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**Details of the Society's activities and
publications will be found on the back cover.**

Cover Illustration - A reduced copy of the cover of Rushers Directory
for 1851, originally reproduced in John Kalabargo
of Banbury by E.R. Lester.

Cake and Cockhorse

The Magazine of the Banbury Historical Society
issued three times a year

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Summer 1991

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This issue of **C & CH** has within its pages a minor revolution in printing technology. The articles have been typed onto a computer disc and then transferred to our Printers who are now able to reproduce the professional type-face without the old-fashioned and costly methods of type-setting.

Through the years **C & CH** has had various formats with changes in size, and method of printing. The first few issues with the exception of the covers were duplicated, with the accompanying inky fingers for those who did the work, then in 1962, there was a change to professional type-setting. This method of printing continued until 1976 when, probably because of cost, there was a change to typewritten copy which has continued until the present time. The new system has the advantage of clearer type, doing away with the "ragged" edges of the typewscript and allowing the typist to correct the copy whilst it is still on the computer screen.

D.A.H.

WILLIAM RUSHER: A Sketch of his Life.

Since the Banbury Historical Society hopes to produce, in the not too distant future, a volume in the Records Series which will present selections from Rusher's BANBURY LISTS & DIRECTORIES, it may be of interest to give some account of the life of William Rusher, bookseller, the initiator of this notable series. The LISTS were started in 1795 by Rusher with a single sheet, printed on one side only: this simply listed the town authorities of all sorts, with the officers for the still very sparsely populated Neithrop, a township or hamlet in the parish. By the following year, however, the publication had grown into an almanac type booklet, a form it never lost. The venture was evidently an immediate success, and filled a real need. Its size tended to vary, especially after 1832, when there was added to the LISTS a detailed traders' DIRECTORY, which itself grew in length as the years passed. Long before 1832, however, the publication of the annual LISTS had passed into the hands of William's eldest son, John Golby Rusher, as we shall see later. Rather unusually with this type of ephemeral publication, except for three separate years, 1836, 1838 and 1840, when a new edition of the DIRECTORY did not appear, the double publication continued until 1906. During its last few years it was owned by William Potts who bought it from Jane Eliza Rusher, who in 1877 had inherited it from her father, John Golby.

Though Directories of all sorts mushroomed from the early nineteenth century, some a bit earlier, Banbury's production is unusual in that for its whole existence it gave information relating only to Banbury Borough, the rest of the large ecclesiastical parish of Banbury, and to the immediately dependent hinterland. Most other local directories of the period seem usually to have tried to include everything considered to be of interest for a wide area, and thus covered their respective county and neighbouring towns, in addition to their place of origin. Though an understandable policy, no concentrated picture could thus emerge of one clearly defined area, with its notable citizens, local authorities, traders and innkeepers. As a source of genealogical information, therefore, Banbury's publication is probably unrivalled, providing also a long sustained overview of one town's growth for well over a century. Though the volume of extant copies is not enormous, and they are widely dispersed, nevertheless at least one of every issue, with the sole exceptions of those for 1803 and 1804 have, in fact, survived. Such a bulk of material is, of course, far too extensive for a complete re-issue, so the Society's projected volume will present a summarised version of the contents of the early numbers, followed from 1832, with facsimiles of various complete issues up to that of 1870, to coincide, as far as possible, with the relevant national Census dates. The present Distribution of copies will be given in the Record volume itself.¹

The original single sheet of 1795 was a free hand-out offered to anyone who purchased from William Rusher, bookseller, whose business was in the Market Place, Banbury, an almanac or pocket book for the next year. The offer appears in part of his advertisement in JACKSON'S OXFORD JOURNAL [J.O.J.] for 6 December 1794.² But who was this William Rusher? His family can with probability, though not certainty, parish records at this period being what they are, be traced back to a one Henry Rushier, who lived in Charlbury during the last decades of the

seventeenth century. Charlbury's registers for this period appear to be copies of earlier ones, and what seems to be the same man appears sometimes as Rushell. No entry shows his status or job, but if the identification is correct his grandson, John Rusher, William's father, prospered enough to have belonged, even though not engaged in farming, to the class at that period still loosely known as yeoman. This John, whose date and place of birth are not recorded, but which may have occurred about 1720-1725, lived in Charlbury during the early years of his married life, two of his children being baptised there, in 1752 and 1755.³ His eldest son, another John (b. 1752), returned from Neithrop to Charlbury about 1785, to run for years a general shop, with bookselling interests, and most of his children were born there. The family's connections with Charlbury thus seem well established.

William was the second son, and fifth surviving child of John Rusher, senior, who had moved, about 1756, to live for the rest of his life in Eynsham. A range of sources show this John, at Eynsham, filling many parish offices, below the rank of church warden. In some documents he is noted as schoolmaster, presumably in the village, and he was also active as an early version of an estate agent for at least two Oxford property auctioneers. Principally, however, he made a good living amassing property, buying or renting various parcels of land in Eynsham, and advancing money to mortgagees. By the time of his death in April 1795 he was, (though in his will still described as yeoman) quite a well-to-do man, possessing enough land to be able to make property bequests to the nine members of his family then living, as well as to other relatives, and to leave sums of money amounting to about £245 chargeable on various of these properties.⁴ In the mid eighteenth century period Eynsham's parish registers were ill kept, and William's baptism escaped note, nor can it be found elsewhere. His date of birth was probably some time in 1759, but this can only be estimated from his reported age of 90, at his death in Reading in 1849.⁵

Nothing is known of William's career until, on his marriage to Mary Golby in Banbury Church on 9 February 1783, he was noted in the register as 'Schoolmaster': both partners belonged to the parish. Other documents show that the school in question was the Banbury Bluecoat School. One of the witnesses to the marriage was John Rusher, almost certainly not his father, but his elder brother, John, whose own first child appears in the Banbury baptism register under 11 October 1783. John Rusher, junior, moved to Charlbury before May 1785, as already noted. An advertisement in the J.O.J. for 11 September 1779, for a property sale, shows John, junior, then still resident in Neithrop, ready to answer queries about it, while John senior, would do the same in Eynsham. It seems probable that William had been sent to live with his brother John, perhaps to assist in the latter's shop there. This may, in part at least, have been a book selling business, for William, in the years after John, his brother, had gone to Charlbury, had such a business in Banbury himself, and advertisements in the J.O.J. over several years show John, in Charlbury, was one of his selling contacts.

The surviving documents for the Bluecoat School, some in the Bodleian Library, and others still in the hands of the Trustees of the Banbury Bluecoat Foundation in Banbury, have several long gaps, in particular in the series of Cash Books, so it is not possible to determine when exactly William was appointed as schoolmaster there. But it seems reasonable to suppose that he had been living in Neithrop or Banbury for long enough to have attracted, by 1783, the patronage of John Rushworth, the

Treasurer of the Trustees of the Bluecoat school, who was the most important person looking after the School's affairs: for in 1783, when he married, William, then about 24 years of age, was noted in the register as 'schoolmaster'. The salary he received in 1787, as noted in the relevant Cash Book, was £24.5s.6d a year, paid half yearly, whereas in 1765 Robert Barnes, then the schoolmaster, had received £23.13s.6d. The Cash Books show that the salaries of both the Master and the Mistress of the School were paid at the above intervals in lump sums at all times; this way of going on probably explains why William, in spite of his school appointment, did not give up his bookselling activities, as several advertisements in the J.O.J. for many of the years until 1794 indicate. His heart was obviously here, rather than with the School, though its accounts contain several entries which probably relate to William's sale of school books and stationary to the School Trustees. About this time, according to his newspaper advertisements, he published his own reading book for children, called 'Reading made easy', selling at 6d. a copy, which seems to have had quite a long lasting success, and copies of this would doubtless have been provided for the School.⁶

There is no evidence, for or against, to indicate whether he, in person, ever actually taught the charity children, but if he did not he would have had to find someone else to deputise for him, for whose emolument he would be responsible. There is, indeed, an advertisement in the J.O.J. for 21 February 1789, for 'an Assistant' teacher, who was told to get in touch with William Rusher, Bookseller, Red Lion Street, Banbury. It is probable that the person he actually engaged was William Arne, born in October 1773 to a local carrier and labourer, John Arne, who lived with his family in Neithrop, for in 1792 William Arne married William Rusher's younger sister, Jane (b.1768), and in the same year William Rusher resigned as schoolmaster, and Arne succeeded him at the Charity School.⁷ With a gap of six and a half years from February 1796, Arne subsequently held the school appointment until 1817, when the charity children were sent by the Trustees to the new National School. It is certain that for much of this time Arne, like Rusher, did other jobs as well as, or instead of teaching. It was not an unusual occurrence for people to take on whatever they could get, and the early years of Rusher's BANBURY LISTS, as indeed in later years, too, reveal many individuals with several minor appointments.

