

# CAKE & COCKHORSE



**BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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

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# CAKE & COCKHORSE

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

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The facing page on which we list our Committee members has a number of changes. The unfortunate loss of our past Chairman Mrs Gwladys Brinkworth, after many years service to the Society, was felt by all who knew her. Another past Chairman Mr. John Roberts has had to stand down for the present and also has Mrs. Gillian Beeston.

Two other hardworking Committee Members have sought a respite after a number of years of service, namely Mrs. Nan Clifton who was Hon. Secretary and Miss Mary Stanton who was our Treasurer. We are fortunate that they both remain on the Committee. The recruitment of new Committee Members has not been a problem and we welcome Mr. A. Essex-Crosby as Treasurer and Miss P. Renold as Programme Secretary. Two other members make up the committee, namely, Dr. J.S. Rivers and Mrs. J.P. Bowes. The Hon. Membership Secretary, Mrs. Sarah Gosling, has gained "promotion" to the post of Honorary Secretary.

We have now, with this issue, completed another volume of the magazine. It is the intention to print a composite Index to cover the previous volumes. This will enhance its usefulness as a research tool, for local historians.

D. A. H.

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Cover illustration: Reverend George St Clair,  
Founder of Banbury Book Society

A TEENAGE DIARY OF THE 1860s:  
GEORGE JAMES DEW OF LOWER HEYFORD

George James Dew, the writer of the diary, was born at Lower Heyford in North Oxfordshire on the 27th December, 1846. He was the eldest son of John Dew, a builder, carpenter, and blacksmith, and his second wife, Jemima. Over the course of time John Dew extended his business to include baking bread, keeping pigs, and running a grocery cum ironmongery shop. In the early volumes of George's diary, which he began to keep in 1862, when aged barely 15, there are many references to his making bread and helping generally in the bakery, as well as in his father's carpentry business. This latter included the making of coffins - a task for which the boy had little relish. He seems often to have been despondent about his future career and there is little doubt that his involvement with the undertaking side of his father's firm contributed to these pessimistic feelings - as did the stomach disorders which were to plague him for much of his life. A number of the diary entries refer to the premature deaths of fellow villagers and the transitory nature of human existence - gloomy thoughts for a 15 or 16-year-old.

George's interests were always more intellectual than practical, and from an early age he was an enthusiastic antiquarian and bibliophile. Self-improvement was a constant preoccupation. And when in the autumn of 1870 he was offered the post of temporary poor law relieving officer and registrar of births and deaths for the Bletchington district of Bicester Poor Law Union, he accepted it eagerly, seeing it as a welcome break from the dulling routine of a carpenter in the family firm. He was permanently appointed to the relieving officer's position in March 1871 and remained in the post until 1923. At that date he was the oldest serving poor law relieving officer in the country. Mr. Dew's diaries for the 1870s have already been edited,<sup>1</sup> and in Cake and Cockhorse, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Autumn 1983) an account was given of the life and career of his wife, Mary (née Banfield). She was mistress at Lower Heyford school from 1867 until her retirement in 1913, when she was succeeded by her daughter, Miss Dorothy B. Dew, who still lives in the parish. Although Mr. Dew's earliest diaries lack the maturity of his later observations, they nonetheless provide an interesting insight into the mind of one solemn mid-Victorian teenager. They also supply useful details of life in Lower Heyford and environs during 1862 and 1863, and it is for that reason, too, that extracts from them have been reproduced.<sup>2</sup> By 1871 the population of Lower Heyford, excluding its hamlet of Caulcott, was 434. Entries in square brackets have been added by the editor to amplify some point in the original text.

1862

Apr. 21. A man from Gardner's of Banbury came to repair our Blacksmith's Bellows.<sup>3</sup> ...

May 4: Found my last copy book that I wrote at Miss Hore's School: on

the lid is wrote "G. Dew left this School Apl. 3rd 1857" in my own hand-writing. [Miss Hore and her sister ran a small private school for girls in Lower Heyford, next door to the Dews. Later George attended a private school at Eynsham and Dr. Radcliffe's school at Steeple Aston.]

May 7: The Postman brought a newspaper from America from my Uncle, Jas. Dew - and because it had his initials (J.D.) in one corner outside there was four shillings to pay on it: we of course refused to have it. . . .

May 26: 2 Yrs. ago this day (1860) an accident happened at Heyford Station between 8 and 9 o'clock in the evening - the express train from Banbury caught a passengers train partly on the siding and partly on the line that the express was coming on and so smashed a part of the sides of both trains and did a deal of damage. One person was seriously hurt but did not kill him. The Station Master (Mr. Lait) lost his situation through it - but there is great doubt whether he was in fault or not. . . .

May 28: Baked this morning up at 4.30 a.m. Went to fetch timber from Middleton [Stoney].

June 4: Mr. Clark of Bicester came over here and we made an agreement with Jno. Alder, Caulcott for the rent he owes my Aunt instead of taking his goods.

Sept. 11: This day I have seen the effects of "Drunkenness" (sic) - Joshua Franklin was turned out and their furniture (if it may be so called) put into the street. What a sad pity, especially for his wife and four children.

Sept. 23: John Dew Junr. [George's only brother] went to London with Aunt Elizabeth by Excursion Train. - Our bakehouse chimney was on fire this morning - we soon put it out by throwing water down the chimney. The fire burst out at the top and roared tremendously. . . . Joshua Franklin's wife and four children went to Bicester Union [workhouse] to day; but he is missing. - Their things have been out by the door of their old cottage ever since they were turned out.

Oct. 12: John Dix Aged 69 Years died this evening. He had been for very many years a member of the Wesleyan Chapel at Lower Heyford. I believe him to be a good man, although he had very peculiar notions; he died very happy.

Oct. 14: Papa and myself went to London to the International Exhibition, we passed the day very well it being so very fine. - Papa bought a time-piece.

Oct. 16: John Dix buried about 4 o'clock. Thus all flesh passeth away. . . .

Oct. 24: . . . Baked this day drawn the bread between 8 and 9 o'clock this evening. John went to Kirtlington to fetch barm. Our bread has been very inferior lately on account of the bad flour. The bread is now 7<sup>d</sup>. per Qun. [quartern] loaf.

Nov. 9: Next Sunday at the parish church there will be a collection made in aid of the Distress in Lancashire and every third Sunday in each month. The Rev<sup>d</sup>. C. H. Faithfull's text this morn<sup>g</sup>. was 1 Cor. 16 ch. 2 v.<sup>4</sup>

[The distress was caused by the shortage of raw cotton which arose from

the American Civil War; this led to the laying off of vast numbers of workers in the Lancashire textile industry.]

Nov. 18: J. Mold dropped a part of the clapper out of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bell on my toe on the left foot. We had just fetched it from the tower.

Nov. 19: My toe very sore, could not do anything except writing.

Nov. 22: Baked this morn<sup>g</sup>. up at 4 o'clock. Rather Frosty. Deddington Fair. Papa went by the 12 o'clock train to pay the rent of our house and premises.

Nov. 25: ... Mr. Kench preached in the chapel last evening and left for Kirtlington this morning. Sold him "Birkett on the New Testament" for 2/-. We bought it for waste paper, it weighed 7 lbs. 2 oz.

Nov. 29: Mary Ann Facer second daughter of Thomas Facer, Wharfinger, died this morn<sup>g</sup> of Diphtheria (sic). Aged 14 yrs. This complaint is very prevalent in this neighbourhood. Tailor Heath of S. Aston had two daughters die about a week apart. Went to Banbury to fetch some coffin furniture for the above as the coffin was wanted immediately. Bought pr. Balmoral boots.

