

# CAKE AND COCKHORSE



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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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Whilst we may sometimes deplore the seemingly unnecessary destruction of buildings epitomising Banbury's history (Staley's canal warehouse, for instance) developments can be of positive benefit to those interested in the past. The new Shopping Centre is enabling further archaeological investigation of the castle site, and Banbury is to get a brand new museum, something pretty unusual in these times of local authorities being so strapped for cash.

An advantage of modern technological advances in information retrieval is that many records can now be seen in some photographic form on screen. No longer is it always necessary to visit distant archive repositories. Banbury's own research facility is the Centre for Banburyshire Studies, at Banbury Library. This was opened several years ago, but with only 14 hours of opening time. Since July this has been doubled. It is now open Tuesday to Friday, morning 9.45 to noon, afternoon from 2.00 to 5.00 (to 7.00 Wednesday and Friday), and Saturday morning, 9.30 to 1.00. Closed on Sundays and Mondays. In the past 12 months (October '97 – September '98) it was used by 1,563 visitors, a 25% increase on the previous year. To ensure that the Centre continues to improve in time and staffing, public use must be evident – use it or lose it!

*Cover:* Detail of the Roman mosaic at Thenford (based on reproductions in Peter Salway, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Roman Britain*, and David S. Neal, *Roman Mosaics in Britain*, Britannia Monographs Series, No. 1, Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 1981, reproduced by kind permission).

# RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK AT CASTLE QUAY, BANBURY, OXFORDSHIRE: An Interim Report

*Steve Litherland*

*Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit*

## **Introduction**

This short article is intended to give an up-date on the progress of archaeological work funded by Banbury Shopping Centre Limited and PillarCaisse, the developers of the new Castle Quay complex in Banbury. From the initial planning stages of this development, back in 1989, archaeologists from Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit have been seeking to use this opportunity to further our understanding of the history and growth of this northeast quadrant of the medieval town, an area which includes the remains of Banbury Castle, and later, following the arrival of the canal between 1778 and 1790, the town wharf or quay.

The development area has been sub-divided into three distinct, but physically and chronologically overlapping, zones of archaeological interest: the Castle Precincts, the Bridge Street and Mill Lane market-side, and the canal-side. These zones were then evaluated to assess the survival and ability of the archaeological evidence to map the Castle and the historic town here accurately, to trace the commercial development of the Bridge Street and Mill Lane area, and to examine the changing industrial character of the canal-front.

We are now in the final stages of the overall fieldwork project; when, before the development goes ahead, the archaeology which will be directly affected will be recorded through large-scale archaeological excavation. However, in several instances, by utilising the information gained from the evaluation stage of the archaeological work, it has been possible for the architects to design the foundations of the new buildings, usually by raising the ground level, so that important archaeological deposits will be preserved, or at least the impact of the buildings upon them lessened. The most recent stage of work to be completed was an area excavation of building plots in Bridge Street and

Mill Lane which finished in late July, and towards the end of 1998 further work will commence on the site of Banbury Castle in the Castle Gardens car park. These large-scale excavations are the culmination of archaeological research spanning almost a decade, work which has included extensive documentary and map research, the recording of standing buildings and non-destructive prospection for buried archaeological deposits using ground-probing radar and trial excavations, some of which were dug inside the empty buildings in Bridge Street before they were demolished.

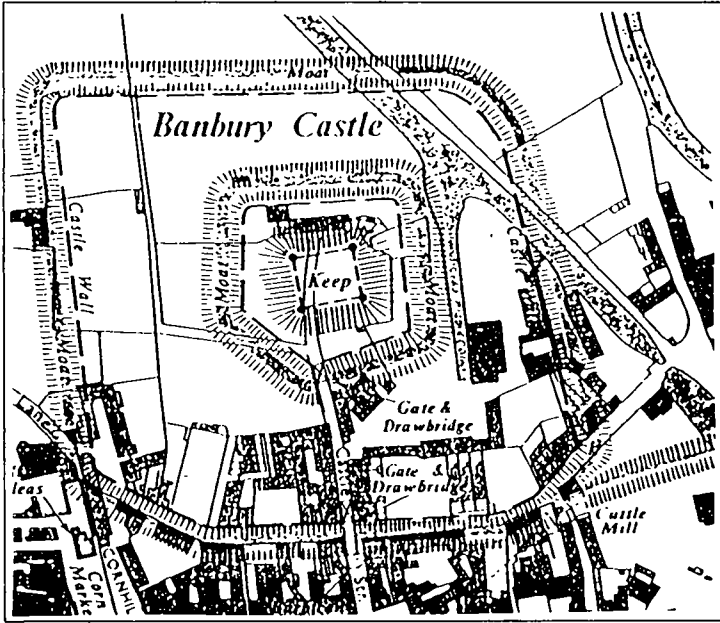
### **Previous work**

For a town of relatively modest size, Banbury has been well provided for by its historians. From George Herbert's early nineteenth century memoirs, through Beesley (1841), Potts (1958), Stacey (1960 and 1975), and Trinder (1982), to name but a few, the recorded history has been particularly rich and varied. The historical status of the town was further reflected by its inclusion in the first volume of the *Historic Towns Atlas* in 1969, and coverage by the *Victoria County History* in 1972.

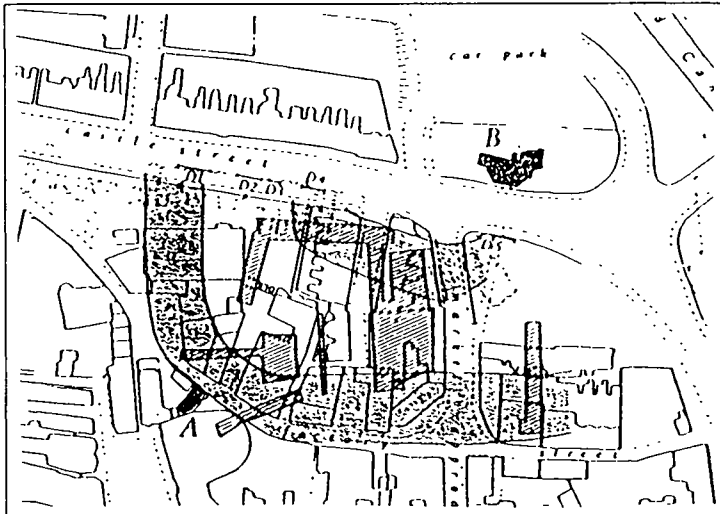
In comparison, archaeological work in the town has been relatively limited, although in the early 1970s a series of large rescue excavations was carried out on the southern half of Banbury Castle prior to the construction of the Castle Shopping Centre (Fasham 1973 and 1983, Rodwell 1976), and this was followed by Banbury's inclusion in an archaeological survey of the historic towns of Oxfordshire (Rodwell 1975). The following discussion concentrates mainly upon the Castle, where the final stage of work will shortly commence. Perhaps, more detailed discussion of the results from Bridge Street, Mill Lane and the canal may be covered in future articles.

