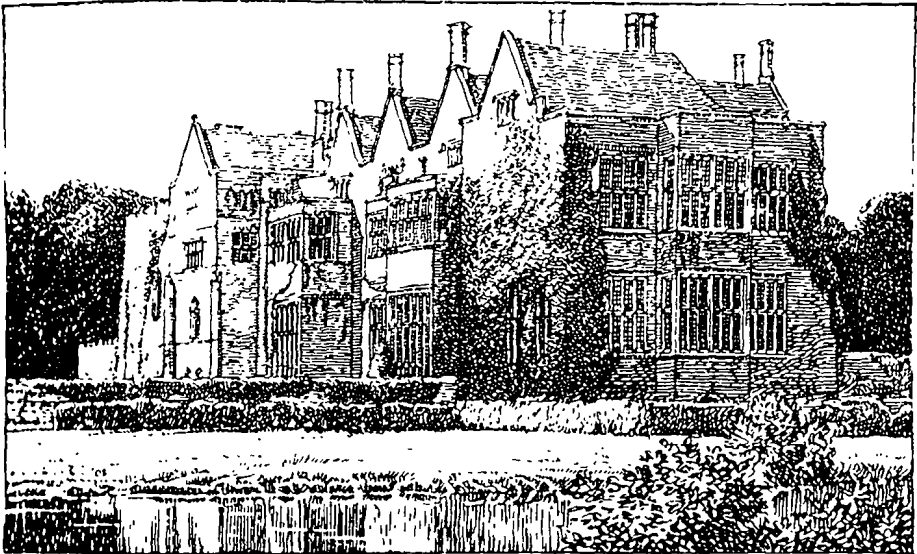


# CAKE AND COCKHORSE



## BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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# BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

# *Cake and Cockhorse*

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

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The Annual General Meeting at Aynhoe Park on Saturday 19th July was held on a traditionally beautiful B.H.S. A.G.M. summer's day, with over forty members present. Nick Allen (former administrator at Aynhoe Park) knowledgeably conducted members around the public rooms, and later it was hard to round up those who were happily wandering around the grounds and discovering the ice-house.

Now all thoughts are concentrated on our (slightly premature) fortieth anniversary celebration, when Irene Lizzie Jones, Director of 'Prince Rupert HYS Vangarde [17th century history alive]' will present her '17th century cameo', *Unwilling Soldier* (a poor woman follows the civil war armies trying to find her husband). This is to be held on the evening of Thursday 11th September, and as it is at Broughton Castle, by kind invitation our President and Lady Saye and Sele, we have explained to Lizzie that a 'parliamentary' bias would be tactful!

Your invitation is enclosed and it essential to signify if you (and your spouse/partner/friend) want to attend, as we must know numbers beforehand. We will start with wine and soft drinks, so a 'retiring collection' will be taken to contribute towards the considerable cost of this event.

Whilst discussing her entertaining article on Broughton Castle's contribution to film history over recent decades, Lady Saye and Sele remarked that the most enjoyable occasions had been the two Leo McKern presentations arranged by John Roberts for our Society some twenty years ago. We are sure that Thursday 11th September will equal them.

By the way, this issue marks the end of our thirteenth volume. At approaching a hundred pages a year, members can see they get good value.

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**Cover:** Broughton Castle, the 'star' of Lady Saye and Sele's article, from Frederick Griggs' illustration in *Highways and Byways in Oxford and the Cotswolds*, by Herbert Evans, 1908.

## JOSEPH HAWKESWORTH: A Parliamentary Soldier

*Nicholas Allen*

It came about whilst researching military activities in Adderbury during the English Civil Wars for the chapter 'Adderbury at War' in the book *Adderbury: A Thousand Years of History* that I came across a well documented operation in March 1644. This was a raid on Adderbury House to capture royalist officers of the Prince of Wales' regiment. It was mounted and led by two parliamentary cavalry officers and a party of eighty horse based at Warwick Castle. The two officers concerned were a Major Abraham Pont and a Captain Joseph Hawkesworth. Hawkesworth to my military mind seemed the more interesting of the two leading participants, his actions during the aftermath of the raid showed him to be a quick thinking and gallant officer and seemed to be worth researching in more detail.

The recorded part of this raid starts in the early hours of Sunday 3rd March 1644, when Pont and Hawkesworth with their party of horse dashed through south Warwickshire, bypassed Banbury and descended on Adderbury House about 4 a.m. The house, a large six bayed building, was home to Henry Wilmot, Lord Wilmot of Adderbury, who was second in command to Prince Rupert, commander of King Charles' cavalry. The house was, and still is, about two hundred yards to the east of the Oxford road. In those days it was surrounded by around ninety cottages and just behind the Red Lion, which was a hostelry for the traveller then as it is today. The approach to Adderbury House must have been quite hazardous as there must have been many dogs about with all those cottages.

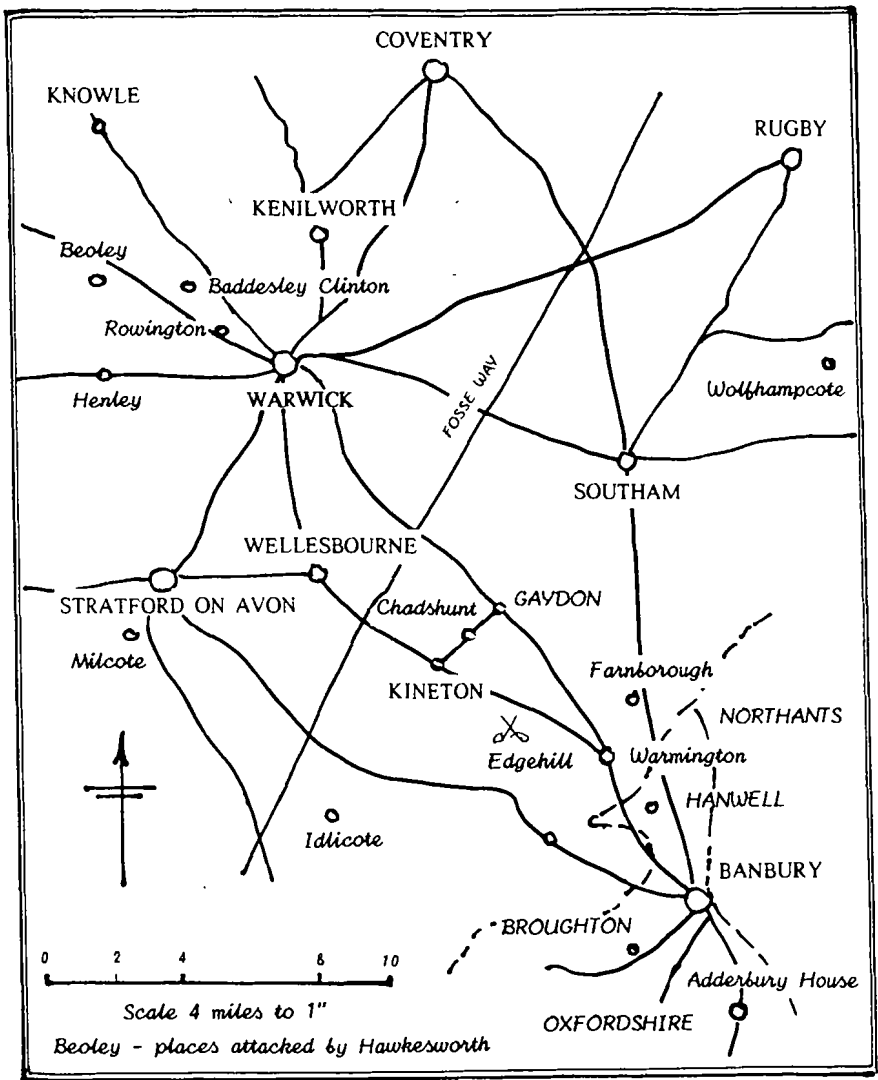
The parliamentary party nevertheless surprised the royalist cavalry officers 'before they were drest' and carted them off, presumably to be ransomed back to their families to raise funds to pay for the Parliamentary army. The two senior officers captured were Lt. Col. Sir Arnold de Lisle and a Major Jackson with five junior officers. A royalist soldier meanwhile had managed to get away unseen and rode to Banbury to warn the Royalist garrison of the castle commanded by Sir William Compton.