It is sad that so few of the lesser personages of history ever seem quite to 'come alive': whatever personal letters and papers there may have been, tend not to have survived, and they are, thus, only listed in town documents, parish registers, land leases, rate books and suchlike. William Rusher is no exception here, but it is possible to gain some information about his earlier activities from his advertisements in the J.O.J., though after those of late 1794 this source seems to have dried up, perhaps because he sometimes used the back pages of some of his own BANBURY LISTS for this purpose instead. Much later on he got some passing personal mentions in a diary type book written by his granddaughter, Sarah Beesley, but when she started to write, he was already a very old man, or had perhaps already died.

One advertisement in the J.O.J., for 13 November 1794, offers quite a revealing glimpse of the scope of William's business at that particular moment: "All kinds of Books and Stationary, Mens and Boys Hats, Gold Rings, Silver Goods, Plated Buckles, Looking Glasses etc. etc. now selling cheap at William Rusher's (the late Mr White's shop) in the Market Place, Banbury". He put what was simply a

Bookseller's and publications notice in the same paper for 18 December 1794, so the range of merchandise in mid November was perhaps more the result of his take-over of Mr White's old shop than an indication of his usual wares. His book notices in the 1798 and 1799 issues of the BANBURY LISTS, certainly indicate that his real interest lay in the book trade. On the other hand, a trade token survives which may indicate that he would sell whatever came his way, but before dealing with this point, the late 1794 advertisements have other matters of interest to reveal.

The entry for 13 November 1794 also shows that by that time William's new shop was also the Stamp Office for Banbury. This would have denoted both a certain mark of status in the town, and a source of an extra steady income, though not probably a large one. Many documents, for example leases or marriage licences, but there were many others, had either to be made out on ready stamped paper, or had to be officially stamped at some stage of compilation. The fees collected were a source of tax revenue for the government, and as an accredited agent in the matter, Rusher would have been empowered to deduct a proportion of this money for his services, but I can give no figures. This franchise remained in the business, under its various names, until at least 1831. though from 1823 it was in the name of William's second surviving son, Thomas Golby Rusher. The office then disappeared from mention in the LISTS & DIRECTORIES for some years, but subsequently, after a period in other hands, John Golby Rusher was in 1845 noted as holder of the Stamp Office and Legacy Return Office. By 1858 John Golby's son, William, the Actuary, held the position, but I have not investigated holders of this office in this later period in any detail.

As well as mentioning the launch of his first tentative BANBURY LIST on 6 December 1794, William in the same advertisement announced his intention to begin another venture: this was a proposal to fit up a Room (or two if necessary) as a Reading Room, whilst at the same time he declared that he was going greatly to enlarge his Circulating Library. He asked those willing to encourage the new undertaking to let him know, as he proposed to start it in the following January. How long the Circulating Library had already been operating I do not know, but the whole affair seems to have prospered after 1795, and the running of it some thirty years later was in the hands of his son, Thomas Golby.⁸

For nearly thirty years after 1795 what can be traced concerning William Rusher's career makes dull reading. The Banbury Parish registers show that between November 1783 and October 1797 eight children were born to him, but that by 1802 he had lost four of these as infants or in early childhood. Two sons have already been mentioned, whilst another and the only remaining daughter will be noted later. Banbury's rate books' survival is patchy, but what there is shows that he owned property in Neithrop, which brought him some income in rents; at a later date his two elder sons appear in these records regularly. Otherwise, William's own BANBURY LISTS are our main source of information about him: he was Parish Clerk from 1795 to 1813, when his brother-in-law, William Arne, took over the office; he was an Overseer of the Poor for a year in 1797, and a Church Warden from 1806 to 1816. His two sons, already noted, enter into these LISTS in various capacities at later dates. William himself was never a member of the rather unweildly Banbury Corporation, but John Golby, on the other hand, was elected an Assistant in 1826, progressed to Alderman in 1833, and was Mayor in 1834, and was one of the

borough magistrates both before, and some years after, the changes brought about by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835.

Before sketching in the last period of William's long life, more information about his career as bookseller and stationer can be pieced together if we return to the trade token mentioned some paragraphs back. At several periods since the Restoration, the last perhaps being at the end of the eighteenth century, small value coinage was in such short supply that many traders solved the difficulty, though without official sanction, by issuing their own trade tokens. Such ephemera do not readily survive, but even so many museum coin collections contain examples of them. Banbury's early nineteenth century historian, Alfred Beesley (d. 1847), had his own collection, and of these he described one issued for Banbury by William Rusher.⁹ I have seen a facsimile of such a token, which is about the size of the old penny piece (before decimal currency). On one face is a portrait of William, with longish hair and a high cravat, and the inscription: 'Wm Rusher Hatter Bookseller & Stationer Banbury'; on the other is the borough's emblem of the sun in splendour, with the inscription: 'Deus est nobis sol et scutum' (God is to us both sun and shield). Inscribed on the rim, according to Beesley (it is too unclear on the facsimile) is: 'Payable at Banbury Oxford and Reading' - which is the really interesting thing about this token. There is available some evidence which will elucidate his seemingly wide trade connections, as well as something about his life at this period.

That his token had such a wide currency is less surprising than may appear at first sight, and can probably be ascribed in the main to his bookselling activities for which, as in the case of his brother James, discussed below, he probably had customers in many areas. The fact that William is noted on the token as 'Hatter' as well, may help to date it to about 1794 or 1795, since there is no evidence to show that he sold hats before he took over the 'late Mr White's shop' in late 1794 (see above), nor that he continued to do so at a later date. It has already been noted that his elder brother, John, in Charlbury, was one of his selling agents. Two of his book notices, printed at the end of the 1798 and 1799 BANBURY LISTS, give two of his Oxford contacts: the first noted that his Catalogue might be had gratis not only in Banbury, but 'at Mr Hanwell's in the Turl, Oxford'; the second is similarly worded, but 'at Mr Slatter's, Printer, Oxford'. Both these advertisements declared William to be selling 'all kinds of new Books, Magazines, Stationary etc., at the London prices', that schools were served 'with good allowance', and that books, weekly numbers etc. 'were bought, exchanged, or sold by commission'. On the face of it, a good steady business, no doubt putting him in the income class of solid citizens from which Church Wardens were chosen, as happened to him in 1806, as already indicated.

With regard to the second advertisement, William, not himself a printer, had a more intimate connection with Slatter, whose imprint appeared for the first time on the 1800 edition of the BANBURY LISTS, for on 4 October 1798 William's eldest son, John Golby (born 1784) was apprenticed to Richard Slatter, printer in Oxford, for seven years, for which the sum of £30 was paid. As a time-served apprentice he became, on 3 November 1806, a Freeman of the City of Oxford,¹⁰ nevertheless John Golby returned to Banbury in 1808, for from the 1808 issue of the BANBURY LISTS, his name appears as the printer of it, his place of business being then in Bridge Street. He seems from this time to have taken over complete charge of this publication, as well as launching out on several publications of his own in his

subsequent long career as one of Banbury's printers. In 1810 he married Sarah Wilkins in Banbury Church, and in the following years numerous children were born to the couple, of whom Sarah, author of 'My Life', was the second (see note 3).