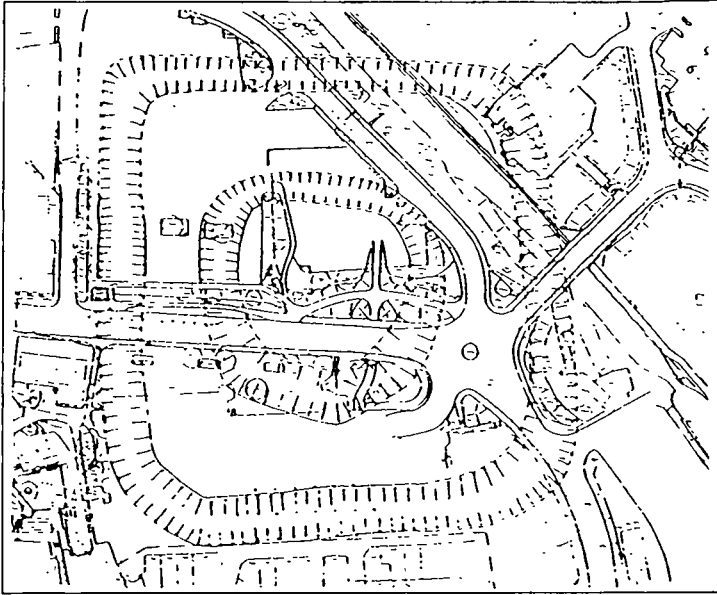
### **The Castle**

The survival and character of the Castle's archaeology was evaluated by non-destructive ground-probing radar, observation of structural engineers' test-pits and bore-holes, and excavation of three trial trenches in the Castle Gardens car park in 1997. Later this year, larger excavations are planned in those areas of the Castle to be built upon, which will complete the archaeological fieldwork on the Castle. The results of the work to date may be usefully compared, and in several instances contrasted, with the evidence of the 1970s excavations from the southern half of the Castle. The ground-probing radar results, when



*Fig. 1a and b. Above. Detail from Lobel (1969), 'Map of Banbury circa 1800, with major features in late medieval times.' Below. Detail from Fasham (1983), 'Location map of the southern part of the castle area.' Scale approx. 1:2500. North at top of page.*





*Fig. 1c. Provisional reconstruction of castle based upon GPR and evaluation trenching. Scale approx. 1:2500. North at top of page.*

combined with the other evidence, enabled the actual footprint of the Castle to be accurately mapped in this area, and some of the inconsistencies of the Ordnance Survey interpretation of the line of the outer moat, which were repeated in the *Historic Towns Survey*, corrected (fig. 1). Unfortunately, excavation of the trial trenches has also shown that some time this century the ground-level in the former inner bailey of the Castle was extensively reduced by up to four metres. The present situation can be usefully compared with that described in the early years of this century by the surveyor for *Victoria County History* and shown on the 1900 1:2500 OS extract reproduced here (fig. 2, overleaf):

“the site (of the castle) was occupied by gardens and by streets of houses...The making of streets and the cutting of the canal through the site have destroyed much of the evidence of the ground, but it is possible, from traces found in digging for draining and building, to lay down the course of the outer moat...In the centre of this area is a mound 9 feet above ground-level at its base, now occupied by a rather ruinous cottage built at the demolition of the castle on to the only remaining

