and bread and cheese taken in the middle of the morning.

It is hoped that this survey has been able to convey something of the continuity, significance and flavour which nonconformity contributed to village life in Hook Norton.

Kate Tiller

SOME FIELD NAMES IN THE PARISH OF HOOK NORTON

The study of Field Names can be of general interest and of specific information, general in the sense that names can mean more or less the same over a large area, specific as to topographical conditions in a particular place.

In Hook Norton some of the names are related to certain features; "Thremwelle" (OS) of the 13th C. means three streams (PN), which can be identified to the west of the village where three streams converge.

"Ludewelle" (OS) of the same period and place, today Ledwell, meaning Loud stream (PN), was an obvious choice for the name because of the noise of the three streams meeting.

Flexhill, nearby, 13th C "Flaxlonde" (OS) tells us that flax was grown in the area.

"The Mersh" (OS) or the Marsh of today, is where, before the advent of large scale agricultural drainage in the 18th and 19th centuries, the land would have been flooded in the winters; it is situated in a flattish area.

"Langdene" (OS) in 1260 seems to have been applied to the valley sweeping down from Oatley Hill towards the Stour stream; but by at least the late 17th C the name was changed to Longdon (MD). Today Longdon is on the side of Oatley Hill; the name seems to have been changed from valley (dene) to hill (don) illustrating the complexity of the subject.

One of the oldest names is "Prestfelde" (OS) today Priest Top, implying a connection with the church. In 1150 Henry d'Oilly confirmed his father's gift of this area to Oseney Abbey, founded 1129 (OX).

Butter Hill on the present Ordnance Maps was "Butterhulle" (OS). It was also given to Oseney Abbey at the same time and named probably from the richness of its pasture, the clayey slopes yielding better grass than the stony soil around the village.

"Stapulhulle" (OS), also 13th C meaning steel hill (PN), can be seen by anyone who climbs the area from any side; it is today called Stapenhill.

Jumping a few centuries and mentioning in passing Cowperry Field 1672 (OX) we come to the Enclosure Act of 1774 and a different set of names. Some would have been in use many centuries before, others would have been given direct to the many small fields enclosed as a result of the Act. Alexander Plain and Far Ground indicate fields some distance from the village. Pudding Furlong, Thistle Leys, Stonepit Ground, The Sands, Sowerlands and Redlands give the type and state of the soil etc.

From early times up to the present, owners and occupiers of land have had their names attached to it, cf Jacque's Ground, Shirley's Ground, Scott's Hedge Ground, Burgess Barn Ground, Gardner's Ground or Toby's Ground; the names of some fields have not changed at all for years in cases like Five, Six or Seventeen Acres, until the removal of hedges this century.

Our field names of Great and Little Castle indicate the presence of an old British Camp, now ploughed out.

The Butts, a name given to more than one field, can have a number of meanings, either irregularly shaped pieces of land abutting on to the Common Field, or related to archery.

This is just a brief outline of what can be an interesting and absorbing subject.

Percy Hackling

References

- OS English Register of Oseney Abbey 1913 A. Clark
PN Oxfordshire Place Names (pub. Place Name Society)
MD History of Hook Norton 1928 Miss M. Dickins
OX Oxfordshire, 1977 G. Stevenson MA.
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THEODORE LAMB : A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

(see note on page 242 of Summer 1982 issue)

Theodore Lamb was brought up in the Sibford Quaker fraternity, the son of a wealthy and respected family. He was a conscientious objector in World War One, for which he was brought to Court in July, 1916 (Banbury Guardian, 8.7.1916). Lamb was renowned throughout the region for his eccentricity. He lived the life of a hermit, cutting himself off from all society, and disowned by his family. He dressed in rags and grew his hair and beard long. People referred to him as Joshua.

Local legend has it that the reason for his adopting an ascetic existence and contravening existing social norms, is that, as a young man not long out of college, he was crossed in love. The parents of the girl from Chipping Norton whom he was courting prevailed upon her to cut herself off from him. This is said to have broken Theodore's heart and propelled him into his eccentric lifestyle, which he maintained till the end of his life.

I have already collected a certain amount of information about Lamb, but this only provides a bare outline of his character and behaviour. I should like to appeal for further information, of any kind. If anyone has any memories of him, if anyone has any photographs or other documents relating to him, I should be most grateful if they would contact me. All help will be acknowledged. Please write to me at the following address: 21 Holmlands Park North, Sunderland SR2 7SE.

Michael Pickering

BOOK REVIEWS

Warwickshire Grazier and London Skinner 1532-1555. The Account Book of Peter Temple and Thomas Heritage.

Published for the British Academy by the Oxford University Press. £29. 281 pages.

This is an excellently produced book, with something for everybody. Those who can afford it should buy it; others should borrow it.

The story is built round the accounts of Peter Temple of Burton Dassett, and to a minor extent of his relative Thomas Heritage who, a member of the Skinners' Company, traded in wool and general merchandise. Apart from the utilitarian goods needed by a sheepfarmer, Thomas sent to his country customers hogsheads of claret, almonds, rice, sugar, figs, raisins and spice. That is just one example of how the accounts throw light on the life of a modernising 16th century farmer.