Though John Rusher I, William's father, but also to a lesser extent his brother John at Charlbury, had a stake in estate agency work, as already mentioned, there is nothing to show that William had any connection with this business at its Oxford end; but one of his sisters, Betty (born 1755) had in 1779 married Thomas Eaton, of Oxford, who was one of the auctioneers for whom John senior worked. Probably William visited this family, and was on good terms with them, for many years later his own third son, another William (born 1791), moved to Oxford, where he set up as an apothecary. As such, this son obtains a marriage licence dated 19 February 1819, to marry Elizabeth Eaton, of St Clements', Oxford, in the church of the same name. She was his first cousin. This younger William matriculated at the University on 26 June 1821, as a University 'privileged person', engaged in the work of apothecary and male midwife. He later became a surgeon and general medical practitioner and died in 1862, aged 70, and much lamented, according to a notice in the J.O.J. of 29 March of that year.

William Rusher's trade token also mentions Reading as another place where it would be recognised, but though direct evidence for his contacts there is not forthcoming, later events in his life provide sure grounds for concluding that one, at least, of these was his youngest brother, James Rusher. This boy, baptised at Eynsham in February 1771, and thus some twelve years younger than William, was the last of John I's children, and he was given the same name as the only casualty in the family of ten, another James, who had died in 1769, aged eight. Beyond the entry in the baptismal register, the first known later appearance of James Rusher was in Reading, when he put a long advertisement in the *READING MERCURY* for 9 June 1794 - a newspaper with as potentially wide a distribution as that claimed by the J.O.J. In this he 'respectfully informs his friends and the public that he has opened a shop (in Castle Street Reading) and laid in a great assortment in the various branches of Stationary, Glass and Chinaspelling books, Testaments, 'Reading Made Easy' (William Rusher's own book).....also Red and Black Ink Powder', and so on. The list out-rivals that of William in his advertisement in the J.O.J. of just over five months later, quoted in an earlier paragraph.

Whether the new shop was James's first venture in Reading, it is impossible to say: that it may not have been, is perhaps suggested by his addressing the notice to 'his friends'; on the other hand, his father, John Rusher I named him, together with his eldest brother, John II of Charlbury, as joint executors of his will dated 12 July 1794, a provision which he changed to John and another son, Thomas, in March 1795. Perhaps in 1794 James had only just left his original home in Eynsham, though it seems rather unlikely that he had not, before the age of twenty four, been sent somewhere to learn a trade. It is useless to speculate, for no evidence survives to decide the matter. Someone, perhaps most probably William, must certainly have made at least a loan to make his Reading venture possible, but again we are in the dark. The business prospered, rapidly becoming, it appears, like that of William in Banbury, mainly a bookselling one, for a newspaper notice of 22 May 1837, following his sudden and unexpected death after only a few hours' illness, noted that 'he had been in business as a bookseller in that town (Reading) for upwards of forty

years, and was much and deservedly esteemed by all who knew him.¹¹

The chance survival of three short, but friendly business letters, one each for the years 1802, 1809 and 1812,¹² reveal customers living in Bermondsey, Edinburgh and Olney Hall, Buckinghamshire. The middle letter reveals, in passing, that James had London contacts. Two of the letters sent regards to Mr Rusher, the first being that for 1802. These letters must have been but the survivors of a great many received during the forty years of his business, and though these ones relate to James Rusher, they indicate a much wider phenomenon. Improving road conditions, especially from the end of the eighteenth century, favoured every type of business, the book trade among them, and there is nothing to show that James's far flung contacts were in any way exceptional.

Since James Rusher seems early in his life at Reading to have become an active member of that town's flourishing Baptist church, the records of his marriage appears in none of Reading's Anglican parish registers, and I have searched for it in other possible locations, such as Oxford, without success. From James's will only do we learn that his wife's name was Roberta, but her maiden name is lost. From the same source it appears that, at the time of his death there were three descendants: Joseph, who with one of his brothers in law, carried on the business for some years, and two married daughters, Roberta Johnson and Eliza Wilkins. The will was dated some four years before James's death, and is very detailed, leaving many family bequests and gifts to Baptist ministers and missionary causes, amounting to over £4000, apart from the business in King Street, Reading, and other leasehold properties.¹³

The success of William Rusher's BANBURY LISTS between 1795 and 1800, and his connections with Reading, probably led James to start a similar publication, in 1801, for "Reading and its Vicinity". This was to be printed annually and sold by himself, then of King Street, Reading, and 'by other Booksellers of Reading'. As in Banbury, the new venture proved a success, and from 1802, a second part, THE BERKSHIRE DIRECTORY, was added. This was nearly thirty years before John Golby Rusher brought out the first BANBURY DIRECTORY. The series, however, was never so closely bound to one area, as the Banbury production, and indeed the BERKSHIRE DIRECTORY covered, rather sketchily, the whole county and included several towns. Many of the earlier numbers also included quite lengthy historical pieces and other matters of interest. In the 1836 edition, the introductory section notes that for the early years of the nineteenth century, there was no other such publication for Reading and its County, and that his efforts had been kindly received. He also noted that 'some purchasers have thought it worth while to preserve entire series for reference purposes and for historical reasons'. About thirty years later William's son, John Golby Rusher, evidently had a similar idea, for in the 1860s he distributed large collections of earlier BANBURY LISTS & DIRECTORIES amongst friends and business acquaintances.¹⁴ Whether any collections of the Reading publication, styled as to Part 1, THE READING GUIDE, Part II being THE BERKSHIRE DIRECTORY, still exist I do not know, but an almost complete collection, though sometimes with one or other part missing, is held at the Central Library in Reading. From 1833 the publishers were Rusher and Son. Curiously, the 1838 edition contains no reference to James's sudden death in 1837; but from this time until 1857, which seems to have seen the end of the series, the

publishers were Rusher and Johnson (his brother in law). By that time there were quite a few other Reading Directories available, Many short lived.

William Rusher appears to have retired from business in Banbury sometime in 1822, aged then about 63. The clearest evidence for this is an entry under 1823 in his granddaughter, Sarah Beesley's MY LIFE, already mentioned several times. Though written many years later, she evidently relied, for its many exact datings, on actual diaries she had kept. This girl was John Golby Rusher's second child, of many, and was born in 1812. She recorded, under 1823, a visit at Christmas to her grandfather William, then living in retirement at Overthorpe, near Banbury, with his wife and daughter, having left his son, Thomas, at his shop in the Market Place. Of her grandfather's home she said that he 'lived in a comfortable house on the top of Overthorpe hill, and he had a good orchard and flower garden'. John Golby's elder children went there often. The entry of Thomas's name alone in the Stamp Office in the BANBURY LIST of 1823, indicates that his father had left the town before its publication. William continued to have a residual connection with the town, however, as he was listed as one of the Commissioners for Special Bail, for various London Courts until the 1826 LIST, but presumably, for that occasional office, he need not have been resident in the town. Whether he retained any financial interest in the shop, or Lending Library, also run by Thomas, it is impossible to say.¹⁵ According to Sarah Beesley, Thomas remained at the shop until 1832, when he left both the shop and Banbury, and her father added the business to his own, but she went into no details concerning this change.

Indirectly, William's close contacts with his brother, James, in Reading are confirmed by another entry in Sarah's book, where she recorded that Mary Rusher, of Overthorpe, William's daughter (born 1795), married Philip Davies, wholesale grocer of Reading, at nearby Middleton Cheney on 24 April 1824. Both places are a short way over the Northamptonshire border, which at this point runs very close to Banbury. In a later entry she revealed that Davies was the son of a Baptist minister, and himself a preacher at a village near Reading. William and his wife and daughter must surely have been, from time to time, visitors in James's household, and thus well known to the latter's friends, particularly among the local Baptists, for it does not seem reasonable to suppose that Davies, a considerable local businessman, would otherwise have gone to seek a wife in the Banbury area. William and his wife, Mary, appear from Sarah's recollections, to have moved to Battle Place, Reading in early 1829 to be near their daughter, and the diary shows that Sarah herself paid visits to them there. She also met James, and over the years got to know the Davies family well. Of all the Rusher family and its marriage connections mentioned in this study, Philip Davies became the most notably wealthy, leaving at his death in March 1883, aged 83, a net estate of £47,871.¹⁶ Amongst a large number of family legacies, Sarah Beesley herself received one of £300. Baptist causes figured prominently in it, too. Very little of his estate appears to have been in real estate, but this reflects new ideas about wealth, some 88 years after the resources in land, leases and mortgages revealed at the death of John Rusher I in 1795.