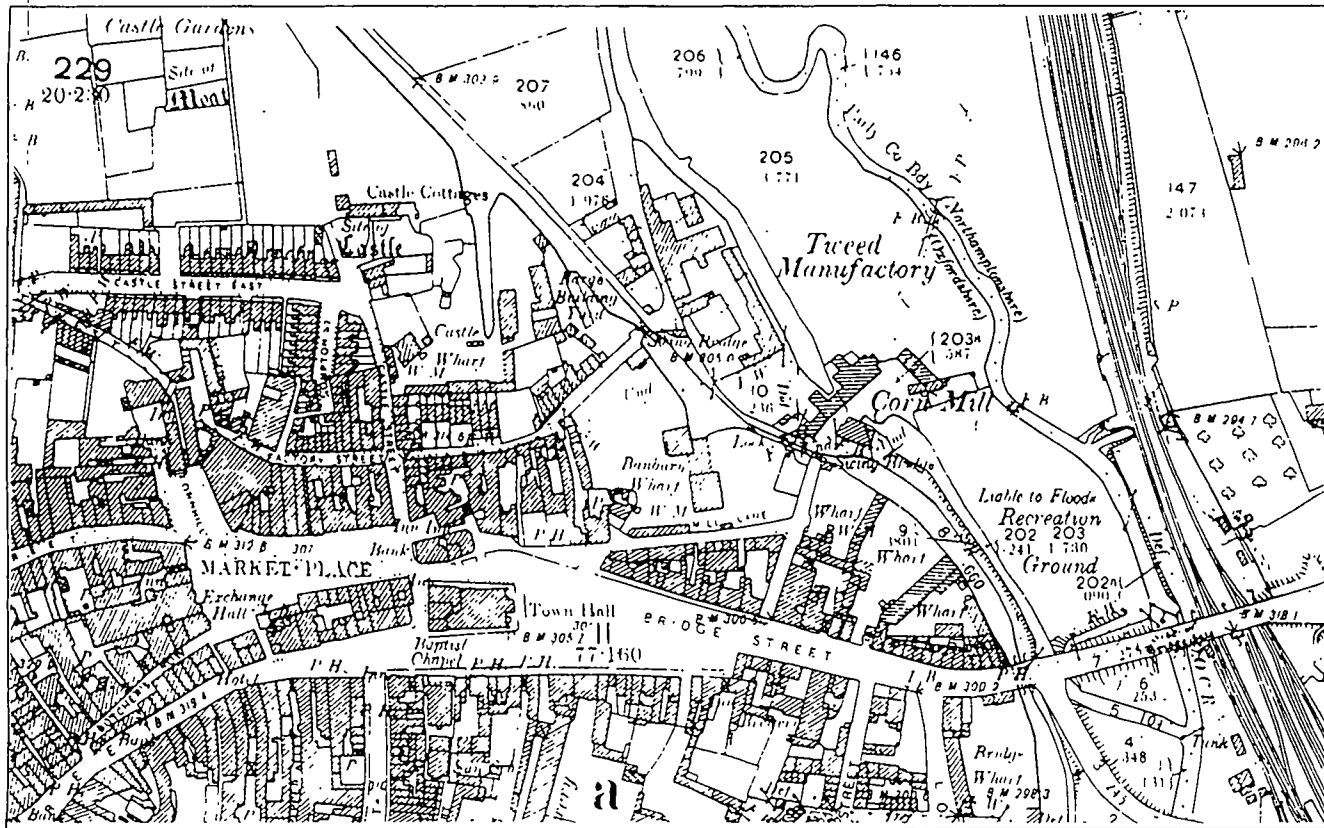


Fig. 2. Extract from OS 1:2500 (1900).



portion of its wall. This mound...was surrounded by a ditch now filled in...the south-west corner the mound is now disguised by the streets which run up to it, but the ground here has been partly made up in recent times, while the road from the Market Place was the original roadway up to the castle..." (1907, 322).

The scouring away of the mound has meant that there is little surviving archaeology here which post-dates the 1250 -1350 remodelling of the Castle. However, the upturn of this is that earlier archaeological deposits, which relate to the first castle of Alexander the Magnificent (1123-1148) and earlier, are readily accessible for investigation, whereas in the 1970s these deposits were sealed under about three or four metres of later archaeological deposits.

Fortunately, late-medieval and post-medieval deposits have survived beyond the inner bailey. This is because of the natural slope of the ground down towards the River Cherwell, which has meant that archaeological deposits were not scoured away and may even have been sealed under levelling material for the car park.

While at this stage further work is required to clarify the picture, perhaps the most exciting discovery of the recent work was evidence which seems to pre-date the first Norman castle. This archaeological evidence complements the limited early documentation, which in addition to that of the place-name itself, supports significant activity in Banbury prior to the building of the castle. Banbury was part of a large estate belonging to the See of Dorchester-on-Thames in Anglo-Saxon times, which was transferred, along with other North Oxfordshire estates, to that of Lincoln around 1070. Banbury is also recorded in 1086 as a manorial centre, having become an administrative centre of the Bishops of Lincoln.

In the early 1970s excavations Fasham found some vague stone alignments and a number of pits which appeared to be earlier than the first buildings associated with the castle, and trial trenching in the inner bailey supports this view. A large east-west aligned ditch (plate 1) was one of the earliest features found. This ditch had gradually silted prior to the cutting of a series of three similarly aligned, but smaller, ditches one after the other. Pre-Conquest pot sherds were recovered from the fill of one of the recuts. The consecutive recutting of the ditch may imply a number of things, which it is the aim of the next stage of work to try and clarify, but at the very least it suggests that this ditch was a significant



*Plate 1. Early moat in centre of photograph.*

feature for some period prior to the construction of the Castle. Was the ditch a component of a pre-Castle manorial or administrative centre here? Only further work can confirm this idea.

Subsequently, a causeway was built across the silted ditch and several pits were dug nearby, possibly to quarry the naturally occurring sand and gravel, and it is very tempting to place these events with the building of the first castle in the mid-12th century. The mixed fills of the pits are indicative of rapid backfilling with waste building material, and the absence of refuse tells us that the pits were not used to dispose of domestic rubbish.

Archaeological evidence of later activity was mainly found outside the limits of the inner bailey. This was, of course, originally built as a part of the later remodelling of the Castle in the 13th/14th century, on top of the earlier remains. The foundation of a two metres-wide ironstone wall, built over the silted-up ditch mentioned above, was the only feature found during the evaluation of the inner bailey which may date from this later remodelling; significantly, in the 1970s excavations Rodwell noted that the lower parts of the curtain wall of the 13th/14th century Castle were constructed before the ground level of the inner bailey was raised, which may explain its survival. Moreover, Stukeley (1776, 48) recorded



*Plate 2. Survival of ironstone building and early roof structure, 54 Bridge Street.*



*Plate 3. Medieval building foundation, Mill Lane.*



*Plate 4. Post-medieval foundations and cellars, Bridge Street.*

that a cottage was built on to the only remaining portion of the castle wall still standing in the 18th century, and a 'castle cottage' is shown here to the north of the junction of Castle Street East with Castle Street on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1900 (fig. 2).

It is now clear that both the inner and outer moats lie some 10m further west than earlier suggested (fig. 1). Two trial trenches were cut across the inner moat. This was a massive defensive feature, in excess of 15 metres wide and about five metres deep. The pottery recovered from the moat had a wide time-span, from the 11th to the 19th century, but the presence of 14th and 15th century pottery in two of the lowest fills of the moat suggest that it was allowed to silt up during this period. There was also extensive evidence of hectic refortification in the Civil War as various documentary sources suggest. It is clear that a significant percentage of the pottery recovered from the moat was residual. No doubt this is a reflection of the remodelling of the castle in the 13th/14th century, the Civil War refortification and the subsequent slighting of the defences. It also appears that in the aftermath of the Civil War the moat was infilled primarily in the late-17th and early-18th centuries, with later landscaping activities occurring in the 19th century, when the area became known as the Castle Gardens. Preservation of water-logged deposits within all the ditches and moats which were sampled on the Castle site is good, and these have high potential for reconstructing aspects of the changing environment in this part of Banbury over a thousand years.