Nov. 30: I see a receipt on the Church door for £5 19 5 in aid of the distress in Lancashire gathered on Sunday 16 Nov.

Dec. 2: Went to Bham. by an excursion Train. - Stopped there all night and

Dec. 3: John sent us 2 tickets to come back by the Ex<sup>n</sup>. Train. Bought "Self Improvement" also 1st vol. of John Howe's Works for Mr. Kench - and other Books, etc. ... Went to West Bromwich ... seen a coal pit in action. 409½ yds. Deep.

Dec. 22: Mrs. Bakers house broken into the roughs carried off about 1½ lbs. cooked meat, but nothing else though there was plenty there. A mysterious affair.

Dec. 25: Xmas Day. Very clear this evening. Heyford Church is more neatly decorated this Xmas than it has been before in my recollection. As you enter the church over the porch doorway is "Emmanuel" in large letters made of bay leaves. The front of the gallery has a border of evergreens with "unto us a Child is born" made of variegated ivy; the word "Child" is on the middle panel and larger than the rest which gives it an appearance of neatness and good style. On the chancel arch is "Glory to God in the highest" made of holly leaves. Below the chancel window on the wall is "Unto us a son is given" in the same style as the preceding. The bottom of the (chancel) window commonly called the window board has a lot of evergreens laid on it, also some of the other windows. There is a cross with I.H.S. [?] on the window but the I.H.S. cannot be distinguished. On all the columns were Holly and Ivy, Box and Bay. There is a circle with sort of half circles hanging to it on the baptismal font. On the painted arch of the church door inside there is a wreath. There are also other minor decorations. J. S. Cheesman, W. King, Miss Cheesman etc. etc. etc. were the persons who helped to do it and under whose superintendence

it was done. Taking it as [a] whole it is very prettily and neatly arranged. [James S. Cheesman, of Caldecote Farm, Lower Heyford, and William King were both large farmers in the village. Mr. King died in 1865 and was succeeded by his son, William Padbury King.]

Dec. 27: This day I am 16 yrs. old. Old enough to be much better than I am. . . .

Dec. 31: . . . Now we are come to the end of the year 1862. Tomorrow morning (should our lives be spared) we shall be in the year 1863 - a stranger to us. I have much to be thankful for past mercies and preservation from all misfortunes and for a good home with plenty of food. We know not what may happen in the next year, but may God preserve us with his mighty hand.

1863

Jan. 8: Aunt Elizabeth and Miss Dandridge's Cook drank tea with us. Aunt E. paid my wages for collecting her rents (7/6) . . . [Aunt Elizabeth Dew was housekeeper to Miss Dandridge, who lived at Steeple Aston. Her fellow servants were a cook, a housemaid, and a gardener cum footman.]

Feb. 13: . . . Between 6 and 7 o'clock this evening James Allen [of Upper Heyford Mill] was shot dead on the road leading from the "Cross Roads" towards Upper Heyford. - Noah Austin was riding in the cart with him and he is suspected to be the perpetrator of this horrid deed. He tells a curious and improbable tale. Allen was shot at twice; the first time it grazed the back of his head, but the second entered just below his ear, which must have caused instantaneous death. He was often intoxicated and probably so at the time he was so inhumanly murdered. At least he was a thorough soaker. [Noah Austin was a butcher and the son of a farmer from Upper Heyford. Robbery was the ostensible motive but prior to the murder he had been a close friend of the victim's daughter, according to the Oxford Chronicle, 7th March, 1863.]

Feb. 14: . . . Ambrose Attwood left this evening. He has worked for us as Carpenter about 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> yrs. Fond of beer, and filthy in his conversation, frequently having obscene allusions. - Our other man F. Watkins has worked for us about 19 months. He is of small stature, but very strong; remarkably still and careful I understand as regards money. Ignorant (like the above) and of a stupid and rather quick temper. - His example in silence might be beneficial to many . . . They had a coroner's inquest on James Allen of U. Heyford Mill. Noah Austin they took to Oxford.

Feb. 16: Sharp frost and very clear. At mid-day I visited the spot where James Allen lay after he was murdered. There was about half a pint of clotted blood; the wound must have bled profusely as a greater part must have soaked into the ground.

Feb. 18: . . . James Allen buried this afternoon.

Mar. 4: Mamma's birthday 48 yrs. old. Born 4 Mar. 1815.

Mar. 5: . . . Noah Austin sentenced to be hung. (sic).

Mar. 10: Prince of Wales married this day. This probably was one of the

grandest days at Heyford within living memory. Men, women and children all had a treat; the men had supper (5.30 p.m.) and the women tea (3.0) in the barn opposite the Bell Inn, called Adam's Barn. This was provided by subscription. The children had tea at the Rectory kindly provided for them by the Rector. The barn was thoroughly cleansed top and bottom (by the Rector) and the tables and seats fixed gratis (by J. Dew) [his father] also wires fixed to the beams to hang up the lamps, two of which we lent. There was a plentiful supply for all parties and no exceptions made in the invitations, so that all were well satisfied. Particularly fine day. The ringers rang several peals through the day. After supper the Rev. C. H. Faithfull and W. King made several speeches etc. etc. etc. after which the people left.

Papa, myself and John went by train to Oxford to see the illumination, which was most magnificent in every respect. Started from Oxford to walk home at 2.30 a.m.

Mar. 11: and arrived at Heyford about 6 o'clock feet sore and very tired. About 5 o'clock a fog came on suddenly which made it very cold.

Mar. 24: Noah Austin hung at Oxford.

Mar. 25: "Cheap John Sale" in the Brewhouse at the Bell Inn this evening.

Mar. 26: Again this evening.

April 28: Went to Banbury by the 11.54 a.m. Train and returned by the 3.10 p.m. Was measured for Coat and Wainscoat. (sic) I have been much hindered lately from my lucubration on account of my health but hope soon to make progress. I have not yet arranged my studies properly but time will make all right. If I keep on a firm, sure and steady course, though with but apparently small gain I shall by degrees find myself increasing in knowledge as I do in age. The present reward seems nothing but I shall reap the benefit hereafter.

May 10: Went to S. Aston Bible Class held in the School Room this evening.

Richard Markham [son of John Markham, who had lived at the Queen's Head, Lower Heyford] buried this afternoon. His age was 32 yrs. So his name is hastening on to oblivion. The roads are very dirty and even the dirt in the fields with a kick of the shoe will raise a cloud of dust. It has not been particularly hot but fine weather and no rain for sometime. The sky has been rather hazy mostly but cloudy at intervals. -

This parish Heyford is now a scandalous place, much worse than it was formerly. Drunkenness, (sic) adultery, swearing and the like is very prevalent. "The White Horse" is a most horrible low place and will be if permitted the ruin of this parish. [The landlord of the 'White Horse' was James Hayward, who also ran a carrier's business.]

May 14: Showery. G. Cooper [butcher, shopkeeper, land surveyor and clerk of Lower Heyford market] told me of some respectable person that called at the White Horse for a glass of ale, and inquired how he could get a sight of Miss Allen, he believed she was guilty from what he had read.



He said, "If I could get one moment's sight of her, I should be fully satisfied in my own mind whether she was guilty or not." He started for U. Heyford and probably had his desired wish. No doubt he was a phrenologist; and seemed to put implicit confidence in his abilities.

May 20: Cloudy and cool all day. - Steeple Aston Poor Man's Club. - Went to S. Aston this evening, saw the band etc. Multitudes of people, perhaps more than for some few years; it can truly be said a mixed multitude; the effects of drink can be seen in the faces of the greater part and in many by their walk. - There were drunken, sober, proud, humble, respectable and disreputable people both male and female in these masses, which could easily be distinguished one from another.