With regard to William there is little else to record. His wife, Mary, died at Reading, aged 81, on 10 February 1837, the date appearing in Sarah's book. Probably she was buried in St. Lawrence's parish, in which they may still have been living at the time, for William himself was buried there on 13 March 1849, even

though when he came to die he was living at 1, Russell Terrace, in St. Mary's parish. Sarah noted only the year of his death, but she did note his age as 90 years. His will had been signed on 13 October 1846.¹⁷ His executors were his eldest son, John Golby, and his son-in-law Philip Davies. Specific gifts of money amounted to some £819, but all the other bequests related to parcels of leasehold or copyhold property in Banbury and Marston, Oxford. The dispositions showed that he had assisted or made loans to his sons John Golby and William, the medical man in Oxford, and to his son-in-law. The most interesting item was the assignment of certain rents and profits on a parcel of property in Banbury for the separate use of Ann, wife of his second son, Thomas, 'independently of her said husband'. Such a provision had to be spelled out in a will, for the period was still before the Married Women's Property Act. I have looked in vain for what lies behind this bequest, but documentary indications are too sparse to be sure. It appears to relate back to Thomas leaving the bookshop, and indeed Banbury itself in 1832, and may have been because of some injury or injustice to Ann, but this is only surmise.

Nothing was left to Thomas in William's will, though Thomas's son, another Thomas, was to have the property relating to his mother, after her death. Thomas appears to have lived in Oxford, though for how long is not ascertainable. Sarah Beesley reported that she and her daughter, Sarah, stayed a night there with him in 1858, on their return journey from a visit to the Davies family in Reading. This was, in fact, very shortly before Thomas's own death, which occurred on 13 September 1858, also reported by Sarah. An administration bond relating to his affairs, dated 30 December 1858, stated that he was 'late of Russell Terrace, Reading in the County of Berks, Gent', and it was granted to his widow, Ann Rusher of Reading. His effects were under £450 in value.¹⁸ This would seem to indicate a reconciliation between the two a short time before he died.

This article, for lack of concentrated direct evidence about William Rusher himself, has developed rather into a study of a generation, and more, of a talented and enterprising family of the 'middling sort', starting with John Rusher I, yeoman and embracing the activities of several of his sons. Yet another of these could, indeed, be added to the number already discussed: Philip, fourth surviving son, baptised at Eynsham in 1765. He married Sarah Emmetts in 1791, at St. Mary's church, in Reading, not long before the time when James started his bookselling activities in that town. Did he perhaps live with the Emmetts family when he first went to Reading? Not unlikely, but history does not relate. Philip himself took his wife to Neithrop, moving later to Banbury. They had three children between 1792 and 1797, but these all died very young, though there appears to have been another daughter at a later date. For the earlier period Philip was noted in the Banbury registers as 'hosier'. Later, however, he was for many years manager of the Old, or Cobb's Bank, in Red Lion Street, and lived in a house in the same street. He died, aged 67, in July 1832, when Sarah Beesley was only 20. She seems hardly to have known him, for she only mentioned his banking appointment in a passing note; though she did recall that about 1789 he had written and published a descriptive poem, called 'Crouch Hill', which gave some account of the sieges of Banbury in the Civil War. William not only helped him with the publication, but the work figured in his own lists of items for sale at the period.

Two of William's sisters, Betty and Jane, have already appeared in these pages. The

eldest member of the family, Hannah, born in 1750, never married, though the baptism of her illegitimate son, William, otherwise unknown, occurred in Banbury church in March 1780, when she was living in Neithrop. Where she lived after this episode is not known, but her father made a settlement for her in his will, from the profits from some land in Eynsham, to be administered by his executors. Yet another sister, Mary, William's third (born 1757), in 1781 married a young man of Woodstock, and therewith passed out of this present chronicle. And there we must leave them all: several later descendants have already been noted, some of them people of achievement, and there were a good many others, but that is another story.

P.RENOLD.

FOOTNOTES.

1. Though a detailed list of the surviving copies of Rusher's publication must await the Records volume, anyone who has a present interest in them is referred to the extensive sets held both by Banbury Public Library and by Oxford Central Library [O.C.L.], Local Studies Section.
2. Good collections of the J.O.J. can be found in the Bodleian Library or O.C.L.: advertisements etc. quoted in this article should be traced under the date of issue given. Both libraries also have copies of the two successive sets of Indexed Synopses of all matters of Oxfordshire interest contained in J.O.J., covering the years 1752 to 1780 and 1781 to 1790, edited by E.C.Davies and E.H.Cordeaux in 1967 and 1976 respectively. These contain numerous references to various members of the Rusher family, which go back to 1768: for years after 1790 a search in the original newspaper is necessary.
3. Parish register entries referred to in this article can be traced in the appropriate originals or transcribed copies etc. held at Oxfordshire Archives or the Berkshire Record Office, Reading. Some dates can also be found in a privately printed diary type book, written towards the end of the 19th century by Wm. Rusher's granddaughter, Sarah Beesley, entitled MY LIFE: copy in Banbury Public Library.
4. Oxfordshire archives holds a very large number of property documents in various named collections. Reference to the index cards under his name will reveal an unusual number relating to the transactions of John Rusher I. Traces of other activities will be found in Eynsham Parish documents other than the registers, as well as in notices etc. in the J.O.J., as indicated in Note 2. A Consistory Court copy of his will, dated 12 July 1794, with codicil dated 4 June 1795 is in Ms.Wills Oxon.100, pp.289v to 292: as a family document this will is a prime source of information.
5. See Sarah Beesley, *op.cit.*p.63. A clerk's comment on William Rusher's Will noted that he died on 8 March 1849. His burial is in the register of St. Mary's, Reading, where his age is given as 90.
6. Three main sources relate to the Bluecoat School at Banbury: a) Bodl.Ms. Top. Oxon.c.238, Papers relating to the Bluecoat School at Banbury 1763-1838; b) Trustees' Minute Book and three Cash Books, covering, with gaps, a period running from 1750 to 1903, and held by the present Trustees of the Banbury Bluecoat Foundation, for the time being at the Cherwell Council Offices, near Banbury; c) the School was one of the charities included in the Charity Commissioners Report of 9 July 1824: it contains a useful summary of information about the school, from its foundation in 1705 until the time of writing the Report. Between these various sources the information given in the text can be checked.
7. See the Trustees Minute Book (as in Note 6), sub dates, for these appointments. Entries in Rusher's BANBURY LISTS note Arne's holding of the office.

8. The later history of some of Banbury's libraries can be pursued in Barrie Trinder, VICTORIAN BANBURY, 1982, published as Vol.19 of the Banbury Historical Society's Records Series.

9. See Alfred Beesley, THE HISTORY OF BANBURY, 1841, p.531.

10. See OXFORD CITY APPRENTICES 1697-1800, edited by Malcolm Graham, Oxford Historical Society, New Series, Vol.XXXI, p.245; also Register of Freemen of the City of Oxford, sub date.

11. A newspaper cutting, dated only 22 May, is one of the items in a Scrap Book compiled about this period by a certain Lovejoy, Reading Reference Library, 3321/9. It was probably taken from the READING MERCURY, but the negative microfilm of this newspaper offered for the researcher's use at this library is excessively difficult to decipher, the newspaper itself being apparently in a wretched condition. The year of James Rusher's death was in fact 1837, as can be seen from a separate list of deaths given by the paper, which I was able to read.

12. Berkshire Record Office D/N2 13/2.

13. James Rusher's Will, PRO PROB11/1884, date of probate 28 Septemeber 1837; see also Sarah Beesley, op.cit. for some references to this family and its Baptist connections, which are also a feature of the obituary notice mentioned in Note 11.

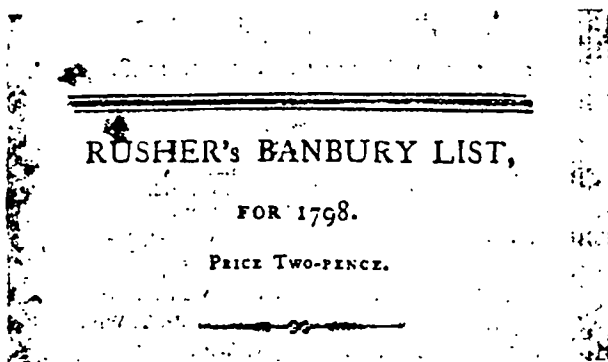
14. As already indicated, the distribution of colections of this publication will be given in the Records volume.