### **Bridge Street and Mill Lane**

Work has only recently been completed in this zone, and a period of study and research is now being planned. The interested reader may refer to the summary account of the desk-top survey of this zone, which was published in *Cake and Cockhorse* 12.3 in 1992 and the detailed account of the development of Staley's Warehouse by Robert Kinchin-Smith, also published in this journal. Evidence gathered during a detailed programme of recording of all the buildings demolished in this street block has added a great deal to the late-18th and 19th century social history of the area. In addition, substantial parts of ironstone buildings, roughly dating from the 1500s to the late-1700s, were discovered under later alteration work (plate 2). Amongst the key discoveries made during the recent excavations was a ditch running parallel to Mill Lane whose

fill contained pottery of Saxo-Norman date, the medieval street surface and parts of ironstone walls of buildings fronting onto that street (plate 3). In contrast the earliest archaeological evidence from the Bridge Street frontage dated to the 1500s, and consisted of the foundations and cellars of a row of quite substantial, probably commercial, buildings here. These were progressively modified during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries (plate 4).

### **The canal and river-side**

For various practical reasons archaeological work in this area has been limited to radar survey and two trial trenches on the edge of the Bus Station. However, the medieval town boundary ditch, called the Cuttle Brook, and an out-flow leat of the Cuttle Mill have been identified, together with evidence of the 18th century town quay. In addition, further recording work on the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Tooley's Boatyard is also being undertaken in late-September this year.

### **Conclusion**

In several important respects the results of the present campaign of archaeological work complement and enhance the findings of the rescue excavations on the southern half of the castle made in the 1970s, and promise to shed more light on the early history of Banbury. In addition, we have also tried to broaden the focus of archaeological research. In spatial terms the project aims to explore the inter-relationship of the castle and the town; and in historical terms, to carry forward the cut-off date of investigations, in order to attempt to reconstruct the development of this historic, if peripheral, part of Banbury from its origins about a thousand years ago, right up to the present day.

While it is regrettable that because of changes in Health and Safety Legislation governing work on construction sites it is not possible for individuals to volunteer for work on the Castle site, we are hoping to organise facilities for open days to be held when the excavations on the Castle go ahead, in late-1998 and early-1999. All the finds and project archive will, of course, be deposited with Banbury Museum upon completion of the project, and it is hoped that a display of recent work will also be mounted.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff from BUFAU who have worked in Banbury over the last few years for their excellent work on and off site. The list is a long one, and while running the risk of offending by omission, I would nevertheless like to single out the following individuals, Iain Ferris (project manager and BUFAU director), Derek Moscrop, Kirsty Nichol and Jon Sterenberg (co-directors/supervisors), Edward Newton (photography and logistics), Bob Burrows, Gary Coates, Chris Patrick, Eleanor Ramsey, and Josh Williams. Thanks are also due to Paul Smith and Carol Rosier, the curatorial archaeologists representing Oxfordshire County Council; together with various members of Cherwell District Council and the groundworks contractors, Bryants, who have aided the progress of work. Last, but by no means least, the funding of all this work by the developers, in particular Richard Cannacott of Banbury Shopping Centre Limited, and PillarCaisse, is most gratefully acknowledged.

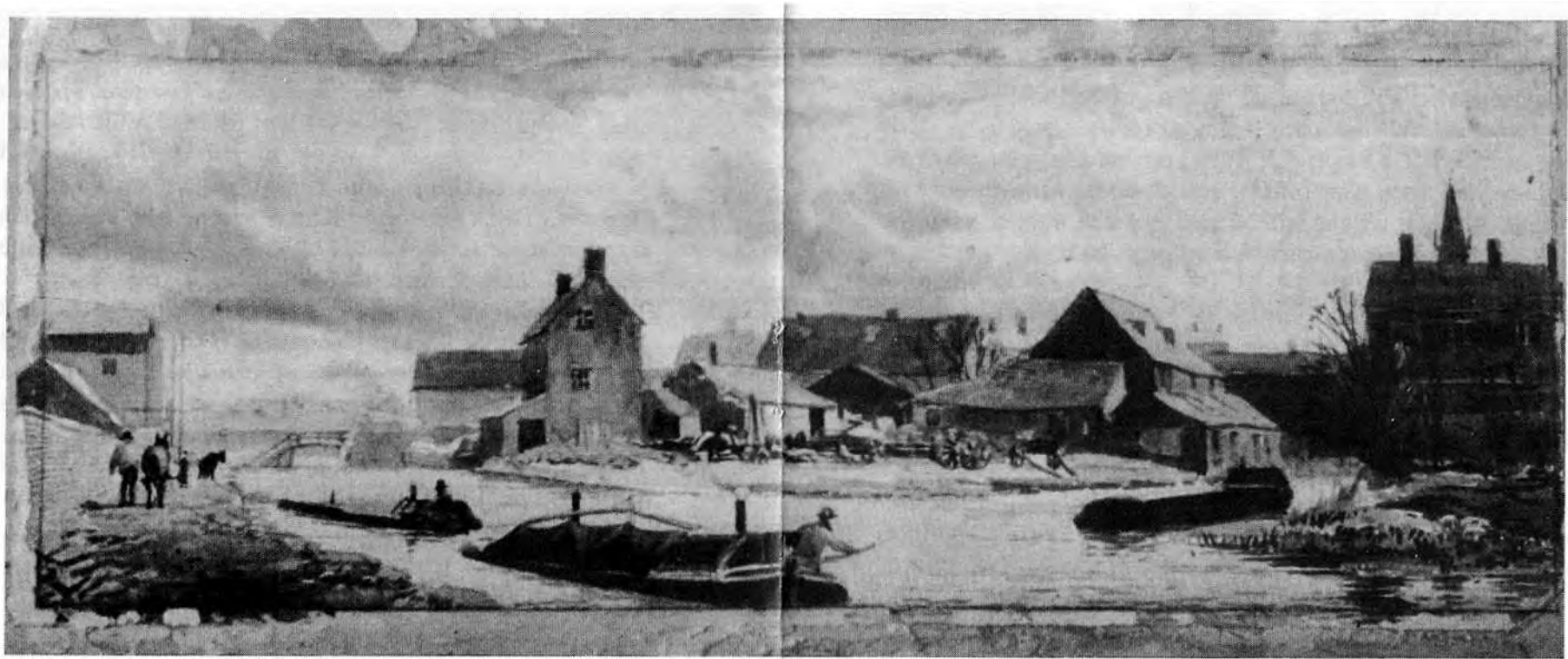
## **A NEW MUSEUM FOR A NEW MILLENIUM**

*Simon Townsend*

*Museum Services Manager, Cherwell District Council*

Twelve years after the fledgling town museum opened its doors in the Borough Library, the Banbury Historical Society was formed. Looking back over almost half a century it is clear that both organisations have enjoyed many tangible benefits from the very close partnership that has developed. In October 2000, Banbury will have a brand new museum and I hope and believe that the Historical Society will derive many new benefits from a high profile museum which will draw attention to Banbury's rich heritage.