The royalists immediately despatched a large party to intercept the parliamentarians somewhere north of Banbury; presumably someone or something must have given away the fact that the parliamentary party came from Warwick. They did catch up with the parliamentary rearguard commanded by Hawkesworth the Banbury side of Kington. Hawkesworth and a small party had elected to hold off the Royalists so the main party could make their escape. His party put up a terrific fight, losing twelve troopers but preventing the royalists from recapturing their men. The parliamentary party were forced to retreat to the church in Chadshunt, a hamlet just north east of Kington, where they barricaded themselves in. The royalists backed-off thinking, quite sensibly, that there might well have been more parliamentary troops in the vicinity waiting to trap them, but not before firing the hamlet, but 'with a little help the fire was stayed'.

Pont got his prisoners, seven officers, thirty troopers and eighty horses (quite a bag!) to Warwick in one whole piece and Hawkesworth on his return was given instant (temporary) promotion to major (later substantiated) which incurred a quite considerable rise in pay, 39s. to 51s.: no doubt a very useful boost to his finances as he had not at all long before married a widow with four children.

It is appropriate at this juncture to consider also the unrecorded achievements of this daring operation; to put some flesh on what is a very bare bones account. A party of eighty plus parliamentary horse rode a distance of at the very least seventy miles (the return journey from Warwick to Adderbury plus diversions) much of it through hostile country - Banbury was at that stage a royalist garrison and it was ringed with many small royalist garrisons based mainly on large houses, such as Compton Wynyates, Broughton Castle, Hanwell, Aynhoe Park and Deddington.

The core of this plan must, I am sure, have been based on the premise that Adderbury House was a safe royalist billet and that the officers and men would have been fairly relaxed over a weekend, particularly on a Sunday. Also another factor that would probably have been taken into consideration was the weather; if it was a cold early March the sentries would be that much more likely to be less vigilant. Therefore it would have seemed to be a worthwhile gamble that a small well trained and fast moving party travelling cross-country on a Saturday and attacking a



HAWKESWORTH'S TERRITORY

royalist garrison in a large country house in the wee-small hours of a Sunday morning stood a very good chance of success. Pont and Hawkesworth were no doubt counting on the royalist officers having dined well at the table of a wealthy nobleman. Their gamble worked.

The raiding party on their return journey must have covered at least twelve to fifteen miles before the warned royalist force, of around a hundred horse, caught up with them. With such a well conducted operation the parliamentary force would certainly have had a small rearguard following up behind to warn them of any approaching enemy. Also as it was early March it would still have been dark when the parliamentary party cleared Banbury. The sound of a hundred fast moving horses must have carried a long way in the early morning. This would have allowed Pont ample time to agree to Hawkesworth's offer that he should take a section of troopers to hold off the royalists long enough for the main body to get away with their prisoners and horses.

Looking at the map, logic would suggest that Hawkesworth would have probably staged an ambush somewhere along the road south of Warrington. Pont more than likely would have taken his party back to Warwick along the Warwick road (now the B4100) - it would have been the shorter distance - leaving Hawkesworth to draw off the royalists along the Kineton road (B4086) as the record shows. This whole operation was immaculately executed and, when looked at from the above perspective, indicated a high order of leadership from the officers and an equally high order of training, discipline and courage from all ranks.

No doubt Pont's superiors would have considered the operation to have been a success for a variety of reasons: the gaining of seven ransomable royalist officers and sufficient valuable trained cavalry horses to mount a full troop of horse, plus the fillip to morale such an operation would have on local troops - balanced against the loss of twelve men.

Joseph Hawkesworth was almost certainly born in 1601. In 1669, the last year of life, he was living at Lubenham, a small village near Market Harborough (his wife's original home). He was buried in the church there. His tombstone is set in a chapel in the north aisle which sadly, from a researcher's point of view, had been used as the village school, so generations of small booted feet have worn the text away - so that is the end of that trail for the moment.

Before becoming a soldier he was secretary to Robert Greville, 2nd Lord Brooke, whose homes in Warwickshire were Warwick Castle and Beauchamps Court (Brooke was the premier Warwickshire peer for the parliamentary cause). Joseph's father Peter came from Yorkshire; possibly he or his wife were at some time in service with the family of Mary Copley as she too came from Yorkshire. Mary married a Fulke Greville who was a cousin to Fulke Greville, 1st Lord Brooke, and was Robert Greville 2nd Lord Brooke's mother (the 1st Lord Brooke adopted Robert who succeeded to the title on his death). The Hawkesworth family would have rated themselves as minor gentry and Joseph Hawkesworth would no doubt have gone up the social scale a notch or two as an important member of the Brooke household.

He married Alice Bolt early in 1642; she was widow of Henry Bolt, a successful businessman at Market Harborough in Leicestershire. She came with a family of four children and was a little older than her new husband. They had a daughter Mary either late 1642 or early 1643, who eventually married in 1660 a John Hanbury of Feckenham in Warwickshire. The Hanburys had a daughter Anna Maria, but both parents died leaving Joseph and Alice to bring up Anna Maria.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Brooke was described as a long-standing puritan intellectual with radical views. His wide circle of friends were leading political subversives, including John Pym and Lord Saye and Sele. He had also been appointing, for some time prior to the Civil War, his own puritan protégés to churches he had in his gift. Brooke it was who received the first Parliamentary Commission of Array on 6th June 1642: the effective start of the Civil War. With this Commission he was authorised to commission officers to raise cavalry and infantry units.

Brooke himself very rapidly set about recruiting and paying for his own regiment of foot. Subsequently he also raised a troop of cavalry. Hawkesworth as Brooke's secretary must have been very busy at this time acting as a civilian adjutant. Having by now got to know something of his character I can imagine he must have pestered Lord Brooke to give him an active service commission too.

Joseph Hawkesworth was in fact commissioned as a captain of a troop of horse of initially eighty men on 25th April 1643, by Colonel William

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<sup>1</sup> Going off at a tangent, I discovered that one of Alice's children by her first marriage had a daughter who married 'Ambrose Holbeach of Mollington' [sic].



Purefoy. The commission was addressed to 'Brother Hawkesworth' and read as follows:

*To Jos Hawkesworth Captaine. By Vertue of the Commission of his Excellence the Earl of Essex, according to the Authoritie to him given by Ordinance of the Lords and Commons in Parliament: I doe Constitute and appoint you to be Captaine of a Troope of fourscore horse in my owne Regiment, raised or to be raysed in the said countyes & Cittys or parts adjacent: to serve for the defence of the king - parliament - and kingdome - as above mentioned.*

signed *William Purefoy.*

Purefoy had by then raised a regiment of seven troops. Hawkesworth's commission was awarded shortly after his master, Lord Brooke, was killed by a sniper's bullet whilst attacking Lichfield.

