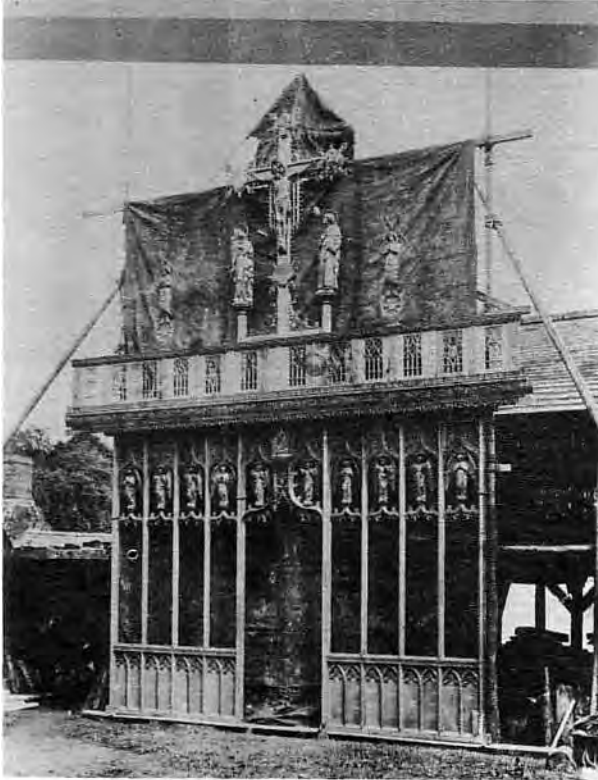


# CAKE AND COCKHORSE



## BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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# Banbury Historical Society

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

## **Cover Picture:**

Main Section of the Chancel Screen for Hobart Cathedral, Tasmania.  
Photographed in Franklin's Yard, C.1916 before shipment.

# Cake and Cockhorse

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

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Following an article entitled "A Survey of Industrial Remains in Banbury and District" in the Summer 1987 edition, I received an interesting letter from Mr. F.A. Blencowe, pointing out that the locomotive named was "Lidban" and not "Lidben". He also notes that another locomotive is mentioned in the Industrial Railway Society Handbook 'J' namely "John" (built by Hudswell Clarke No.32 in 1889 and rebuilt in 1909) it arrived from Poynton Collieries in Cheshire via E.Nuttal & Co., Contractors probably before Lidban and did not go away until after August 1922.

In the previous issue I noted that Sarah Gosling had left the area. It is with great relief and pleasure that I announce the arrival of her successor, Mrs. Mel Barnett. She has already met a number of members and is already contributing to the success of the Society.

D.A.H.

**FROM HEMPTON TO HOBART:  
FRANKLINS OF DEDDINGTON c.1850-1917.**

This article is based on research work carried out for Oxfordshire Museums Service between 1984-5 during which time two exhibitions were mounted, one at Banbury Museum, the other at the County Museum, Woodstock.

The research initiated as a result of a donation of a collection of 74 woodcarving tools to Banbury Museum. At an early stage it was ascertained that the tools were used by woodcarvers employed by H.R. Franklin's builders, of Deddington.

The main aims of the research were to: provide information about the woodcarving tools and to explain their use within a local skilled trade; to relate the significance of the tools to H.R. Franklin's building operation by examining examples of woodcarving, particularly; and to establish the scope and importance of Franklin's within a local, national and international context.

Franklin's were general builders but also specialized in church building and restoration. Although Franklin's became well known for their local building work it was for the high quality of church carving that the firm gained a national and later international reputation. From c.1850-c.1860 Franklin's probably produced work<sup>1</sup> for churches under the direction of G.E. Street. In the late 19th century Franklin's produced work for the architects G.F. Bodley, T. Garner and in the early 20th century for Cecil Hare.

The firm was founded c.1850 by Robert Franklin who was a carpenter and joiner by trade. Census returns for 1841 show that R. Franklin, aged 50, carpenter, lived in Chapel Street, Deddington. He established a highly successful builders yard and employed 10 men by 1851. By 1871 his widow employed 84 men and 8 boys. Later the brothers Henry Robert Franklin and William Franklin took over the firm which became a very big operation by the 1890's employing 200 men or more.<sup>2</sup>

H.R. Franklin lived at Castle House, Deddington and bought Yarn-ton Manor in 1895. Bought in a ruinous and sadly neglected state Yarn-ton Manor was restored under the supervision of Thomas Garner.<sup>3</sup> W. Franklin lived at The Blocks now renamed Featherstone House.<sup>4</sup> Franklin's Builders Yard was situated immediately behind Featherstone House (The Blocks.) The Yard is now occupied by Johnson's.<sup>5</sup>

H.R. Franklin and W. Franklin were the two directors of the family firm. In C.1912 a financial crisis occurred caused by William's wife leaving him and taking most of the money. Franklin's became a Limited Company with two new directors, Frank Gray, MP for Oxford City and Mr. Gargetts, Manager of Barclay's Bank<sup>6</sup>

The firm continued in business until 1917 when it was forced to close due to bankruptcy. It appears that Franklin's received a large order for stretchers during the 1914-18 war, which they turned out approximately 6 inches short of War Office specifications. As a consequence the War Office refused payment and the Official Receiver

was called in.<sup>7</sup> It was also known that Franklin's were to work on Liverpool Cathedral but due to financial problems could not take the work on.<sup>7</sup>

Output by the firm was prolific. As well as producing fittings and furnishings for churches, Franklin's also produced work for Oxford Colleges, schools and private houses.

From interviews with residents in Deddington, particularly relatives of woodcarvers it was possible to establish some idea of how Franklin's operated. Franklin's employed joiners, carpenters, pit sawers, smiths, masons, horsemen and estimators at the turn of the 20th Century. Woodcarving was a specialist trade within the Firm. The woodcarving tools donated to Banbury Museum provided the first clues of how this specialist section operated. The tools included chisels, gouges, parting tools, fluters and veiners. The names of the woodcarvers were stamped or engraved on the wooden handles:

A.J. Hancox (Arthur)  
Wheeler  
H. Faulkner  
W. Spiers (William, father of Fred)  
C. Carvell (Charles)  
F. Sturch (Fred)  
J. Hopcraft (Joseph)  
F. Spiers (Frederick, son of William)  
J. Spiers

It was further known that other carvers were Canberry, Smithin and Walters.<sup>8</sup> (See Fig. 1.)

Although most of the men working for Franklin's were from Deddington, a number of carvers were brought in from outside in order to complete specific orders to time. Spiers were one such family. Carvers came from Stratford-on-Avon and also from a firm at Gloucester. Franklin's men would sometimes work for these firms in return.<sup>9</sup>

David Hancox was foreman at Franklin's and was brother to Arthur, one of the carvers pre-1914. Woodcarvers served a 5-year apprenticeship. It was common practice to inherit tools from a member of the family or to perhaps buy tools secondhand off another carver. For this reason some of the wooden (handmade) handles bore two names stamped one over the other. The metal pieces for the chisels, planes saws and other tools were purchased from the well-known tool makers such as Marples of Sheffield. The carvers made the handles commonly out of ash or beechwood, to their own design. A complete set of tools amounting to perhaps 60-90 pieces were kept in handmade wooden tool boxes or more substantial tool chests.<sup>10</sup>

Franklin's mostly used English oak for their carving. The oak came from Exeter and also from Brackley. Oak was stacked in the lanes near the Yard for several years to season. It was then sawn by hand in pits. The oak was kiln dried at Franklin's Yard. A large stock of timber was held.<sup>11</sup>

From an old photograph of woodcarvers, taken c.1895 outside Featherstone House (The Blocks) it can be seen that the woodcarvers

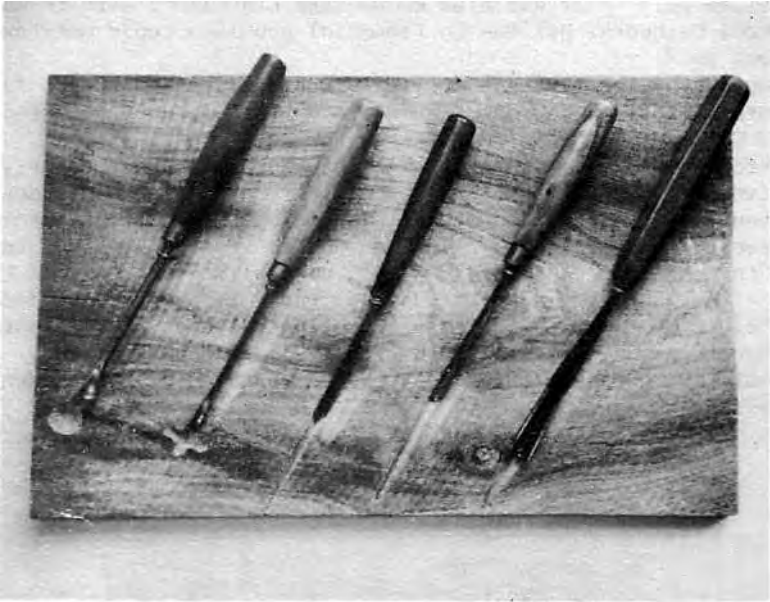


Fig.1. Sample board showing examples of five cust using from left to right: Back-bent gouge, front-bent gouge, curved parting tool, fluter and another curved parting tool.