May 23: Baked this morn<sup>g</sup>. up at 3 a.m. Tolerably clear and frosty. - Partly painted Miss Dandridge's front palisades. Worked hard from 3 a.m. to 7 p.m. . . .

May 25: Esther King drank tea with us. I made a little coffin for her dead pigeon with a breast plate on it with the following inscription "Sarah Painter Died May 23rd 1863. Aged 3 Months." She tells me she shall take it home to Tingewick with her and not bury it.

June 4: . . . My whole mind seems to be bent upon literary affairs, there is not a day passes in which I have not a wish to become an author. I hope it may not rest with the wish but come into effect.

June 11: . . . Rev. C. H. Faithfull shown (sic) me how to do two sums in Algebra - very kind of him. . . .

June 14: Read "Mason on Self Knowledge." Very good but rather different to what I thought it was. . . .

June 17: . . . My old MSS. has served me for some time (and will for a long while yet) in what some call closet paper. Excuse this vulgarity but it is a fact.

June 30: . . . Self reliance is good, trust to yourself and no one else, if you have helps from friends so much the better, but I say Trust to yourself.

- Make up your mind and say I will do so and so, go to work with determination, but at the same time remember that "Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it." - Man may say I will but if God says no, then all is in vain to try to do what the Almighty will not permit.

July 2: Sharp showers of rain in the morning. Went to Oxford with my sisters Ellen and Elizabeth and Aunt Elizabeth. Visited the New Museum, Taylor Buildings, Corn Exchange etc. etc. Had a very pleasant day, it being so very fine all the afternoon. Aunt E. and myself had our photographs taken at Hill and Saunder's. - Bought at Joseph Thornton's, 18 Magdalen St. (opposite Martyrs Memorial)

"Johnson's Lives of the Poets" 4 vols.	5/-
"Whateley's Elements of Logic"	1/9
"Hamilton's Conic Sections"	9d.
"Colenso's Trigonometry"	2/-
"Cobbett's Advice to Young Men"	1/9

The whole 11/3 and 10/6 Carte de Visites [photographs] besides many other minors.

July 13: Up at 5 a.m. Painting all day at Mr. Creek's water mill. . . . Worked hard from 5 a.m. till 8 p.m. Find myself much better, the rule for me in moderation is, the least sleep and food I have and the harder I work the better it is for me. I am naturally of an indolent turn, and when I am busily employed, then I enjoy myself because my mind is in action giving no room for depression of spirits. - After a hard day's work I can confine my mind much better than after a day of laziness.

July 14: . . . Many of the poor people are very impudent and rude - they make remarks on seeing me so often sitting at the table in my bedroom. One says "he's always up there," another "that's his study," another "I wonder what he wants up there always," another "he's been up there all day," another "he's writing," another a look up with a grin, another little urchin will stand against the wall and make the best use of his eyes in looking at me and many pass by with a quick glance and say nothing, but perhaps may think more than those who make remarks. A casual glance I don't mind, nor yet silence, but it is far from pleasing when they take a deliberate stare and make remarks. I would stop this if my bedroom were differently situated. The window is so very low and I am obliged to get near to it for light. I like to be in private and silent, but I don't always get both.

July 15: . . . Finished 2 Vol. of Boswell's Life of Johnson. I think I spend almost too much time in reading now and am not diligent enough with my mathematical studies - but however the new reading will soon be over and then I shall once more be at liberty. My studies seem to cling to that which I like best and how natural this is.

Aug. 3: . . . Painting at Mr. Creek's. Bathed in the canal this evening for the first time. I think I should soon learn to swim. - Cut my feet. John Grantham's Junr. eldest son broke his arm.

Aug. 11: . . . Screwed a corpse down for the first time; little Hedges who was buried to day. - Had some Salmon (fish) first time.

Aug. 23: . . . I am now fast hastening to the age of manhood, and I find circumstances alter with me materially. My opinions, my taste and all alter: soon I shall have to face the world myself. . . .

Aug. 30: . . . Heyford Feast Sunday. . . . A good few people strutting about to show themselves; many strangers. - Parochial feasts are gradually dying away generally . . .

Aug. 31: . . . Heyford feast is rather revived this year to what it has been, but not near equal to its former gaiety. I see many peoples (sic) friends are visiting them and probably this is what it was originally. Drunkenness and all that is bad is going on. Policemen are busy walking about.

Sept. 21: . . . Went to U. Heyford this evening to hear a person lecture or discourse on a subject with no title, but on Creation or the Kingdom of God according to the subject. He is a stranger, dresses oddly with a long cloak,

looks like a gentleman at a distance, otherwise when near; has been about here for two months. People say he knows several languages and he says he has been to College in many foreign lands etc. etc. ...

Sept. 23: ... Papa went to London by first train on lamp and oil business. ... Bread sank to day to 6d. per quartern.

Oct. 1: ... It is very fashionable about here just now to have one or more small feathers stuck in the hat. They are generally small and of a pretty colour.

Two tramps set fire to a barley-rick at Middle Aston belonging to Mr. Cother. They are now in custody. I understand the rick is destroyed.

...

Oct. 3: ... Had a blister on this evening, Mr. Murchison tells me I must take care and attend to myself or my health will get in a bad state. [The blister was applied to his abdomen and was to cure a stomach disorder; Mr. Murchison of Bicester was the Dew family doctor.]

Oct. 4: ... Blister very troublesome all day. Another fire at Middleton [Stoney]; two ricks set on fire by a tramp.

Nov. 12: ... Merry Planting beans on the left hand side (towards Grantham's of our orchard. John Cook says

"One for the pigeon, one for the crow  
One to rot and the other to grow." -

referring to the number of beans put in. ... I set in the bread on Oct. 17 for the first time and have continued so do do since that time.

Nov. 14: ... I understand John King of Rousham and Henry Coldicott of Lower Heyford, Farmers, have sunk their men's wages to 9/- per week.

Nov. 16: ... Work at Upper Heyford all day. Eleven sheep were killed on the railway by the express train running over them; somewhere in U. Heyford parish. I seen (sic) the head of one which was cut quite off. Belonged to Mr. Smith, Somerton.

Nov. 18: ... Went to S. Aston this evening to the Radcliffe School to hear a lecture on old tapestry (altar coverings) in use before the Reformation. To give a minute description of the antique needlework (in two parts) would be of considerable length. There is the crucifixion, etc. etc. and the deaths of many saints. Rev. J. H. Brookes spoke of the saints and W. Wing on Steeple Aston generally before the Reformation.

Nov. 19: Cloudy and calm all day. No rain. Rebecca Bagget (formerly Wadrup) was reported to have robbed Mrs. James Dew of 13/- while she (Mrs. Dew) was at her (R.B.'s) house at tea. The policeman was sent for last night to come this morning; when he saw her, she offered to pay the money instead of having the scandal as she said, and did so. This is another sign of guilt. It is very probable she will be taken into custody to day. Thus we see a most hypocritical and abominable robbery, committed under a mask of friendship. Wonders will never cease. ...

Nov. 21: Baked this morning; up at 3.30 a.m. ... The robbery mentioned on the 19th was committed on Tuesday 17th Nov. 1863. She paid back the

money on the 19th, and perhaps it may rest at that. . . .

Nov. 22: . . . Hymn books used this day for Church for the first time; they sang the 36 Psalm and 272 Hymn in the morning. Singing twice in the afternoon from this time instead of once . . .

Nov. 28: . . . All the farmers have sunk their labourers' wages to 9/- per week this day or yesterday according to their pay night. - Of this I see no necessity; they had a good harvest and if the corn is low, a double quantity makes it up. Be it as it may I do not approve of it. A catalogue of second hand books from E. Lumley's, 514 New Oxford St. London this morning. Sent for several volumes.