Something for everybody. Here is the detail of the 16th century enclosure of much of Burton Dassett for livestock farming; the still visible result is the magnificent church, almost alone among the fields where a market once filled it with prayers. Here is the unique account of cattle trading, the buying and fattening of Welsh cattle, and their sale in many markets including Banbury. Here set out are the profits of sheep rearing, and of the sale of wool. The cost of building a house, the wages paid to servants, the relationship between the manor and the landholders, fee and copyholders, within its boundaries. Here is literally a field-day for local and social historians. There is even interest for accountants in the careful recording by Peter Temple of every detail of his transactions, as he built up his wealth from very little to the embryo of a great estate.

To many it will be the great estate which interests most, and the genealogy which here began and grew into one of the great houses of England. The Temples were linked to the Spencers, both growing by similar means from small beginnings to take their place in national history. It was Peter's son John who set up independently at Stowe, and his descendants who built the house and formed the park which, though sold and the contents dispersed, still amaze.

Apart from the price, there is little fault one can find with this book; one might wish that it were longer; there is plenty of scope for others to analyse and expand on what is here clearly set out.

D. E. M. F.

PORTRAIT OF OXFORDSHIRE. CHRISTINE BLOXHAM. PUB. ROBERT HALE, LONDON. 224 pages, £8.25.

Christine Bloxham has made a valuable addition to the popular Portrait series which numbers over 80 books covering most of the British Isles. It has been a demanding task, for this is not just a historical study of the county but offers an introduction to its topography, communications, industry sociology and farming, to say nothing of legend, folk-lore, crafts and lifestyles, past and present. The 1974 boundary changes have been taken into account and The Vale of the White Horse gets due treatment.

Miss Bloxham's expertise in local crafts and folklore comes through strongly and enriches almost every chapter. She dutifully surveys the county's geology and industry, but is always ready to lure the reader away with local legend or revive his interest with a good story. Not that serious matters are neglected. Over 40 country houses are surveyed - Blenheim, Broughton and Nuneham Courtenay in some detail. The county's rail, road and canal systems are clearly analysed, farming has a chapter to itself, and a dozen or so towns, including Banbury, are succinctly studied. When it comes to describing the villages, her task becomes impossible. A mere glance at the packed map at the end of the book shows the dozens of villages which deserve a mention. She might have been more eclectic, but villages are individualistic and it is a brave writer who would select a few to typify the many. Oxford has a lively chapter to itself, though it has a separate book in this series.

To new-comers this book is an excellent introduction to the county; to established residents it is a useful refresher; to exiles it evokes nostalgia, but for all readers there are diverting snippets of information, both surprising and entertaining. The bizarre death of Earl Harcourt, the activities of the Oxford fishermen, the Rogationtide blessing at Oddington - these and countless other intriguing episodes add a delightful dimension to this book. There is a useful bibliography, a full index and fine, varied photographs.

It is hard to believe that Christine Bloxham has lived in Oxfordshire for little over a decade. She knows the county and we hope she will long continue both her work on its history and her connection with the Society.

G.J. Fothergill

The Illustrated Journeys of Celia Fiennes 1685-c1712. Edited by Christopher Morris; published by Macdonald and Co. in association with Webb and Bower; 248 pp; £12.95.

The diaries of Celia Fiennes' journeys were first published in 1888; but researchers and the general public had to wait until 1947 for what in his preface Dr G.M. Trevelyan called a definitive edition with a long introduction and notes by Christopher Morris. Unfortunately that edition was in preparation under war-time conditions when many records were buried underground, and the actual publication by the Cresset press had to be in utility format. It has long been out of print.

A new edition is therefore most welcome. It retains the advantage of editing and introduction by Christopher Morris, who has revised his comments and notes where needed by new information now available. The book is in attractive format, lavishly illustrated in colour and in black and white with copies of contemporary or near contemporary pictures of many places visited by Celia Fiennes. The general public now has available a pleasing edition of the lively diaries of a remarkable woman who rode through all the counties of England and described in pungent words what interested her. That is what matters to general readers, of whom there should be many.

But historians (and this review is for an historical magazine) and other specialists should beware. Though Dr Trevelyan's preface with its reference to a definitive edition is reprinted, this is not a definitive edition of the whole text. Material which is not distinctive to Celia is omitted and, more dangerously, there are omissions in the main text without indication. That matters not at all to the general reader, who may in fact welcome the shortening. But historians and other researchers will need to check the full text in the Cresset edition before committing themselves to conclusions. The editorial note comes clean about this policy, presumably dictated by space and price; but it is a pity that the points of omission could not be indicated. It is also a pity that the lines in the family tree were not better checked; many people are shown with four parents!

By and large this will be a welcome addition to many libraries and coffee tables, at a reasonable price, an ideal Christmas present.

D. E. M. F.

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 £6.00 including any records volumes published, or £4.00 if these are excluded.

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

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