Fig.2. Woodcarvers at Franklin's c.1895 outside Featherstone House (The Blocks).

wore white linen aprons.(See Fig.2.) The apprentices wore bell-boy style hats, distinguishing them from the qualified woodcarvers. A number of the workforce were identified by Miss Stanley and Mrs.Ray Deddington residents related to woodcarvers. These included: Mr. Hall, the supervisor on the far right of the photograph; Alf Stanley standing 5th from left in the top row; Mrs. Ray's father seated second from left in front row. The firm reproduced copies of this photograph for the employees. Franklin's also employed a number of boys to 'fetch and carry' for the working men. Errands were run to collect 'beer and baccy'.

Miss Stanley, daughter of Alf Stanley, one of the last woodcarvers to work for Franklin's recalls that her father worked extremely long hours. He was often away from home, and her mother always kept his bag packed as he sometimes went away on church work at very short notice.

There were 7 or 8 woodcarvers employed by Franklin's c.1917. Employees at Franklin's worked a six day week from Mondays to Saturdays, with only Sundays off. The timetable of a typical working day in summer was as follows:

6.00 am. Start work  
8.00 - 8.30 am. Breakfast  
12.00 - 12.30 pm Dinner  
4.00 - 4.30 pm Tea  
7.00 pm. finish Work

The woodcarvers were paid 6½d per hour. Holidays were unpaid.<sup>12</sup>

The C.19 was a period of great activity in church building and restoration. C.1850 R. Franklin carried out general repair work to churches but also worked on new buildings often with J.Hopcraft, another Deddington Builder. Examples include: The chapel of St. John, Hempton 1850-51, and the Church of St. John, Milton 1856 to the design of William Butterfield. R. Franklin carried out work at the Church of SS Peter and Paul, Deddington; 1843 nave roof renewed in oak (cost £300); 1836-7 new pulpit, reading desk, communion rails and altar pieces. It is likely that Franklin's worked on the general restoration there in 1858 and in 1865-6 under the direction of the Diocesan Architect G.E. Street (1824-1881).<sup>13</sup>

From 1884-1917, H.R. Franklin's became closely linked with the architects G.F. Bodley (1827-1907), I. Garner (1839-1906), and Cecil Hare, a pupil of Bodley's. It was for the high quality of craftsmanship in producing wood carvings and church furnishings that Franklin's became reknown. Rood screens, reredos, pulpits and organ cases were very much in demand. This work was carried out to the designs of Bodley and Garner and after Bodley's death, to the designs of Cecil Hare. Bodley had worked in Gilbert Scott's office with Street in the 1840s. In 1869 Bodley formed a partnership with Garner which lasted until 1897, when Garner was received into the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>14</sup>

A great many of Bodley and Garner's churches were built in the English Late Gothic style. Internally churches were often decorated with painted boarded wooden roofs, wood sculpture such as rood screens, reredos and organ cases, sometimes in a heavily gilded and

painted Flemish or Late Gothic Style.<sup>15</sup> The list of churches and other commissions carried out by Franklin's (which were known during research carried out between 1984-5) demonstrates the vital contribution which this North Oxfordshire firm made within the local, national and international context. The commissions included general building work, stonework and woodcarving. Perhaps the most prestigious woodcarving completed by Franklin's was the chancel screen and pulpit for the Cathedral Church of Hobart, Tasmania. Bodley and Garner successfully competed for the commission for the cathedral which was built between 1868-94. The pulpit designed by Bodley was erected in 1903. The rood screen by Hare was erected in 1916.

Residents in Deddington recall that a great stir was caused in Deddington at the time the Chancel Screen and Pulpit for Hobart were packed for shipment. Mrs. Hopcraft, wife of the Deddington builder, J. Hopcraft recalled that she and her sister Maude were young girls at the time "... no one seemed to know where Tasmania was, except that it was a long, long way away" (See Cover Picture.)

Sally Stradling.

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1. Vane-Turner, M. The Story of Deddington, 1933, p.39.
2. Census Returns for 1841, 1851, and 1881 for Deddington,, Oxon in the County Record Office.
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4. Colvin, H.M. A History of Deddington, Oxon, 1963, p.10
5. Information from Mr. J.M. French, estimator for Franklin's.
6. Op.cit.
7. Information from Mrs. Ray of Deddington whose father worked for Franklin's.
8. Information from Mr. J.M. French.
9. Information from Miss Stanley, daughter of Alf Stanley, wood-carver for Franklin's.
10. Information from Mr. Drinkwater, who was apprenticed to Alf Stanley, woodcarver.
11. Information from Mr. J.M. French.
12. Information from Miss Stanley.
13. Colvin, H.M. A History of Deddington, Oxon, 1963, p.107.
14. Dixon R and Muthesius's, Victorian Architecture, 1978, pp.223-4.
15. Op.Cit. p.223.
16. Vane-Turner, M. The Story of Deddington, 1933, pp.39-40.



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Abbreviations used for sources:

Potts - Potts, W., A history of Banbury, 1978 edition.  
VCH - Victoria County History  
Revsner - Pevsner, N. & Sherwood, J., Buildings of England, Oxfordshire, 1974.  
Colvin - Colvin, H.M., A History of Deddington, Oxon, 1963.  
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J.o.J. - Jackson's Oxford Journal  
Vane-Turner - Vane-Turner, M., The Story of Deddington, 1933.

## **Oxfordshire**

**Banbury** Horton Hospital by Charles H. Driver of London. 1869-72, built by Messrs. Franklin & Sons of Deddington. £9,168 spent on purchase of ground, building and fitting (Potts, p.303: VCH: Oxfordshire Vol.X.p.85)  
Christ Church south Banbury 1853 by Benjamin Ferrey, built by Joseph Hope of Oxford. Tower on north side built by Franklin's of Deddington in 1880 to Ferrey's original design. (VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol.X.p.106)

**Bodicote** Church of St. John the Baptist Medieval, rebuilt 1843-4. Enlargement of church 1843-4. Medieval tower removed, new tower built at west end of nave. North aisle rebuilt and whole church much altered and re-seated. Architect, John Plowman. Builder, Robert Franklin of Deddington. Further changes: 1866 north porch added. In 1878 organ moved from west end to chancel, new seats placed in chancel, new pulpit built, new vestry made at base of tower. (VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol. IX, p.38)

**Clifton** Chapel of St. James the Great Built by Robert Franklin and James Hopcraft in 1851. Paid for by Revd. Risley (VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol. XI, p.116)

Clifton School 1870. Built by H.R. Franklin on a site given by W.C. Cartwright. Day School. Attendance of 13 boys and 18 girls. House for single certified teacher. Governed by a separate Trust Deed but under joint management with Hempton. Closed 1945 and later demolished. (VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol. XI, p.119)

**Cropley** Church of St. Mary Magdalene Medieval church restored C.19 and C.20. Third instalment of repairs carried out by Messrs. Franklin of Deddington architect W.F. Loveday. Repairs included £1,900 on tower, vestry windows, chancel arch, extensive repairs to tower and buttresses added to chancel. Tower by Messrs. Booth of Banbury. (VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol. X, p.222)