The relocation will take the museum from the Horsefair to a new home alongside the Oxford Canal in the centre of Banbury. It is a unique, once only opportunity, made possible through a chance range of circumstances. These include a desire to expand the museum service to meet public demand: the availability of a town centre brown field site; the financial support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and the European Union; the development of the new Castle Quay Shopping Centre; and



*A watercolour by W. Mathieson showing*

the potential benefits of incorporating the scheduled ancient monuments at Tooley's Boatyard.

The impressive, modern architectural design, incorporating Tooley's Boatyard, will be located between General Foods Social Club and Chamberlain Court (the existing bridge to Spiceball Sports Centre is to be removed). It will be joined to the Tourist Information Centre and Museum Shop on the opposite side of the canal, by an enclosed glazed bridge. The design addresses the severe shortage of space experienced by the Museum and Tourist Information Centre, and will allow new and improved services to be developed.

The new permanent displays, called the Banbury Life Galleries, are over four times larger than those we have now. Very simply this means that we can display four times the quantity of objects than we can at present. Having said this, the gallery concept does not offer an overview of

*the old canal wharf at Banbury around 1880.*

Banbury's history from its foundation to the present day, but illustrates four significant periods from Banbury's rich history in greater depth. These are; Banbury during the English Civil War; the Plush Industry; the Victorian Agricultural Industries and World War II. The displays will illustrate domestic life from these periods, including extensive costume and textile collections dating back to 1660s, and will offer visitors the opportunity to listen to first hand accounts of everyday life during these dramatic times. Throughout the museum, the interpretative approach will be both educational and fun giving visitors a very 'hands on' experience. But the galleries will not only look to the past. The natural history of the canal environment will be on show and there will be an exciting discovery gallery focusing on the scientific and technological principles upon which canal transport and traditional narrow boat repair rely.



Tooley's Boatyard, which symbolises Banbury's canal heritage, will be incorporated within the new museum. Built in 1778, this fascinating historic monument has serviced the narrow boats of the Oxford Canal for over two centuries. Although once common, Tooley's yard is the last remaining example left in England. It will reopen not as a museum but as a working boatyard, once again offering services to the narrowboats that use the canal. Museum visitors will be able to watch work in progress and visit the historic buildings and new workshops on regular open days throughout the year.

The temporary exhibition programme has been a great success in the current museum helping to attract over 75,000 visitors a year. The new museum will have two exhibition spaces, one for local artists and the other for touring exhibitions that will draw upon the museum's reserve collections and treasures borrowed from national museums.

Designing a museum from scratch enables us to offer services tailor-made to the needs of our diverse audiences. These include the Banbury Historical Society, schools, families, and canal users. I have prepared a summary of just some of the new facilities which will be of benefit to the Banbury Historical Society and schools. They are as follows:

#### **Banbury Historical Society:**

- Greater percentage of collections on display
- Displays designed to support the National Curriculum
- Access to databases of historic photographs and the museum collection
- 50-seater lecture theatre/classroom available for evening meetings, supported by ample local parking and without any treacherous stairs to negotiate.
- A new education officer
- Increased public interest in Banbury's heritage.
- A tailor-made education programme
- A café offering home cooked food.
- Storage space for coats and lunch boxes

I hope, like me, you feel excited about the future. We have a tremendous opportunity if we work together for the next half century as we have in the last.

# **The MARSTON ST. LAWRENCE Area, Northamptonshire: ARCHAEOLOGY AND EARLY HISTORY**

*Derek Barrett*

Archaeological evidence<sup>1</sup> indicates considerable human activity in the Marston area from Prehistoric times. Documentary evidence shows how Marston, and its hamlets of Costow (now deserted) and Westhorp (transferred to Greatworth parish in 1935), evolved during medieval and later times, from Anglo-Saxon (or earlier?) origins.

Only the Roman Villa near Thenford has been excavated. Nevertheless, archaeological material from limited surface collection provides valuable evidence, and shows what could be found in unsearched areas.

All relevant sites/finds mentioned are shown on the accompanying sketch map.

## **Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age) c.500,000 – c.8000 B.C.**

Little evidence exists of nomadic, ice-age hunter-gatherers. Two flint scrapers and a hand-axe tip (broken off in antiquity), heavily patinated and stained, appear to be Palaeolithic.

How they were deposited is uncertain. Were they lost or discarded by hunting bands, redeposited by glacial ice-sheets and/or meltwater action, or brought in by modern humans in river gravel?