His commanding officer, Colonel William Purefoy, hated with all his heart the monarchy and established church and, on his own say so, as early as 1611, when studying in Geneva, was working on a plot to destroy the monarchy. He was one of those parliamentary officers who took great delight in defacing those churches whose clergy were not wholeheartedly puritan. It is not impossible that some of this hatred may have rubbed off on to his officers. Hawkesworth was most certainly a puritan zealot. Purefoy it should also be noted was one of those who put his signature to the King's death warrant.

On 12th May, seventeen days after being commissioned, Hawkesworth led his first raid, on the mansion at Baddesley Clinton, owned by Edward Ferrers. His subaltern officers at this time were Lts. Creedy, Bovey and Hopkins. The troop 'requisitioned' from Baddesley some horses, very precious at that stage of the war, a yoke of oxen, cows, guns, gunpowder, armour and money. He also extracted from Ferrers a promise to pay the Parliamentary cause a regular sum of 'protection' money. The final bill that Ferrers presented to Parliament at the end of the war was for £320.

In military terms it is no mean feat for a man, who was a civilian one day and a cavalry officer the next, to raise a troop of cavalry and have them ready for action all within seventeen days. Hawkesworth was very much in Cromwell's mould, roughly the same age (Cromwell was born in 1599) and from a similiar social background; he also had no previous military experience. Like Cromwell, he was a natural cavalry commander.

It should be borne in mind that England had no standing army and there were very few men with military experience. Those who had this were men who had served in the many European wars in the Netherlands, Scandinavia and Flanders. These experienced men were spread very thinly over both armies. By the time Hawkesworth was commissioned England had been at war just over six months. Most able bodied men with any military experience would have already been absorbed into units formed prior to the first major battle at Edgehill in October 1642.

Hawkesworth might possibly have acquired a handful of experienced men from a unit that had suffered heavy casualties at Edgehill or from some other battle. The parliamentary army method of dealing with units that suffered heavy casualties was to disband the unit concerned and form a new one with the remnants of other units. Often these men who made up these new units were called reformados. The royalists on the other hand would absorb units reduced by heavy casualties into one of their existing units.

What of the men and equipment who made up Hawkesworth's troop of horse? The standard establishment (for both sides) was four officers; the troop commander (usually a captain), a lieutenant, a cornet (a second lieutenant), a quartermaster and sixty rank and file; the senior rank was corporal (equivalent to a sergeant of foot). Cornet and corporal of horse are ranks that still pertain in the Household Cavalry.

All ranks were armed with pistols, carbines and cavalry swords. Officers would provide their own uniforms, accoutrements and mounts, and quite often those of their men too. Mostly the men that joined a cavalry unit were socially superior to their comrades who fought on foot. They were able to afford their own mounts and equipment, as their officers did. Cavalrymen were considerably better paid than their infantry counterparts, very nearly twice as much. The most essential item of uniform was the leather buff coat that all cavalrymen wore. A top quality coat could cost as much as £10 (half the annual wage of a servant). A good quality coat was probably the most important item of uniform that a cavalry soldier could have as it could considerably reduce the force of a sword cut to the arms and shoulders.

If additional horses were needed, often the community a trooper came from would provide a mount or mounts by subscription. Sometimes the

troop commander would purchase additional mounts but more often as the war progressed and good cavalry horses were hard to come by they just requisitioned them with a promise to pay after the war, or as we shall see in Hawkesworth's case he just took/stole them whenever there was a need.

Hawkesworth's troop was rapidly recruited to full strength and records show that unlike most other troops of parliamentary cavalry he was able to maintain his established strength throughout the war. He was able to do this for two reasons: the most important was that he was able to pay his men regularly - in fact his troop had the reputation for being the best paid and the best led cavalry troop in Warwickshire; the other was that Hawkesworth was a successful officer and soldiers do like to serve under a successful officer - more so in those days if they were presented with the chance of loot after a day's fighting. A selection of operations conducted by Hawkesworth and his men is listed below:

### **1643.**

**June.** After the raid in May 1643 on Baddesley Clinton he was involved in the storming and capture of Tamworth Castle. This operation was led by Colonel Purefoy; it took them three days to force the royalist garrison to surrender on 25th June. The rest of that summer of 1643 he spent organizing the fortifications of Warwick town.

**October.** Hawkesworth led an attack on Thomas Clarke's manor of Wolfhamcote in Northamptonshire. Clarke's report said 'Upon the 24th Day of October 1643 in the nyte tyme came a party of Captaine Hawkesworths souldiers from Warwick, and brook open my stable door and plundered or took away with them five Marcs and one gelding, & imploied two of my best mares then worth £24 in service against Grafton house (near Towcester), where they were both shott & lamed. Clarke concludes his report with a longwinded grumble that Hawkesworth then made him pay to get his horses back!

**November.** A soldier, one Sergeant Nicholas Hawes and Adam Dadin (once a miller on Lord Brooke's estate), both puritan radicals, were caught preaching to a large congregation in a quarry just outside Warwick by John Yardley, the bailiff of Warwick. He hauled them up in front of the vicar of St Mary's Warwick, who had them locked up (not all parliamentarians were puritan radicals). Hawkesworth, who

was still a captain, was by then governor of Warwick Castle, which conferred much power on him. Hawes was released on Hawkesworth's orders the following day.

**December.** Hawkesworth commanded a very large force to attack Beoley House at Weston near Redditch, home of William Sheldon, a very wealthy catholic landowner, which Hawkesworth claimed was being used as a royalist garrison although the house was indefensible. Many royalist officers were captured but perhaps one of the most unpleasant events of that dreadful war, which certainly did not reflect any credit on Hawkesworth, was his treatment of the garrison - this consisted of mainly Irish troops (King Charles to his eternal shame had recruited Irish troops to fight his English subjects, something for which he was never forgiven). Hawkesworth had all 'the Irish therein [put] to the sword' and the house was burnt to the ground after it was stripped of everything worth looting. His men continued their looting into the new year, attacking Rowington, Knowle and Henley. Hawkesworth, who was a puritan zealot, was obviously anticipating the parliamentary ordinance of 24th October 1644 that no quarter was to be given to any Irish or papist born in Ireland, who were to be instantly put to death.

**1644.**

**March.** Raid on Adderbury House (already described).

**Summer.** George Raleigh, who was initially under the protection of Lord Brooke, but eventually declared himself for the King, was plundered no less than five times by different parliamentary armies. Hawkesworth in the summer of 1644 also attacked Raleigh's house and estate at Farnborough; he took much timber from his woods and sheep racks. He also made a start on dismantling Raleigh's house with the aim of using the building materials for what was the forthcoming siege of Banbury Castle. Raleigh's complaint about this attack said 'Taken away by Capt (actually Major) Hawksworth's Soldiers..... from his manor house of Farnbrow About 60 Casements with windowes.....£20.'

**Summer.** Hawkesworth's troop was initially involved in the siege of Banbury Castle. It dragged on into the late autumn and by Friday 25th October a royalist cavalry attack from the south routed the, by then, badly led parliamentary forces.

**November.** Hawkesworth was formally commissioned Serjeant-Major of Colonel Purefoy's Regiment of Horse for his part in the raid on Adderbury House the previous March. However he claimed the pay and acting rank from 1st April. His commission came from the Committee for Safety of the County of Warwick. His friend and brother officer Abraham Pont was killed shortly after just outside Pershore in Worcestershire (Pont too had been in the service of Lord Brooke, as his steward).

**December.** Hawkesworth with a force of 200 horse attacked Milcote House, Stratford-upon-Avon, which belong to the elderly Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex. Hawkesworth told the earl that he had instructions either to fire the house or pull it down. Having thoroughly looted the place he chose to burn it, making sure on the way that the fire was unquenchable.

