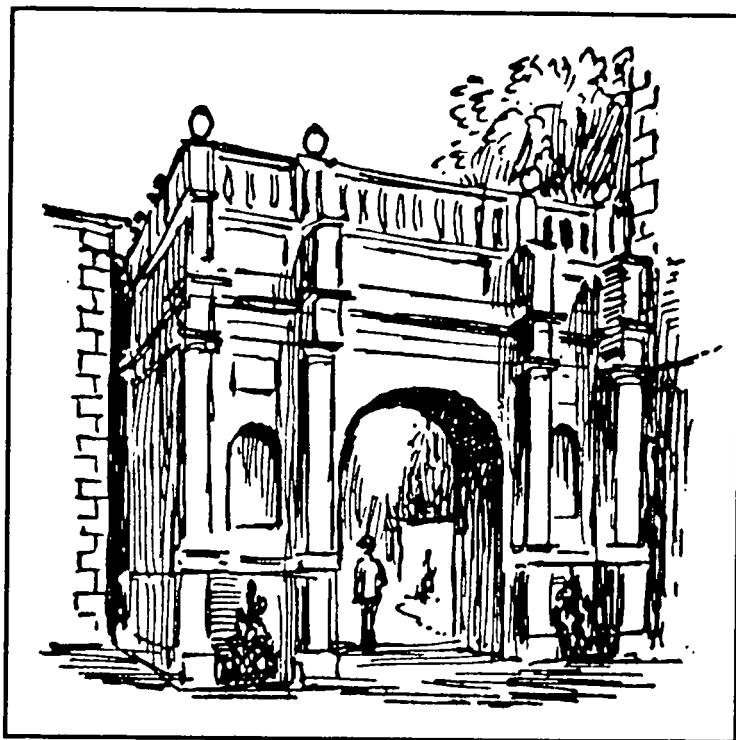


CAKE AND COCKHORSE



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

Cover: Sir John Soane's archway at Aynhoe Park (drawing by B.S. Biro, tailpiece in
Garden Glory, by Ted Humphris, 1969, 1988, reproduced by kind permission)
(see page 230; the location of the 1997 A.G.M., see opposite).

Cake and Cockhorse

The magazine of the Banbury Historical Society, issued three times a year.

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As members already have been told, our Annual General Meeting is to be held at Aynhoe Park on Saturday 19th July. Alas, Ptolemy Dean, the expert on Sir John Soane, cannot after all be present to conduct us around the house (his place will ably be taken by Nick Allen); but, perhaps even better, especially for those unable to be present, he has made up for his absence by his article in this issue which must be the definitive commentary on Soane's work at Aynhoe Park. We are privileged to have the opportunity of publishing it.

To make this doubly an 'Aynho[e]' issue, David Hall has again contributed an assessment of archaeological evidence from field surveys, this time of Aynho fields, long before the Cartwright family were influencing the parish.

We are always hoping to receive contributions of local historical research from members not only of this Society but of the many village societies in 'Banburyshire' - however, in a way, it is even more gratifying to have articles submitted from a distance, so when James and Barbara Cook, from Albion College, Michigan, U.S.A., sent in their scholarly article on the eighteenth century medic George Maculay, it was even more exciting - especially as, with local knowledge, we were able to identify 'The House at Pyc Corner' as being Castle House in Cornhill - an important building that even the *VCH* had virtually ignored; now, happily, open to anyone wanting a drink or a meal in attractive 'Bar-Café' surroundings.

THE HOUSE AT PYE CORNER

George Macaulay, M.D.

An Eighteenth Century Physician who lived in Banbury

James Wyatt Cook and Barbara Collier Cook

In preparing a biography of George Macaulay, M.D. (1716-1766), the first husband of the notable British historian, Catharine Macaulay,¹ we discovered that following the completion of his medical education at Padua in 1739, and before establishing his practice in London in 1751, George Macaulay practised medicine and resided in Banbury. This article, a part of a chapter from our forthcoming book, chronicles what we have been able to discover about Macaulay's stay in Banbury and explores his reasons for coming to and leaving the town.

On July 19, 1738 - just before his departure from Scotland for Padua 'George Macaulay, Esq., student of medicine' was enrolled as a Burgess and Guildsman of the City of Edinburgh, 'by Right of his father the Right Hon.^{ble} Archibald Macaulay, Esqr., Lord Provost and Gildbrother of this City Dispenccing with payment of any dues for Good Services Performed to this City.'² That Dr. George Macaulay was the son of Archibald, thrice Lord Provost of Edinburgh, is a connection hitherto unnoted.

George Macaulay expected, it seems, to return to Edinburgh on completion of his medical education and there to practise his calling as physician and man-midwife. A more attractive prospect, however, intervened. He somehow became acquainted with or learned about

¹ See Bridget Hill, *A Republican Virago: The Life and Times of Catharine Macaulay, Historian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). A part of the research informing this article was generously supported by the Pew Faculty Development Fund and the Faculty Development Committee of Albion College, Michigan, and by the National Endowment for the Humanities. We owe a particular debt of gratitude to J.S.W. Gibson for calling our attention to published references concerning local government in Banbury, Greatworth Manor House, the art work of Peter Tillemans, and, especially, for correcting our speculations concerning the location of the house at Pye Corner. We also thank Deirdre and Graham James, willing conscripts in a research raid on the Northamptonshire Record Office. This article is dedicated to Margaret Condon, a staunch member of the Banbury Historical Society and archivist *extraordinaire*.

² Edinburgh Town Council Records, July 19, 1738. City Archives, MS. SI.1/58, f. 150.

Leonora Maria Bathurst, niece of Allan, the first Earl Bathurst, and daughter of Peter of Clarendon Park, the earl's younger brother. Her mother had been Leonora Maria Howe Bathurst, the only child of Charles Howe, a Northamptonshire gentleman and philanthropist, to survive to adulthood. Following his wife's death, Peter felt unable to rear all three of his daughters and permitted Leonora to be reared by her maternal grandfather, Charles Howe, whose deceased wife's (Eleanor Pargiter Howe's) ancestral seat in Northamptonshire was at Greatworth, not far from Banbury.

We have been unable to locate documents clarifying the manner in which the match between George Macaulay and Leonora Maria Bathurst was arranged. One possible scenario posits an introduction via one or the other of the nobility who promoted the interests of Archibald Macaulay's family, especially the Duke of Argyll. Another, perhaps more likely, involves the intervention of Leonora's father (who lived until 1748) and her uncle, Lord Allan Bathurst. A surviving letter from Bathurst to John D[rummond?], Lord Provost of Edinburgh, requesting the provost's aid in finding employment for a poor relation, establishes the earl's connection with the provost's office,³ and the earl had continuing connections in Edinburgh. A third possibility presumes that Macaulay came to Banbury for reasons having nothing to do with Leonora Maria and met her subsequently. This last, however, seems unlikely. Though George was well connected, he was impecunious.

Whatever the case, it was in Banbury, not Edinburgh, that George Macaulay established his practice on returning from Italy, and perhaps, judging from the contents of his library, a post-doctoral continental tour - sometime, therefore, between 1740 and 1742.

Then as now, the northern part of Oxfordshire and the south-western edge of Northamptonshire were drawn together by mutual economic and agricultural interests into a loosely organised unit often called 'Banburyshire.' Advising the Banbury Corporation in its deliberations were members of the gentry and aristocracy - usually the owners of neighbouring estates who were appointed for life to a 'board' of thirty 'Assistants to the Corporation'. Charles Howe served as a member of this body until his death in 1742, as did Lords Hillsbury, Wilcox, and

³ Scottish Record Office. MS. GD 24/1/464C (Part 2), f. 87.154, Letter from Bathurst to John D[rummond?], 1 October 1729.

North.⁴ These Assistants displayed a committed - not to say controlling - interest in Banbury and its affairs. Charles Howe's record of daily expenditure, for instance, shows regular contributions toward the education of the children of Banbury and the support of the Banbury poor. It may well be that Howe was introduced to Macaulay, found in him a kindred spirit, and with one eye on the needs of the community and the other on the future of his granddaughter suggested to Macaulay establishing his practice at Banbury.

Banbury certainly needed physicians - particularly charitable ones. A series of epidemics had raged in the decades preceding Macaulay's arrival, including a notable smallpox epidemic in the 1730s.⁵ Moreover, Banbury offered a physician with Macaulay's well known altruistic proclivities ample scope for the exercise of his medical philanthropy. A workhouse, in Scalding Lane (now George Street), had been moved in 1731 to the east side of South Bar, between the present Cross and Calthorpe Street.⁶ The existence of 'a pest-house and airing-house in 1743 on the site of the castle' is recorded.⁷ Thus there were many people both poor and afflicted to claim Macaulay's sympathy and professional attention. Banbury at this period, in fact, provides a notable example of the difficulties that can beset a community when local responsibility for the maintenance of the poor remains unsupplemented by any outside resources.

Local control worked very well as long as there were not many poor in Banbury. In the second and third decades of the eighteenth century, however, the local cheese industry, which had been the principal employment of many inhabitants, collapsed. The requirements of the needy poor quickly threatened the community's capacity to fulfil them, and the means attempted to make the poor productive - spinning jersey and labouring in the workhouse - proved generally unsuccessful. The Banbury

⁴ Banbury Borough Journal 1722-1761. Oxfordshire Archives [OA], MS. B.B. XV/ii/i. 1722-June, 1761, 7 September 1741, 145. On the role of the Assistants to the Corporation, see R.K. Gilkes, 'Banbury - The Pattern of Local Government, 1554-1835.' Part 1. *Cake and Cockhorse* 5.1. Autumn, 1971.

⁵ *Victoria County History [VCH]: Oxfordshire*, Vol. X. *Banbury Hundred*, ed. Alan Crossley (Oxford 1972), 82.

⁶ William Potts, *A History of Banbury* (Banbury: Cheney & Sons, 1958), 189; 2nd edn., ed. E.T. Clark (Banbury: Gulliver Press, 1978), 234.