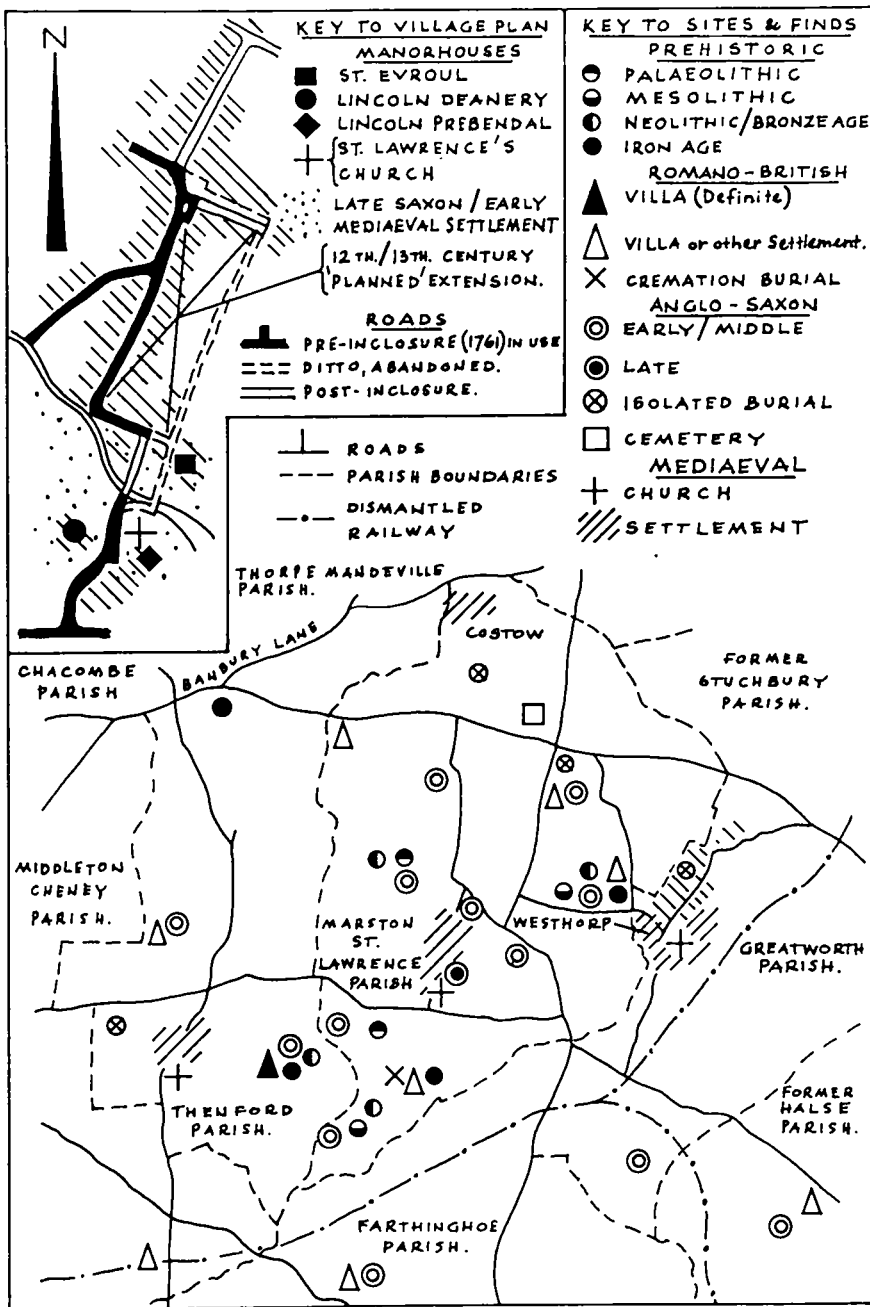
## **Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) c.8000 – c.4500 B.C.**

More certain is evidence of nomadic, post-glacial hunter-gatherers, who adapted a similar life-style to warmer climate and increasingly forested landscapes.

Several flint scatters probably mark flint working areas in temporary hunting camps, or more permanent base camps within their territory. Identified flake/blade tools include: awls, graters, knives, microliths

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<sup>1</sup> Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (RCHM) England, 1982. Vol. IV. *Archaeological Sites in South-West Northamptonshire*. Marston St. Lawrence Area – Farthinghoe, pp. 53-54; Greatworth, pp. 64, 65; Marston St. Lawrence, pp. 98-101; Middleton Cheney, p. 101; Thenford, pp. 143-145.



(arrow or spear tips/barbs), scrapers and saws, also heavier core tools such as axes and picks.

### **Neolithic (New Stone Age) c.4500 – c.2500 B.C.**

The change from hunting and gathering to farming began in the fifth millenium, influenced by migrant farmers and/or new ideas from the Continent.

Axes, sickles and quernstones are evidence of wildwood clearances (began in the late Mesolithic?), woodworking and crop growing. Several occupation sites, probably short-lived, rectangular timber farmsteads, grazing and cultivation areas, are marked by flint and pottery scatters.

Other identified artifacts include: leaf and tranchet derivative arrowheads, awls, fabricators (for flint knapping or making sparks), hammerstones, knives, saws, scrapers and late Neolithic 'Peterborough' ware pottery.

### **Bronze Age c.2500-c.700 B.C.**

Bronze working reached Britain in the third millenium. Then, settlements were small and short-lived, comprising circular timber buildings, surrounded by small, squarish 'Celtic' fields. Larger, more permanent settlements and extensive field systems, probably for grazing animals, characterised the late Bronze Age. More weapons, defended sites and territorial divisions suggest competition for scarce land and resources.

Early Bronze Age flintwork includes: barbed and tanged arrowheads, small round-edged scrapers, and small plano-convex knives. Bronze objects from Thenford include a late Bronze Age hoard, possibly from the Thenford Hill Iron Age (late Bronze Age?) site.<sup>2</sup>

### **Iron Age c.700 B.C. – A.D. 43.**

After c.1000 B.C. iron working became increasingly dominant, heralding the 'Iron Age': an age of increasing population and settlement, intensive farming and land shortages. Resulting social pressures increased inter-tribal warfare, weaponry, defended sites and hardened tribal boundaries. First the Coritani, then the Catuvellauni tribe, dominated this region.

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<sup>2</sup> RCHM, p. 143.

Isolated farmsteads or larger settlements are marked by pottery scatters and quernstone fragments. That on Thenford Hill was probably a defended farmstead, enclosed by a bank.<sup>3</sup> Others preceded the Thenford villa and other settlements. Several late Iron Age coins have been found locally.

### **Romano-British A.D. 43 –A.D. c.410**

By A.D. 47 the Romans controlled Catuvellaunian territory. Part became a 'civitas' (an administrative area based upon original Iron Age tribal territories), with Verulamium (St. Albans) its capital. Certain small towns became local administrative centres. Probably Lactodorum (Towcester) served the area which included later Marston.

Most people were country dwellers, descendants of pre-Roman British. They occupied many settlements: villages, hamlets, farmsteads and villas, of differing character, situated almost everywhere.

With new implements, crops and techniques, arable and pasture land exploited in Iron Age times was more extensively farmed. 'One-way' ploughing transformed squarish, 'cross-ploughed', 'Celtic' fields into longer narrower ones. In this region of continuous cultivation, evidence of such fields is rare.

At least nine settlement sites exist in the area studied, marked by dense pottery scatters, structural remains, tesserae, objects of metal and other materials and coins. Air photography revealed crop marks of ditches, enclosures and pits on several sites.

Pottery evidence suggests occupation throughout the period, with evidence of pre- and post-Roman occupation, though not necessarily continuous. Interesting finds include: 'Belgic' pottery, clay loom-weights, shale and bone spindle whorls, a bone (knife?) handle, a bronze 'bow' brooch, finger rings, a needle, a nail cleaner and a rare owl statuette, probably representing an 'owl-goddess' of a pre-Roman cult; and from Thenford, a graffito on a small greyware pottery sherd.