Dec. 1: . . . Papa gone to Birmingham by an Excursion Train. Bought "Ancient Egypt" "Cowper's Letters" and several other volumes.

Dec. 6: . . . I can truly say that since Papa etc. left for Winchester and since they returned [c. October 1863] I have been remarkably happy; my studies have been such that I have delighted in and not what I thought would be beneficial in other respects though not to my taste; I have rose generally about 5 a. m. or a little later and indeed what pleasure I have found in this morning time! Cowper says he has "often observed that there is a regular alternation of good and evil in the lot of men, so that a favourable incident may be considered as the harbinger of an unfavourable one, and vice versâ." (Let. CLXXXIII). This I have observed myself and I think it is a fact. What then is my present happiness an harbinger of? Something bad if anything. . . .

Dec. 8: . . . I had a very pleasing conversation on books with Mr. T. Kench (United Free Church Preacher); he is much like myself - very fond of books and literature generally . . .

Dec. 13: . . . At the present moment I owe Papa 18/5 for books, and should no kind friend intervene I cannot pay it under at least two years. I must read over and over what I have and borrow all I can and not get so far in future. But such is my failing, it is a thirst after knowledge that causes it. - Finished reading "Coleridge on Method." . . .

Dec. 14: . . . Before 4.30 a. m. good old Joseph White wanted some articles out of the shop, so he was let in . . . [Mr. White had breakfasted with the Dews on 4 Dec., his 79th birthday.]

Dec. 15: . . . Thomas Bagget was buried at 4.0 p. m. About the last 25 yrs. he had been in the Union, was a man of very weak intellect (in short an idiot) and wore short petticoats till he was a man. Among his varied peculiarities, this one may serve as a criterion; he never would go to bed till Creeks' waggon had returned home; he had no associations with it or the driver whatever, if (as sometimes they did) they sent him to bed he would get up again and for nothing else except the waggon. Aged 52 yrs. in his 53. He was son of Matthias Bagget. . . .

Dec. 18: . . . Very poorly all day, . . . could hardly hold my head up all day . . .

Dec. 21: St. Thomas. Shortest day. Our and the neighbouring bells rang

merrily at 6 a.m. ... My complaint as usual; out of doors but little.  
Dec. 23: Mamma and myself went to Dr. Acland [in Oxford]; he is of the same opinion as Mr. Murchison. Dr. Acland is an ordinary looking man but wears his hair rather long. ...

Dec. 25: Xmas Day. I feel happy this morn<sup>g</sup>. as I was last night. I propose going to U. Heyford to Uncle Thos's to dinner ... Spent a very pleasant time at U. Heyford; had beef and plum pudding for dinner. At night I went to S. Aston church. Mr. Brookes read a Homily instead of a sermon ...

Dec. 27: I am 17 yrs. old this day. ... Far upon the age of manhood, but not manly or experienced in my trade in proportion I fear ... May I resolve on a new resolution to live for the future to more purpose and more to the object of my creation, serving God with all my heart and strength....

Dec. 31: ... This being the last day of the year 1863 it will be well to make a few observations and to review the past, the time remaining of this year is but short ... To begin with the harvests, the source of life. Hay gathered in in good weather and a plentiful crop, especially that of the Cherwell meadows which was of first rate quality. The first part of harvest was very fine and favourable weather, but latter part raining and consequently some wheat, barley etc. grown out, but there is no room for discontent as the crops were very fine and not much injured. Very few wasps ... One phenomena (sic) of nature of rare occurrence in this our quiet island we have experienced, namely an earthquake on 6 Oct. 1863. Potatoe (sic) crop about as usual, the disease came late and made havoc as heretofore. Apple crop very good. Apricots not so many as some years. The prices (sic) of bread at Heyford per quartern has been 6½d. but now is 6d. ... And now to the old year I say Farewell; soon it will appear as a figure 1 and to some of the future generation of no more consequence; but alas to those that have lived in it, it is of great importance, and to those that have died in it of more importance still, - it has sealed their doom, and unalterably fixed it for all eternity ... [Below he gave a list of those who had died in Lower Heyford during 1863!]

Pamela Horn

Index of Deaths which have occurred in 1863:

- Burial of Wm. Artess (sic), from Bicester Union [surname should probably be Artis].
- Death of Rich<sup>d</sup>. Markham, aged 32,
- George Oakes, Caulcott, aged 9 months,
- Alice E. Hedges, aged 3½ yrs.,
- Thomas East, aged 65 yrs.,
- Sarah - Hopcraft, Caulcott, Infant, died suddenly,
- Burial of Thos. Baggott, (sic) from Bicester Union. [In the diary Dew had spelt this as Bagget, see entry for 15th December.]

## FOOTNOTES

1. Pamela Horn, ed., Oxfordshire Village Life: The Diaries of George James Dew (1846-1928), Relieving Officer (Beacon Publications, 11 Harwell Road, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, Oxon. OX14 4BN, 1983).
2. The diaries are preserved in the Bodleian Library, where they have been deposited by Miss D. B. Dew. The 1862 extracts are taken from the original entries made in 5 small notebooks (ref. MS.D.D.Dew c. 62). These were later written up in a larger volume, when some of the wording was slightly amended. The 1863 diary is in a single notebook, ref. MS. D.D.Dew e. 8.
3. This was probably the firm of wholesale and retail ironmongers in High Street, Banbury.
4. The verse reads: 'Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.'



John Hill Beale, Headmaster Crouch Street School

## AN OLD BANBURY SOCIETY

I have just completed researching records of one of the oldest of Banbury societies and thought that 'Cake and Cockhorse' might be interested in some of the details. My record, together with photographs of members, will be contained in one book which will be hand-circulated to members of the society only.

The society to which I refer is The Banbury Book Society which, although not as old as The Neithrop Association for the Protection of Persons and Property, which was founded in 1819, is nevertheless venerable as it was begun in 1866 by the Reverend George St Clair who was minister of the Banbury Baptist church. He took up this post in 1864. He lived in the house at the corner of Middleton Road and West Street. He was a scientist of ability, a Fellow of the Geographical Society, the author of a number of books on geological and archaeological subjects. For a considerable time he was a lecturer for the Palestine Exploration Society. He left Banbury in 1876 and became co-pastor with George Dawson at the Church of the Saviour, Birmingham and later succeeded him.

Among the earliest members was John Hill Beale, headmaster of the Crouch Street British School who later built Ark House, the Leys, where he educated many Banburians who later became prominent in the town, including William Potts, the historian. William Cubitt, plush manufacturer, was another early member. He it was who supplied plush for the seating in the House of Lords. He was a deacon and secretary of the Bridge Street Baptist Church.

Other founder members were William Johnson, leather merchant and twice Mayor of Banbury who died during his second term of office, Joseph Lambert, tailor and developer of the Calthorpe House Estate, Robert Heygate Brooks, dentist, whose son H.R.F. Brooks was Mayor in 1910, John Mawle, ironmonger and Mayor of Banbury in 1890 and 1900, alderman on the County Council and William Shilson, woolstapler.

Others who followed into membership, although not founder members, were Samuel Stuttered, a wool cloth merchant and noted naturalist, amateur artist and fisherman, William Lampet Whitehorn, solicitor, to whom so much is owed for his work in developing education in the borough, T.O. Hankinson, a member of the Board of Health, Town Council, Board of Guardians and for 30 years honorary secretary of the Old Charitable Society, Mayor and magistrate, J.P. Gillett, banker and Borough Treasurer, William Braithwaite, banker and barrister, W.J. Bloxham, builder and Mayor, Dr Neville Penrose, medical practitioner and leading member of the profession in his day, Joseph Gillett, banker and rower for King's College, Cambridge, who married Sarah Gillett who became the first woman Mayor of Banbury, Arthur Fairfax, solicitor and William Potts.