15. Two notices in the J.O.J. throw some light both on Thomas's business and on the Library: 26 February 1825 said that tickets for a Banbury Subscription Ball were 'to be had at Mr.T.Rusher, Bookseller'; in that of 19 March 1825, the AGM of the Banbury Subscription Library was announced for 29 March at the Red Lion Inn, to be followed by a dinner. The notice also said that the Library by then consisted of more than 400 volumes, and that subscribers (£1 annually, or 7s.6d. quarterly) all became joint Proprietors: for all business application was to be made to Mr. Rusher, evidently Thomas. I found these items quite casually, and there may well be others relating to his business in this newspaper over the years.

16. The Probate copy of Philip Davies' Will was at Somerset House, London, when I procured a copy some years ago.

17. Probate copy of William Rusher's Will, location as in Note 16. Probate was granted to John Golby Rusher in the Court of Canterbury 12 May 1849; see also Note 5 above.

18. The Admon. relating to Thomas Golby Rusher is to be found in Oxfordshire Archives.



ARTHUR MOLD - Portrait of a fast bowler.

In August 1990 the bowling analysis of a local farmer and Banbury cricketer became national news. Charles Taylor took 5 Yorkshire second innings wickets for a mere 33 runs. This achievement in his first county game for Middlesex set me wondering how many previous examples there had been of local players aspiring to first class cricket. A search through the "Who's Who" of first class cricketers fails to reveal many with local origins or connections. If the Banbury area is extended to take in Bicester, the bordering parts of Northamptonshire and Warwickshire and the Oxford city region then many more names emerge.

The best known and possibly the most significant cricketer who made a successful entry into the first class game was Arthur Mold of Middleton Cheney. Wisden for 1890 records that he was a bowler of "easy action, accuracy of pitch and with a good break on occasion". Local people became aware of these characteristics when he played for his own village side in 1879 at the age of 16. A year later Middleton Cheney merged with the Chacombe cricket team and won 16 matches during 1880 due especially to Arthur's bowling.

By the time he was aged 20, Arthur Mold was a groundsman at Banbury and was appearing in the Banbury and District XI whose fixture list was a strong one. Typical of his impact on the game at this stage was a haul of seven wickets in the fixture with Warwick, June 1885. The "Banbury Advertiser" notes that he not only bowled unchanged but was "so destructive that the eleven were out for 82".

Following his two seasons with Banbury, Mold had a brief period with Northamptonshire who had not then achieved first class status. His appearance in a colts match at Northampton in 1887 led to inclusion in the first team fixture with Staffordshire on Whit Monday, 30th May. The outcome was great personal satisfaction - 7 for 24 including a hat-trick.

Arthur joined Lancashire in 1889. He had been recommended to A. N. Hornby, Lancashire's captain, by a Mr. Jenkins who was a keen supporter of Banbury. Arthur Appleby also noted Mold's potential and was instrumental in his being brought to the north west at a time when the Red Rose was wilting. In 1888 Lancashire finished the season fifth out of eight counties. They won only four out of fourteen matches. A year later the County came second and achieved wins in ten out of fourteen games. The County retained second place in 1890, 1891 and 1893.

During the following twelve seasons he had many notable analyses and achievements. It was in Wilfred Flowers benefit match against Nottinghamshire in 1895 that Arthur claimed four wickets in four balls, Lillywhite's Annual has a graphic description. "Mold made the ball do whatever he liked...." He "dismissed Shrewsbury, Daft, Mr. Dixon and Mr. Wright with consecutive balls".

Arthur seems to have been especially effective at Brighton. Pelham Warner observes that he appeared invigorated by the sea breezes. In the same chapter, Warner also recalls Mold's many battles with Cambridge University and Middlesex batsman, 'Stork' Ford. Spurred on by the sight of spindly legs, Arthur took a positive delight in aiming at these. Warner himself was in the firing line during a Gentlemen v

Players game at Lords in July 1901. A fast delivery from Mold caught him on a vein and he was out of cricket for several months. Mold topped 100 wickets seven times with his best performance reserved for 1894 (189 wickets at 11.94) and 1895 (192 wickets at 13.73). His most striking achievements were during 1894. In July the Lancashire game with Somerset lasted only one day mainly because of Arthur's devastating bowling on a rain affected wicket. At one stage he had taken 7 wickets for 0 runs. Lancashire won by an innings and his final analysis read:-

Overs	Maidens	Runs	Wickets
27.2	11	60	13

By contrast with his bowling feats, Arthur Mold did little with the bat. His best performance for Lancashire was in 1895 when he scored 57 against Leicestershire. Arthur together with Albert Ward managed 111 for the final wicket. 31 was his second best achievement this time at Gloucester in 1901.

At test level, Arthur Mold did not enjoy the same success that marked most of his County Cricket career. He appeared in each of three matches against Australia played at Lords, the Oval and Old Trafford, Manchester, in 1893. As a batsman he failed to trouble the scorers. His bowling performances were only modest: 3 for 44 at Lords; 0 for 12 and 1 for 73 in the Oval test: 1 for 48 and 2 for 57 at Manchester.

C.B. Fry's "Book of Cricket" contains some splendid action pictures of Arthur which reveal that his effectiveness was less a matter of run up and more a case of arm action at the wicket. This view is confirmed by the "Banbury Advertiser" in its issue of 5th. May 1921. Their obituary notice reveals that "he used to saunter casually 7 or 8 yards back from the wicket, turn, walk forward a few yards and then suddenly break into four long quick strides". On a worn pitch he had the ability to achieve lift which must have been a vital factor in so many excellent returns. Equally significant about the way he sustained performance was his enthusiasm for shooting, a skill developed at Middleton Cheney.

Though Arthur's action brought him repeated success, it was to be the origin of his downfall. In July 1901, during a match against Somerset, umpire Phillips no-balled him sixteen times in ten overs for throwing. The 1902 edition of "Wisden's Almanack" notes that "for the next few days nothing else was talked about in the cricket world." Arthur had every right to ponder why his own captain had not counselled him earlier, if indeed he was ever guilty of throwing.

Arthur Mold disappeared from the Lancashire side. Disillusioned and disappointed, he re-joined Northamptonshire (still a second class county) in 1903, this time as a slow bowler. His contribution to the Midlands side was slight. Wisden records that his 76 overs cost 225 runs and brought a meagre reward of six wickets. This was a sad end to a career marked not only by exhilarating bowling performances but a bubbling relationship with his colleagues. W.E. Howard was pavilion steward at Old Trafford during Mold's spell with Lancashire. In "Reminiscences of a Non-Player" he recalls the many jokes inspired by Arthur. Typical was a river incident at Tunbridge Wells. There was a wager that Johnny Briggs could crawl along the branch of an overhanging tree more times than Charlie Smith (team mates of Arthur). Johnny completed a dozen such manoeuvres. Charlie performed really well and looked set to win until Arthur Mold rowed away from the branch and left him



ARTHUR MOID from "The Book of Cricket" edited by C.B. Fry

clinging to the tree.

Arthur retired to Middleton Cheney and became landlord of the Dolphin. He resumed acquaintance with local cricket and played both for Middleton Cheney and the Banbury and District Club.

“Give me Arthur” is the title of a book about Arthur Shrewsbury. Equally it could apply to Arthur Mold. It is to be hoped that cricket historians will not allow the decisions of a single umpire to dim the performance of a man who brought new life to late nineteenth century Lancashire cricket.

BRIAN LITTLE.

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Banbury Guardian May 1921 (Courtesy Oxfordshire County Libraries, Banbury).