⁷ *VCH*, 82.

vestry, charged with maintaining the impoverished, began to be visited by the spectre of bankruptcy caused by the eighteenth century equivalent of the National Health. They feared the poor fund would be exhausted by payments to physicians and surgeons in the event of the outbreak of an epidemic, and attempted to legislate their way out of the prospective bankruptcy. They resolved that, in the event of an epidemic, 'No Apothecary or Surgeon Shall be paid unless Employed by the Overseer.'⁸

A similar concern surfaces again in 1746. On September 17, of that year:

At a general Vestry...it is also agreed that in Case the Smallpox should happen to break out in the Workhouse it should fall to the Care of the Overseers and not to the Governor of the Workhouse & the Overseers to pay all Surgeons Bills relating to the poor. And if any of the poor should Elope from the Workhouse, without the Consent of three of the Overseers [and] if they should come in again, the Governor is to Cloth them at his expences out of his Salary, but if they go with Consent of the Overseers and come in again then in such Case the Overseers to Cloth them.'⁹

The needy seemingly resisted - one would think predictably - the draconian behavioural controls the authorities sought to impose on them.

Concern over the possibility of welfare fraud also troubled the members of the vestry. To this they responded by requiring the deserving poor to wear an indentifying - and demeaning - badge. Those who refused to do so disqualified themselves for public relief:

May 7th 1749. At a general Vestry then holden by the Inhabitants and Overseers of the poor of the Borough of Banbury afores^d to Consult about the affairs of the poor, it was then agreed the payments should continue as they now stand provided they conform to the Law in that behalf made as provided to wit/ to wear the Badge.¹⁰

And again:

June 4th 1749 At a General Vestry then holden by the Inhabitants and Overseers of the poor of the Borough of Banbury aforesd. to consult about the affairs of the poor. It was agreed that whoever receives Collections from the Overseers of the poor shall wear the poor Badge otherwise their Collection shall cease and no more paid to them.¹¹

⁸ OA, Vestry Book, MS. D. D. Par. Banbury, c. 35, Jan. 16 1744.

⁹ Vestry Book, f. 94 r.

¹⁰ Vestry Book, f. 163 r.

¹¹ Vestry Book, f. 163 r.

A physician who donated his services to the poor must have been a welcome addition to the community from the vestry's perspective.

By contrast with the Banbury poor, Leonora Maria Bathurst had been tenderly, not to say indulgently, reared by her grandfather and was his sole heir. His will, dated at Greatworth 7 Sept. 1741, names her his executrix as well and leaves her 'all his lands in Gritworth, Weedon Pinkney and elsewhere.' Aside from a few specific bequests to others, including twenty pounds to 'the poor of Gritworth,' ten to 'the poor of Westrope,' ten more for the relief of 'poor French Protestants,' and 100 shillings to Leonora's married sister, Frances Cooper, he assigns the granddaughter he reared, 'All my Ready Money Goods Plate Jewels, Chattels & Personal Estate Whatsoever & Wheresoever.'¹²

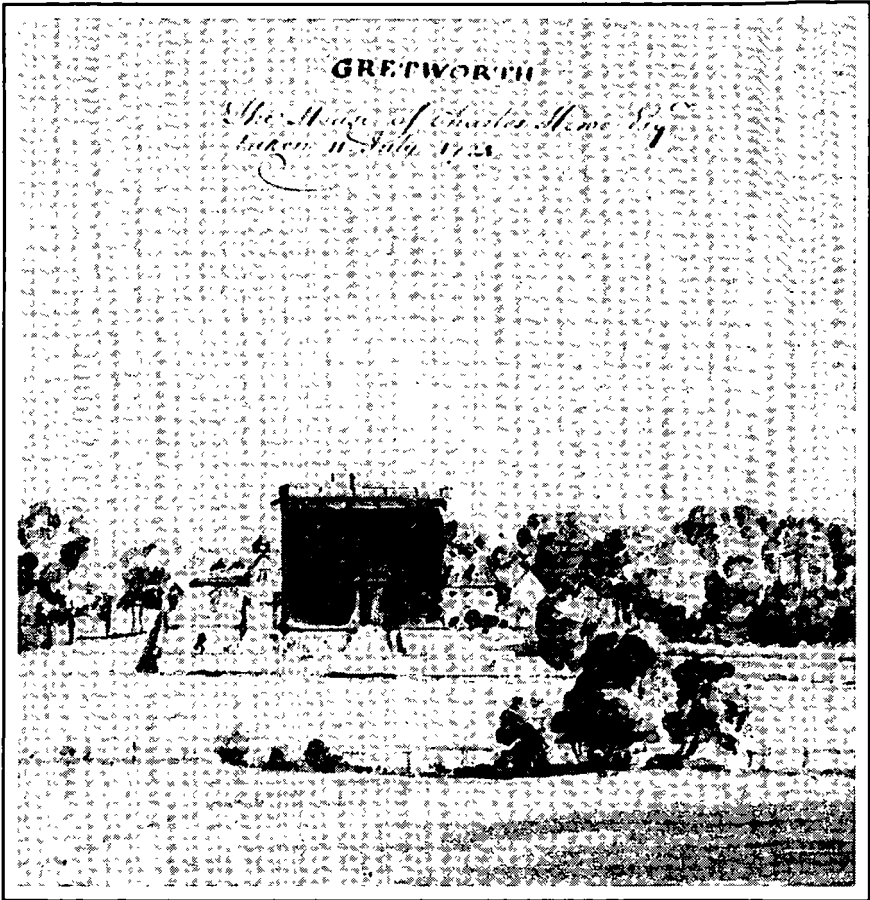
In naming Leonora his executor as well as his heir, Howe underlined not only his affection for her, but the confidence he reposed in her good judgement as well. Control of Howe's estates and money effectively made her her own woman. While her father, the member of parliament, and her uncle, the earl, could suggest matches for her, no one was in a position to press her into a marriage in which she was not a full and willing participant. She was a good catch, but only for the man who could both win her heart and convince her intellect that he was worthy of her.

In addition to being what the age termed 'a fortune', Leonora was also likely to have been a beauty. Though no portrait of her is known to survive, several pictures of her father, her uncle, and her first cousins do. Her participation in the gene pool that gave them their good looks very probably endowed her with the regular features and good skin that they enjoyed.¹³

Greatworth, the country mansion in which Leonora Maria grew up, enjoyed a commanding view of the surrounding countryside and was an idyllic environment for a child. From its top storey, it was said, one could see nine counties. Regrettably, the house was destroyed by fire in

¹² [NRO, Ms. XYZ.993, Will of Charles How [sic], esq., 7 September 1741.

¹³ Numerous Bathurst family portraits, including some of Peter Bathurst, Leonora's father, as a child and adult, and of her female first cousins, are to be found reproduced in the *Catalogue of the Bathurst Collection of Pictures* (1908).



December 1793,¹⁴ but a tinted drawing of the house made by Peter Tillemans in 1721 suggests the wealth and status of its occupants.¹⁵

¹⁴ George Baker, *History of Northamptonshire*, vol. 2 (London: Bowyer Nichols & Son; 1822-1830), 509.

¹⁵ The original drawing is in the British Library (BL Add. MSS. 32467, f. 125). The drawing has been reproduced in J.S.W. Gibson, 'Three Lost Northamptonshire Houses and Their Owners,' in *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, vol. 5.4 (1976), 311-14; in Pam Carpenter's chapter, 'The Manor House,' in *A Village of Great Worth*, eds. Walter Stageman et al. (Greatworth: W. Stageman, 1994), and in *Northamptonshire in the Early Eighteenth Century: The Drawings of Peter Tillemans and Others*, ed. Bruce Bailey. Northamptonshire Record Society, vol. 39 (1996).

Howe's Daily Account Books suggest the care that was lavished on Leonora, or 'Noe' as she was sometimes affectionately called. In 1722, Howe pays £14.4s. to a Mrs. King for two quilted caps for Noe. March 18, 1722/3 finds him buying her 'ruband' (ribbon) and ruffles for £3.3s. He also buys for her a ewe and a lamb at a cost of £17.6s. September and August record expenditures totalling 27s. for cloth and muslin. In February and June and September, the day books record expenditures for shoes for Leonora. Shoes appear especially frequently in the record. Leonora was growing fast and going through shoes in a hurry. That same February, she was ill and required a physician's (Dr Trist's) attendance on February 22, 23, and 25. (Dr Trist was also a member of the Banbury Corporation's Assistants. He resigned in 1744.) At Christmas, 1724, Leonora receives a gift of five shillings. Howe's records also attest that the inhabitants of Greatworth ate well and stayed warm, and that Howe enjoyed a bit of gambling. One finds disbursements for beef, mutton, milking, cheese, 'Turkys & fowles' butter, fish, and anchovies from London, and a gallon of brandy. The butcher's bill for meat for one quarter came to £16.5s.0d., and even the dogs got their due; £2.0s.6d. was paid for liver for the dogs on September 4, 1724. Coal was consumed at a fairly furious pace. On July 13, 1723, Howe notes 'There is now in the house 13 Tuns and a half of coal Began to be burnt this day Besides 8 Tuns in stacks without doors.' One also finds several disbursements for lottery tickets, and an occasional notation of lottery winnings.¹⁶

Howe's entries detailing income from rents, from the sale of animals and faggots, from the sale of wool, barley, and wood and disbursements as above are consistent with the picture of an active country gentleman, overseeing the business of running several farms (one of which he had bought from a Bathurst family member), working with local government to improve trade and industry, contributing to the welfare and education of Banbury children and to the maintenance of the poor. Beyond these activities, an ardently pious Howe also occupied his mind and his time composing meditations on spiritual subjects - meditations that he doubtless shared with his family. These Macaulay, who shared the belief system they outline, would later collect and publish.

¹⁶ NRO. MS. YZ. 997, Box X.1099, Acc. 1955/49, Estate and General Accounts of Charles Howe.