The society is self-perpetuating and it is interesting to note how

sons have often followed fathers into membership. For instance, Theo Clark, miller and Mayor on three occasions who also died in his last year of office, has been followed by his son, George, who has been a member now for over 40 years and Ted, editor of The Banbury Guardian and editor and extender of Potts' 'A History of Banbury,' who has been in membership for 38 years. John Taylor Mawle succeeded his father, Leo Whitehorn and John Wilks their fathers.

There has never been another member of the clergy in the society but there has been one former Member of Parliament, Mr E.A. (Ted) Bagley, who owned the Grand Cinema in Broad Street. He was the representative for Farnworth just after the First World War. Other Mayors to have joined are John Cheney senior, Edgar Chapman, Sidney Ewins, and Malcolm Spokes. A dentist, a seedsman and an accountant are among the present membership.

The society has since its inception met in each others' homes once a month. Each member puts in one book a month and as there are twelve members the book is in circulation for a year. In war years magazines were put in for reading rather than books and in those years sandwiches were served but today the usual custom is dinner round the table.

As will be appreciated from the above, there have been many members who have occupied the office of Mayor and in the 1920s the society was often referred to as "the Mayors' nest".

It is, of course, a small society and there have probably been no more than eighty members throughout the years. Its objects remain the same, educational and social, but it is a society much appreciated by its members whose hope is that it will continue for many years to come.

Ted Clark



William Cubitt,  
Plush Manufacturer



## SARAH'S SECRET, or NO STONE UNTURNED

A recent discovery at Delapre Abbey had led to the addition of the name MEAKINS to my surname interests. I had intended to send a simple note to this effect to "Footprints", but reflecting on how that discovery came about made me realise how important it is in family history research to examine as many sources of information as possible and to look for other evidence besides that contained in parish registers. Had I relied solely on the details they could offer, my 3-greats-grandmother's secret would never have come to light.

It was a folded piece of thick, yellowing paper brought out from my father's tin box that caused the Family History Bug to bite me. When he told me that this was a copy taken from a church's marriage register and that the John Bodfish and Mary Ann Turner named on it were my great-great-grandparents, I determined to see what more could be discovered about John and his origins. The quest I embarked on then was to take me through 15 years and across 3 counties before an accurate picture could be put together.

John and Mary Ann were married on St George's Day, 1838, at an Oxfordshire village called Tadmarton, situated about 5 miles south-west of Banbury. Naturally, my first enquiries were made of Tadmarton's parish registers, with the extraction of every Bodfish entry they contained. Evidently, the first to arrive was William, with his marriage there to Hannah Grantham in 1791 and the subsequent baptisms of their 11 children. All the later entries clearly related to William's descendants, but there was no baptism for a John who could have then married in 1838. Could it have been omitted in error - or, more likely, was he illegitimate?

This suspicion was confirmed on receipt from the General Register Office of a copy of John's marriage certificate. The sections for his father's name and occupation were neatly ruled across, and, annoyingly, as he was simply stated to have been "over age", it was impossible to calculate the year of his birth. A closer appraisal of the Tadmarton register entries began to point towards William's eldest daughter, Sarah Bodfish, as a possible candidate for John's mother. Baptised in 1797, banns were called for her marriage at Marston St Lawrence in Northamptonshire to a Robert Austin in 1817: from the recesses of his memory my father drew the recollection of his own father having said "My grandfather had a half-brother, name of Austin, who went to America"; John's marriage certificate showed one of the witnesses to have been William Austin.

But a mere indication that a family story is true is very insubstantial ground in which to plant a family tree. The puzzle of John's parentage nagged away at me for years, and although the discovery of his name on the 1861 census for Birmingham did at least enable me to calculate the year of his birth as 1816, it seemed to hold out no hope of getting at the truth, as it read:

John Bodfish head married 45 sawyer Oxon, not known  
In 1871 John told the census enumerator that he had been born at Tadmarton, but this was untrue, to judge by his previous statement. This raised several questions. Why the difference? Did he know, or not know, the truth about his origins? If he knew, did he ever tell? Suddenly it occurred to me that the one time it might have been surprised out of him was at the 1851 census, when for the first time he would have been asked to give his birthplace. Knowing that he was still at Tadmarton then, I headed for Oxford and there in the Central Library unrolled the appropriate micro-film until I read:

John Bodfish head married 35 labourer N'hants, Dunsanger  
So he did know something, and had kept quiet about it in later years. Searching the British Isles gazeteer in vain for a place called Dunsanger, on reaching home my large scale map of Northamptonshire was spread out on the hearthrug and every place name on it scrutinised. Tucked away in a southern corner, close to the Buckinghamshire border was a place called "Deanshanger" - could that be it?

The next day I telephoned Delapre Abbey to ask if the baptism registers for Deanshanger were deposited. "Yes," was the reply. "Please, could you look at the 1816 entries, to see if there is one in the name of John Bodfish?" I entreated, and was requested to call back in half-an-hour. And when, in great eagerness and a little trepidation, I did so, the following entry was read out to me:

7th April 1816 John son of Sarah Bodfish of Passenham servant.  
Now I was certain about one of John's parents. But was this Sarah the same girl as the daughter of William Bodfish of Tadmarton? And who was the father? Perhaps, as Sarah was a servant, it could have been the master of the household - or the master's son. Was her downfall tragic and undeserved, like that of Thomas Hardy's "Tess of the D'Urbervilles"? Hoping to find some more clues, I examined the Poor Law Accounts for Passenham, and they yielded details of several payments made on Sarah's behalf, including

26th April 1816 paid expense of fetching Sarah Bodfish and taking her to Northampton Assizes as per bill £4 10s 8d.

This expensive trip must surely have been to fix the obligation for maintenance onto the baby's father, and thus release Passenham from the responsibility. I wrote to the Public Record Office in great hopes, but they were to be sadly dashed; the 1816 Northampton Circuit records do not survive.

And there the matter stood for several years. I continued to work on the ancestry of William Bodfish and traced it back into Northamptonshire through 4 generations as far as 1677, when Lawrence Boatfish of Chelveston-cum-Caldecott married Elizabeth Sparke of Stanwick. Additional evidence was found to indicate the family's origins in southern Leicestershire, established there as early as 1534. From the mass of

details gathered, it gradually became clear that every bearer of the surname was related, and from the linking together of almost all the family groups scattered over Leicestershire and Northamptonshire between the 16th and 18th centuries grew a One Name Study.

This undertaking sent me in pursuit of every scrap of information relating to every Bodfish that could be found. Returning then to the Tadmarton records, I began to work through the Poor Law Account books, extracting every Bodfish entry: fascinating personal snippets appeared, such as the payment to William of 10s 6d for the loss of his fat pig, a blow which would otherwise have been overwhelming to a family so poor and numerous. But the entry which really made me sit up was

Expenses for removen Sarah Bodfish from Tadmarton up to  
Dunsanger with a order £2 12s 6d; 12th December 1815

This proved beyond doubt that John's mother was William's daughter Sarah and no other. Poor girl; she must have left (or been thrown out of) her place, and somehow made her way across the 30 miles from Passenham back to her parents. The prospect to them of yet another mouth to feed must have been dismaying enough, but evidently the parish of Tadmarton was not prepared to help out, as the baby had not been conceived there. So now Sarah, about 6 months pregnant, was to be shunted back again so that responsibility could fall on Passenham. There was no sign of the Removal Order surviving at either place, nor of her examination by the Oxfordshire magistrates, and once more the search for the identity of John's father was at a standstill.