- Deddington Castle House Bought by H.R. Franklin in 1894. Restored with the aid of the architect Thomas Garner. (Colvin. p.9)  
The Blocks, Castle Street C17 altered and partly rebuilt by H.R. Franklin. (Colvin. p.10).  
Bridge over the Sowbrook to the south of Deddington. Rebuilt by Messrs. Franklin and Hopcraft in 1842 and widened by the County Council in 1951. (Colvin. p.16)  
Church of SS. Peter and Paul Nave roof rebuilt in oak in 1843 by Robert Franklin at a cost of £300. G.E. Street restoration 1858-1866. Pulpit, reading desk, communion rails and alter piece by Robert Franklin's. Carvers Tom and Alf Stanley. Gates by Alf Stanley after his retirement from Franklins (Colvin p.107: Miss Stanley: Mr. Drinkwater, Mais pp.122-132).
- Epswell Church of St. Anne Restoration in 1857 by Henry Franklin a Deddington builder. South aisle repaired, church re-roofed, new pews, singers gallery removed. (VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol.X.p.255)
- Finstock Church of Holy Trinity Chancel screen by Franklin's (Letter from Mr. Bowman).
- Glympton Church of St. Mary 1871 restoration and repairs to chancel by G.E. Street. Rectory House and offices by Robert Franklin. (J.o.J. and VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol. XI.p.130).
- Hempton Chapel of St. John 1850-1. Entire church built by Robert Franklin and James Hopcraft. Designed by Rev. William Wilson, junr. Paid for by Rev. Wilson Snr. (Colvin. p.110).
- Milton Church of St. Mary the Virgin 1856-7. After design of William Butterfield. Built by Franklin's and Hopcraft. Nave, chancel, south porch. Early Dec. style. Small central tower with 2 bells. Fittings include font and carved cover, reading desk, pews and pulpit. (VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol.IX.p.36)
- Nether Worton Nether Worton House Home of Lord and Lady Schuster. One of Franklin's woodcarvers Alf Stanley worked here after the firm closed. Gates and staircase.
- Oxford Church of St. Giles Franklin's involvement with rebuilding of south chapel 1850-2. (Vane-Turner. p.39)  
Church of St. Margaret 1883/93 by H.G.W. Drinkwater. Rood screen by Bodley; Gates 1896, Rood 1907, Cresting 1915. Pulpit by Bodley. 1908 reredos and aumbry by Cecil Hare produced by H.R. Franklin's. Baptistry screen 1913. Font cover 1914 by Hare possibly made by H.R. Franklin's. Tower by Bodley, builder H.R. Franklin 1897. (Vane-Turner, p.39; Pevsner, p.293; Oxfordshire County Record Office MS Oxf. Dioc. Papers c.1936)  
Jesus College Building work carried out in 1883 by H.R. Franklin's (Correspondence with Jesus College Archivist.)  
Church of St. John the Evangelist, Cowley Whole church by Bodley 1894-6. Roof, organ case, pulpit, screen made by H.R. Franklin's. Reredos not by Bodley. (Pevsner, p.292; Vane-Turner, p.39)  
Magdalen College H.R. Franklin was commissioned to work here with Bodley and Garner 1886-8. Rebuilding of the President's Lodgings, Carriage Gateway and new Quad; 1880-84 St. Swithun's Buildings: 1902 Hall Restorations; chapel woodcarvings. (Mais pp.122-132; Vane Turner, p.39; Pevsner p.149; Magdalen College Archives D9-284; JoJ 15th October 1881 p.7a, 13th October 1883, p6a, 11th October 1884, p8b, 17th October 1885 p6a)
- Somerton Church of St. James C12 with C19 restoration and additions. Oak screen in tower doorway designed by Thomas Garner and erected in memory of the Coronation of Edward VII, carved oak vestry screen added in 1915.. Woodcarving by H.R. Franklin's. Choir stalls carved by Alf Stanley. (VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol. VI: Information from Mr. Drinkwater).
- Steeple Barton Barton Abbey Franklin worked here for the two remodelings of C.1840 and C.1890. (Vane-Turner, p.39; VCH.Oxfordshire, Vol. XI).

- Wroxall Wroxall Abbey Restoration in 1885 by Bodley, Garner and H.R. Franklin. (Vane-Turner, p.39; VCH: Oxfordshire, Vol.XI).
- Yarnton Yarnton Manor Sold to H.R. Franklin by the Dashwoods in 1895. Restoration by T. Garner and Franklin 1897. (Pevsner, p.867; Country Life Dec. 21st, 1951 and Dec. 28th 1951, Yarnton Manor, Oxfordshire I & II by Gordon Nares).
- Cheshire
- Eccleston Church of St. Mary 1894-9 by Bodley for the Duke of Newcastle. Woodcarvings by H.R. Franklin. (Vane-Turner, p.40).
- Cornwall Church of St. Ives. (Vane-Turner, p.39)
- Hertfordshire
- Berkhampstead Mansion for a man named Coker (Information from Mr. French).
- London Cripplegate (Vane-Turner, p.39).  
House of Commons Panelling by Alf Stanley, 1912. (Information from Mr. French).  
St. Paul's London Screen, pulpit, sounding board, organ grille, lectern and stalls by H.R. Franklin.  
 (Information from Miss Stanley and Mr. Drinkwater).
- Nottinghamshire Clumber chapel 1886-9 by Bodley. Commission for the Duke of Newcastle. Woodcarving by Franklin (Vane-Turner, p.40).
- Powys Powys Cathedral, Nr. Welshpool Rood screen by Franklin. (Information from Miss Stanley).
- Staffordshire
- Burton-on-Trent Church of St. Chad Designed in 1903 by Bodley. Completed by Cecil Hare in 1910 after Bodley's death. Woodcarvings by Franklin's. (Vane-Turner, p.40).
- Suffolk
- Felixstowe Church at Felixstowe (Information from Mr. French).
- Warwickshire
- Stratford-on-Avon Holy Trinity Restoration by Bodley and Garner 1888-92: new reredos exclusive of sculpture £1,771; organ case 1891, cost £495. Oak sides cost £100. Also screens and panelling. Woodcarvings by H.R. Franklin's. (Vane-Turner, p.39; Shakespeare Centre MS in DR 490/10).
- Wiltshire
- Marlborough Marlborough School Chapel Restoration by Bodley and Garner 1882-6 with H.R. Franklin. (Vane-Turner, p.39; Correspondence with Marlborough School).
- Salisbury Salisbury School Chapel Fittings by H.R. Franklin's. (Vane-Turner, p.39).
- Worcestershire
- Tardebigge Hewell Grange 1884-9 Franklin's worked here with Bodley and Garner for The Earl of Plymouth. Staircase by Alf Stanley. (Information from Mr. Drinkwater).
- Yorkshire
- York York Minster Doors carved by H.R. Franklin's (Information from Mr. Drinkwater).
- Leeds Leeds Cathedral Woodcarving by H.R. Franklin's (Information from Mr. French).
- Italy
- Rome Church of San Remo Woodcarving by H.R. Franklin's (Information from Mr. Drinkwater).
- Tasmania
- Hobart Cathedral Church of St. David 1886 by Bodley. Pulpit designed by Bodley carved in English oak by H.R. Franklin's. Erected 1903. Canopy and panelling added 1904. Rood screen by Hare carved by H.R. Franklin's. Erected 1916. (Vane-Turner, p.39; Correspondence and plans from the Dean's Secretary, Hobart Cathedral).
- Liner S.S. Queen Mary (Information from Mr. Drinkwater).

## THE TOWN CLERKS OF BANBURY, 1554-1835.

The Office of Town Clerk, like that of the Chamberlain, may well have derived from officials of the medieval Gilds:<sup>1</sup> it had no counterpart in manorial administration.<sup>2</sup> The Town Clerk, or Common Clerk as he was sometimes called, first made his appearance in several town and cities during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but did not generally occupy a place of real importance in town government until the fifteenth century or later.<sup>3</sup> However, by 1689 he was clearly established as an indispensable and leading figure in most municipal corporations,<sup>4</sup> 'the standing and confidential adviser of the Mayor and Corporation', on whose 'Talent and Integrity much of the merits of their official conduct must depend'<sup>5</sup>

The Town Clerk was almost always one of the town's leading attorneys, and on his death or retirement it was common procedure for him to be followed by his successor in the legal practice, oftentimes his own son.<sup>6</sup> This continuity established a generally beneficial pattern of permanence and stability, for while the Mayor held office for only one year and other officers might be replaced as the Corporation decided, the Town Clerkship was tenable for life.<sup>7</sup> From 1554 to 1835 Banbury was served by probably no more than sixteen or seventeen Town Clerks, including seven, perhaps eight, who were members of three families: Style(s), Aplin, Walford.