By that winter of 1645 most of Colonel Purefoy's Regiment was on detachment in Cheshire and commanded by Major Hawkesworth under the overall command of the Cheshire commander in chief Sir William Brereton. The Warwickshire Committee of Safety was very unhappy that a Warwickshire regiment, and one of their best, was serving so far from home. Purefoy was sent up to Cheshire with a Colonel Colemore, a Committeeman. Colemore was to take over the command of the regiment. Hawkesworth and the other officers refused to accept Colemore. They did not trust him and thought, quite correctly, he had come to bring them back. The regiment preferred Hawkesworth, considering him a skilled, experienced and successful cavalry officer, whereas Colemore was an infantry officer. Colemore rapidly retired from military activity and Hawkesworth's second-in-command, now Captain Creed, took over the troop that Colemore had brought with him, all of them staying put. This is another example of how powerful a figure Hawkesworth had become in Warwickshire: to defy his commanding officer, a relieving colonel and the Committee of Safety and seemingly getting away with his actions.

On 23rd July 1646, Worcester surrendered to Parliament, marking the end of the worst fighting of the first Civil War in that part of England. After this Hawkesworth's active military career to all intents and purposes ceased. The second Civil War flared up in March 1648 and

Hawkesworth was commissioned to raise a troop of horse. There is however no record that either he or his troop were involved or even if he actually raised another troop. King Charles was beheaded on 30th January 1648/9 and the war petered out again in the March of that year.

In July 1649 Hawkesworth was ordered to slight (make unusable) Kenilworth Castle, once the home of John of Gaunt. At the beginning of the War it was owned by Charles' queen, Henrietta Maria, and held in stewardship for her by the Earl of Monmouth. A parliamentary garrison was installed soon after the battle of Edgehill. On 16th October the order to slight was modified giving him *carte-blanche* to put in execution 'what you may deem fit with all expedition'. He had the great tower and curtain wall demolished. Having done that, in 1650 he plus ten other officers from his regiment purchased the castle and estate for £2,000, when royalist property was being sold off. They had the vast mere surrounding the castle drained to create more usable land for agricultural purposes. Hawkesworth then had the gatehouse converted into a residence for himself and family, keeping 140 acres of land for himself. He described it as 'a convenient and handsome mansion'. Today the gatehouse still stands and is called Hawkesworth's Gatehouse. This type of sale was a way Parliament had of avoiding paying cash (of which they were very short) for back-pay and gratuities owing to their demobilized soldiers.

Hawkesworth in that year was also made a Colonel of Militia. This was a highly sought-after appointment that was usually reserved for someone from the local gentry. The recipient would gain both financially and socially; also he would have been able to 'sport' his regimentals at official and social occasions. In 1656 he was made governor of and M.P. for Warwick, thus completely cementing his position in society. The 3rd Lord Brooke died in 1658 and it was Colonel Hawkesworth, J.P., M.P., who carried the Brooke regimental standard at the funeral.

Then came the Restoration of 1660. Kenilworth was restored to the Crown leaving him homeless. He and several of his fellow ex-officers were later pursued for the restitution of £50,000 - allegedly money due to the Exchequer, owed by Warwickshire. Considering how utterly ruthlessly he dealt with Warwickshire's royalists during the war he seems to have survived the Restoration comparatively well. Joseph died on 17th March 1669 at Lubenham near Market Harborough in Leicestershire. Alice died some years later.

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Above: *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*. Keith Michell as Henry VIII,  
Ann Stallybrass as Jane Seymour. August 1969.

Below: *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. Anthony Andrews and Ian McKellen, 1982.





## FILMING AT BROUGHTON CASTLE

### *Mariette Saye and Sele*

*Henry VIII, Keeping Up Appearances, Lady Jane, Three Men and a Little Lady, Cromwell, Noel's House Party, The Madness of King George, 2.4 Children, The Scarlet Pimpernel, Morecambe and Wise, Jim'll Fix It, Joseph Andrews, Oxford Blues, William Tyndale, The Slipper and the Rose, Sorry, The Long Bow, and others.*

Some of that sounds like history, and, for Broughton, all of it is. It may sound like fun too - most of it is - but: will a fourteen-ton truck damage a fourteenth century bridge? Will the lights on the indoor scaffolding burn the sixteenth century ceiling or will a long microphone damage the pendants? What will the miles of thick black cable snaking through the house do to the floors or the furniture? Will the smoke from the fake Great Hall fire seep upstairs? Will Noel Edmonds's helicopter damage the lawn and what will happen to the doors when Mr. Blobby bangs them? We have to decide whether we can subject the house to all this. We have to ask ourselves if the fee helps with the maintenance or makes yet more maintenance necessary. Broughton was chosen and we, acting for it, have to decide whether to agree to their coming. We have to balance the havoc with the benefits.

We always forget how much havoc there is. The speed of the dismantling of the electric wiring is astonishing. There are ladders and lorries and swarms of people purposefully setting about taking us over: props bringing in furniture, to be perhaps a sumptuous drawing room of the seventies (for Fiona Shaw, Christopher Cazenove and Tom Selleck in *Three Men and a Little Lady*) or a fourposter and a footstool for Helen Mirren (*The Madness of King George*), swords for Ian McKellen and Antony Andrews (for their fight in *The Scarlet Pimpernel*) or Special Effects bringing in foam axes and polystyrene chandeliers, to drop on some unsuspecting person (was that for *2.4 Children* or *Mr. Blobby*?).

There is such a mixture of things to remember. Eleanor Bron's tutorial in the garden on *Much Ado About Nothing*. Ronnie Corbett, filming *Sorry* on the roof one winter's night in pyjamas and with his hair in curlers, needed a coat. Three chalked-up blackboards at one end of the Great Hall gave the dancing Diana Rigg, Eric Morecambe and Ernie

Wise the words of their song. Eric was funny all the time. Beryl Reid (*Joseph Andrews*) was funny all the time. Tony Richardson's family wandered about. I remember a Christmas tree in July, and summer visitors puzzled at the tinsel in the garden. A South Korean commercial on Harris Tweed meant that tiny pieces of white paper scattered over a kilted piper became snow, even though the leaves were fully on the trees. You learn that varnished, dyed-green sawdust can be Thames slime (Trevor Nunn's *Lady Jane*) and that, in the same film, lurchers, fed vast quantities of succulent beef in rehearsals, needed sleep before Take One. Patrick Stewart, John Wood and Helena Bonham-Carter (and, incidentally, a crew of about eighty) had to wait. You learn that the fine spray from plastic plant sprayers can be sweat, needed in *The Madness of King George*, as well as being water pistols while they wait. It was good to wait, so there could be talking to Alan Bennett. He was here to see the last day of the filming of his play - and to buy plants from our shop.

You learn the jargon: who are the sparks, the gaffers and the riggers, and you try not to mind when you see people removing most of the furniture. But really you are beginning to be infected - not just by the excitement of it all, but by the fact that you yourself are becoming part of the huge con trick that such filming seems to be. You are one of the participants, one of the players of the game. And you are using the jargon. You know that 'dead' means that the harvest supper vegetables (*Emma*) will not be needed for a subsequent scene and can therefore go into your deep freeze.

But there are some problems. Opening the doors early can mean that on arrival the crew finds a room full of young mallard. A fugitive absailing down the gatehouse walls can damage the stone with his heels. You have to choose your moment to go shopping, or you might make an unscheduled appearance in the aerial start of *Noel's House Party*. You have to ask someone's permission to move. Try taking a group of visitors round the house and avoid the dreaded word 'Cut': someone has inadvertently trodden on a squeaky floorboard or wondered, audibly, about a cup of tea. 'Quiet Please' is an instant discipline - rather like Brown Owl putting up her hand. But traffic on the Shipston Road and flights to Birmingham are less easy to silence.