Again, it was work on the One Name Study that nudged me in the direction of a possible answer. Having previously picked up a reference to a Bodfish being involved in the "Captain Swing" riots (machine breaking and arson by agricultural labourers) in 1830, I identified him as James, one of Sarah's younger brothers, from the Calendar of Prisoners in Oxford Jail. Next, the Quarter Sessions records were examined in an attempt to find out more about James's case. Although unsuccessful, I read through many cases relating to the paternity of illegitimate babies and the thought occurred that even if the Assize records for Northampton in 1816 did not survive, maybe those for the contemporary Quarter Sessions did. Another call to Delapre Abbey proved this to be so, and on my next visit there I was provided with several boxes containing bundles of documents, each wrapped in very dusty paper and looking as though it had been quite untouched since 1816 when the clerk threaded a string through the papers, parcelled them up and dated them. I began to unwrap and unroll the bundles, scanning each document carefully. Then - Eureka! In the middle of the bundle for the Epiphany Session I found a printed form, duly completed with the information that revealed Sarah's secret:

"Whereas Sarah Bodfish of Passenham in the said County of Northampton single woman, did by her voluntary Examination taken in Writing upon Oath before John Christopher Mansel

Esquire One of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said County, on the 21st Day of December last past, declare herself to be then with Child; and that the said Child was likely to be born a Bastard, and to be chargeable to the said Parish of Passenham and the said Sarah Bodfish did then charge John Meakins of Potterspury in the said County Labourer with having gotten her with Child..... "

But what was this, further down the document?

"apprehending the said John Meakins ... who was afterwards brought before ... for idemnifying the said parish of Passenham or securities to enter into a Recognizance ... which he refused to do and was therefore committed to the Common Gaol of the said County of Northampton until such security is given ...

Had I really discovered the answer, or another mystery? Why did he refuse? Could Sarah have accused him out of spite? Or did he say "Why me - it could have been one of half-a-dozen others!" - this began to sound more like "Moll Flanders" than "Tess of the D'Urbervilles"!

Most likely John Meakins was young, scared and desperate to avoid the financial obligation being fastened on him. A quick glance at the Potterspury Bishop's Transcripts indicated only one likely John Meakins; baptised in 1798, he would have been aged about 18 at the time. What actually happened when the case came up at the Assizes in April 1816 we shall never know, but it must have been sufficiently conclusive for Passenham to be released from responsibility for Sarah and her baby, as two days after her trip to the Assizes the Poor Law Overseer paid "5s to bear her expenses going home".

At home in Tadmarton in March 1817, Sarah witnessed a marriage, then re-crossed the county boundary later that year for her own marriage to Robert Austin, at Marston St Lawrence on 26th November. On turning up the register entry I was surprised to see, clearly and confidently written, Sarah's signature. Not usual, I felt, for a poor servant girl and the daughter of a labourer.

Robert and Sarah set up their home at Tadmarton, for it was Robert's native village too, and there she bore him 10 children. Baby John may have been brought up by his grandparents, William and Hannah Bodfish, for it was their name that he retained. When in his early forties, together with his wife Mary Ann and five sons, John left Oxfordshire for Birmingham. And there it was that in 1862, my great-grandparents, James Bodfish, Sarah's grandson by John Meakins, married his cousin Emma Austin, Sarah's granddaughter by Robert Austin. This may have brought pleasure to Sarah in her old age: she probably did know all about it as someone, likely John, came back to obtain proof of his marriage, as that yellowing paper in my possession is annotated "Given by T. Lea, Rector of Tadmarton, 2nd September 1864". I like to think that John did see his mother then, for she died, aged 68, less than a year later, in

June 1865 and less than two months afterwards her husband Robert, too, was laid to rest.

It was quite a challenge that came down to me, after 150 years, to fill in the blank spaces on great-great-grandfather's marriage certificate. More than once I felt that it was hopeless, and the trail was completely cold. But if the experience I gained in searching for what lay behind Sarah's Secret has taught me anything, it is that both luck, and perseverance, are needed in the fascinating, maddening, self-imposed task of family history research.

Mary Bodfish

Reprinted by kind permission of Northants Family History Society.

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# The Guardian;

OR,

## MONTHLY POOR LAW REGISTER,

FOR THE DISTRICT COMPRISING IN THE UNIONS OF  
BANBURY, BEESTER, BRACKLEY, CHIPPING-NORTON, DAVENTRY, NORTHAMPTON,  
SHIPSTON, SOUTHAM, STRATFORD-ON-AVON, WITNEY, AND WOODSTOCK.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM POTTS, PARSONS STREET, BANBURY

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From the early BANBURY GUARDIAN

### A sad case

B.G. 26 October 1843. Borough Police: A report made "before the Mayor", on 20 October.

"On Sunday morning a man, who stated his name to be William Harper, was taken into custody by the police, he being very noisy in the street and evidently insane. He was dressed as a farm labourer, and had a small bundle in his hand. He stated that he came from Calne in Wiltshire, that he had been twice in Salisbury Gaol, that about six weeks ago he broke open his father's box and stole therefrom £12, and had done no work since. His behaviour after he was taken into custody was such as rendered it unsafe that he should be left alone, as he was at times exceedingly violent. Throughout Monday night he was, however, very calm, and on Tuesday morning his attendant left the cell for a few minutes; his back was scarcely turned when Harper rushed with his head against the angle of the wall of his cell, near the door, with such violence, that the gaoler heard the blow, and on going to him found him about to repeat it. He was then in a most violent state, and seizing the metal lid of a night pail, again inflicted severe blows on his head before he could be secured. It was thought at first his skull was fractured; on examination this did not prove to be the case, but the wounds were very extensive and serious. In reply to an application to Calne, a letter has been received which corroborates the principal part of his statement, and by which it appears he has long been a desperate and very profligate person.

Since the above was in type, Harper is dead. Shortly after the paroxysm described above had subsided, he appeared to be sinking, but spoke firmly and sensibly to his attendant about half an hour before he died. His death took place at 7 o'clock last night. An inquest will be held upon the body today."

B.G. 2 November 1843. The Inquest report filled out some details: P.C. Charles Herbert had been on duty in the High Street on the Sunday morning when Harper had been taken into custody, "who had been kicking at the door of Mr James Gardner, demanding admittance, there being men inside, he said, who were

to meet him by appointment". Walker, the gaoler put him in a cell alone, and he was visited by Mr Douglas, the gaol surgeon, about 1½ hours later, and then at intervals of 20 minutes throughout the day, only leaving about 11 at night when he was not violent, but only rambling. "John Turbitt of this borough was employed to remain in a cell adjoining that in which the deceased was confined". Turbitt was let out at 6.15 am. and the violent incidents outlined above then occurred. The gaoler had to go for Mr Hitchcock of the Ship, and for P. C. Townsend to overpower him. After that someone stayed with him till he died. The deceased had said he was 37. The gaol surgeon, William Thomas Douglas, who visited him often in gaol, was of the opinion that his states of excitement, delirium tremens, were caused by excessive drinking, which was the cause of his death, he thought, rather than the violence inflicted on himself.

"The jury immediately returned a verdict of 'Died by the visitation of God'."

### **"Drunk and disorderly"**

B.G. 10 April 1845. A Letter to the Editor.

"Sir, How is it that in your paper we so often see parties fined for being 'drunk and disorderly', but never being disorderly alone? Now Sir, I would ask, where are the police, that they do not commit this noisy, disorderly teetotal rabble, who nightly perambulate our streets, to the station house? Really, I think this is a nuisance which ought not to be endured: just as honest respectable people are going off to sleep, they are suddenly alarmed by a mob of men and boys making noises upon musical instruments. If a hard-working mechanic had been to a jovial party and was returning home singing 'Rule Britannia', or any other patriotic song, he would be instantly collared and taken off for disturbing the peace; but if these teetotals do not disturb it, who does?