As well as continuing in his professional practice, it was usual for the Town Clerk to hold several other town appointments; for example, as Clerk of the Peace for the Borough and County Quarter Sessions, Clerk to the Magistrates in Petty Sessions, Registrar, Clerk to the Markets; maybe also as Coroner, Deputy Recorder, Steward of the Manor, or as presiding officer at the Court Leet. Some boroughs admitted the Town Clerk as a member of the Common Council, and Dover and Carlisle even elected him to the office of Mayor, thus creating what the Commissioners on Municipal Corporations described as 'a strange incongruity'.<sup>8</sup>

The Salary paid to the Town Clerk was small, usually no more than a few pounds a year; but for his work as solicitor for the Corporation he received the appropriate legal fees, he usually collected a fee for each admission to the freedom of the borough, and, of course, was entitled to all the costs incurred in the discharge of the duties of the other offices he held. Opportunities for profit and the level of profit varied from town to town, but that some Town Clerks did very well indeed is clearly illustrated by the example of Thomas Burbidge, who, when he lost his job as Town Clerk of Leicester with the reform of the municipal corporations in 1835, so assessed his income from the office over the previous four years that he felt entitled to claim the sum of £10,760.6s.1d. by way of compensation.<sup>9</sup>

Of particular significance was the fact that the Town Clerk, as the borough's only professional office-holder, regarded the Corporation as not so much his employer or master as one of his clients,<sup>10</sup> so that, although he was fully involved with the town's

affairs, he could exercise a considerable degree of independence and, indeed, authority, not enjoyed by his fellow Corporation officers. The most important consequence of this special relationship, at least so far as Banbury is concerned, was that the records of his involvement in Corporation affairs, which the Town Clerk was required to keep, were guarded as his own, or his practice's, private and confidential papers and, as such, forming no part of an official borough archive. If, in fact, these records have survived their whereabouts are unknown.

All that has come down to us is the Town Clerk's Book of Forms and Precedents, dated 1797.<sup>11</sup> This is a handbook of legislation relating to corporations, the oaths to be administered to office-holders, the method of appointment and duties of Land Tax and Window Tax Commissioners and Assessors, the setting of the Assize of Bread; and it is a guide to such matters as the procedure to be followed in admitting members into the Corporation, in electing the Mayor and the Member of Parliament, and in conducting the Sessions. To identify the Town Clerks and to form some impression of the part they played in the government of the town we have to rely upon the few surviving general records of the Corporation's activities.

Banbury's first recorded Town Clerk was Peter Gyll, one of several 'necessary officers to be annually chosen' in accordance with the town's first charter, granted in 1554.<sup>12</sup> Each year he was provided with a gown at the Corporation's expense and, it would appear, a wage of £1.<sup>13</sup> The sixteenth century by-laws and ordinances give us some idea of his duties and the fees he could expect to receive. On the day of St. Michael the Archangel he played a central role in the annual election of the Bailiff, presenting the two candidates for election, recording the vote of each Alderman and Burgess,<sup>14</sup> and administering the oath of office to the successful candidate.<sup>15</sup> He then carried out the same procedure 'for the election of the King and Queen's Justice of the Peace within the said borough of Banbury ... and all other officers necessary for the town and court to serve for the year following'.<sup>16</sup>

'Every Sunday and holy day and at other times convenient except sickness and other lawful excuses' the Town Clerk was required to attend on the Bailiff; every year, in autumn or winter, along with 'all other officers accountants' he was required to submit his 'proper and full accounts' to the auditors 'upon pain of imprisonment without bail of mainprize'.<sup>17</sup> In the Court of Record every warrant for arrest ('capias') was to 'be made and directed under seal of the Town Clerk and subscribed with his hand and name', and no capias would be 'granted at the suit of any stranger or foreigner except it shall first appear plainly to the Bailiff ... or the Town Clerk that there is good cause to commence the same suit within the Liberty of the said town'.<sup>18</sup> Once an issue in the Court got under way it was the Town Clerk's responsibility to 'make the records perfect and engross them in parchment upon pain of one day of imprisonment and pay to the Chamber of the town 1s.8d. for every default'; and every two months the records of all Court proceedings were to be brought up-to-date, with a day's imprisonment and a 2s.

fine the punishment for his failure to do so.<sup>19</sup>

It was accepted that some fees were in order for both the Town Clerk and the Sergeant-at-Mace for their work in connection with the Court, and these were specified and publicly recorded 'in a table set and hanged up in the Court Hall' to deter both official and suitor from any attempt at bribery, with the added threat of a fine and two days imprisonment should the Sergeant and Town Clerk give way to the temptation of taking more than was prescribed as their due.<sup>20</sup> This table of fees has not survived, but it can be assumed that the Town Clerk derived a not inconsiderable and, certainly, regular income from his Court activities, as, indeed, he did from the 1s. he received from each successful candidate for the freedom of the borough and from each Alderman on his election, the 6d. from every newly-elected Capital Burgess and the 4d. fee for recording a covenanted servant's completion of his apprenticeship.<sup>21</sup>

Peter Gyll was still Town Clerk at the time of the visitation of Oxfordshire by William Harvey, Clarenceux King of Arms in 1566<sup>22</sup> and could have continued in office until his death in February 1575/76, although there is no evidence for this.

The Corporation Accounts make no reference to the office of Town Clerk after 1572/73 until Nicholas Austen (Awstin) was elected and 'sworn to the true execution of his office and unto the supremacy' on the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel (29 September) in Armada year. 1588.<sup>23</sup> He was re-elected on 29 September, 1591,<sup>24</sup> and when the 1608 Charter called for 'one wise and discreet man to be elected who shall be called the common writer or clerk, in English the Town Clerk' his appointment was confirmed.<sup>25</sup> Although Peter Gyll was entered as a freeman of the borough in 1554, there is no indication that he was ever a member of the Corporation; Nicholas Austen, however, was, serving as an auditor in 1598-9, 1600-1 and 1601-2, and contributing to 'certain suits, obtaining the Charter of this Borough, the suit of the Cross, and other charges, the entertainment of the King, the building of the Wool Hall and other business concerning the Corporation'.<sup>26</sup>

On 6 January, 1617/18, William Knight 'did leave his place of Town Clerkship unto the Mayor; and the Company is to choose some other whom they shall think fit'.<sup>27</sup> Knight had been Chamberlain since 1608 (named for the office in the Charter of James I) and could possibly have added the office of Town Clerk on Nicholas Austen's death in July 1613, perhaps in the absence of anyone else prepared to take it on. He continued as Chamberlain until 1628, but on 10 January, 1617/18, 'there was chosen to be Town Clerk by most of the Company, according to the Charter, Mr. Edward Edenes' (Edens), who, on the same day, took the 'oath of obedience and his oath for the executing of his office before the Mayor, the whole Company being then present';<sup>28</sup> that the Banbury Burial Register records the burial of Edward Edens 'Town Clarke' on 21 November, 1643, indicates that he remained in office until his death.<sup>29</sup>

At some time between 1643 and his own death in July 1649, William Pym would appear to have been Town Clerk, but the next confirmed holder of the office was Timothy Harris, son of the Rev. Dr. Robert

Harris, Rector of Hanwell, and of his wife, Joan, sister of the redoubtable William Whateley, Vicar of Banbury. Not a member of the Corporation, Harris, as Town Clerk, subscribed to a letter from the Mayor and Aldermen to the Trustees for the sale of Fee Farm Rents, dated 3 June, 1653; <sup>30</sup> four years later he was a witness for the Corporation in the Chancery lawsuit arising from the Sheep Pens dispute, and died in office, still only a young man of 36, in June, 1659. <sup>31</sup>

His successor, Richard Down(e)s, was Town Clerk, with just one short break, from 1659 until his death in 1691. It is most unfortunate that more than thirty-one years service - through the Interregnum, the reigns of Charles II and James II and the early years of William and Mary - should be marked by only a handful of brief references in the surviving documents. He was named as Town Clerk and Coroner on 1 December, 1683, when, the 1618 Charter having been surrendered to Charles II, a new one was given to the town. <sup>32</sup> He was one of the town officials removed from office by James II on 20 November, 1687, but was restored, as Assistant and Town Clerk, in October of the following year when the King reversed his policy towards the corporations in a frantic effort of survival. <sup>33</sup>

From 1691 to 1722 the office of Town Clerk would appear to have been filled by four members of the Style(s) family. Philip Style, Senior, was certainly Town Clerk at the time of the contending Mayors after the death in office of William Thorp in February 1698/99, supporting John Welchman, John West, Junior and John West, Senior, while his son, Philip, Junior, served the office in the alternative administration of Samuel West, <sup>34</sup> and it is tempting to assume that in fact, he had held the office since 1691. However, Jeremy Gibson has shown recently that Philip Style did not sign the Association Oath Roll of 1695, which, as Town Clerk, he surely should have done; after the Mayor, the Recorder and the Member of Parliament, the Roll was signed by Daniel Style, Philip, Senior's younger brother and landlord of the Unicorn Inn, which leads Mr. Gibson to suggest that Daniel Style 'was also Town Clerk in 1695-6, as his family filled this office later'. <sup>35</sup> But Daniel Style was no lawyer, whereas Philip, Senior's son, William, who did sign the Association Roll three places after his uncle, was, so that it is possible that he signed as Town Clerk, thus holding the office before his father, as well as succeeding him on his (Philip's) death in 1706; the involvement of Philip, Junior, in the mayoral dispute may well have made him persona non grata, as far as the Corporation was concerned.