Above and below: *Lady Jane*, 1985.  
Directed by Trevor Nunn, with Jill Bennett, Helena Bonham Carter, Carey Elwes, Michael Hordern, Patrick Stewart, John Wood and Sara Kestelman.





An interlude during filming the 1975 *Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show*.  
Ernie Wise, Diana Rigg, Lady Saye and Sele, and Eric Morecambe.



Sometimes, though, what may seem like a problem turns into a perk. Not only did a chippy mend the oak panelling, damaged in one energetic session, but he did an excellent job on some previous damage too. When all the armour was taken down for the filming of television's *Emma*, that was the moment to clean it (but how do you clean it quietly, when it's all piled up in the room next to the filming and will clatter when you reach for the wire wool and the WD40?).

And there are the pleasures of an occasional four course lunch in the car park marquee with the gaffers and the stars; or the unexpected bonus of hearing a chamber music concert one mid-week morning.

The bustle isn't continuous. The concentration involved in preparing a room exactly as the director wants is slow and silent work - the exact placing of the rakes in the sheaves; the 'food stylists' with their glue, sticking plums, apples and apricots into pyramid shapes (for *Emma*); a dog with a star role gnawing a bone being taken quietly aside for some preliminary training. Some of the cast will return to the make-up and costume caravans, perhaps to acquire beauty spots and wigs, while others just languish around, sleeping, sewing, reading, or sunbathing. Michael Hordern (*Joseph Andrews*) went fishing.

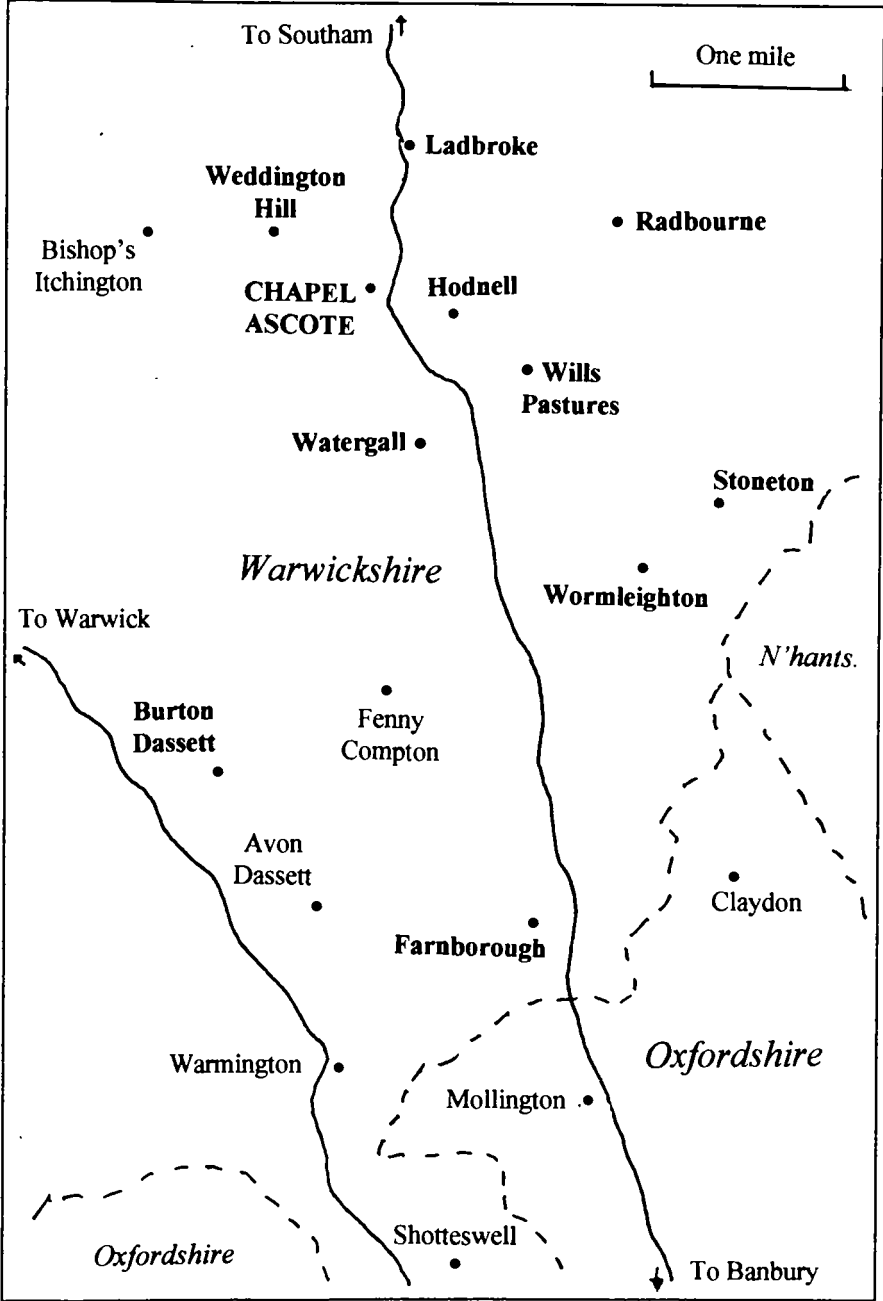
Perhaps it should be a relief when the last lorry has eased its way through the gatehouse, but suddenly there's no longer the throb of the generator nor that sometimes opera-chorus-atmosphere, something like the crowd scenes in the RSC's memorable *Nicholas Nickleby*.

When I apologized once to a member of the public about the disruption caused to their visit by some filming, they answered 'but this is much more fun'. And I'm sure the house enjoys it. It has earned its keep and been a versatile actor itself, after all. And anyway it knows it's the *real* star!

#### *Acknowledgments*

*To the various copyright owners for their kind permission to reproduce the photographs illustrating this article. The photographs themselves are a selection from those on display in the Broughton Castle tearoom, and, as this article shows, are a constant reminder of happy occasions. And to the staff of KallKwik, 2a West Bar, Banbury, who took infinite trouble helping with photocopying.*

*Opposite: 'Rogues and Vagabonds', with Leo McKern, Polly James, Michael Meyer and Edward Fox, performed for Banbury Historical Society on 31st October 1976 (see C&CH 7.3, Summer 1977, p. 98). With its predecessor, 'Take My Advice', two of the most enjoyable presentations held at the Castle.*



## CHAPEL ASCOTE - A DESERTED VILLAGE

*Linda Doyle*

A small batch of deserted villages lie alongside the A423 eight miles or so north of Banbury in south Warwickshire. They are only a fraction of the many which lie throughout England.

During my search I turned up a Quarter Sessions document from 1653, which referred to Hodnell (then including Watergall, Wills Pastures and Chapel Ascote) as 'anciently an eminent parish' and for many years past, the estates being in 'great men's hands'. Who were these Great Men?

Gradually, I discovered that these Manorial Lords and tenants ranged from the Spencer ancestors of our future King of England Prince William; through the Catesbys of Gunpowder Plot fame; to close connections with the nearby Civil War battle of Edgehill; to but mention a few.

So here were some of the Great Men.

The present day owner, H.B. Allman, in 1980, while ditching in Chapel Field, accidentally excavated a medieval skeleton from what is considered to be the site of St. Helen's Chapel. So the ghosts of many a famous man and his family must roam the fields at night. Indeed, one such owner, though not buried in St. Helen's, Sir Henry Kingsmill, has become a ghostly legend in his own right, roaming the Vale of the Red Horse on his white stallion since the Battle of Edgehill when he was killed; though my night ventures into finding him, have as yet drawn a blank!