A man as careful, prudent, and principled as Howe would surely have encouraged Peter Bathurst of Clarendon Court to arrange a suitable match for the granddaughter Howe so treasured. He also would certainly have discussed with her the sort of man he would approve. Clearly character and sound principles would have taken precedence over fortune and status in Howe's scheme of values, and the young doctor from Edinburgh with his good connections, his Church of England religious convictions, his sound political principles, and what we must suppose to have been his advanced views about and exceptional regard for the wellbeing of women, surely came highly recommended on all counts. Regrettably, Howe, who may have been in failing health for as long as a year before his death in 1742, did not survive to see Leonora married.

The wedding took place at St. Peter's Church, Greatworth, on December 22, 1744.¹⁷ According to the bishop's transcripts of the parish registers of Greatworth, Macaulay was already resident in Banbury at the time. In all likelihood, the ceremony was performed by Thomas Winstanley, who served as Rector of the church of Greatworth from 26 Feb 1739/40 until his resignation in 1752. If Leonora opted for a fashionable wedding - a likely prospect given her wealth and the stylishness of her Bathurst cousins - the ceremony may have been spectacular, for 1744 was the single year in the annals of British marriage customs when the consumption of cloth in the production of wedding gowns was at its most conspicuous, with copious yardgoods draping and encompassing bustles of enormous breadth.

Following the ceremony, the couple settled in Banbury in a large and convenient house in Pye Corner, as we learn from an advertisement appearing in *Jackson's Oxford Journal [JOJ]* in 1758:

TO BE SOLD

(Pleasantly situated in Pye-Corner, Banbury)

An exceeding good Dwelling-House. wherein Mr. Welchman formerly and Dr. Mac Aulay late dwelt; with a large Court-yard, Summer house, pretty Garden well planted and paved all round; Coach-house, Brew-house, Six-stall Stable, two Lead Pumps, (one in the Scullery, the other in the Brew-house) and all other convenient offices thereto belonging; being the best situate, and

¹⁷ NRO, Bishop's transcripts of the parish registers of Greatworth, 1706-1812. The parish registers were lost in the fire that destroyed the Manor House in 1793.



'The House at Pye Corner', Castle House, from Cornhill.



Castle House from the south-west (Photographs: Banbury Museum).

most convenient House for a private Family, in *Banbury*; having a Back Door to the Fields, and all of the Offices distinct from the House. - Enquire of Mr. William Deacle, an attorney in Banbury aforesaid.¹⁸

The designation 'Pye-Corner,' together with the allusion to 'Mr. Welchman', originally led us to speculate that the location of the Macaulay dwelling might have been identical with that of the original Banbury Cakeshop in Parsons Lane, where Edward Welchman was baking the famous Banbury Cakes in the mid-seventeenth century. However, we later learnt that this was highly improbable as there could have been no back door from this building, on the southern (town) side of Parsons Lane, 'to the fields'. Moreover, by 1726, it was owned by another baker, John Gibbard.¹⁹ Edward Welchman's eldest son was in fact an apothecary, whose own second son, John (1667-1730), was actually a surgeon in Banbury.²⁰ Given the propensity of the medical fraternity to set themselves up in houses already associated with their practice, it seems probable that this John was the 'Mr Welchman' who lived in the 'House at Pye Corner'.

It has been suggested by Potts 'from advertisements' that Pye Corner was on 'the corner of Parsons Street'.²¹ Closer scrutiny of these, particularly one in 1773 (below) makes it seem far more likely that the house is the still surviving building known as Castle House, beyond the northern end of Cornhill itself. This location tallies with the later advertisement,²² of what appears to be the same dwelling, now with stabling for ten horses. This adds the details that the premises, if they are indeed the same, commanded 'a view of the Town-Hall and Market,' while remaining, 'as retired as in a Country Village,' since the back door opened on to the fields. All this makes Castle House a good, though not entirely certain, candidate for having been the Macaulay dwelling.

¹⁸ See E.C. Davis, *Chronological Synopsis and Index to Oxfordshire Items in Jackson's Oxford Journal*, Vol. 5. 'Macauley [sic], Dr. 58: 224c. [i.e., 1758. the 224th day of the year - August 12]. See also Centre for Oxfordshire Studies, Oxford Central Library, Microfilm of *JOJ*.

¹⁹ *FCH*, 31.

²⁰ William Potts, *A History of Banbury* (Banbury: Cheney & Sons, 1958), 130; 2nd edn., ed. E.T. Clark (Banbury: Gulliver Press, 1978), 159.

²¹ Potts, 1st edn., 184; 2nd edn., 229.

²² In *JOJ*, 30 January 1773. Information from Mr Gibson.

The 1773 advertisement adds some details:

A genteel Stone modern-built sashed HOUSE; consisting of two handsome Parlours and a large Hall, four good Chambers and a large Closet, with three good Garrets over them, a very large kitchen.

Servants were quartered above the coach-house.

Its description in the advertisement as 'modern-built' is probably house-agents' hyperbole. It had been occupied by Macaulay from at least 1744 and presumably by the surgeon John Welchman until his death in 1730. The ironstone of its facade suggests an eighteenth century construction, but this was probably mere refronting.²³

Doubtless assisted by a staff of servants of a size commensurate with their means, the Macaulays should have been very comfortable in their home at Pyc Corner as they turned their attention to professional activity and founding a family.

Leonora soon became pregnant, and for several years the children arrived in Banbury with punctual regularity. Charles Bathurst Macaulay, son of 'George, M.D. and Leonora' was born March 3, 1745/46 and baptized on March 21. On June 24 the year following, Archibald, son of George, physician, & Leonora' was baptized. The last day of October, 1748, 'about half an hour after four in the evening' saw the birth of a daughter, Caroline, who was baptized November 25. Leonora Maria, Jr. came into the world February 22, 1749/50 and was baptized, March 5, 1749/50.²⁴ As gentry, it is probable that the Vicar himself, John Wardle (served 1738-58), would have christened the Macaulay children born at Banbury.²⁵

Almost as soon as the children arrived, however, they began departing. Although none appear in the Banbury registers, the Bishop's transcripts of the parish register of Greatworth begin that sad story. The register itself was lost in the fire that destroyed Greatworth manor in December, 1793. In this contemporary transcript we find a surviving record of the burial on July 1, 1747 of baby 'Archibald MacAulay.' He had lived only a week or so. The dates of Charles Bathurst and Caroline Macaulay's

²³ *VCH*. 31. Described as probably a seventeenth century house, 'refronted'.

²⁴ See J.S.W. Gibson, ed. *Baptism Register of Banbury, Oxfordshire*. Part Three: 1723-1812 (Banbury Historical Society, vol. 16, 1978) 29-35. See also, OA, Banbury Parish Registers beginning 29 September 1723, ff. 51, 54, 58.

²⁵ OA.,MS. Archd. Anon., c.156. ff. 44 and 81.

deaths are not recorded, but only Leonora Maria, Jr. survived to accompany the Macaulays to London in late 1750 or early 1751.

Presumably the other children were also buried at Greatworth, but we have been unable to find substantiating records, and the surviving eighteenth-century monuments in St. Peter's churchyard are too effaced to be legible. Nevertheless, Charles and Caroline died some time before the couple's departure for London. Surely, despite the frequency of infant mortality, Leonora was crushed. It also must have been extraordinarily frustrating and difficult for George - a physician and midwife with the most advanced training available in his day - to endure helplessly the deaths of his children, one after the other. It is small wonder, therefore, that following the death of little Archibald, George and Leonora began to consider with increasing seriousness the possibility of a move to London. They had no doubt already weighed doing so among their options. George had enrolled as an extra-licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians on September 24, 1746. This proved a necessary first step to becoming established in London. There, the Macaulays must have hoped, their luck as parents might change.

In late 1750 or early 1751 - Leonora was pregnant again - the Macaulays left the house at Pye Corner, settled in London in Poland Street, and George became physician and man-midwife to the British Lying-In Hospital in Brownlow Street, Longacre, thus bringing to a close a brief episode in the social and medical history of Banbury. While for a short period the move to London seemed salubrious, the family tragedy that had dogged Macaulay in Banbury soon reasserted itself. Though the Macaulays' last child, Catharine, was born in London on May 1, 1751 and survived for seven years (until November, 1758), first her mother, in December, 1751, and then her sister, in 1753, preceded her in death. All three, both Leonoras and Catharine, were buried at St. James Church, Piccadilly.²⁶ No monuments survive. What more we know of them and of George's prior and subsequent story will appear in the book we are currently completing: *Man-Midwife: The Life and Times of George Macaulay, M.D. (1716-1766)*.

²⁶ City of Westminster Archives Centre, 'St. James Piccadilly, Burials, 1 May 1754-18 Jan 1762,' indexed and typed by R.W.L. Cheney (1972) and microfilm of St. James Parish Registers, vols. 4 and 21.



Sir John Soane, RA, at the age of 76, painted in 1829.
Portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence,
reproduced by kind permission of The Trustees of Sir John Soane's Museum

SIR JOHN SOANE AT AYNHOE PARK

Ptolemy Dean

Anyone driving through Aynho will not have failed to notice Aynhoe Park, that unusually prominent country house in the heart of the village. This harmonious composition was not the work of one architect, as might initially be suspected, but an accumulation of at least three. The main central 'block' of the house was the work of Edward Marshall who transformed the original Tudor house in the 1660's. Fifty or so years later, additions were made by Thomas Archer from around 1707-14. His baroque architectural tendencies can be seen in the central doorways of the stable and kitchen wings. These were positioned to enclose the north courtyard and frame the view of Marshall's original block when seen from the village street. Archer added further symmetrical wings to Marshall's block itself, considerably lengthening the south front when seen from the extensive park.