William Style remained as Town Clerk until his death in 1716, and his own son, John, was named in the 1718 Charter as the 'first modern Town Clerk and Coroner'; this Charter also excluded the Town Clerk from the necessity of annual election, and provided that on John Style's 'death or removal' the Mayor, Aldermen and Capital Burgesses would appoint his successor. <sup>36</sup>

That became necessary when John Style died in 1722 and Richard Paynton may well have been chosen (although an entry in the Vestry Book for 18 July, 1740, contains the first reference we have to him as Town Clerk), continuing in the office until his death in 1748.

If this was, in fact, the case, then all that we know of his more than twenty years of service is the Vestry's concern in 1740 that he had 'been deficient for many years last past in making the Poor's Assessments according to his Agreement at a Vestry holden April 4th., 1727 to Execute his paying his Taxes'.<sup>37</sup>

Perhaps Richard Paynton's negligence was symptomatic of a general mood of apathy and irresponsibility, which appears to have been prevalent in the affairs of the Corporation during the years of his Town Clerkship. At the elections for Mayor in 1723, 1724, 1729 and 1738 the successful candidate refused to serve, a replacement nomination was required and a re-election was necessary;<sup>38</sup> in 1725 and 1735 a third election was called for,<sup>39</sup> while in 1745 only at the fourth attempt did the Mayor-elect agree to serve.<sup>40</sup> On 7 September, 1730, the day appointed by the Charter for the election of the Mayor, twenty-two of those summoned for the purpose by the Sergeants-at-Mace failed to appear and the election had to be delayed; there was again no quorum on 5 September, 1737, so that 'No Mayor could be chose' until the following day.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, on no less than five occasions in 1734 there was no quorum at Halls summoned by the Mayor, Edward Box, 'to consult about divers weighty affairs and matters for the good and benefit of this Corporation', even though Richard Page and William Bloxham, the Sergeants-at-Mace, testified to having summoned 'personally or by message left at their houses' the missing Aldermen and Capital Burgesses.<sup>42</sup> One wonders what restraint Richard Paynton or an unknown Town Clerk urged upon Robert Greenall, Mayor for the year 1728-9, who provoked an official protest signed by the Recorder and eight Aldermen and Burgesses when, having met in Hall during the forenoon of Monday, 12 January, 1729, the Mayor arbitrarily adjourned the meeting to 6 p.m., having refused to declare what business he had to propose. Then at 6 o'clock the Mayor continued a train of adjournments; to 11 a.m. on 13 January, to 11 a.m. on 14 January, to 6 p.m. on the same day, to 5 p.m. on 15 January and, finally, to 11 a.m. on Friday, 16 January; and the only business attended to during this whole week was the rejection of the resignation submitted by an Assistant and the defeat of a single candidature for Capital Burgess.<sup>43</sup> And if the Town Clerk had advised Mayor Henry Clarson against his forcing through the election of William Jarvis as Capital Burgess on 31 March, 1736, against the wishes of the majority of Hall members and 'contrary to the ancient custom and usage of the Borough' his advice was ignored, and it needed court action against Clarson and Jarvis to have 'the said pretended nomination and the election of the said William Jarvis ... declared null and void.'<sup>44</sup>

For the remainder of the life of the closed corporation the Town Clerkship was in the hands of members of the Aplin and Walford families.

Benjamin Aplin was elected by a vote of 10-0 on 11 October, 1748;<sup>45</sup> having been elected an Assistant earlier the same year;<sup>46</sup> he became Coroner on 8 September, 1756.<sup>47</sup> When he resigned the office of Town Clerk 'and all profits and advantages thereto belonging' on 3 September, 1770, it would appear to have been to leave him free to



set his sights on further advancement in Corporation office; that same day he was elected Capital Burgess and appointed Deputy to the Recorder, Frederick Montagu. <sup>48</sup> The Capital Burgess vacancy had actually arisen on 25 July when the Rev. Mathew Lamb and John Lambert had been elevated to Aldermen; but for some reason the Mayor, Charles Hide, decided 'that no more business was to be transacted at that time' and left the Hall with Henry Clarson, John Pain, senior, and the Rev. Mathew Lamb. Seven Aldermen and Capital burgesses remained, and they 'took upon themselves to Elect' Richard Burford and Thomas Gibberd as Burgesses 'in the room of the said Mr. Lamb and Mr. Lambert'. Their action was declared 'illegal contrary to our Charter and the custom in such cases used' when the vacancies were filled on 3 September with the election of Benjamin Aplin and Thomas Gibberd. <sup>49</sup> The seven rebels - Aldermen Edward Burford, John Hill, Charles Wyatt, William Barrett, John Lambert, and Burgesses Jonah George and William White, - were prepared to accept Thomas Gibberd, whom they also had elected, but they protested on 19 September against the preference for Benjamin Aplin over their choice, Richard Burford. <sup>50</sup> The issue was not resolved until a Hall on 6 February, 1771, when Aplin's resignation was accepted and he was promptly (albeit narrowly) re-elected Assistant and Capital Burgess, the seven protestors still voting against him. <sup>51</sup> On 2 September, 1771, he was unsuccessful in the election for Mayor, but John Lambert (one of the seven), who had been preferred by 30 votes to 2, declined to serve, and in the second contest on 16 September Aplin defeated Charles Wyatt by 26 votes to 5. <sup>52</sup> Having become Mayor he gave up the office of Deputy Recorder. <sup>53</sup> He died in 1773.

Benjamin Aplin's son, Christopher, born in 1747, succeeded his father as Assistant and Town Clerk, <sup>54</sup> and the seven Aldermen and Capital Burgesses who were opposed to the father's election as Capital Burgess were equally unhappy that the son should be Town Clerk, although if any of them had been present at the Hall on 3 September, 1770, they had not registered their disapproval in a vote of 10-0. <sup>55</sup> However, they were there in force at the Hall on 6 February, 1771, when Benjamin Aplin's letter of resignation as Capital Burgess and Christopher's as Town Clerk (both dated 27 October, 1770) were accepted. <sup>56</sup> Christopher Aplin's resignation 'was founded as is alleged upon the Omission of his not having reced the Sacrament of y<sup>e</sup> Lords Supper within 12 Months before the time of his Election into that Office and also upon the objections of Mr. Jonah George, Charles Wyatt and others of y<sup>e</sup> Corporation to his continuing in the sd. office'. <sup>57</sup> When the question was put 'Whether shall the sd. Ch. Aplin who hath lately and publickly according to y<sup>e</sup> Statute in that case provided reced y<sup>e</sup> Sacrament of y<sup>e</sup> Lords Supper be Town Clerk for this Corporation or not'. by 9 votes to 7 - presumably the seven protestors - Christopher Aplin was elected Town Clerk and Coroner, and five days later took the oaths of office, along with those of Allegiance and Supremacy. <sup>58</sup>