I walked the site of the deserted village at Ascote, wandered over the dry hollows of the ancient fishponds and my romantic soul was captured - I wanted to know the names of those who farmed this land; I wanted to know about their lives; I wanted to know who was born or died here; I wanted to know who rode the horses whose iron shoes I so frequently found!

I was walking those very same acres which have changed little since fifteenth century footsteps fell; for yesterday's map is remarkably like today's. Indeed the view from my bedroom window includes the wooded slopes of Weddington Hill still called Nuns Bushes, which the Nuns of Nuneaton tenanted from as early as 1200, though the windmill no longer shares the skyline. Even the field boundaries have changed little since their

enclosure and still show indications of the original two field farming system in use during the thirteenth century.

This cluster of south Warwickshire villages have Saxon origins. Prior to then, the land, predominantly a heavy clay soil, was not best suited for early occupation. Though not far from the Fosse Way, there is evidence that there were Romans in the vicinity, including the possibility of a Roman villa on Weddington Hill above Ladbroke, after a hoard of Roman coins were discovered there as recently as summer 1995.

When the Saxons developed their plough improvements and populations expanded, these heavier soils were exploited and the villages grew.

It is generally accepted that at Hodnell lived a Saxon called Hoda who had cottages on the hill. Likewise across the valley stood the cottages of Aelfstan, a servant of the Bishop Oswald, on the south slope of Ascote Hill; on the springline with panoramic views across the Lake and low lying marshland of Watergall towards Burton Dassett hills. Equidistant between the two hamlets, alongside the main throughfare, Aelfstan is believed to have built the wayside Chapel of St. Helen's, originally in wood, then replaced with stone.

By Domesday, these villages were well developed with a comprehensive network of trackways between them.

Their ownership passed mainly into Norman hands after the Conquest, except for some estates which Turchil the Saxon retained. Turchil's land eventually also went to Norman overlords, however, his descendants managed to retain an interest in these villages under the common name of de Arden and possibly as de Rodburne.

In 1332, William de Arden was the most important underlord and highest taxpayer at Radbourne. His daughter and heir, Joan, married a notable landowner and businessman, William de Catesby of Coventry. The Catesbys remained at Coventry while William gathered land around Warwickshire. Their son John became lord of Radbourne Manor when his grandfather released him the rights in 1373.

William de Catesby already had strong links in this area, because his mother was Isabel, daughter of the lord of Ladbroke Manor, Henry de Lodbrok. In 1342 William started his accumulation of land here when he bought widow Christian Burnel's (née Gormund) land at Hodnell, possibly an area equivalent to Watergall. Then in 1349, time of the Black Death, he



began dealing with his uncle John de Lodbrok for possession of Ladbroke Manor.

Christian Gormund's family had been at Hodnell since 1235 and before that at Harbury. The Gormunds can also be found at neighbouring Stoneton, Wormleighton, Farnborough and Burton Dassett. Indeed, when Warwick Museum did an archaeological dig at Burton Dassett prior to the M40 excavations, they found a door lintel engraved 'Gormund'.

Christian married Robert Burnel (de Briwes), whose family held a large chunk of Hodnell since about 1260 and who in 1316 was one of three persons to style themselves lord of Hodnell Manor.

Apart from a selection of smaller names wandering in and out of documents, much of Hodnell and its associates seemed to have passed, through marriage and death, between the families of Burnel, Tayden and Gormund. This left the remaining area occupied by Coombe Abbey and Nuneaton Priory. Indeed, in 1316, it is these two religious orders who also both claimed manorial lordship of Hodnell. So someone surely saw financial benefit at a time when these villages were in the throes of disintegration - why were they so important as to dispute over who was lord of the manor?

Unfortunately any manorial court rolls prior to 1400 appear to be lost, possibly through the Catesby ownership when the manor courts merged with those of Ladbroke, also under Catesby.

This area of south Warwickshire, called the Feldon, was open land, in comparison with the heavily wooded Arden Forest of north Warwickshire. Here in the south, as the agricultural methods improved and populations expanded, improved farming rotations prompted the division of the old two field system into three or even four field systems. Things were looking good and by the eve of the Black Death (1348) the English population had probably increased three fold since Domesday.

One means of coping with this population pressure in the Feldon was by migration and during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, many people moved north and west through Warwickshire, clearing areas of forest for new settlements.

These migrant farmers, being the only ones able to move, became freeholders of their new farms, so that by the mid-thirteenth century, there were distinct social differences between the Feldon and Arden. Eventually due to this migration, the Feldon supported less than a third of its

population as freemen and the work demands for the remaining serfs from their lords was higher than elsewhere, which reflected in a harder way of life for the south Warwickshire villager. The England, such as with the Crusades, also increased the layman's knowledge and introduced him to new foods, fashions and ideas, as well as to new diseases. Wider travel increased the need for trading and a vast number of weekly markets rapidly followed. Again, finance was often a leading motive as licences were expensive and in south Warwickshire, Coombe Abbey had much to gain from this.

Despite years of stone clearance and ploughing over most of these deserted sites, there still remain visible the ridge and furrow, fishponds and house platforms. At Ascote the site has yielded little other than plain, unglazed pottery shards and a scattering of shaped stones, indicating the relative poverty of those who were forced to remain.

The consideration now is whether these particular villages were deserted through enclosure or plague.

For enclosure to work successfully, the land has been held in large blocks by one tenant. In fact if you look closely at Hodnell and Radbourne, although several names turn up, the families are all related and the remainder is in religious hands, notorious for enclosure. Indeed Coombe Abbey features prominently. At Radbourne, references to Coombe Abbey in medieval documents indicate a very high density of sheep and intensive farming and from the early thirteenth century, their possession of Hodnell is under the name Schutenholdenhull. Schuten means filthy (shitty) and, for such a derogative name to remain in documents for nearly two hundred years, must surely mean something. Too many sheep on heavy land can soon result in a sea of mud - so did they overstock and overgraze and if they did, what nourishment were the poor villagers able to gain for themselves and their families on their remaining patch of common land? They had no means of removing themselves as the more fortunate freeman could.

From estimates of a Domesday population at Hodnell (with Ascote) of about 150 persons, by 1332 the Lay Subsidy Roll only represented sixteen persons and their families, which a century later had fallen further to only four families. Radbourne fared no better.

So even before the Black Death (1348), Hodnell and Ascote had shrunk considerably. Some of the worst famine years were between 1315 and

1317. Our villages, already consisting of the poorest remaining families and apparently competing for a living on heavily grazed sheep pastures, found famine was followed by further famine, due to the sick and depleted population being unable to harvest what corn they had grown or to tend their animals. Those following winters must have been times too miserable for the comprehension of the twentieth century person, cushioned in centrally heated homes, with the ability to import food in to compensate for none on the doorstep! These people had nothing left, no reserves, nowhere to go and no knowledge of how to overcome it.

When the Feldon was hit by the first wave of plague, many people recovered, but when the second wave came in the vengeance of the Black Death, this must have been the final straw which broke the camel's back!

At Ladbroke, the vicarage changed hands twice that year, which speaks for itself!

It is only now that the Catesby family really began its accumulation of large quantities of land around this area. Maybe they saw the excellent prospects ahead, who knows! By the fifteenth century, they were not only lords of Ladbroke, a still thriving village, but of all the surrounding deserted villages.

In 1459, a chantry priest of Guy's Cliffe, Warwick, John Rous, petitioned Parliament on depopulation due to enclosure and in his details of Warwickshire he included Hodnell and Ascote. However, it is now known that several on his list were depopulated due to plague and not necessarily enclosure.