POLITICS AND ELECTIONS IN BANBURY 1806-1831

T.H.B. Oldfield, the great radical historian of the English electoral system, offered an unflattering description of Banbury politics at the close of the eighteenth century. "The right of voting in this populous town is confined...to a mayor, six alderman, and twelve burgesses, who, like all other corporations, are under the influence and direction of an individual".¹ And so indeed it seemed. Before the Great Reform Act of 1832 Banbury was one of only five single member constituencies.² The right of election lay with the eighteen members of the Corporation, and like many corporation boroughs Banbury fell victim to aristocratic influence. Between 1754 and 1819 the Corporation only twice failed to return the nominee of the Earl of Guilford, who had a seat at nearby Wroxton.³ This political control was so apparently effective that between 1722 and 1806 Banbury was not contested at all, and, despite his fluctuating national fortunes, Lord North enjoyed a secure electoral base as the member for Banbury from 1754 to 1790. Not until the dramatic election of 1831, when the Reform Crisis was at its height, was the electoral influence of the earls of Guilford decisively challenged. Yet the Guilford influence in Banbury was unusual. Unlike, say, the Grosvenors, who annually spent huge sums to maintain their electoral interest in Chester, the North family did not lavish resources to sustain their influence in Banbury.⁴ Their influence was assumed rather than asserted.

The fragility of political influence in Banbury was clearly demonstrated between 1806 and 1808. The fluidity of national politics helped shatter the electoral calm of Banbury, and the Corporation was faced with three contested returns in as many years.⁵ In November 1806 the sitting member Dudley North, who had held the seat since 1796, was challenged by William Praed, a city banker, who had sat for St Ives between 1780 and 1806. Praed defeated North by 10 votes to 6.⁶ For a moment at least it appeared that the Corporation had emancipated itself from the Wroxton interest. Another general election followed in 1807, and the same two candidates came forward. The result was a tie, with both candidates securing 9 votes each. Immediately after the 1807 elections Guilford's agent was relieved. He saw every prospect of disqualifying at least one of Praed's supporters, and assured Guilford that, "The result of yesterday's contest was fortunate beyond our most sanguine expectations, and we have no doubt that it will reinstate your lordship's influence too firmly again to be shaken".⁷ As the mayor also acted as returning officer he did not enjoy a casting vote, and the Corporation was thus compelled to make a double return.⁸ Inevitably parliament declared the result void and issued a writ for a fresh election. In the ensuing contest North scraped home by 5 votes to 3. Only patchy evidence exists which enables us to assess the strength of the Earl of Guilford's electoral control, but the events of 1806-8 suggested that it was, at least under certain circumstances, distinctly fragile. North's return was reputed to have cost the Earl £5,000, and was only secured by the mayor's declaring void 6 votes which had been cast for Praed. Passions within the corporation clearly ran high, and only one member who had supported Praed in 1806 switched to North in 1808.⁹ By 1808 this fierce electoral squall had blown itself out, and a new era of calm descended.

Even though the franchise was restricted to members of the Corporation, it would be quite wrong to think of parliamentary elections at Banbury solely in terms of the politics of oligarchy. Even in corporation boroughs such as Banbury, elections remained popular occasions. While the formal business of making the return was done by the Corporation behind closed doors, these events were accompanied by a series of popular rituals which in some senses served to reconcile non-electors to their political exclusion. It was customary for candidates or their backers to put up considerable sums of money to provide non-electors with liberal quantities of ale during elections. If the majority of Banburians could not vote, they could at least have a wake. In 1819 Heneage Legge had been returned at a by-election, but, faced with the prospect of having to seek re-election, at the general election of 1820 Legge announced that he could not afford the customary election expenses.¹⁰ The prospect of a dry election provoked a riot.

The Corporation had been warned of possible trouble, and when they met on the morning of 10 March at the home of Robert Brayne, the mayor, they were already aware of crowds assembling and a post-chaise being hi-jacked. To the accompaniment of cries of 'No Legge' and 'No Corporation', some thirty special constables escorted the Corporation from Brayne's house to the Town Hall.¹¹ Once the Corporation were inside stones began to be hurled. The Corporation hastily vacated the Town Hall and abandoned the chairing of the elected Member. The chairing of the member was a hallowed part of election ritual through which election was confirmed by acclamation. Those actually carrying the Member were paid by the Corporation.¹² Rather than the rough joy of the customary chairing, Legge instead faced a hostile crowd and was chased from the Town Hall into Red Lion Street. Much relieved, he took refuge in Cobbs' bank, and the crowd, frustrated of their quarry, began pelting the bank with stones.¹³ Numerous arrests followed, with rioters first being held in Banbury gaol and later transferred to the more secure county gaol at Oxford.¹⁴ As evening fell the situation was still tense and a worried mayor convened a special meeting of magistrates at the 'Gun and Dog' to co-ordinate the activities of special constables and watchmen. This, combined with a threat to call in the yeomanry, was sufficient to restore order.¹⁵

The rioters were not exclusively Banburians. Many from outside the town had arrived to demonstrate their hostility both to Legge's return and to being deprived of traditional pleasures. Those arrested included men from Adderbury and Bodicote, as well as from Neithrop and Banbury. Given the passions aroused the mayor argued that it would be impossible to enpanel an unprejudiced jury at Banbury and therefore petitioned the Home Office for permission to transfer all cases from the Banbury Sessions to the County Quarter Sessions at Oxford.¹⁶ Although the yeomanry had not intervened directly, the Bloxham and Banbury Yeomanry had been mobilized under the command of George Frederick Stratton of Great Tew. Stratton later told the Home Secretary that order had been restored 'without any official assistance on our part, as the report of our intended arrival produced that effect'. Nevertheless, the mayor did not want the yeomanry stood down until prisoners had been removed to Oxford, fearing that 'attempts to rescue the prisoners or some disorder might take place' in the meantime.¹⁷ Stratton's report went on to assure the Home Secretary that the riot 'had not any political feature'. In a narrow sense this was true: the riot was directed against the abandoning of customary election rituals rather than against the

oligarchic politics of the borough itself. However, the disturbances of 1820 did suggest that Banbury politics were a delicate mechanism, and if the political beneficiaries of the unreformed electoral system wished to maintain their privileges then they in turn would have to respect the customary 'privileges' and traditional expectations of non-electors. Failure to do so, as 1820 demonstrated, imperilled the politics of privilege itself.

After 1820 old patterns seemed to reassert themselves. At the election of 1826 traditional rituals were restored and *Jackson's Oxford Journal* reported that 'the day passed off with the greatest good humour and hilarity'.¹⁸ In 1830 Henry Villiers Stuart, cousin of the fifth Marquis of Bute, was returned unopposed. By marrying the daughter of the third Earl of Guilford, Bute had acquired a share in his father-in-law's electoral influence.¹⁹ In 1830 aristocratic influence in Banbury politics appeared to be at its zenith. Yet this calm assertion of aristocratic control was deceptive. Beneath the surface a sea of change was beginning which would transform Banbury politics. Banbury and its extensive economic hinterland continued to expand and diversify. By 1831 some 44,000 people lived within eight miles of Banbury and Banbury's industrial and service sectors expanded rapidly to meet the demands of expanding local markets. Of all Oxfordshire towns, Banbury had the most extensive and self-conscious middle class.²⁰ The social and cultural influence of this middle class was already considerable, but until 1826 its strictly political influence was more marginal. In 1826 a powerful committee of liberal tradesmen, bankers, professionals and manufacturers was established to manage George Frederick Stratton's campaign in North Oxfordshire. Stratton's challenge to the predominantly agricultural, anglican, and Tory elite in Oxfordshire struck particular chords in Banbury, and the bulk of his support came from the more northern areas of the county.²¹ Although Stratton's campaign was ultimately unsuccessful, one consequence was that Liberals in Banbury had established an embryonic political organization. By 1831 Liberals were sufficiently strong and well-organized not only to challenge but indeed to overturn the old political order.