Whether continued opposition from the seven protestors reached an unacceptable level of irritation, or whether his father's death increased his professional responsibilities - maybe as a combination

of both - Christopher Aplin obviously felt he had had enough and his resignation as Town Clerk and Coroner was accepted at a Hall on 7 September, 1773.<sup>59</sup> But he was prepared to continue to serve on the Corporation; at the same Hall he received the freedom on the borough and was elected Capital Burgess,<sup>60</sup> and ten years later was elected Alderman and Mayor for the year 1783-4, although the fact that John Pain and Robert Knight refused to vote on this occasion suggests that Christopher Aplin could still arouse strong feelings.<sup>61</sup> On 17 August, 1787, he resumed the office of Coroner, which he retained until his resignation on 18 August, 1797.<sup>62</sup>

Christopher Aplin was replaced as Assistant and Town Clerk by his father's business partner, William Walford;<sup>63</sup> that was on 7 September, 1773.<sup>64</sup> On 17 October, 1774, the Recorder, Frederick Montagu, appointed him his Deputy, but this raised doubts as to the legality of the two offices being held by the same person, and William Walford felt constrained to resign, both as Town Clerk and Deputy Recorder, on 30 December, 1774, so that the Corporation could resolve the matter. It was decided that the two offices should not be simultaneously in the hands of one person; William Walford was re-elected Town Clerk, and, with the Corporation's agreement, the Recorder appointed Theophilus Walford his Deputy.<sup>65</sup>

When William Walford, senior, resigned on 18 August 1797, after twenty-four years as Town Clerk, his place was taken by his son, twenty-one-year-old William, junior, who was still in office when the old Corporation was replaced in 1835, and whose appointment to continue with the new Council established him as the longest-serving Town Clerk in the town's history.<sup>66</sup>

William Walford, senior, having resigned the Town Clerkship, followed the example of his Aplin predecessors and built on his Corporation membership: he was immediately granted the freedom of the borough and elected Capital Burgess,<sup>67</sup> became Alderman on 8 March, 1799,<sup>68</sup> and served as Mayor for the years 1799-1800<sup>69</sup> and 1805-6;<sup>70</sup> in 1802 he added the duties of Justice of the Peace.<sup>71</sup> William, junior, however, fulfilled his Corporation ambition as Town Clerk and, also, from 1797 when he took over from Christopher Aplin, as Coroner.<sup>72</sup>

The date, 1797, for the Town Clerk's Book of Forms and Precedents, suggests that it was the work of William Walford, senior, drawing together materials illustrative of the Town Clerk's sphere of responsibility and interest, in order to provide a reference book and guide for future holders of the office. If that is really so, it is strange that none of the material contained dates from Walford's own twenty-four-year tenure of the Town Clerkship; indeed, most of the procedural examples are drawn from the period when Benjamin Aplin was Town Clerk, and the fact that on pages 126 and 127 of this 135-page volume it is recorded (and hardly by William Walford) that Benjamin Aplin's letter resigning as Capital Burgess and his son, Christopher's letter resigning as Town Clerk were both dated 27 October, 1770 - two of three Aplin references, and the only ones in the book to individual Town Clerks by name - leads one to speculate that this volume was really an Aplin collection, with the fly-leaf

title and date added later.

The volume begins with an extract of the 1718 Charter (16 July, 4 Geo.I) and what follows constitutes a practical procedural guide to the organization and control of the town's government, by way of implementing the various provisions of that Charter and statutes relevant to the government of Corporations. This and the special role of the Town Clerk is clearly illustrated by the procedure to be followed in the election of the Mayor, set out as follows:

'To take place first Monday in September.

(a) Call over names of the Corporation and Assistants and make those present (a) and upon a majority of the 48 appearing, each integral part.

(b) Then read this clause contained in 2nd. skin of the Charter - 'volumus et per presentes ... in his presentibus expressam Declaratam'.

(c) Then read Act against Bribery and Corruption out of printed Act (2nd.G.III,C.24) ...

(d) Then Mayor with the Senior Aldermen and Junior Aldermen, Senior Burgesses and Junior Burgesses are to withdraw into the Council Chamber and nominate a candidate to stand in election to be Mayor for next year which being voted to stand in election. Then the Mayor and the above Nominators are to withdraw into the Council Chamber and Nominate a second candidate which being voted to stand in election.

The question is put and voted which of the two shall be Mayor.

When and how Mayor is to take oath of office.

To take oath of office on Michas day following election when nothing more is to be read save only the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy required by 13 C.2nd.Sec.12.

Manner of taking oath - late Mayor stands and holds a Mace in his right hand and Bible in left upon which newly elected Mayor also puts his right hand.

Town Clerk reads Mayor's oath.

After taking this oath and oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy and before next Sessions which always happens within a month of Michas. Mayor under direction of 25th Chas.2 (Corporation Act) takes Sacrament and gets a Certificate thereof signed by Minister and Churchwardens and attested by two witnesses and at next Sessions Certificate is produced and proved in open court on oath by the two witnesses; which done, Mayor takes oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy and abjuration according to 1st.G.I and repeats the Declaration concerning transubstantiation according to 25th.Chas.II which concludes all requisites for his establishment.<sup>73</sup>

Set out in a similar way are the required procedures for admitting members into Corporation office,<sup>74</sup> for the election of the Member of Parliament <sup>75</sup>and for the conduct of proceedings at the Sessions, <sup>76</sup>together with the text of the many oaths, which the Town Clerk was required to administer - Allegiance, Supremacy, Abjuration,<sup>77</sup> and those specifically designed to be taken by the Chamberlain, the

Tester of Weights and Measures, the Flesh Taster, the Searcher and Sealer of Leather, the Toll-taker, the Ale Taster and Bread Weigher, the Attorney, the Justice of the Peace.<sup>78</sup>

From the book we find that the Town Clerk received a fee of five guineas for his part in the election of the Member of Parliament,<sup>79</sup> and 2s. from every newly-admitted Freeman of the Borough;<sup>80</sup> when alehouse licences were granted - 'principally between the choosing of a new Mayor and Michaelmas Day' - the Town Clerk could claim fees of £1.6s.6d., made up as follows:

'Duty by 9 Anne	1.0
Duty by 29 G.II	1.0.0
As Clerk of the Peace (over and above fees payable to J.P.s' Clerk by 26 G.II	1.0
As J.P.s' Clerk by 9 G.II & 24 G.II for the licence	2.6
For every recognizance as the Table of Fees settled by County J.P.s under 26 G.II	2.0' <sup>81</sup>

Detailed notes are included on the collection and payment of the Window Tax, first imposed in 1696 as a replacement for the Hearth Tax and collected until 1851,<sup>82</sup> and the Land Tax, which did much to finance the wars of the eighteenth century and which varied between 1s. and 4s. in the £ (Pitt fixed it at 4s. in 1798); the Town Clerk was Clerk to the Land Commission and 'for writing the assessments, duplicates, copies, warrants, orders and instructions' he 'shall have 1½d. in the £ to be paid him by the Receiver according to the warrant of two Commissioners'.<sup>83</sup> By a ruling of 2 September, 1805, the Town Clerk was also allowed £2.2s.0d. for holding the Court Leet, as well as a free dinner at a public house for himself and thirteen jurymen on Court Leet Day.<sup>84</sup>

That none of these payments is recorded in the Report from the Commissioners on Municipal Corporations in 1835 illustrates the failure of the young Whig barristers, appointed Assistant Commissioners to investigate the facts, to delve deeply and to record fairly in their headlong enthusiasm for municipal reform. What they did record was that the Town Clerk received a salary of £25 a year (paid from Michaelmas, 1825, 'to include his attendances on the Magistrates at their Courts of Record and Petty Sessions and other occasional meetings for transaction of judicial business as also for his attendance at the different Halls held by virtue of summons from the Mayor'<sup>85</sup>), with incidental emoluments the usual professional charges for business done by him for the Corporation, and which amounted to £7.8s.1d. in the year previous to their report.<sup>86</sup> His other fees were given as '1 guinea upon the admission of each new member into the corporation', about £40 a year from the general and Petty Sessions, and some £12 from the Court of Record 'during the six months it has been in operation' (it had fallen into disuse, but had been revived by Sergeant Talfourd, when Deputy Recorder). He was 'also allowed by the corporation to receive to his own use the tolls in the horse market, amounting to about £3 a year' Then,

as Coroner, the Town Clerk received a fee of £1 on each inquest and 2s.6d. for a certificate of burial.<sup>87</sup>

The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 made the appointment of a Town Clerk obligatory, the office now to be held, not at pleasure, but during good behaviour.<sup>88</sup> Accordingly, on 1 January, 1836, the new, duly-elected Town Council met and established a valuable continuity by appointing William Walford as part-time Town Clerk at a salary of 50 guineas a year and expenses;<sup>89</sup> the first full-time Town Clerk, E.Owen Reid, was only appointed in 1932.<sup>90</sup> Thus, William Walford was able to bridge the old world of the close corporation and the new world of the elected council, making a significant contribution to both as Town Clerk over a period of 47 years.<sup>91</sup>

R.K. Gilkes.