The third major player, whose work can barely be seen from the village street, was Sir John Soane. It was he who gave the house its most spectacular interior, and on whom this piece will focus.¹

Sir John Soane (1753-1837) was the son of a Goring on Thames bricklayer. Determined to succeed, he won a scholarship to travel around Italy examining classical ruins, before setting up his own practice in 1780. His early commissions were mostly domestic works carried out for clients that Soane had met on his grand tour who were now inheriting their family seats. Appointment as Surveyor to the Bank of England in 1788 increased both his workload and his reputation.

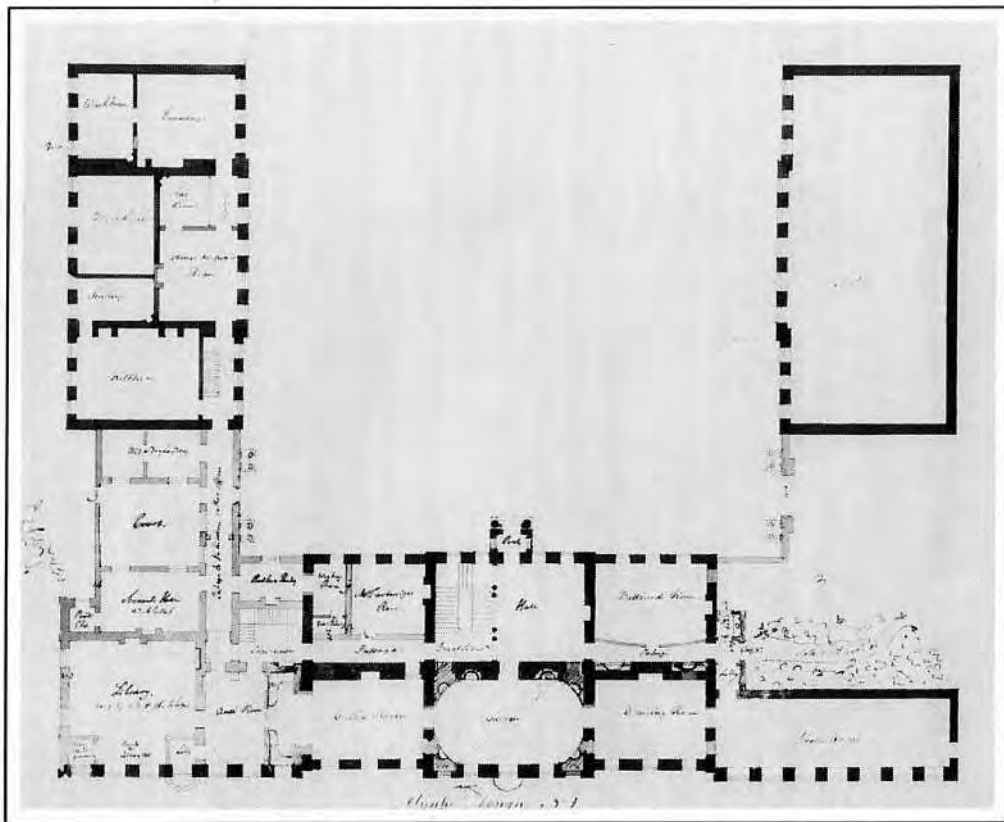
Soane was introduced by Dr Beadon, Bishop of Gloucester, to his client at Aynhoe, William Ralph Cartwright (1771-1847), who had succeeded his father a year after his birth. The meeting took place on 4th June 1795,² but it was not for another four years until Cartwright actually commissioned Soane to proceed with alterations at Aynhoe. Even then, Soane had to write 'I understand clearly that you want a plan

¹ The Marshall and Archer schemes are described in some detail in *Country Life*, July 9, 16, 1953.

² Soane Journal 3.

JOHN SOANE:
 Design plan of Aynhoe Park (November 19 1799) [ref: 6/4/24]. Clearly outlined in black is the original outline of the Marshall house with its Archer wings and outbuildings. Soane's interventions in light grey show the symmetrical flanking arches to the north courtyard, and the considerable reworking of the fabric on the west side. The great enfilade is also already in place. Soane's freehand overworking of the plan shows how his thoughts were flowing to improve it further.

Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of Sir John Soane's Museum.



Plan of the Hall Floor with the proposed Alterations & Improvements.

from me. I am not much accustomed to making plans to be executed unless under my own direction ... because in my judgement it is impossible to have that justice done to them, which the interest of the Employer as well as that of the Artist requires...'. Soane's letter, preserved with the Cartwright papers in the Northamptonshire Record Office,³ will have a familiar tone for those of us in architectural practice today.

There are further illuminating records amongst the Cartwright papers, including a letter from Humphrey Repton (dated 11th February 1798) about the possible re-landscaping of the park.⁴ Also preserved are the estate muniments, including the Ledger, which records the cost of the work carried out from 1800 to 1805. Soane's own documents, including numerous plans and drawings, are preserved in Soane's former house, and now Museum, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, Holborn.

Various grand architectural solutions were proposed at first, but clearly these elaborate (and expensive) schemes to replace Archer's additions were abandoned in favour of a remodelling of the existing house to provide a new Library, bedrooms and additional domestic accommodation. The brilliance of Soane's scheme therefore lies in the way that he was able to transform an *existing* building, almost entirely within the proportions of the structure that he had inherited. It is this skill in firstly understanding the potential of the existing, and secondly being able to manipulate and overcome the constraints to realise this potential, which is the hallmark of Soane's genius and what makes the achievement at Aynhoe Park all the more spectacular.

Soane's brief was to provide a direct covered link between the main house and Archer's detached kitchen block north west of it, which his client (understandably) wanted to retain. At the same time, Soane was clearly aware of the need not to disrupt the strong symmetry of the north courtyard, so clearly defined in the view from the village street. This meant that any 'infill treatment' between the main house and the detached kitchen block to the NW would have to be 'mirrored' in some way in the similar space between the main house and Archer's detached stable block directly opposite to the NE. The solution was inspired. An arch was constructed between the stable block and the house, allowing continued open access to the parish church and beyond. Opposite, an

³ Northamptonshire Record Office ref. C(A)5147.

⁴ Northamptonshire Record Office ref. C(A)5411.



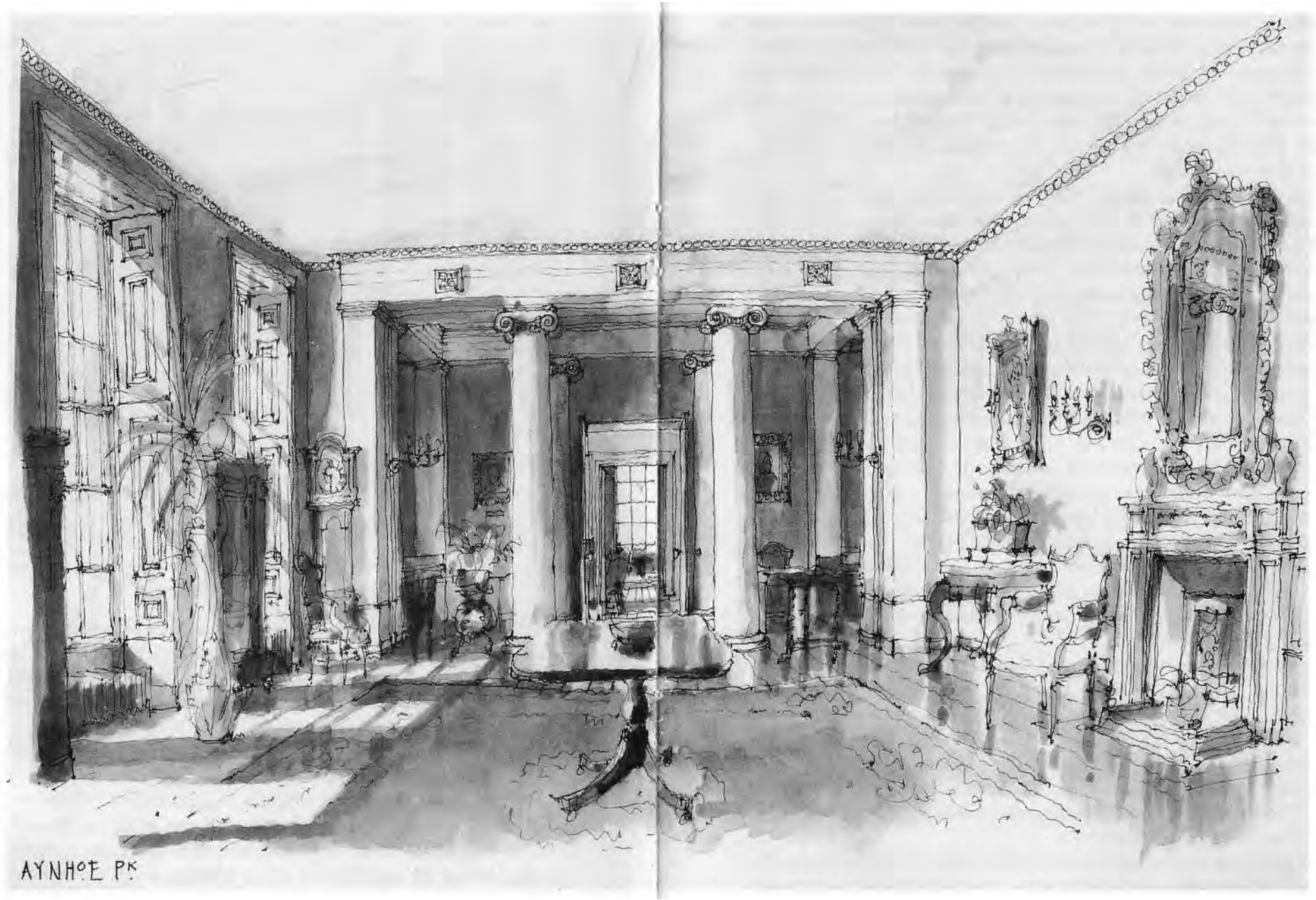
The South Front.



Sir John Soane's archway.

identical arch was constructed between the kitchen and main house, but this was glazed in, concealing the extra domestic accommodation behind and providing the covered link necessary. That the great window formed in the west arch, with its delicate glazing bars, served only a housekeeper's room was just too bad.