It is also grievous to hear beautiful pieces of music mutilated and spoiled in the way they are by these musicians, for judging from what I have heard of their performance, there is not one of them can draw the proper tone from his instrument, save he who blows the big drum, and he can hardly make a mistake. If such a noise occurs again it is to be hoped our constabulary force will not be so remiss in their duty as they have formerly been, and that they will exert themselves to quell the riot as speedily as possible.

A TEMPERATE MAN, BUT NOT A TEETOTAL

[The above reached us too late for insertion last week]"

### **One of the Mayor's duties**

B.G. 21 December 1848. Report under Borough Police.

"LIGHT BUTTER. On Thursday last [i.e. 14 December] the Mayor, as Clerk of the Market, attended by his Officers, proceeded to the

Market Place, for the purpose of testing the weight of the butter exhibited for sale. About 28 lbs. were found light, and were in consequence seized and forfeited. It was formerly a practice to throw butter seized under such circumstances out of the Town Hall window, to be scrambled for; this wasteful practice has been long abandoned; it was next distributed amongst the poor, which gave rise to a great deal of dissatisfaction and jealousy; this time it has been sold, and the proceeds placed in the hands of the Borough Treasurer. "

**A perennial ploy!**

B.G. 11 July 1850. From among the 'Small Ads'.

"MATRIMONY MADE EASY

OR, HOW TO WIN A LOVER

Professor Liston, 2, Hastings Street, Burton Crescent, London, will send Free to any Address, on receipt of Thirteen Uncut Postage Stamps, plain directions to enable Ladies or Gentlemen to win the devoted affections of as many of the opposite sex as their hearts may desire. The process is simple; but so captivating and enthralling that all may be married, irrespective of age, appearance, or position, while the most fickle or cold-hearted will readily bow to its attraction. Young and old, peer and peeress, as well as the peasant, are alike subject to its influence; and last, though not least, it can be arranged with such care and delicacy, that detection is impossible. N.B. Beware of ignorant imitating pretenders."

One could hardly lose! though history does not relate how many applications the Professor received. Can anyone explain about the 'thirteen uncut postage stamps' - why would these have been of any value?

P. Renold

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## QUERIES

This page has been allocated with the hope that YOU, the readers will fill it each month with questions and hopefully answers and observations on our local history. The suggestion came from O. Chaplin, a member from Northampton and he asks "Small quarries can be found scattered around almost every village in this area, though it is rare that there is clear evidence for their date and purpose. In the village of Bodicote there is a field known as 'Stonepit Field', where there are the remains of a stonepit or quarry. I knew it as a child about 60 years ago and I have often wondered about its origin, whether to supply stone for the building of the big house at Wykham Park or earlier, to supply building stone for Bodicote. I would be interested in any comment on this".

V. Barbour poses the following question:

"Banbury 19th century organ builders. I know of three churches in the area - and there are possibly more - whose organs were built or rebuilt locally. The Catholic Church in Chipping Norton has an organ which was, I believe, originally in Heythrop House. The re-builders name was LUGWIG. The other two organs are at South Newington and Drayton and the names on these are of two different craftsmen, both English. Possibly these could have been apprenticed to Lugwig???"

## BOOK REVIEW

Banbury Wills and Inventories, Part One, 1591-1620, Part Two, 1621-1650, Transcribed and abstracted by E.R.C. Brinkworth and J.S.W. Gibson; Introduction (in Part One) by Miss G.H. Dannatt; edited by J.S.W. Gibson. Banbury Historical Society, Records Volumes 13 (1985) and 14 (1976). Part One, 340pp. (incl. 98pp introduction), 2 maps, 1 plan, 1 facsimile, 2 tables, £9.00 (+£1 p&p in U.K.); Part Two, 200pp., £6.00 (+50p p&p); both parts together, £13.50 (+£1.50 p&p); from Banbury Museum, Horsefair, Banbury, Oxon. OX16 0AA.

Note. Each part contains indexes to the documents in both parts; those in Part One also include the Introduction).

All of us who are interested in probate inventories - and especially those of us who are interested in them for the light they throw on the history of towns - can now rejoice, for Volume 13 of the Banbury Historical Society's publications has appeared. It has appeared in 1985, nine years after Volume 14 to which it supplies the introduction. How the cart came before the horse in this way is explained by Jeremy Gibson in his Foreword, but it will remain a bibliographical conundrum for libraries for many years to come. That aside, what we have now is a most interesting and useful two-volume edition of all the surviving Banbury probate inventories from 1591 to 1620 together with extracts from the wills and other probate documents to which they were adjuncts, the whole embellished with additional information derived from the parish registers. Here we have 365 inventories to add to the 48 (from the period prior to 1591) which are already in print in M. A. Havinden's Household and Farm Inventories in Oxfordshire, 1550-1590 (Oxfordshire Record Society, 44), and with them we are given extracts from the probate papers of a further 38 persons for whom no inventory survives, and (as Appendices) lists of a further 176 Banbury people for whom wills survive amongst the records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury between 1571 and 1650. All together this is a formidable body of evidence and the very lucid charts in the Introduction show that we have (at least between 1611 and 1635) some probate document for something like 50% of those in the Banbury area whose estates were likely to have brought them within the purview of the probate courts. Interestingly, by comparison with other places for which probate inventories have been published, the surviving records show a greater preponderance amongst the less well-off, though it is far from clear why this should be, given Banbury's status at that time as the county's second most important town.

Together with the documents themselves and a comprehensive set of indexes we are given an excellent and authoritative 96-page introduction by Miss G.H. Dannatt. Miss Dannatt not only surveys the information which these documents provide on such topics as houses, and room-usage, possessions and husbandry, but also teases out many strands from the

mass of facts and weaves them into a most valuable picture of society in Banbury in the first half of the seventeenth century.

There are few local historians who do not enjoy a good probate inventory: it gives us real factual information on real people and at the same time satisfies the nosey-parker in us all by allowing us to peer into other people's houses and pick over their possessions. We will all have our favourites in this collection. This reviewer is particularly interested in tradesmen and shopkeepers, and there are many here: butchers and mercers, ironmongers and bakers, chandlers and fellmongers, wheelwrights, woollen drapers, blacksmiths, glovers, tailors and joiners and many more besides. It is not solely that one can see for instance the range of goods available in an ironmonger's establishment such as that of Thomas Hadley in 1599 (no 54), but one can see how, for instance, a cutler's goods in 1628 (Bartholomew Naylor, no 294) had to be divided in order to provide some sort of endowment for his three unmarried daughters; or how a fletcher's stock in trade (Rowland Hughes, no 116) financed a young son between 1610 and 1620, keeping him in clothing, healing his scalded head, sending him to London to be an apprentice to a master from whom he then ran away, and then settling him in Banbury.

It is all very good material. If I have a criticism it is over the glossary. Several times I turned to it without success. What, for instance, was 'snapphawme' which was for sale in Thomas Hadley's shop? And it would have been kind, too, for those without access to the O.E.D. to have glossed 'calys sande' and 'jues trumpes' which were also in that shop. But these are excellent volumes which I shall turn to again and again. There are real human stories behind these lists of chattels which will continue to intrigue. Who was, for instance, John Smarte (no 10) who lived with the tallow-chandler Robert Isard and who died in 1592? It was presumably Isard who wrote on the bottom of the inventory 'If I had knowen so much afore, I would not have taken him into my howse for twentie nobles, for he had almost cost me and my wyf our lives with his seutes'. Twenty nobles would have bought Smarte out four times over: at his death he was worth £1 12s. 6d.