During the fifteenth century, Catesby started to rent Hodnell Manor to one John Spencer, the eldest son of Henry Spencer of Badby.

Two of John's sons married two of Sir Richard Empson's sisters.

Lawyers Empson and Dudley, under the reign of Henry VII, beggared many a wealthy man to line their own pockets and when Henry VIII came to the throne, he executed them both as a way of favouring himself in the eyes of his subjects.

One son, William, married Elizabeth Empson, and they lived at Radbourne Manor. It was their son, John, who went on to purchase Wormleighton in 1506 from his cousin-in-law William Cope.

John Jnr, heir to Hodnell Manor, married sister Anne Empson. It was their only daughter Jane who married William Cope of Hanwell near Banbury. John Jnr was buried in St. Helen's Chapel in 1498; and his son

and heir Thomas requested in his will in 1531 to be buried alongside his father. This was probably one of the last burials in the Chapel. Thomas left 40 marks (£33.6s.8d.) to the church and desired his executors to cause the church-yard to be paled round. I wonder if this was ever done, or was it conveniently forgotten as the Spencers rapidly moved on to more worthy occupations and desirable residences.

Thomas was a minor when his father died, so cousin John from Radbourne managed his estates. John was also the guardian of William Catesby's grandsons, their mother being another cousin. William Catesby ('The Cat'), executed after the battle of Bosworth in 1485, lost his property to the Crown and Spencer money helped pay towards its restoration to the grandchildren, William and Richard Catesby.

While John Spencer had Wormleighton rebuilt to his specifications, everyone resided at Hodnell Manor.

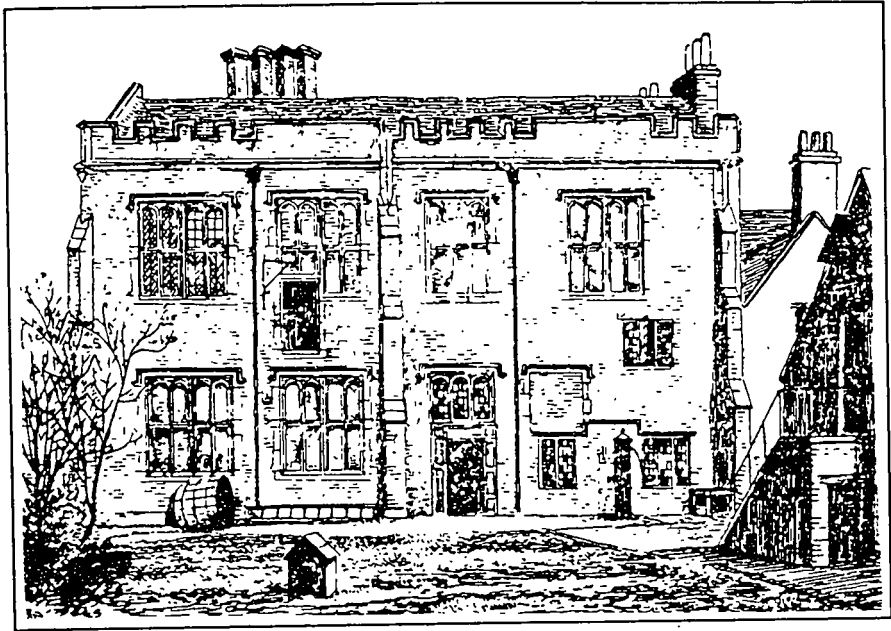
The elder Catesby boy, William, died young at 15 years and his *inquisition post mortem* was held at Southam. Richard became heir and married John Spencer's daughter, Dorothy.

Marriage was most certainly a way of land management, social standing and political gain. Family gatherings at this period one can assume were hotbeds of gossip and one-upmanship, with the ladies being pawns of convenience to barter with.

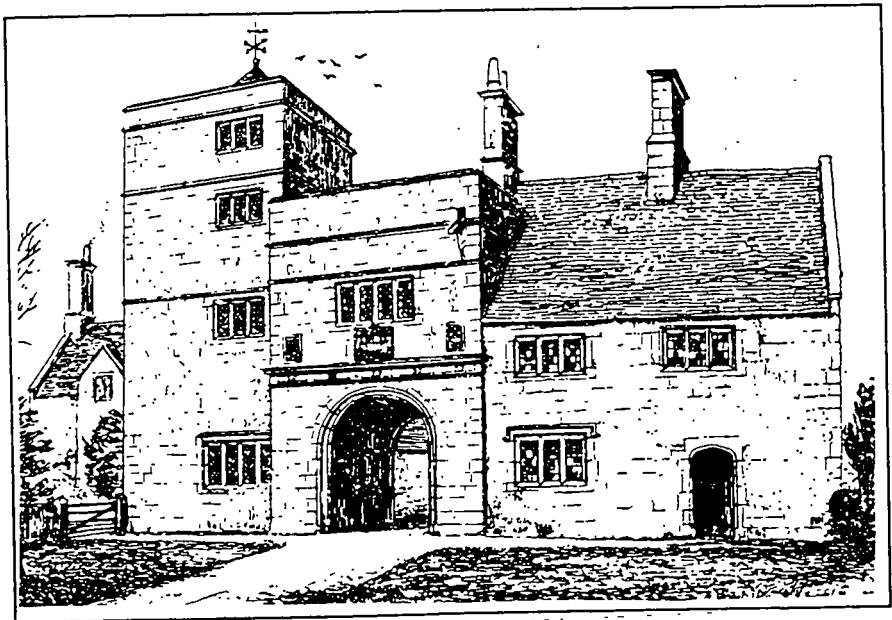
Commercial and social arrangements were already well under way between these two families. An undated letter, thought to be pre-1486, from John Catesby of Althorpe requested 'Master Spencer of Hodynhill' to sell him 300 wether hoggerels (sheep) to help stock his farm.

Richard Catesby retained his ownership of Radbourne, Hodnell and Ascote until his death in 1553. Most of it during this time was tenanted by John Spencer of Wormleighton, as he began to build his dynasty on the back of sheep and apparently using Catesby's political and business acumen as stepping stones.

On Catesby's death or just before, Thomas Wilkes, a wool merchant, acquired all of Hodnell. Spencers no longer rented this land, although they retained some at Radbourne and Ladbroke, having purchased Wormleighton and Althorpe. Thomas came to live at Hodnell and when he died in 1559, his three nieces inherited a parish each. He was buried at St. Michael's in Coventry, but it is uncertain if this was because St. Helen's was already ruined or Coventry was a more prestigious place for burial.



Wormleighton House: remains of the Tudor mansion.  
From W. Niven, *Illustrations of Old Warwickshire Houses*, 1878.



Anne Wilkes first married Anthony Dryden, who died young. Her second marriage was to Sir William Kingsmill and they inherited the parish of Chapel Ascote, but did not live there. It was their grandson who fought at Edgehill and whose statue is in Radway Church.

Frances Wilkes married Anthony's brother Sir Erasmus Dryden from Canons Ashby and they lived at Hodnell until Erasmus inherited Canons Ashby Manor, but Dryden relations remained at Hodnell for years after. Erasmus' mother was Elizabeth Cope, a great-granddaughter of John Spencer of Hodnell. Their grandson was the famous poet John Dryden.

The youngest sister, Margaret, was first sold in marriage to a friend of Catesby, but after Frances Dymock's death, she went on to marry Thomas Gibbs and her settlement was Watergall. Their eldest son Edward inherited Watergall and younger son Thomas went on to be the Rector of Ladbroke in 1642.