Soane had to overcome similar problems on the south facade. In order to provide the additional Library and bedrooms, Archer's single storey west wing needed to be raised in height. But again this could not be done satisfactorily unless Archer's corresponding east wing, the single storey Orangery, was also raised in height. And then there was a problem of height. Raising the parapet level of the flanking wings would erode the dominance of Marshall's central block and destroy the proportion of the whole facade. We can see Soane's dilemma from his surviving survey



AYNHOE PK

The Eating Room: on Soane's plan on page 228 this is the room to the left of the central Saloon. looking away from it through the Ante Room to the Library.

drawing of the house, which shows us its appearance before he carried out his alterations. His solution was to insert the additional row of first floor windows in place of Archer's deep cornice, balustrading and pediments. The height of the wings was consequently raised by the equivalent of only two quoin stones on the Marshall block. Marshall's block itself was given large pediments on north and south elevations, giving it more emphasis.

With such difficulties on the north and south fronts, Soane's new east and west ends offered an architectural freedom which he then fully exploited. The west elevation is remarkable in that due to its narrow width, it could only consist of two 'bays'. A lesser architect might have left the resulting central pilaster solid - an architectural solecism of the worst kind, but Soane split it to form a central recess, or mini bay, thereby resolving a tricky problem with characteristic originality.

However, Soane's greatest enjoyment at Aynhoe Park is found inside. The potential offered by the great length of the south front was seized for its full architectural effect. All the interconnecting doors between the various rooms from the Orangery at the east end, to his new Library at the west end, were repositioned centrally to form an 'enfilade' (or unbroken clear view) down the length of the house. And because he took trouble over the position of his west windows, this enfilade extends visually out of the house and into the park beyond. The effect when looking down this with light streaming through over twenty south facing windows, is magnificent. Soane must have had a truly inspired sense of spacial understanding to have been able to visualise this from his small office in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

To avoid monotony, every room on the south front was treated differently. The finest of these rooms, the Saloon (now the Drawing Room), is in the centre of Marshall's original block, and was remodelled with apsed ends, niches, blind arches, and the most delicate umbrella vault ceiling. The Dining Room was given a coved serving bay at its west end, screened by pairs of ionic columns, while west of this, the Ante Room received a vaulted ceiling whose arches follow the radius of the pediments of the doorways.

The geometry of the new Library at the west end was determined by the need to retain the external door at the centre of Archer's former west wing. To avoid the crudeness of an outside door directly disrupting his



The Library: the shelves to the left of the window hide the lobby.

Library. Soane was forced to provide it with a small lobby, which is served by a door from the Ante Room. But the strong axis running east-west down the enfilade and a north-south symmetry suggested by the Ante Room vault meant that these symmetries had to be honoured with

the insertion of three identical 'blind doors' to match in the three remaining corners of the room. The same rigour to maintain symmetries had also to be maintained in the Library, where the garden door lobby in the south east of the room is matched by an equivalent lobby in the south west. But this lobby did not need to hide a door. Instead there is a 'secret' enclosure behind the bookshelves which accommodates the house safe (which, alas, is now empty).

Soane was at work along the north side of the house also. Archer's handsome oak staircase was relocated east of its original position in the main entrance hall.⁵ Soane's elaborate scheme for rehousing the stair in an elaborate coved space was much pared own,⁶ but his Ionic columns and gently coved ceiling survive. At the west end of the house, Soane was able to insert a new staircase of his own. With its simple stone tread profile and iron balustrade detail, it is staggeringly spare and modern in its simplicity, and a date of 1930 suggests itself more than the actual construction date of 1804. Above it, Soane was able to cut back the roofs in order to insert a characteristic roof lantern, providing extra daylight to the space. But this was not all, for again, subtlety prevails with thin strips of orange glass providing a warmth and interest to the extra light.

Linking the two stairs to the entrance hall are passageways. But again, rather than leaving these as dull banal corridors, Soane inserted thin pilasters, arches and a sequence of 'mini-vaults', that give these spaces a sense of increased perspective and height. Soane was able to transform the entrance hall itself, now that it was liberated of the Archer stair. Archer's original columns were reset further back and replicated to enclose the heart of the newly reordered room. A new and polite cornice of very shallow modillions was inserted to define the space. At the same time, a new front door porch was added. Again a much pared down version of the original semi-circular portico originally proposed,⁷ it can be seen in a

⁵ Soane's earliest plans [Soane Museum refs: 6/4/16, 22, 23, 24 etc.] indicate that Archer's stair was originally located in the west section of the present entrance hall, screened by two pairs of columns.

⁶ It is interesting to note that the watercolour of the space as originally proposed, painted by Joseph Gandy and preserved in the Soane Museum, appears to show Archer's re-used oak balusters, suggesting that it was always intended that these should be retained.

⁷ Soane drawing [Soane Museum ref: 6/4/17, 19].



The Archer Staircase relocated in a Soane setting.

sketch made of the house in 1834.⁸ Soane's porch has subsequently been replaced by one designed to reflect more the styles of Marshall and Archer. Soane's final act in the entrance hall was the positioning of the fireplace directly opposite the front door, to greet visitors as they arrived.⁹ The present onyx chimneypiece was installed more recently.

Upstairs on the first floor, Soane's hand continues to be very much in evidence. Despite the limited height of the existing building, we find the bedroom over the entrance hall has a domed ceiling with apsed ends, while the ceiling of the spine corridor is formed of a sequence of barrel vaults. The best bedrooms are those that Soane provided in the new first floor of the Archer west wing, over the Ante Room and Library. Here columns and vaults are used to raise the ceiling where it could be incorporated under the pitch of the roof and lowered at the edges under the parapet gutter.

Throughout the house, Soane's attention to detail can be seen in chimneypieces and joinery. His familiar ball mould cornice and Greek key patterning can be found in the Eating Room. The house is all the more remarkable as, unlike so many Soane works, little has been done to destroy it. The only serious loss has been the Plunge Pool, a remarkable creation which was similar to that which still survives at Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire.¹⁰ The Aynhoe pool represented the growing interest in improved ablutions. Although this is now underneath the tiles of the modern house kitchen, the four cigar shaped columns that defined the enclosure, and the vaulted ceiling above, can still be seen.

Conversion of the house by Mutual Households Association (now the Country Houses Association) saved the house from an uncertain future after the tragic death of the last Cartwright owner and his heir in a car accident in 1954. The house remains mostly undivided and retains much of the picturesque quality captured by 'Lili' at Aynhoe in the 1830's.¹¹

Note. Unless otherwise stated, all illustrations are from original colour washes and sketches by Ptolemy Dean, and are reproduced by his kind permission. A colour print of the Eating Room illustration is included in *Soane Revisited*, The Soane Gallery, 1996.

⁸ *Lili at Aynhoe*, Elizabeth Cartwright Hignett (1989), p. 22.

⁹ *ibid*, p. 31. Lili's sketch shows an unusual iron fire grate with full height grillage above. Another is in the Ante Room (p. 41). These may date from Soane's time.

¹⁰ Soane worked at Wimpole from 1791 onwards for the 3rd Earl of Hardwicke.

¹¹ *ibid* (see footnote 8).

AYNHO ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SURVEY

David Hall

A fieldwork survey of Aynho was made in 1994 and the findings are summarised below, along with some historical notes.

Fieldwork evidence

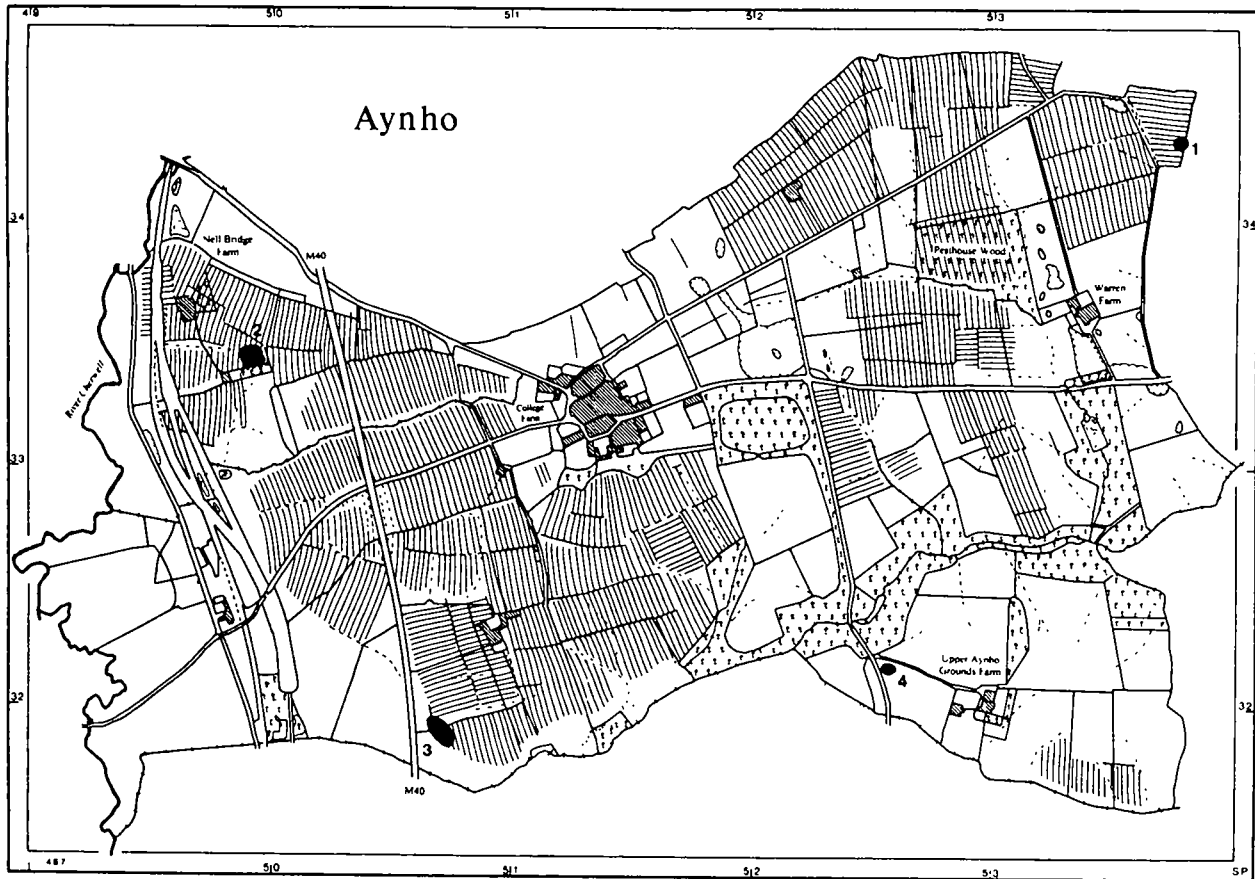
The greater part of the parish lies on limestone and the lower ground on the west, by the River Cherwell, is Jurassic Clay. Around the Warren the land is sandy, and ironstone outcrops west of Upper Aynho Grounds and west of the village.