David Vaisey  
Bodleian Library

## **BOOK REVIEW**

**THE CULWORTH GANG** by Jack Gould.

16 pp. A. 5 available from the Author, 4 Hillside Road, Piddington, Northants. NN7.2DB. Price: 70p plus postage.

The Culworth Gang, Banburyshire's very own Highwaymen have been the subject of many articles over the past 200 years. In this pamphlet, Mr. Gould has drawn on these articles and on some new research to make a very readable history.

The newspaper reports of the day are quoted extensively and together with the Parish Register entries, one is able to build a picture of the various families involved, their hardships and reliance on the Parish after their men had been executed.

The addition at the end of the pamphlet of even more recent information on the families history leads one to believe that we have not heard the last of the Culworth Gang.

D. A. H.

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A recent purchase by the Friends of the Bodleian is of particular interest to Local Historians. Ref: MS Don.b.36.

"A survey of the Dutchy Manor of Deddington in the County of Oxford belonging to William Ralph Cartwright esq. 5th October 1808, drawn up c.1810, together with notes of admissions of copyhold tenants, 1786-1880.

The volume contains fourteen plans covering the demesne, copyholds and freeholds in the manor (one of three manors in Deddington) and three plans of Deddington town itself and of its hamlets of Clifton and Hempton. This manorial survey was not previously available to historians.

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## **Bishop DAVID LOVEDAY**

Bishop Loveday, a member and Vice President of the Banbury Historical Society from its earliest days, died on Easter Day a few days before his 89th birthday. In recent years increasing age had precluded his attendance, but until that he had been regularly present at the A.G.M. and other meetings and at our annual dinners ("so long as it's not chicken").

The Loveday family at Williamscoote and Wardington have been deeply involved in the affairs of Banburyshire for the past two centuries. Of the present generations, David Loveday's elder brother Thomas and his sister Helen were other early members of the Society and contributors to 'Cake and Cockhorse', as was his cousin Dorothy Loveday. His niece Mrs Sarah Markham is one of our most enthusiastic members. A favourite opening to an after dinner speech was "My grandfather, who was born in the year of the French revolution . . ." - this remarkable family spanned almost two centuries in the three generations.

It was therefore particularly fitting that David Loveday, former headmaster of Cranleigh School and subsequently Archdeacon of Dorking, should be appointed Suffragan Bishop of Dorchester. Dorchester of course is the ancient see, but if even we had a Bishop of Banbury, it was him. Even after retirement, he remained an Assistant Bishop for some years. His knowledge of the north of the county and its personalities, particularly its clergy, was profound, and is exemplified in his review of the Victoria County History volume which covered Cropredy and its attendant chapelries (C&CH, 5, 8, p.159).

I recall being told of one of his confirmation sermons, when he compared the Christian life to the rooms of a house. He came finally "to what some people call the drawing room, the parlour, the sitting room, but" (apparently oblivious of its name for the majority of his congregation) "what we have no room for in our life is the 'lounge' - there is no lounging for the Christian". We can be sure that there was no lounging for him.

It is sad that with his passing comes the end of the direct association of the Loveday family with Oxfordshire after so many years, but at least in him the family maintained its highest traditions of leadership and service to the community to the end.

J.S.W. Gibson

## **GWLADYS WINIFRED BRINKWORTH**

By the death of Gwladys Brinkworth on 22nd April our Society has lost one of its most faithful and unobtrusively hard-working members.

I well remember how at any of the functions of the Society in its first few years, Ted Brinkworth would diffidently ask if he might "bring a friend". We soon realized that this would always be Gwladys Davies, and this friendship must even then have gone back many years. So it was to all his friends' delight that one day we learnt that they had married very quietly a few days' before. To that time I had never been invited beyond Ted's front doorstep (even to the extent on one occasion of pouring rain of sitting together in my car); my first visit after this happy event Gwladys was there to welcome me and when Ted returned from shopping there I was installed inside! It was the first of much hospitality received ever since.

In 1974 Gwladys herself joined our Committee and was its chairman as recently as 1983-84. The task she had undertaken for very many years was press publicity, providing both advance notice of meetings and the regular reports on these and the talks that were their purpose. She did much also behind the scenes to ensure that meetings were efficiently arranged and that coffee and refreshments were provided. So much of what is taken for granted was only the result of Gwladys' work and forethought.

We were used to seeing her in the context of the Society and as Ted's wife, but the Memorial Service in Banbury on 8th May was a reminder of the leading part she had taken in many of the town's activities. Before retirement she had been a high executive in Spencers' surgical corset firm. Lessons at the service were read by the Organiser of the Citizens' Advice Bureau and the Chairman of the United Nations Association; donations were invited for the Save the Children Fund - just a few of the aspects of a hard-working, caring, compassionate life.

Her family have very generously signified their wish to make available a substantial capital sum from which an annual income may provide for prizes for work on local history by schools in the Banbury area. Details still have to be worked out, not least the most acceptable form for the educational authorities. However, your Society's committee have enthusiastically accepted both the principle of the fund and the responsibility for its administration. We can therefore look forward to the memory of Ted and Gwladys Brinkworth and all they both did for the Historical Society being preserved in the prizes which will bear their name.

J.S.W. Gibson

The Banbury Historical 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 and 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. By 1985 there had been 88 issues and at least 230 articles. Most back issues are still available and out-of-print issues can if required be photocopied.

Other publications still in print include:

Booklets -

*Old Banbury - a short popular history*, E.R.C. Brinkworth  
*New Light of Banbury's Crosses*, P.D.A. Harvey  
*Banbury Castle - a summary of excavations in 1972*, P. Fasham  
*The Building and Furnishing of St Mary's Church, Banbury*,  
N. Cooper

Pamphlets -

*History of Banbury Cross*  
*The Globe Room at the Reindeer Inn, Banbury*

The Society has also published twenty or more volumes in its records series (list available of those still in print). These have included *Banbury Parish Registers* (in seven parts: Marriages 1558-1837, Baptisms and Burials 1558-1812); *Banbury Corporation Records: Tudor and Stuart; Banbury Wills and Inventories* (1621-1650 published; 1591-1620 for publication 1985); *A Victorian M.P. and his Constituents: The Correspondence of H.W. Tancred 1841-1860; Shoemaker's Window: Recollections of Banbury before the Railway Age*, by George Herbert (now available in Gulliver Press edition); *South Newington Churchwardens' Accounts 1553-1684; Wigginton Constables' Books 1691-1836; Bodicote Parish Accounts 1700-1822; Victorian Banbury*, by Barrie Trinder (with Phillimore); and *Aynho: A Northamptonshire Parish*, by Nicholas Cooper (with Leopard's Head Press). Volumes in preparation include *Banbury Gaol Records 1805-1852*, edited by Penelope Renold, and *Baptisms and Burials 1813-1838*. An edition of letters to the 1st Earl of Guilford (of Wroxton, father of Lord North, Prime Minister and M.P. for Banbury) is also planned.

Meetings are held during the autumn and winter, normally at 7.30 pm at the North Oxfordshire Technical College, Broughton Road, Banbury, on the second Thursday of each month. Talks are given by invited lecturers on general and local archaeological, historical and architectural subjects. In the summer, the AGM is held at a local country house and other visits are arranged.

Membership of the Society is open to all, no proposer or seconder being needed. The annual subscription is £8.00 including any records volumes published, or £5.00 if these are excluded.

Application forms can be obtained from the Hon. Membership Secretary, c/o Banbury Museum, 8 Horsefair, Banbury, Oxon.