The advowson of St. Helen's Chapel was also split three ways, but since those who remained were married and the families baptised at All Saints Church, Ladbroke, it seems the chapel had quite fallen away.

In 1638 there was a petition from Archbishop Laud which complained that ancient allowances for the maintenance of Ministers and repair of churches in many Warwickshire parishes had been taken away. Notes enclosed included that the church of Hodnell was altogether demolished.

Dugdale in 1656 says 'the ruins are now scarce to be seen.' This suggests that once it was apparent that the church was not to be repaired, the stone was quietly spirited away to repair local cottages and byres and now like the villages, the foundations lie undisturbed beneath the clay.

## Sources

Information has been collected from the following sources, cross-referenced between them and where there are discrepancies I have used my judgement and reference to the sources used by each.

It is difficult to divide the information up as much of it is the same and taken from similar original sources in the Public Record Office.

Warwick County Records Series, *Warwick Quarter Sessions*.

*Victoria History of Warwickshire* (V.C.H.).

Glover, *The Place Names of Warwickshire*.

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Catesby family of America, *The History of the Catesbys*.

Dugdale, William, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire*.

Beresford, Maurice, *The Lost Villages of England*.

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Collins, *Peerage*.

Thorpe, Harry, *The Lord and the Landscape*.

National Trust, *History of Canons Ashby*.

P.R.O. references and more detailed information will be found in my publications 'Local History around Ladbroke':

1. *Medieval Ladbroke* (1066-1640): A short village history from Domesday to the Civil War.
2. *The Palmer Estates* (1640-1910): Ladbroke during the years of Palmer ownership at the Manor from the Civil War to the Great War.
3. *Ascote: Story of a Deserted Village* (published this summer).

Each is priced £1.50 + 25p p&p, available from myself, Mrs Linda Doyle, Chapel Ascote Cottage, Ladbroke, Southam, Warw. CV33 0DB.

Proceeds go towards maintenance of All Saints' Church, Ladbroke.



N.B. *Victory*, owned by Windmill Hill Granite Quarries, entering Nell Bridge lock on 27th October 1900, with Mrs Shiers steering and Joseph Shiers on the bridge. *Photograph courtesy of The Railway and Canal Historical Society.*



## NELL BRIDGE (Oxford Canal Co.), ADDERBURY

*Hugh Compton*

In his excellent book *Adderbury: A Thousand Years of History*, Nicholas Allen mentions on page 74 the drawing, by Mrs Davenport, of Nell Bridge over the River Cherwell on the London to Shrewsbury road. Adderbury's position astride the main trade routes was further enhanced in the 1780's when the Oxford Canal Company (O.C.C.) constructed a bridge over the canal and called it Nell Bridge. Indeed by 1871 the village could rightly be called a town as it boasted a population of 1,280 persons.

Stone bridges over the Oxford Canal were very much of a rarity,<sup>1</sup> so the use of this material at Nell Bridge only came about because of the loads it was expected to bear and, to help, the space under the arch for a towing path was omitted. This was a source of annoyance to boatmen who often resorted to taking the tow-line across the highway to help the movement of narrow boats into the lock, in contravention of a notice exhibited forbidding this practice. At this point the canal locks down into the River Cherwell and during times of flood this sometimes prevented empty boats passing under the bridge even though it has normal headroom for the canal.

The narrow boat (approximately 70 ft. by 7 ft.) in the photograph was owned by the Windmill Hill Granite Quarries whose proprietor was William Boon of King Street, Coventry. Its captain Joseph Shiers of Bedworth Hill, Nuneaton, had on 23 September 1896 been found by the Public Health Inspector (Mr Drew) of Bicester Rural District Council to be in contravention of the Canal Boats Act of 1877 when the craft was seen at Heyford Wharf.<sup>2</sup> The trouble was he had four children aboard instead of the two permitted under the Act,<sup>3</sup> for a cabin whose approximate measurements would have been 8½ ft. long, by 6¾ ft. wide,

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<sup>1</sup> P.R.O.: RAIL 855/102. The O.C.C.'s Distance Book for 1796 records a total of 246 bridges across the Canal of which only twenty were constructed of stone.

<sup>2</sup> Oxon Archives: PLU2/SN/A3. Canal boat inspection reports 1889-1924 carried out by Mr Drew for the Bicester Rural District Council.

<sup>3</sup> Act: 40-41 Vic. c.60. *Canal Boats*. The up-shot was a stiff letter from the R.D.C. to the owners who replied to the effect that the Captain had been told to ensure it did not happen again.

having a height of only 5 ft. This regulation often resulted in boys over twelve being sent to work on another boat and girls being sent off to work in domestic service.<sup>4</sup> To assist with the checking of the boats each owner was required to register it with a local authority: this one had in fact been done in Coventry and was given the number 144.

The lock-keeper's house in the photograph dates from about 1787<sup>5</sup> and was occupied by Joseph Morgan whose family history shows how employees of the O.C.C. moved about their waterway: for he came from Newbold on the outskirts of Rugby, some 44 miles away, whereas his wife Sarah came from Claydon to the north of Banbury, some 12½ miles distant. Did he meet her as he passed south by water on his posting or perhaps more likely at Banbury market? Essentially his work as a labourer involved him with the maintenance of the canal, its towing-path, locks, bridges, hedges etc. Luckily for him the canal in this area was closed at nights and also on Sundays.<sup>6</sup>

*In the late 1960's I saw the Banbury Health Inspector in his office and was permitted to read the Banbury Register of Canal Boats and also to examine some of his inspection reports. Alas with the passage of time and local government reorganisation, all his records seem to have vanished.*

Extract from  
Paterson's  
Roads:  
*Direct and  
principal Cross  
Roads in  
England and  
Wales,*  
by Edward  
Mogg, 1822.

ADDERBURY is a large and neat village, containing a handsome Gothic church in which there are several monuments worthy of attention. Near a place called the Green stands a very interesting ruin, overrun with ivy, and in the last stage of decay. This was for about 2 centuries the noble residence of the Cobb family, the last legal possessor of which died in 1702, and now lies buried in the parish church. At a short distance from the ruins of the residence of the Cobb family, formerly stood a very spacious and superb mansion, belonging to the Duke of Buccleuch, but it has been considerably reduced and completely modernised within the last 20 years, by its present possessor J. R. Field, Esq. Here at one time lived that consummate libertine, Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, whose magnificent state bed is now in the possession of the present occupier, by whom it has been very tastefully ornamented in accordance with the reigning fashion.

From Streech	Aynhoe on the Hill Beyond Aynhoe, to Deddington 3½ m. Nett Bridge	From London
91½	Cross the river Charwell and the Oxford canal, and re-enter Oxfordshire.	70½
90	Adderbury, Oxon.	72
88½	to Deddington 3 m.	73½
86½	To Weeping Cross	75½
	* BANBURY	
	To Warwick, through Southam, 22½ m.	
	To Daventry 16½ m.	
	To Buckingham, by Brackley, 15½ m.	
	to Chipping Norton 12 m.	
	1½ m. beyond Banbury, to Warwick, through Gaydon, 17½ m.	

<sup>4</sup> See Harry Hanson's *The Canal Boat-Men 1760-1914*, Manchester U.P., 1975.

<sup>5</sup> See Hugh Compton's *The Oxford Canal*, David & Charles, 1976.

<sup>6</sup> See Bradshaw's *Canals and Navigable Rivers of England and Wales*, Henry Blacklock & Co., 1909.

# 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 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).

*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:

*Act Book of the Peculiar Court of Banbury and Cropredy 1625-38*, ed. R.K. Gilkes.

*Turnpike Roads to Banbury*, by Alan Rosevear.

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**.