Thenford's villa was partly excavated between 1971 and 1973. Underlying the buildings were late Iron Age enclosure or field boundary ditches. The earliest building was probably a first-century villa. Around A.D.300 another villa was built north of it, comprising six symmetrically arranged rooms. Others were added on the south and west sides, and a

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<sup>3</sup> RCHM, p. 143.

bathroom on the north side, of the rectangular building. Following its abandonment the site became a yard area, and occupation of some kind continued into the fifth century.<sup>4</sup>

A female figure depicted on a mosaic (preserved in Thenford House; see front cover) probably represents the owner, or one of the owner's family.<sup>5</sup>

Numerous Iron Age settlements lasted into, or throughout, Roman times, continuing native traditions. They were periodically rebuilt on new or existing sites, abandoned completely, or replaced by 'romanised' buildings, also extended or rebuilt at times.

Most villa owners were wealthier Romano-British farmers, descendants of Iron Age ones. Some villas became estate centres, with dependant settlements housing tenant farmers, or the estate work force. The mixture of villas and 'native' settlements in the area suggest villa estates existed, though impossible to prove.

#### **Sub-Roman Britain A.D. 410 – A.D. 450**

Whatever their nature, few, if any, villas functioned normally for long into the fifth century. Settlements, buildings and culture generally, reverted to a more pre-Roman tradition, after separation from Rome in A.D. 410. It was with a significant population of post-Roman Britains, culturally more 'Saxon' than 'Roman', that Saxon migrants interacted after A.D. c.450.

#### **Anglo-Saxon A.D. 450 – A.D. 1066**

A fifth/sixth-century cemetery,<sup>6</sup> and pottery scatters marking early/middle Saxon occupation sites, prove early settlement. Merging Saxons and post-Roman Britains farmed modified 'Celtic' fields, surrounding small dispersed settlements, within ancient boundaries.

Many settlements were abandoned and replaced by similar ones, often on new sites, unrelated to later ones. The 'traditional' village, still impermanent, appeared between 900 and 1200, generally after 1066. Simultaneously, open-field agriculture emerged, forerunner of the

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<sup>4</sup> RCHM, pp. 143-145.

<sup>5</sup> Salway, Peter, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Roman Britain* (1993), Thenford Mosaic, p. 385.

<sup>6</sup> *Archaeologia*, Society of Antiquaries of London, Vol. 33 (1849), pp. 326-339 and Vol. 68 (1884), Plates 22-25.

medieval open-field system. Such great changes explain the loss of many pre-Saxon place-names, though some were transferred.

Thereby, Mersc-tun (Marston), 'farm/estate near a marsh', Cot-stowe (Costow), 'cottage-place', and West-throp (Westthorp), 'dependent farm/hamlet' (west of Greatworth) probably originated and evolved in Middle Anglia.

Middle Anglia comprised numerous tribal territories ('regiones' or 'minor kingdoms') centred on ancient royal estates, such as King's Sutton, Northamptonshire, the King's 'southern tun'. Its suggested 'regio' included later south-west Northamptonshire, north-west Buckinghamshire and north Oxfordshire.<sup>7</sup>

Throughout, evolved various sized estates, originating from land grants made by kings to nobles and churches, grouped into 'hundreds' for administrative purposes. Ecclesiastical evidence suggests several south-west Northamptonshire settlements were estate centres, including Marston.<sup>8</sup> Estates were divided into 'townships' for administrative purposes, upon which later civil and ecclesiastical parishes were based. The considerable extent of Marston's estate is shown by the presence of Warkworth, Middleton Cheney and Radstone amongst its component townships.

Following the Middle Anglian mission of 653, minsters were founded at important centres, such as King's Sutton. Christianity was introduced throughout its extensive parish from mission stations on its estates, such as Marston, often in Celtic sacred places.

Later estate owners founded, and 'owned' the first churches, not necessarily on today's church sites. Chapels founded at estate townships were dependent upon Marston Church. When Marston's earliest church was founded (or sited) is unknown. It was probably of timber and later rebuilt in stone.

As an estate, parish and township centre, with church and burial ground, Marston grew during late Saxon times. Its township comprised Marston, its two hamlets and possibly others, as the later medieval open-field furlong, 'Crowton', suggests: all lying within the developing open-

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<sup>7</sup> Foard, Glen, 'The Administrative Organisation of Northamptonshire in the Saxon Period', *Anglo Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* (4), 1985, p. 199. Oxford University Committee for Archaeology.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

fields and small wooded areas. However, its estate was fragmenting, as former townships became independent territories, though ecclesiastical links with the mother church at Marston continued, some beyond Saxon times.

The late Saxon settlement probably comprised an irregular cluster of 'cots' and farmsteads near the church and bordering the small stream. Late Saxon pottery from today's Marston House suggests the lord's, or his tenant's, 'hall' stood on the site.

### **Medieval 1066-1500**

The Domesday manor comprised Marston, its hamlets and part of Warkworth. with between 135 and 225 inhabitants. Its four hides, ten plough-teams, watermill and meadow were worth ten pounds in 1066 and 1086.<sup>9</sup> Such manors were usually leased.

From it originated three medieval manors, *St. Evroul*, (Lincoln) *Prebendal* and (Lincoln) *Deanery*, resulting from two grants: that of the church to St. Evroul, Normandy (between 1071 and 1081);<sup>10</sup> and Marston and Warkworth lands to Lincoln Cathedral (between 1141 and 1153).<sup>11</sup>

Manorial lands lay in open fields, except the Lincoln manor demesne, enclosed in medieval times. Detached, shared meadows and pasture lay in Middleton Cheney and Warkworth parishes.

The few surviving manorial records provide some detail.

St. Evroul's manor comprised seven virgates (demesne), a windmill, and one virgate at Thenford (1272). Villein tenants held one virgate and cottagers four lands (strips). Obligations included paying an aid (gift) to the lord every three years, mowing, haymaking, carrying, hoeing and reaping on the lord's demesne, who provided food and drink.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Morris, John (Gen. ed.), *Domesday Book* (21), *Northamptonshire*, Phillimore, 1979. Marston St. Lawrence – fo. 224d., 22.4.

<sup>10</sup> *The Ecclesiastical History of Ordoric Vitalis*, vol. III, Books V and VI – Oxford Mediaeval Texts, edited and translated by Marjorie Chibnall. Oxford 1972, pp. 238-239.