Small numbers of prehistoric flints are known from Aynho, but the main site [4] lies west of Upper Aynho Grounds at SP 5620 3216, surviving only as a scatter of flints of Neolithic date (c.3000 BC). Among the finds were blades, scrapers and two pieces of polished flint axe.

Three Roman sites were located, two of them known before and one newly discovered. *Site 1*, SP 5376 3435, east of Warren Farm, is that reported by Sir Henry Dryden in *The Antiquary* [4.78 (1881)]. Finds were made during 1872-1881, including a large complete pot two feet high, many sherds, and stone-covered cists containing skeletons. They were found at 'Spitchill in Aynho, three-quarters of a mile south-east of Rainsborough Camp, and south-east of road from Charlton to Croughton', which is the present site, being the only field in Aynho south-east of the road. The field-name agrees with that recorded in *Aynho*, p. 303. The site has been incorrectly located by the Ordnance Survey, the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments inventory [RCHM *Northants*. IV, 12 and 38 (1982)] and *Oxoniensia* [13.66 (1948)].

Site 2, SP 4990 3346, lies on a high spot near Nell Bridge Farm, and produced building stone, sherds of samian and third century AD colour-coated and Oxford Wares.

Site 3, SP 3572 3188, was partly investigated during construction of the M40 motorway and also lies on a spur. Many more sites, of prehistoric, Roman and Iron Age date, lie just to the north in King's Sutton parish, which seems to have been a regional centre for a very long time.



The only medieval village earthworks surviving at Aynho lie below College Farm on the west. Ridge and furrow, the remains of medieval strip-farming, are also poorly preserved. Very small areas lie north-west of Nell Bridge Farm, south-west between the railways, and under the trees in Pesthouse Wood.

Furlong boundaries of medieval fields, surviving as linear earthwork-banks in modern arable land, were mapped at the 1:10,560 scale. Most boundaries marked on the published map [*Aynho*, pp. 306-7] were observed, but are now getting very eroded. They were clear on the heavier ground of the west, and poor in the east on the sandy limestone, even though the east was ploughed longer before enclosure. The plan shows the information obtained from fieldwork.

Historical evidence

Aynho manorial history is described by the county historians [Bridges i. 134-48 (1791), and Baker i. 543-59 (1822)], and in more detail in Nicholas Cooper's *Aynho* [1984]. Descriptions of open fields are given with maps of the land-use at different times in *Aynho* [pp.46-55, 100-07], with a plan of close and furlong outlines and their names [pp. 303-307]. In references statements below are taken from these sources.

The open-field furlongs were cultivated in a two-course rotation in 1521, called West Field and Cotman Field [NRO C(A) 441]. Three fields had been formed by 1619 (West, Lower and Nether) when one of them amounting to 700 acres was enclosed [NRO C(A) 335; *Aynho* p.100]. There was then a two-tilth cultivation until 1639, when a three-field tilth was reintroduced. This continued until 1763, when a four-course arrangement was created and used until 1792.

Aynho has a fieldbook (or survey) of 1616, which describes all the open-field strips (lands) before enclosure of the West Field in 1620. An account book made by the fieldsmen during 1733-91 provides details of field management [NRO Aynho 21P/107].

Opposite: Aynho open-fields and furlongs surveyed in 1994. There would have been about four times the number of strips drawn. The thick lines are existing field boundaries. Furlong boundaries in the south-east, probably never prominent on the limestone, have now been ploughed away. The map border has a kilometre grid.

The demesne was enclosed in 1561 and the West Field in 1620. The remainder was enclosed by Parliamentary Act in 1792, fully detailed in *Aynho* [pp. 177-92; see also NRO Map 2816 (1793); Award, Enclosure Enrolment Vol. I, p. 439].

The complete open-field system could be reconstructed by use of RAF vertical photographs taken in 1946-7, and furlong names worked out by analysis of the 1616 field book.

Abbreviations and References

NRO: Northamptonshire Record Office, Wootton Hall, Northampton.

Bridges, J., *The History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire* (ed. P. Whalley), Oxford 1791.

Baker, G., *The History and Antiquities of the County of Northampton*, London 1822.

Aynho: Nicholas Cooper, *Aynho: a Northamptonshire Village*, Banbury Historical Society **20**, 1984 - copies still available from the Society.

I am grateful to all the farmers of Aynho for willingly allowing access to their land: G. Belcher, T.E. Boswell, C.A.K. Fletcher, A.P. McLaren, D.J. Oakley and Dr P. Stevens. Paul Martin accompanied me on the fields bringing his great expertise for discovering prehistoric material.

I should much appreciate any information identifying references in *Aynho* with the document numbers of the Cartwright Collection at the Northamptonshire Record Office, especially the 1616 field book.

Lecture Reports

Brian Little

Thursday 14th November 1996.

The History of the Thames Navigation - D.G. Wilson.

A lecture which began with a hint of Roman ships near Guys Hospital ended with a whiff of nostalgia surrounding restored narrow boats.

Between these two extremes was a veritable *pot pourri* of weirs, locks and cargoes. One theme pursued the varying obstructions and controls on a river which can rightly be regarded as Britain's biggest drain. Some weirs belonged to the category of the picturesque. Notable amongst these was that at Radcott where in 1811 a cottage added to landscape quality.

Much earlier, however, there were thirteenth and fourteenth century complaints about fish weirs which blocked navigation. Perhaps this explains why those who tried to reach London by water were advised to make their wills first.

The river became a very busy thoroughfare in the eighteenth century when something like 10,000 boats were known to have passed Windsor. These carried a multiplicity of cargoes including timber from Windsor Forest and tiles for Windsor Castle. Malted barley originated in the fields of Oxfordshire and Berkshire. All in all much of the traffic was because of the need to feed Londoners. The barges at the heart of this movement ranged in shape over some two centuries especially and put in to the growing number of busy wharves. Facilitating this trade was a generation of new locks which evolved out of the process of towpath and lock purchase by Thames Commissioners under the inspiration of a 1790 Act,

Our speaker's closing shot would have warmed the heart of youngsters a few years ago - no less than the Blue Peter Special with that canine symbol of the programme. Goldie.

Thursday 12th December 1996.

Anglo Saxon Art - Joan Clarke.

How dark were the Dark Ages? This used to be a very popular examination question. If your answer had been put together after a Joan Clarke lecture, then the response would have recognised some lightening of the gloom. The key to this was art forms both round and square and usually quite tiny.

Shapes were intricate, sometimes lace-like and commonly included animals with heads thrust backwards or forwards, occasionally with long projected tongues.

The style of this art could be classical or derived from the animal kingdom. Patterns were repetitive but evolving and finds well preserved by river gravels, both in the Cassington-Yarnton corridor and near Abingdon, notably Sutton Courtenay. At the former location there has been a rich variety of discoveries including brooches and beads.

Kent and parts of East Anglia have matched the Thames terraces in the wealth of finds. If there is one overall impression, it has got to be the craftsman's restless urge to cover every space with design characteristics.

As Britain gradually moved out of the era dominated by Angles, Jutes and Saxons or their successors, so objects of art and design became more varied and less strictly part of a tradition for associating burials with possessions.

With so much to admire in the Ashmolean's collection it was hard to justify too bad a Press for the Saxons. True there was no real redemption before Alfred but at least Bede was more venerable than venomous!

Thursday 9th January 1997.

The Deserted Villages of Ladbroke and Wormleighton - Linda Doyle.

Despite the cold snap some 32 members were drawn by the prospect of discovering the story behind some deserted settlements in Warwickshire.

Spurred on by her job in agriculture and encouraged by research finds at Warwick County Record Office, Linda Doyle explored the intricacies of family relationships and traced the sequence of land use changes.

Her evening with us began with that vast glacial water surface Lake Harrison which left only higher tops exposed and suitably covered with light soils. Heavier and lower land awaited the plough.

Roman impact was clear with a hoard indicative of villa presence somewhere above Ladbroke. There was then continuity into Saxon times as burials and pottery of the Burton Dassett area testify.

By the fourteenth century land ownership had been very much influenced by a family power struggle for lordship. This also threatened change yet there appears to have been some more traditional elements notably in the shape and size of wooded areas.

Leading up to this battle for ascendancy there had been at least two centuries of demographic development. Population grew, markets sprang up but Crusaders brought disease.

Cultivation levels failed to keep pace with the growth in numbers. Structurally villages became poor, as evidenced by the very basic nature of the pottery finds.

The intrusion of the Black Death into this equation must have been devastating. By 1540 some parishes only had four persons for tax purposes and Leland was left to discover open country but little else.

There were indeed more sheep than men but on to this impoverished stage there stepped a Catesby who took over Ladbroke Manor in 1373, along with large areas in Wormleighton. How appropriate therefore that the good folks of Ladbroke in the 1990's celebrate November 5th with a bonfire in a Catesby Field.