See next page for references.

*Prospect of Banbury . BRANA VIS . 13. Sept. 1724.*



Etching of Banbury in 1724 by Stukley.

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61. Ibid., pp.84, 85b, 86; Entry of Admissions into Offices in Banbury, contained in Toll Book, 1753/1826 (Banbury MSS).
62. Banbury Minute Book, p.132; Entry of Admissions into Offices in Banbury.
63. The 1st edition of W. Potts, History of Banbury, 1958, p.184, names Oliver Aplin as Walford's partner; the 2nd edition, 1978, p.229, corrects this to Benjamin Aplin. Both editions, however overlook Christopher Aplin's tenure of the office of Town Clerk, 1770-3, and have William Walford succeeding his partner in this office in 1773).
64. Banbury Minute Book, p.46b.
65. Ibid., pp.62b, 64, 64b.
66. Ibid., p.132b.
67. Ibid., pp.132b, 133 (18 August, 1797).
68. Ibid., p.141b.
69. Ibid., p.143b (elected 2 September, 1799).
70. Ibid., pp.167, 167b (elected 2 September, 1805).
71. Admission of Members of the Corporation, 1797-1834, Banbury MS., (admitted 3 May, 1802).
72. Banbury Minute Book, p.132 (elected 18 August, 1797)
73. Town Clerk's Book of Forms and Precedents, pp.13-19.
74. Ibid., pp.50-1, 127-130.
75. Ibid., pp.30-35.
76. Ibid., pp.39-46.
77. Ibid., pp.21-22.
78. Ibid., pp.25-29.
79. Ibid., p.35.
80. Ibid., p.37.
81. Ibid., p.48.
82. Ibid., pp.65-73.
83. Ibid., pp.62-68.
84. Banbury Minute Book, pp.170, 170b.
85. 5 November, 1825, Corporation Journal, p.113.
86. Appendix to 1st Report from Commissioners on Municipal Corporations in England and Wales, Part 1, p.14.31. 1835.
87. Ibid., pp.10-11,13.
88. J. Redlich & F.W. Hirst, op.cit., pp.337n., 126-127. These were two of several amendments, introduced and passed by the House of Lords while the Municipal Corporations Bill was going through Parliament, and accepted by the Whig Government by way of concession to the Tory opposition.
89. Banbury Council Minute Book, 1835-1844. p.75.
90. Banbury Council Minute Book, 1927-1932 (7 March, 1932).
91. His successor, James Beesley, took his oath as Town Clerk on 12 February, 1844. (Declarations Book).

A BANBURY CHURCH PEW-HOLDER of 1737

My gt.gt.grandfather was Richard Welch, who was buried in Whitchurch, Bucks., in 1828 aged 81, having had eight children baptised in that parish. However there was no evidence that the family had lived there, or in the adjacent villages, so the hunt was on, spreading from parish to parish in ever increasing circles, but no trace could be found of Richard's marriage or baptism. At last a reference was made to the small personal names index in the Aylesbury Record Office, which shewed that a Richard Welch was the subject of an Archdeaconry Deed in 1737 - ten years before my man was born.

This was the grant of a pew space to Richard Welch, peruke-maker, in St. Mary's, Banbury, Banbury being a 'peculiar' of the Bishop of Lincoln, with the Archdeacon of Buckingham as his surrogate, hence the deed in the Bucks. Record Office. The grant was for a 'vacant seat or pew scituated in the South Isle bounded by the pew of Richard Lambert Grazier on ye East ye seat of Mrs. Barrett on ye West ye pew of Andrew Long Apothecary North and ye passage on the South containing in heighth five feet & eight inches ... in length six feet ... in breadth three feet & eight inches ... very convenient for him the sd. Richard Welch & his family to sit in stand kneel pray & hear Divine Service & Sermons read & preached ...' There was one objection by - Abbott over-ruled. The phrase 'sit in stand kneel pray & hear Divine Service & Sermons read & preached' must have appealed to the scribe as it is introduced four times in quite a short document. [he was probably paid according to the length of the document].

I lost no time in writing to the incumbent, who passed my letter to Jeremy Gibson, transcribing the registers at that time [now published, BHS.16], and who was able to confirm that my Richard, the peruke maker's nephew, was indeed baptised in St. Mary's in 1747; his parents were William Welch (chairmaker) and Mary, née Upstone, a miller's daughter of Fringford. His grandfather, John Welch, having baptised thirteen children in St. Mary's between 1689 and 1714, was buried there in 1720 - 'Alderman and glover'. Little seems to be known of John in Banbury Library or the Oxfordshire Record Office other than that he was noted as a 'capital burgess' in the Act granting borough status to the town by George I in 1719.

That still left the marriage of my Richard outstanding. At last I found him, in Bierton, adjacent to Whitchurch. The curate had certified that he had married William Welch to Rachel Durley in 1783; I was lucky that Lord Hardwicke's Act had been passed some thirty years before and that Richard, a carpenter, was able to sign his name as the groom. The marriage was by licence, which Lincoln was unable to find, so maybe William had stood by his brother as 'bondman', but it would have been interesting to have been a fly on the wall at the ceremony and to know whether the curate asked 'Wilt thou William.....?'

Harold Thompson



Jeremy Gibson comments:

Ownership of a pew in Banbury Church was an important status symbol in the 18th and 19th centuries. At the Oxfordshire Record Office, MS. Oxf. Arch. Papers c.157, there are 39 deeds for faculties to build or alter pews, mainly for the first half of the 18th century. It is useful to know that there are others at the Buckinghamshire Record Office. Records of the Banbury Peculiar are split between these two offices, presumably depending upon who was surrogate for the peculiar at the time.

I hope one day to abstract all these documents, in both offices. They provide cumulatively some worthwhile evidence to add to our scanty knowledge of the interior of the old church; and some comment on Banbury's social hierarchy at that time.

### BOOK REVIEW

Wood-Jones, R.B., *Traditional Domestic Architecture in the Banbury Region*. First published by Manchester University Press in 1963. Second edition by Wykham Books, Wykham Farm, Banbury, 1986. £12.95 hardback

This book had been out of print for some time and a second edition had been long awaited by both members of the public, house-owners and architectural historians alike.

There are two features enhancing the second edition: firstly a new dust-jacket design showing a cut-away isometric of a house; secondly a preface by Dr. R.W. Brumskill, former colleague of Dr. R.B. Wood-Jones in the School of Architecture, Manchester University.

Dr. Brumskill makes the point that, save for some updating and amplification of specific information it would be hard to see how the substance of this book could have been improved. Dr. Wood-Jones might have contemplated a revision but sadly died in 1982.

The substance of the book remains as relevant today as it did over twenty years ago, providing a scholarly yet readable analysis of the evolution of traditional domestic architecture in the Banbury Region. The text is complemented with numerous measured drawings including plans, elevations and sections together with black and white photographs. A highly regarded pioneer study in the 1960's, this work remains an essential text in the study of minor domestic architecture.

In the preface to the first edition of 1963, Dr. Wood-Jones expressed a sense of urgency in "assessing and permanently recording vernacular building before it disappears in the spate of demolitions and alterations with which fieldwork could hardly keep pace".

The rate of alteration and change in the villages around Banbury is equally as pressing today, but thanks to Dr. Wood-Jones a permanent record survives of regional buildings with examples from the medieval period to the nineteenth century and in scale from the single cell cottage to the manor house.

Dated examples provide a yardstick for comparative analysis of undated examples, tracing the evolution of regional style through the study of plan types, materials, local craftsmanship and building techniques. Both exterior and interior details of buildings are described and explained against a back-drop of social, economic and political history, providing a fascinating account of building development. The essence of the work and the conclusions drawn have been achieved through intensive field study together with academic research.

The high standard to which this work has been carried out is a tribute to Dr. Wood-Jones's enthusiasm, keenly enquiring and meticulous approach.

Not only will Traditional Domestic Architecture in the Banbury Region remain an exemplary work to the specialist, it will continue to provide house-owners, members of the public and visitors to the area with a fine guide to the regional domestic architecture of this richly endowed part of the country.