The issue of Parliamentary Reform stirred passions in Banbury as no other issue had. In the Commons on 21 March 1831 Villiers Stuart had declared that 'although his feelings were in favour of the bill, he should vote against it, as his constituents were hostile to it'. Strictly speaking this was true as a majority of the Corporation opposed Parliamentary Reform, but Villiers' professed personal support for the Reform Bill would have enjoyed considerable support in Banbury itself, and a petition in favour of Parliamentary reform had attracted extensive support throughout the town. In the Commons Villiers Stuart had implied that his own views were so far removed from those of his constituents (i.e. the members of the Corporation) that he felt obliged to resign his seat as soon as the Corporation would find a suitable candidate. In the event Parliament was dissolved before Villiers Stuart could take any unilateral initiative.²² With the town more politically divided than ever, Banbury faced the General Election of 1831. The right of election, of course, still lay with the Corporation, and with Villiers' position at best awkward and possibly untenable, the Corporation proposed to return Henry Hely Hutchinson, a veteran of Waterloo and squire of Weston Weedon in nearby Northamptonshire. Once news of Hutchinson's proposed candidature leaked out, the 'Reform Committee' swung into action, and persuaded a Liberal stockbroker, John Easthope, to stand against Hutchinson. In

supporting Easthope, the Reform Committee argued that 'the present state of (parliamentary) representation' had led to 'a divided town'.²³ As tension mounted, leading members of the Reform Committee attended a meeting of the Corporation to urge 'the injustice and impracticability of attempting to return the present candidate (i.e. Hutchinson) in opposition to the sense of the town'.²⁴ As a result some pressure was put on Hutchinson to resign, thereby releasing members of the Corporation pledged to support him from their obligation to do so. When Hutchinson refused to resign some members of the Corporation clearly decided to desert him anyway, in the hope of avoiding or at least minimizing unrest, and others were prevailed upon not to vote at all.²⁵ Banbury politics was moving into a period of unprecedented polarization.

With Hutchinson refusing to stand down, the campaign against him warmed up. On 28 April posters emerged urging shopkeepers to close their shops on the day of the poll in a demonstration of support for Parliamentary Reform in general and Easthope's candidacy in particular. As tension mounted the tone of posters became more menacing, one warning against the use of force to frustrate the pro-Reform majority:

Soldiers cannot make a good cause bad; this would add oppression to insult and ENDANGER LIVES in the maintenance of corruption. If you value character and property, your town and its inhabitants, your country and your sovereign, REJECT the obnoxious candidate, and avert the impending RIOT and UPROAR, outrage and BLOOD'.²⁶

Other posters, almost vainly, warned against violence and lawlessness. *Jackson's Oxford Journal* reported that 'there has existed for some days past at Banbury a most disorderly feeling, which has manifested itself in sundry tumultuous acts'.²⁷

On the eve of polling it was widely believed that, despite the campaign and the pressure exerted in support of Reform, Hutchinson still enjoyed the support of a majority within the Corporation. At 6 a.m. on polling day, with rumours rife that the yeomanry was about to be called in, barricades started to go up around the town. In response to these ominous preparations it was announced at 7 o'clock that no opposition to Easthope would be made.²⁸ Despite this announcement, Hutchinson persisted with his candidature and an hour later embarked on a canvass of all those aldermen who had previously pledged to support him. In the company of Rev. E. Gibbs, vicar of Elsfield, Hutchinson began his final canvass only to be attacked in Red Lion Street.²⁹ Having escaped one brawl, Hutchinson found himself attacked again in the Market Square, where he drew a dagger, allegedly to defend himself. The intrepid canvassers, now joined by one Major Izod, fled the crowd, and escaped on to the Daventry road just in time to have the turnpike gates closed against their pursuers. Frustrated in their attempt to duck Hutchinson in the canal, the crowd satisfied themselves with a ceremonial ducking of his hat.³⁰

At 11 o'clock, as Walford returned to propose Hutchinson at the nomination, he ran the gauntlet of a hostile crowd outside Cobb's bank. The sympathies of the crowd were now abundantly clear. In a dramatic stroke Easthope's candidacy was proposed by the Mayor, Richard Brayne. Suddenly town and Corporation was publicly united in support both of Easthope's candidature and electoral reform. Meanwhile the increasingly isolated Walford had to leave the hustings in search of a seconder for

Hutchinson. He returned and embarked on a long and ill-judged speech attacking both Easthope and the Whigs' Reform proposals. As tension rose he was persuaded to curtail his speech. Having lost the debate, the opponents of Reform also lost the vote. At the ensuing poll Easthope secured six votes to Hutchinson's two, with the remaining ten aldermen preferring the comparative security of their homes.³¹ Banbury Reformers were euphoric.

After the election Tories, predictably perhaps, complained of intimidation on a large scale, Hutchinson published in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* a version of a letter he had sent to Mayor Brayne on 2 May complaining that 'a reign of Terror' had prevailed in Banbury for many days and in such a climate a free election was impossible. Major Izod went further, claiming that had Hutchinson not drawn his dagger he 'would have been put to death'.³² Mayor Brayne strenuously defended both himself and the Corporation protesting that he had been 'incessantly occupied at great personal inconvenience' in making arrangements for a safe poll.³³ The future historian of Banbury, Alfred Beesley, painted a somewhat different picture. He confirmed that, during the weekend before the poll, some 'respectable persons' had refused to be sworn in as special constables because they were unwilling to associate themselves with a police action in defence of what they saw as electoral corruption.³⁴ Although this defence of the respectable opened the way for the dramatic events of polling day, it should not be seen as part of a conspiracy to intimidate. With the pressure of the reform crisis the politics of aristocratic influence collapsed. Hardly surprising, the as yet unenfranchised Banbury middle class showed no disposition to try and revive a dying system.

Amidst the passions generated by the 1831 election allegations of intimidation were not uncommon. The election of 1831, more than any other in English history, was fought on a single issue: the Whigs' proposals for Parliamentary Reform. The wave of popular support for Parliamentary Reform sank most opponents of the Bill, and in the Commons the Tory Party was reduced to a rump.³⁵ The *Oxford Herald* regarded Hutchinson's defeat at Banbury as little short of sensational: 'It proves that the spirit of reform is so fully aroused that the borough patrons may be defeated in their strongest holds'.³⁶ Events at Banbury mirrored in microcosm a national trend in which an alliance of public opinion, popular pressure, and electoral enthusiasm swept the Whigs to victory. Banbury in a small but spectacular way contributed to the triumph of Reform. The old politics of oligarchy were at an end.³⁷

David Eastwood, Pembroke College, Oxford.

APPENDIX

Alfred Beesley's *History of Banbury*, pp. 541-5, prints the participants and voting in several of the polls, asterisking those who were non-resident:

1 November 1806.

For William Praed Esq.

Alderman Richard Chapman,
Alderman John Pain
Alderman William Judd senr.
Alderman the Rev. John Lamb D.D.*
Alderman James Barnes
Alderman William Judd junr.
Alderman Joseph Pain
Capital Burgess James Lush
Capital Burgess Robert Brayne
Capital Burgess Rev. Richard Pain*
Alderman the Hon. and Rev. H.L. Hobart* and Capital Burgess
John Callow did not Vote.

For Dudley North Esq.

Mayor Alderman Lord Glenbervie*
Alderman Charles Wyatt
Alderman William Walford
Alderman John West
Capital Burgess Thomas Coutts*
Capital Burgess Rev. Edw. Gibbs
Walford

16 February 1808.

For Dudley North Esq.

Alderman Charles Wyatt, Mayor
Alderman the Rev. John Lamb, D.D.*
Alderman William Walford
Capital Burgess John Callow
Capital Burgess Thomas Coutts*

For William Praed Esq.

Alderman Richard Chapman
Alderman William Judd senr.
Alderman James Barnes

Alderman the Rev. H.L. Hobart*, Alderman John West, and Capital Burgess the Rev. E.G. Walford, tendered their votes for Mr North; Alderman William Judd junr., Capital Burgess James Lush, and Capital Burgess Robert Brayne, tendered their votes for Mr Praed; but all these votes were rejected by the Mayor. Alderman Lord Glenbervie*, Alderman John Pain, and Alderman Joseph Pain did not vote.

2 May 1831

For Mr Easthope

Thomas Brayne, Mayor
William Judd, Alderman
Robert Brayne, Alderman
John Salmon, Alderman*
Richard Griffin, Alderman
Richard Edmunds, Capital Burgess.

For Col. Hutchinson

Rev. E.G. Walford, Alderman*
Lieut. Col. Miller, Capital Burgess*

FOOTNOTES.