Note. An article by Linda Doyle on the deserted village of Chapel Ascote will appear in a subsequent issue of *C&CH*. Meanwhile her three-part *Local History around Ladbroke* (*Medieval Ladbroke*; *The Palmer Estates*; and *Ascote - story of a deserted village*), are available from her at Chapel Ascote Cottage, Ladbroke, Southam, Warw. CV33 0DB, at £1.50 + 25p p&p each.

Thursday 13th February 1997.

Edward Stone: The Aspirin Man of Drayton - The Rev. Ralph Mann.

This was a most entertaining talk, light-hearted yet full of history. Starting from a position of disadvantage in that nothing had been published, Ralph Mann developed a well researched discourse which traced the life of Stone from Lacey Green to Chipping Norton. In between, there were substantial episodes in Oxford and at Drayton near Banbury.

Edward Stone was a man from the Bledlow Ridge part of the Chilterns landscape - in his day mercifully untouched by ribbon development. From this yeoman start, Stone aspired to be a 'gent.' - courtesy of Owlswick Manor - and a fellow at Oxford through his association with Wadham College. This particular higher education route gave him a Whig bias but also dragged him into contact with homosexual activity. Thankfully he survived this and the trials of having to give a Wadham sermon.

It was during university days that Stone sharpened his interests in Astronomy and Botany. Might an intimate knowledge of the Botanical Gardens and their plants have been the route to understanding the properties of the willow?

Ordination by the Bishop of Lincoln was followed by curacies at Charlton-on-Otmoor and Saunderton. From these posts he progressed to Drayton in the Banbury area, which came his way because of tutoring the son of the Copes of Hanwell. Sadly, or was it fortunately, the damp unhealthy nature of the building encouraged him to look towards Chipping Norton. By this time ague had set in and so there was every encouragement to seek a cure for fevers. He looked for the answer in the bark of the willow and moreover did so on some land which had been planted with the trees in the 1730's.

Edward Stone's death came suddenly but not before he had discovered that the bark would yield a medicinal powder. Few people taking aspirin today will know of its eighteenth century origins. If only such a ready cure could be found for our venue's fanlight, still flapping in the breeze after a mere 33 years of existence of the lecture theatre!

Thursday 13th March 1997.

Stowe Gardens - Philip Cash.

Stowe School opened in 1923, but well before then the sun had set on the gardens, which were eighteenth century by concept and nineteenth century in completion.

Philip's tour of Cobham's creation was a walk via slides which captured the vistas whilst it relayed the subtleties of contrasting temples.

Today the five gardens which make up the total landscape are just as much an attraction as they must have been to Victoria and Albert. At least the visitors of 1997 will not face the prospect of Covent Garden choirs letting rip from the trees, if ever they did in a cold January of the last century.

The National Trust gathered up the Gardens in 1989, though it took a millionaire's offer to launch a restoration programme. Supported for a while by Government trainees, the Trust spread its money across a broad front of improvement. Though not all human figures have every faculty and one has even endured a visitation by masonry bees, nevertheless there are now some fine statues readily recognisable as Greek heroes.

Perhaps the grounds with their structures were always a better bet than a house in which Congreve complained that the ink froze as he wrote. Their geometric design contributes hugely to the pleasure of a walk on which the visitor is always surrounded by a lot of history and impressed by a sense of achievement.

Philip's lecture, the last in the current series of meetings, will live on in the memory because Stowe is so special and his guiding takes you through all the right places.

Book Reviews

Oxfordshire: A Look at the Past, by Hilary L. Turner, Plotwood Press (5 Whinbush Avenue, Allenton, Derby DE24 9DQ), 1997. Paperback, 128pp., 30 coloured photographs, map and site finder, indexed. ISBN 0 9529920 0 0. £9.75.

From Neolithic to Nuffield man in 128 pages. As someone said on hearing of this new book, 'What, another book on Oxfordshire?' - well, it is - but it surprisingly fills a large gap on the local history shelves of Smith's and Ottaker's.

Most of the extant titles are special interest: pubs, walks in Oxfordshire, walks to pubs in Oxfordshire, the W.I's memory lane books, compilations of photographs, dovecots, windmills, schools and the like. Only one comes to mind that has an overview of the county's history and that is John Steane's *Oxfordshire*, which is organised in themes: transport, trades, economy, architecture etc.

Hilary Turner's book is written specifically for the interested resident or visitor and is arranged into ten well recognised periods of history. Each period encompasses the important buildings and sites in Oxfordshire, fitting them into an historical context and the changing landscape. She focuses particularly on places that can be visited, hence the useful map and site finder at the back. Dr Turner takes her reader through historic Oxfordshire at a cracking pace. The book does reflect well that Oxfordshire since Saxon times has been a buffer 'state' between Wessex and Mercia and even more so during the English Civil War. To a certain extent it still is: making the transition between the South-East and the Midlands.

Before I was asked to review this book I had read it straight through and I thought then as I got into it that there was a faint whiff of the *Victoria County History* about it; really a mini *VCH* with flesh and a human face. Subsequently I read the blurb on the back cover and saw that Dr Turner is an historian with impeccable Oxfordshire credentials, having read history at Oxford and surprise, surprise! she had been an assistant editor on the *Victoria County History*.

This book does not aim to be an academic history. However, *Oxfordshire: A Look at the Past* is a jolly good read and I can well imagine it firing the enthusiasm of someone new to the county wanting to explore and perhaps develop a real interest in some more specific aspect of our local history. Perhaps Auntie Mabel from Australia, on her extended stay in the county, would enjoy it.

The book itself is a touch unusual: a first edition local history in paperback with coloured photographs and good quality ones too; not the usual dull grey efforts we are all used to! I have only two very minor carps: I would have liked the index to be a little more expansive; and what a pity the cover designer wasted all the white space on the 'blind' doorway - the sub-title '*A Look at the Past*' could have been so much larger - it does after all have to compete with a great many other local history titles. Nevertheless *Oxfordshire: A Look at the Past* is value for money.

N.J.A.

A History of the Railways of Oxfordshire. Part 1: The North, by Bill Simpson, Lamplight Publications (260 Colwell Drive, Witney OX8 7LW and 38 Spinney Drive, Banbury OX16 9TA), 1997. H'back, 192 pp. ISBN 1 899246 02 9. £19.95.

Bill Simpson is a Banbury resident and he has already written several interesting books on the railways of this locality. These include one (recently re-issued and reviewed in *C&CH*) on the line which formerly ran from the station in Merton Street, Banbury, to Brackley, Buckingham and Verney Junction, and thence to Bletchley. He has now produced the first of two volumes on the history of the railways of the whole county, starting with the northern half. In his preface he concedes that there have been a number of very good books on the subject and states his intention to avoid repetition but to shed some light on the industrial background of the railways and the lives of those who worked on them.

The method chosen is to divide the book into five chapters, devoted respectively to Banbury, Oxford, Bicester, Chipping Norton and 'Witney Railway, Fairford Branch'; and include in each a section entitled 'Our Working Lives' of railway workers' reminiscences; as well as separate brief accounts of individual stations. This is a somewhat arbitrary method. The old railway companies were no respecters of county boundaries, so while the author has sensibly dealt with the whole of the important short link line between Woodford and Banbury, opened in 1900 (and over which the present reviewer travelled in the last passenger train in 1964), which lies both in Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire, he has included such stations as Bloxham and Adderbury in the Chipping Norton chapter, and King's Sutton and Aynho in the Oxford chapter, rather than, as one would have expected, the Banbury one.

So Banburyshire is dealt with throughout the book and not just in the first chapter, where readers will find a necessarily compressed and only partly comprehensible account of Banbury's industrial and railway history. For a full account of the almost Balkan intricacies of the railway hostilities of the 1840's in this locality they will still have to resort to a standard work such as MacDermot's *History of the Great Western Railway*. They will however find fascinating the descriptions of the shell filling factory at Nethercote and the ironstone railways at Wroxton and other villages, especially the illustrations and reminiscences of the latter

The illustrations are in fact the chief strength of the book, and the captions are generally informative. It is however unfortunate that the book suffers from wayward syntax and poor editing and proof-reading. Verbless sentences abound. The first illustration of all allegedly shows Banbury's Great Western Station 'at its bi-centenary, about 1900'. A splendid photograph of the Royal Train leaving Banbury, watched by train-spotters in pre-anorak days and conveying Her Majesty after the consecration of Coventry Cathedral, was taken in 1962 (page 34) or 1963 (page 97) (in fact it was the former). Page 17 suggests that in 1905 holiday trains went non-stop from Manchester to Plymouth 'taking 218 minutes'. Not even Mr Branson's Virgin Cross Country would aspire to that. The train shown on page 160 (the 'Ports to Ports Express' which until 1939 ran on the single line from Cheltenham to Banbury on its daily journey from Swansea to Newcastle) is not in fact 'entering Kingham' but using the line specifically constructed in 1906 to avoid Kingham.

One could go on, perhaps unfairly, because Mr Simpson's thoughtfulness in recording such railway stalwarts as Fred Lynes (formerly signalman at King's Sutton and many other boxes, and still very much alive at Adderbury, even if the boxes have all gone) and Bert Lane (stationmaster of Hook Norton, Bloxham and Adderbury all at once in the 1940's, but sadly now deceased) make his publication well worth while. The two pictures on page 29 of Dennis Hickman, as a bow-tied young man with two colleagues at Banbury marshalling yard

(where he eventually became foreman) in one, and as a mature but sole occupant of his goods guards van as it is hauled slowly through Adderbury station in the other, sum up not only a working life but an age.

Alan Donaldson

St Mary's Church Banbury: A Historical Guide, by Richard Wiggins, URC Minister at St Mary's. Presumably published by the Church, 1997, but no publisher, date or ISBN given. 16 pages (self-covered), colour illustrated throughout. £2.00 (available at St Mary's Church and at Banbury Museum).