Sally Stradling

### SAINSBURY, CALTHORPE STREET - R.A. Chambers

Oxford Archaeological Unit Newsletter - Vol.XV. No. 2 - September 1987

This extensive site lies between Marlborough Road and Calthorpe Street, and until recently was occupied by a garage, a derelict printing works and housing. The northern end of the site impinges upon the historic core of the town and the southern end lies against and possibly included part of the medieval curtilage of Calthorpe House and manor. It is possible that Calthorpe Street (formerly Calthorpe Lane) formed part of an earlier settlement prior to the laying out of the medieval town in the 12th century. Any surviving archaeology is therefore of prime importance to the understanding of the historical development of the town.

In July 1984 an evaluation of the site was carried out by the Unit for J.Sainsbury PLC. The results of four machine and hand-dug trenches revealed that previous development had destroyed much of the archaeology. However the northern-most trench located to the rear of properties fronting onto the High Street confirmed that the town had extended along the southern side of the High Street by the 13th century. The southern end of this trench revealed modern garden soils with residual medieval pottery, some of which was of a fabric (Banbury F1) manufactured during 11th-13th centuries. Towards the northern end of the trench lay a medieval pit with a filling of clay, ironstone rubble and domestic refuse. The pottery comprised Potters Pury and Brill wares of the 13th-14th century. There were no building remains. This trench appears to have lain at the rear end of a medieval burgage plot established by the 13th century, and the area subsequently occupied until the later 20th century as would be expected of a prime trading position in this part of the town.

The development of this site will involve considerable earth moving and this will be watched for further archaeological material.

## A NONCONFORMIST CAMEO.

I have recently been reading the autobiography of Joseph Parker who was one of the great nonconformist preachers of the 19th Century at the time when the 'Nonconformist Conscience' was something to be reckoned with. His first pastorate was at Banbury and it is interesting to read his comments on what was an important formative period of his life. I quote "I settled at Banbury in the summer of 1853. Banbury is the centre of an agricultural county. My ambition had never gone beyond the little town of Banbury, my surroundings were all I could desire, my friends were warm-hearted and faithful. Banbury was, of course, what may be called a day of small things. My salary was £130 a year, my house rent amounted to 6/- a week, and my clothes did not require many wardrobes for their accommodation. When I asked my draper-deacon how much he would want for a black suit, he said if I did not object to a certain quality of cloth he could let me have a suit at a very moderate price; whereupon I answered "Now remaineth black, shiny and cheap; but the greatest of these is cheap." I got the suit - I wore it - I remember it.

To one aspect of my Banbury life I ought to allude as it was made much of at the time. On every Sunday afternoon I preached in a large field locally known as the Bear Garden. I had grievously offended the lower orders of the town by perhaps too vigorous description of the kind of people who, by word and deed, supported the practice of Sunday excursions. I cannot at this remote period recollect the epithets which I applied to the excursionists, but certainly they aroused the most remarkable and most uncontrollable excitement. Most assuredly I would not apply such epithets to such people in like circumstances today. But I did apply them and I had to suffer punishment for the application. I was not to be allowed to preach any more in the Bear Garden. At all risks and costs I must be put down.

Accordingly the local roughs (supported to some extent, I am afraid, by men of a much higher class) gathered in great numbers to howl and scream and hiss. There was no doubt about the temper of the opposition. The hatred was deep and intense. Sooty portraits of myself were strongly drawn on large calico sheets and waved in my face as I preached to the excited crowd. Then great shouts arose. In a moment some of the roughest of the gang rushed at the cart which I used as a platform, and threatened to roll me down the hill. Every time I passed down the street I was liable to be hooted by little knots of people. On one occasion the crowd came to my house on a Sunday afternoon and shook the sooty calico against my window and threatened to pull down the house. I was alarmed for others but never myself. I continued to preach in the field as if nothing had happened, and my Christian friends stood closely round me in all the uproar and tumult. In the end the Christian cause triumphed to such an extent that some who had assailed me with extreme vindictiveness were induced to hear me preach in quieter circumstances. I had



Joseph Parker - 19th century Nonconformist Preacher

reason to believe that not a few of the men were really honest, and that they were expressing a heartfelt indignation against a man who, as they supposed, had so grossly misunderstood them. To this day I never go to Banbury without having a look at the historical Bear Garden. On that ground I hope some day to see a memorial Christian institution.

All the Banbury days were happy so far as they could be made happy by friendship and sympathy. The little old-fashioned chapel, hidden up an obscure lane without schoolroom or vestry, became in due time too small for us; then with great enthusiasm we set about to provide more adequate accommodation. After about four years residence in Banbury, I could boast of a chapel, a vestry, and a commodious school room. What could any man desire more? To have all this at 26 years of age seemed to be all that heart could possibly wish for. A very happy life is the life of a country pastor.

At Banbury my labour was varied. For example, I preached in my own pulpit on Sunday morning, lectured in the Corn Exchange on Sunday afternoon, or preached in the open fields during the summer Sundays; in the evenings again in my own pulpit and during the week I had seldom fewer than three public services, one of them being in the open air in some neglected part of the town. I look back with particular interest on a small institution which I established under the name of a Secular Class. In conducting this class I endeavoured to teach the scholars something of Grammar and Latin and History. One of the scholars became a solicitor in the north of England, another became secretary to a millionaire, and another was promoted to a considerable position in the Metropolitan police force.

To my great surprise I was invited to preach a Sunday or two, in Cavendish Street Chapel, Manchester and within a few weeks I was asked to receive a deputation from that Chapel with a view to becoming their pastor. I thanked them for their cordial invitation but told them that circumstances would not allow me to accept.

Within the last year or so my people have built me a chapel, and in doing so they have incurred a debt of something like £700. Whilst that debt remains, I remain. If I had found it here I could have left it, but in a certain sense that debt was incurred on my account and until that debt is removed I must stand by my people who have done so much for my comfort.

In about 17 days a telegram came asking me to receive another deputation from Manchester. I was informed that the Manchester people were prepared to pay off the Banbury debt if I would consent to accept the invitation to Cavendish Street. I said I would lay the matter before my Banbury deacons and friends. Their answer affected me not a little "It will be the darkest day in our life when you leave us but we have no doubt that God intends you should remove to Manchester." They gave me a handsome clock, a beautiful solid silver tea service, a handful of gold and two massive silver ladles. Thus we parted - my first pastoral love and I."

It was in the old Independent Chapel in Church Passage that

Joseph Parker conducted the marriage in July 1856 of James Casebrook and Jane Page who belonged to Bodicote Baptist Chapel. James was 25 years old and a labourer and son of a labourer, and Jane was a daughter of a thatcher. Neither of them could write nor could the two witnesses of their marriage. When his working life was nearly over, a labourer was sometimes obliged to take a job stone-breaking. The job was a lonely one on the grass verge of the road all the day. He must first break the stones down with his large hammer and then use a small, blunt, double-headed one to finish them off. It was not as easy as it looked. He had to make sure of his mark, or he would make slow progress. Often he would sit on part of this broken heap to get closer to the work, and so to ease his back. Occasionally he would get a passer-by to stop and talk. He would find a sheltered spot in the hedge for his midday meal of bread and cheese and a bottle of cold tea. When he started for home it took him a while to find his road legs; and then he would hurry to his chimney corner and his warm meal. It was usually an old man who had to take such work and James was now old. The pay was not as much as a labourer's unless long practice had made him quick. However the cost to James was a heavy one and slowed him down as he lost the sight of one eye caused by a flying stone. Not the life of a successful man, one might say, but he and Jane were committed Christians and made a christian home, and Joseph Parker would have known that they would.

One of his daughters became a pioneer Salvation Army Officer and was the only woman sent personally by General Booth to pioneer work in Australia, principally in a Reform school for boys in Queensland. All the Casebrooks were brought up as Nonconformists and were associated with the village chapels until the 1930's. They have reason to look back with gratitude to James and Jane Casebrook and to Joseph Parker who married them. I should know as I am their great grand-son!

Oswald Chaplin.

Quotation from 'A Preacher's Life' - an Autobiography and an Album.

Joseph Parker DD - Hodder and Stoughton 1903

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 (1st 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, 1591-1650** (Part 1, 1591-1620; Part 2, 1621-1650); **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); **Banbury Goal Records 1805-1852**, edited by Penelope Renold. Volume in preparation **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.