1. T.H.B. Oldfield, *History of the Boroughs of Great Britain...* (3 vols., London, 1792), ii, 393. It was actually twelve aldermen and six burgesses (of whom the Mayor was one).
2. The others were Abingdon, Bewdley, Higham Ferrers, and Monmouth.
3. Sir Lewis Namier and John Brooke, *The House of Commons, 1754-1790* (3 vols., London, 1964), i, 356.
4. Frank O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons, and Parties. The Unreformed Electorate of Hanoverian England, 1734-1832* (Oxford, 1989), 43-55; Alfred Beesley, *The History of Banbury* (London, 1841), 539-40. There was a vain attempt to challenge North in 1784 after the collapse of the Fox-North coalition, but, despite an address in support of Pitt from non-electors the Corporation stood firm; P.D.G. Thomas, *Lord North* (London, 1976), 144.
5. A.D. Harvey, *Britain in the Early Nineteenth Century* (London, 1978), 170-204.
6. Oxfordshire County] R[ecord] O[ffice], B.B. xix/iv/1, Poll Book 1806.
7. Quoted in R.G. Thorne (ed.) *The House of Commons, 1790- 1820* (5 vols., London, 1986), ii, 322-3.
8. Oxf. R.O., B.B., xix/v/15, Return of Burgesses to Serve in Parliament, 1807.
9. Oxf. R.O., B.B., xix/iv/2, Poll Book 1808; Joshua Wilson, *Index to the House of Commons* (London, 1808), 27-8; *Victoria County History of Oxfordshire*, x, 90; D. McClatchy, *The Oxfordshire Clergy, 1777- 1869* (Oxford, 1960), 205. Praed apparently enjoyed the backing of the Marquis of Buckingham, see Thorne (ed.), *The House of Commons*, iv, 881.
10. The Hon. Heneage Legge (1788-1844) was the second son of the third Earl of Dartmouth; after being educated at Eaton and Oxford he took a Fellowship at All Souls and was called to the bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1815. The third Earl of Guilford's grandfather had married Legge's great grandmother, hence Legge enjoyed family connections; see W.R. Williams, *The Parliamentary History of Oxfordshire* (Worcester, 1899), 188; Thorne (ed.), *The House of Commons*, iv, 404.
11. Public Record Office, H[ome] O[ffice Papers], 40/11, Statement of Richard Brayne; see also J.R. Hodgkins' brief, colourful, and not always accurate account of the 1820 election in *Over the Hills to Glory: Radicalism in Banburyshire 1832-1945* (Southend, 1978), 15-16.
12. P.R.O., HO 40/11/188.
13. HO 20/11, depositions of T.R. Cobb and William Page.
14. HO 20/11/151.
15. HO 40/11, statement of R. Brayne.
16. HO 40/11/170, 171, and passim.
17. HO 40/11/151, Stratton to Sidmouth, 12 March 1820.
18. 10 June 1826, p.3 c.2. Heneage Legge declined to seek re- election after being appointed Commissioner for Customs in Feb. 1826. The seat therefore passed to his brother, Arthur Charles Legge, a captain in the Life Guards, Williams, *Oxfordshire*, 188-9.
19. *Jackson's Oxford Journal* [hereafter JOJ] 7 August 1830, p.3 c.3; *Victoria County History of Oxfordshire*, x, p 91. Henry Villiers Stuart (1803-1874) had represented County Waterford between 1826 and 1830. After being chosen as High Steward of Banbury in 1827 he deserted Irish politics for the mainland in 1830, In 1831 he returned to Ireland and was Lord Lieutenant of Waterford from 1831 until his death.
20. Barrie Trinder, *Victorian Banbury* (Chichester, 1982), esp. 16-37.
21. See David Eastwood, 'Toryism, Reform, and Political Culture in Oxfordshire, 1826-1837',

Parliamentary History, vii (1988), esp. pp. 101-2.

22. *Hansard*, 3rd. ser., iii (1831), 676-7; Bodl[eian Library], G.A. Oxon b. 101, Collection of Cuttings and Bills relating to Banbury Elections, pieces dated 17 and 22 March 1831.

23. Bodl. G.A. Oxon b. 101, piece dated 26 April 1831. Easthope (1784-1865) was reported to have made £150,000 after becoming a stockbroker in 1818. In 1834 he purchased the *Morning Chronicle*, the leading national Liberal newspaper, for £16,500. He sat for St. Albans 1826-30 and Leicester 1837- 47. In 1847 he was made a Baronet. Easthope certainly had connections with Cobbs' bank in Banbury, and may have been an employee of the Cobbs at one stage.

24. Bodl. G.A. Oxon b. 101, posters dated 26 and 28 April 1831. The six delegates from the Reform Committee were Samuel Beesley, T.R.Cobb, Thomas Gardner, John Munton, William Spurrett and Thomas Tims.

25. See report in *John Bull* newspaper, Bodl. G.A. Oxon 4' 362 (1) [hereafter *John Bull*].

26. G.A. Oxon b. 101, poster dated 30 April 1831. This poster, like much of the liberals' campaign material, was printed by William Potts.

27. 30 April p.3 c.3.

28. *John Bull*; *JOJ*, 7 May 1831, p.3 c.2.

29. Significantly the Earl of Guilford was the patron of the Elsfield living: the politics of patronage operated to the last, McClatchy, *Oxfordshire Clergy*, 210.

30. *JOJ*, 7 May 1831, p.3 c.2; *John Bull*; Trinder, *Victorian Banbury*, 47-8.

31. Oxf. R.O., B.B. xix/iv/9, Poll Book 1831; *JOJ*, 7 May 1831; *John Bull*.

32. *JOJ*, 7 May 1831. It is probably worth noting that, in the wake of the Tory humiliation in 1831, the stridently Tory *JOJ* was actively seeking to discredit victorious Liberals.

33. *JOJ*, 14 May 1831 p.3 c.5.

34. *JOJ*, 21 May 1831 p.3 c.5. Beesley also claimed suggestions that Hutchinson had at one stage enjoyed the support of 12 of the 18 members of the Corporation were unfounded. Be that as it may, it is clear that Hutchinson believed that a majority of aldermen had at one stage been pledged to support him.

35. Eastwood, 'Toryism, Reform, and Political Culture in Oxfordshire', 106-7; John Cannon, *Parliamentary Reform 1660-1832* (Cambridge, 1973), 220-1; Michael Brock, *The Great Reform Act* (London, 1973), 193-210.

36. 7 May 1831.

37. The electoral history in the Victorian era is well covered by Barrie Trinder in *Victorian Banbury*, 47- 64, 122-30; and in the same author's *A Victorian M.P. and his Constituents: The Correspondence of H.W. Tancred* (Banbury Historical Society Records Series, 8, 1969).

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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. Well over one hundred issues and approaching three hundred articles have been published. Most back issues are still available and out-of-print issues can if required be photocopied.

Publications still in print include:

Old Banbury - a short popular history, by E.R.C. Brinkworth.

The Building and Furnishing of St. Mary's Church, Banbury.

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Records series:

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Banbury Wills and Inventories 1591-1650, 2 parts (vols. 13, 14).

Banbury Corporation Records: Tudor and Stuart (vol. 15).

Victorian Banbury, by Barrie Trinder (vol. 19, with Phillimore).

Aynho: A Northamptonshire Village, by Nicholas Cooper (vol. 20).

Banbury Gaol Records, ed. Penelope Renold (vol. 21).

Banbury Baptism and Burial Registers, 1813-1838 (vol. 22).

Current prices, and availability of other back volumes, from the Hon. Secretary, c/o Banbury Museum.

In preparation: Lists of Tudor and Stuart Banbury Taxpayers, including the May 1642 subsidy for the Hundreds of Banbury, Bloxham and Ploughley (mentioning almost as many names as the Protestation Returns of a few months earlier, for which the Banbury Borough and Ploughley Hundred returns do not survive). Others planned: documents showing how the Civil War affected those living in the Banbury area; selections from diaries of William Cotton Risley, Vicar of Deddington 1836-1848; selected years from Rusher's *Banbury List and Directory*, 1795-1880; news items from the Banbury area from Jackson's *Oxford Journal* (from 1752) and the *Oxford Mercury* (1795-6); and letters to the 1st Earl of Guilford.

Meetings are held during the autumn and winter, normally at 7.30 p.m. 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 historical, archaeological and architectural subjects. In the summer, the AGM is held at a local country house and other excursions are arranged.

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