Anyone who has been into the enquiry office at Marylebone Railway Station in London will have seen a poster advertising day tickets to Banbury. Two people with their rucksacks are shown looking up at the tower and dome of St Mary's Church. From this spring if such visitors take the plunge and go inside they will discover a most attractive and authoritative guide compiled by Richard Wiggins, who is United Reform Church Minister.

The booklet opens with a welcome from David Ineson, the Vicar, as well as some brief notes on the history of the town. A sepia picture of the pre-1791 building symbolises the Christian presence in Banbury, the diversity of which is then outlined.

By far the largest section is taken up by an architectural description and some points about interesting survivals such as the organ, bells and church plate. Special attention is reserved for Victorian change and modifications.

Throughout the guide, history is viewed as an evolving process. Post-1900 contributions culminate in the theme of restoration and lead the reader on into the Millenium with its prospects for 'a new life as the central church'.

Space has been found for the visitor to consider a Shakespeare link and a Gulliver connection, ahead of a finale which prefers cross to cake in a twinning with cockhorse.

One feature which is sadly all too unusual in a church guide is the author's meticulous provision of notes or references to his sources, including, gratifyingly, relevant books and articles published by our Society.

Richard Wiggins and the designers/printers are to be congratulated on a high quality product which is beautifully illustrated. Here is a booklet every bit worth its purchase price of £2.00. I can but echo the words of David Ineson when he asserts with confidence that it will impart 'some strength to continue your earthly pilgrimage'. That must be good for St Mary's and even better for Banbury tourism.

Brian Little

Note. A version of this book review first appeared in the *Banbury Guardian*, and is reprinted here by kind permission.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT, 1996

Your Committee have pleasure in submitting the 39th Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, for the year 1996.

The Officers and Committee have remained unchanged except for the retirement of Dr John Rivers, former Chairman and subsequently lecture programme organiser for many years. We are most grateful to him for his dedicated work, and are glad still to see him regularly at meetings. Nick Allen is now responsible for future speakers and meetings.

Membership of the Society has again risen and now stands at 280 (238 in 1994), most as records members. Attendance at meetings and new membership continues to benefit from the publicity efforts of Joan Bowes, who has distributed posters (fresh for each meeting) for display in a number of key places.

The year's meetings had been arranged by Dr John Rivers, with the accustomed entertaining variety. Reports, prepared by Brian Little, have appeared in *Cake & Cockhorse*.

Again there were effectively two village meetings. The first was held at Claydon, where we viewed the fascinating by-gones in the Granary Museum, followed by refreshments at Claydon House. The second was at Middleton Cheney, with a talk on the Pre-Raphaelite windows there. In June we visited Baddesley Clinton, north of Warwick, a medieval manor house now owned by the National Trust. We are grateful to Fiona Thompson for her initiative and efficient arrangements.

For the A.G.M. Mrs Schilizzi invited us to Chacombe Priory. On a wonderful hot summer's day, we had a 'first' in holding the meeting in deckchairs in the garden, followed by tours of the house with its fascinating contents.

At the start of September we again held a reception at Banbury Museum to which members of local historical societies, as well as our own, were invited. This had proved very popular in 1995, and no less so in 1996. We are very grateful to Simon Townsend and his staff for allowing us the use of the Museum and coping so willingly with all that the reception involved.

Problems with production delayed the 'Summer' issue of *Cake & Cockhorse* so much that it was decided to have a 'double' issue in the Autumn, following on the Spring issue. These two provided the usual wide variety of topics, with contributions from John Cheney, Maurice Cole, Jeremy Gibson, David Hall, A.B. Hawkins, the late Annie Jarvis, Ron Knight, Brian Little, Gary Marshall, Walter C. McCanna, Jean-Claude Peissel, and John Rivers.

Although Alan Rosevear's *Turnpike Roads to Banbury* and Ross Gilkes' *Act Book of the Peculiar Court of Banbury and Cropredy 1625-1638* are both fully edited, it proved impossible to put them into production during 1996, but this is now in hand and it is hoped to publish both during 1997.

No grants from the Brinkworth Fund were made during the year, but we continue to solicit applications for help from suitable educational bodies.

In the accounts, the rise in membership is reflected in the increased subscription income. For various reasons the Society was unable to take advantage of commercial support in despatch of the journal, which shows in the decrease in donations and increase in distribution costs, despite only two issues. This is also reflected in the Balance Sheet, where the sum due from debtors must be set against the high level of creditors, due to an accounting mistake by another body. The reduced cost of the journal is because only two journals were issued in the year, although the second was a 'bumper' number. Our membership form was reprinted in 1995, but there was no such extraordinary expenditure in 1996, so administrative expenses have been dramatically reduced. The Brinkworth Fund accumulation reflects the failure of local educational and other authorities to take advantage of modest grant aid. With two volumes in active preparation (one already in 1997 incurring substantial outlay) there are certain to be heavy demands on the publications reserve during the current year, quite apart from a return to the normal three issues of the journal and increased administrative out-goings.

Banbury Historical Society

Revenue Account for the Year ended 31st December 1996

	1996	1995		
INCOME				
Subscriptions	2638	2112		
Less (Transfer to Publications Account)	<u>(596)</u>	<u>(437)</u>	1675	
Income Tax Refund on Covenants	166	169		
Building Society/Bank Interest	461	518		
Donations - Meetings	37	51		
Postage	—	<u>324</u>	375	
Expenses not claimed	<u>20</u>	<u>—</u>		
	2726	2737		
EXPENDITURE				
Cake & Cockhorse -				
Printing	860	1182		
Postage and envelopes	<u>389</u>	<u>189</u>		
	1249	1371		
Less (sales)	<u>(100)</u>	<u>(100)</u>		
	1149	1271		
Lecture, Meeting, Secretarial and				
Administrative Expenses	17	487		
Hire of Hall and Speakers' Expenses	228	223		
Reception	168	173		
Subscriptions/Donations	37	52		
Sundries Bank Charges	12	16		
Publicity	52	76		
General	<u>68</u>	<u>—</u>		
	1731	2298		
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR				
Transferred to Accumulated Fund	£ 995	£ 439		

Publications Account for the Year ended 31st December 1996

INCOME				
Proportion of Subscriptions	596	437		
Sales of Publications	849	941		
Less (Share of Cake & Cockhorse)	<u>(100)</u>	<u>(100)</u>	841	
	1345	1278		
EXPENDITURE				
Records Volume				
Printing	—	1500		
Postage	—	<u>229</u>		
		1729		
Other books	<u>(163)</u>	<u>48</u>		
	(163)	(1777)		
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR				
Transferred to (from) Publications Reserve	£ 1,182	£ (499)		

Brinkworth Fund Account for the Year ended 31st December 1996

	1996		1995
INCOME			
Interest received	128		165
EXPENDITURE			
Prizes/Grants	—		170
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR			
Transferred to (from) Brinkworth Fund	£ 128		£ (5)

Banbury Historical Society

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December 1996

	1996		1995
ACCUMULATED FUND			
As at 1st January 1996	5737		5298
Add Surplus for the Year	<u>995</u>	6732	<u>439</u>
			5737
PUBLICATIONS RESERVE			
As at 1st January 1996	3031		3530
Add Surplus for the Year	1182		—
Less (Deficit) for the Year	<u>—</u>	4213	<u>(499)</u>
			3031
BRINKWORTH FUND			
As at 1st January 1996	3029		3034
Add Surplus for the Year	128		—
Less (Deficit) for the Year	<u>—</u>	3157	<u>(5)</u>
			3029
SUBSCRIPTIONS received in advance	238		433
CREDITORS for services and supplies	620		340
	£ 14960		£ 12570

REPRESENTED BY -

GENERAL FUNDS				
NATWEST BANK - Banbury				
Current Account	108		141	
LEEDS & HOLBECK B/SCTY - Banbury				
Charities No 1 Account	11429		9199	
PETTY CASH	<u>17</u>	11554	<u>9</u>	9349
SUNDRY DEBTORS		250		193
BRINKWORTH FUND				
LEEDS & HOLBECK B/SCTY - Banbury				
Charities No 2 Account		3156		3028
		£ 14960		£ 12570

I have examined the books and records provided to me by the Banbury Historical Society and from the information believe that the draft accounts prepared to 31 12 96 represent a true and fair reflection of the Society's financial position

B S Goodchild, ACIB, ACIS

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 a hundred issues and some 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*
- The Globe Room at the Reindeer Inn, Banbury*

Records series:

- Wigginton Constables' Books 1691-1836* (vol. 11, with Phillimore)
- Banbury Wills and Inventories 1591-1650*, 2 parts (vols 13, 14).
- Banbury Corporation Records: Tudor and Stuart* (vol 15)
- Victorian Banbury*, by Barric 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)
- Edgehill and Beyond: The People's War in the South Midlands 1642-1645*,
by Philip Tennant (vol. 23, with Alan Sutton).
- Oxfordshire and North Berkshire Protestation Returns and Tax Assessments 1641-1642* (vol 24)
- Adderbury: A Thousand Years of History*, by Nicholas Allen (vol 25, with Phillimore).

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

In preparation

- Turnpike Roads to Banbury*, by Alan Rosevear
- Act Book of the Peculiar Court of Banbury and Cropredy 1625-38*, ed R.K. Gilkes
- Selections from the *Diaries of William Cotton Risley, Vicar of Deddington 1836-1848*

The Society is always interested to receive suggestions of records suitable for publication, backed by offers of help with transcription, editing and indexing.

Meetings are held during the autumn and winter, normally at 7.30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, at the North Oxfordshire College, Broughton Road, Banbury. Talks are given by invited lecturers on general and local historical, archaeological and architectural subjects. Excursions are arranged in the spring and summer, and the A.G.M. is usually held at a local country house.

Membership of the Society is open to all, no proposer being needed. The annual subscription is **£10.00** including any records volumes published, or **£7.50** if these are not required; overseas membership, **£12.00**.