<sup>11</sup> Lincolnshire Archives Office, Lincoln (LAO). MS orig. A1/1/40 (R 166).

<sup>12</sup> French Archives – Archives Départementales de L'Orne, Alençon, France. Duval, Louis, *Summary Inventory of the Departmental Archives prior to 1790, Orne, Ecclesiastical Archives – Series H (Male Abbeys)*, Vol. 1, Alençon, 1891. St. Evroul, Marston St. Lawrence, p. 190, H896.



Lincoln manorial lands were granted for a yearly supply of ‘certain Northampton gloves’ in 1159 to 1163.<sup>13</sup> The manor was confirmed to Bishop Hugh I by King Richard I in 1194.<sup>14</sup> In 1315 Hugh Reson of Marston surrendered his rights to the Deanery manor’s ‘mill of Frankelow by Warkworth’, which yielded five shillings annual rent between 1148 and 1163.<sup>15</sup> Both lords were fined in 1329 for punishing users of false measures by fine, instead of tumbrel and pillory.<sup>16</sup> Other tenants recorded were Richard Florkyn, chief villein (1374), John Smart (1403-4) and William White (1445).<sup>17</sup>

Between 1240 and 1272 a toft, arable and meadow at Westhorp were granted to St. Evroul.<sup>18</sup> Stray cattle ate growing corn on the Deanery manor’s Westhorp lands in 1320: the owners were bound over on pain of a fine.<sup>19</sup> The Prebendal manor had free tenants there in the thirteenth century.

Costow hamlet yielded two shillings annual rent between 1148 and 1163.<sup>20</sup> It comprised tofts, crofts, a messuage, garden and pond, marlpits, watermills, arable and meadow. One twelfth-century resident, Aldred, held the toft (dwelling site) nearest to an ‘ancient’ watermill.<sup>21</sup> St. Andrew’s Priory at Northampton, Daventry Priory and Lincoln Cathedral owned property there. Unlike Westhorp, it declined during medieval and later times.

Medieval Marston comprised a church, vicarage, manor houses and various dwellings with fishponds, watermill and windmill beyond.

The present church was built around 1200, with later alteration and additions, from Early English to Victorian Gothic: a church which St. Evroul had ‘to their own use’ (1272).<sup>22</sup> The Churchyard Yew, over 1,500 years

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<sup>13</sup> LAO, Marston St. Lawrence, MS orig. Dij/83/2/35. R 168.

<sup>14</sup> LAO, Marston St. Lawrence, MS orig. A1/1/41, R 169.

<sup>15</sup> LAO, Marston St. Lawrence. Dij/83/2/34, R 167.

<sup>16</sup> *Placita De Quo Warrento* – Record Commission, 1878. Marston St. Lawrence, p. 500, 522. Crown inquiry into the rights of manorial Lords.

<sup>17</sup> LAO, Marston St. Lawrence. Bj/2/10, fo. 73 and Bj/2/14, fo. 6-7.

<sup>18</sup> French Archives, St. Evroul Abbey, Marston St. Lawrence, H936, p. 195.

<sup>19</sup> LAO, Marston St. Lawrence. Dij/83/2/32.

<sup>20</sup> LAO, Marston St. Lawrence, Dij/83/2/34, R 167.

<sup>21</sup> British Library, MS.Cott.Vesp. Exvii, f.1536. Marston St. Lawrence

<sup>22</sup> French Archives, St. Evroul Abbey, Marston St. Lawrence. H896, p. 189.

old, was a sapling in Saxon, if not Roman times: a silent witness of Marston's origin and development.

The earliest Vicarage lay west of today's Marston House.

Village dwellings comprised an irregular cluster of landless family 'cots', villein tenants' 'longhouses', and later several 'courtyard' farms of emerging 'yeoman' farmers.

The St. Evroul, Deanery and Prebendal manor houses occupied today's Marston House, the former Georgian Vicarage and Church Cottage sites respectively.

Marston's twelfth or thirteenth century, 'planned', northward extension, was probably due to increasing population.

It was the prelude to the greater changes of post-medieval times.

### **Sources and further reading**

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## Book Reviews

**Aspects of Helmdon.** No. 2. Helmdon branch W.E.A., 1998. A5, 56 pp., £3.50 (payable to WEA Helmdon Branch) from Mrs A.L. Harwood, The Old Bakehouse, 44 Church Street, Helmdon, Northants NN13 5QJ.

Two issues back we reviewed the first *Aspects of Helmdon*, and it is good that a second has now appeared. As with its predecessor it is admirable in content and presentation.

Audrey Harwood follows up her research into Helmdon bakers with a similar piece on the village's four pubs and their various landlords. The Cross appears to have been the longest established, appropriately enough probably run by the Cross family in earlier centuries, though the evidence for this is of necessity circumstantial. The Chequers was the other alehouse or inn, with the William IV (later the Bell) and the Cock and Magpie as beerhouses. Only the Bell still survives to offer refreshment to Helmdon's present inhabitants, but Audrey has unearthed a commendable amount about all four from a wide range of sources.

Valerie Moir contributes two pieces. The first is an account of work done transcribing the gravestones in the churchyard, which should encourage readers to undertake similar work elsewhere. Her major article on Helmdon Enclosure is a *tour de force*. It opens with a general description of the former open field system, and a map of Helmdon's own pre-enclosure layout. The parish comprised three manors, with two Oxford colleges, Magdalen and Worcester, each being major landowners, together the Shortland family. For the researcher this is fortunate, as shown by a 1731 rent roll preserved at Worcester College. But the real treasure is a series of letters written in 1758 by the Commissioner, Mr Francis Burton, to the Reverend Dr Jenner at Magdalen College. This illustrates vividly the process from start to finish, with much human detail. It is not surprising that Burton was Commissioner, as he was agent to William Cartwright of Aynho, the M.P. who was to present the petition to Parliament. He clearly worked conscientiously and hard on the scheme, but was not without his personal problems: '*...my little boy ... is all next week to go through a medical discipline for ye Worms, by which he is almost eaten up. I hardly ever saw so large a Breed of those noxious insects...*' Two years later he was to propose a similar enclosure for Aynho. Nicholas Cooper, in his history of *Aynho* (pp.177-8), suggests he was a melancholy man lacking in drive and ready to see difficulties. His experiences at Helmdon do not seem to bear this out, but he would be well aware of all that was involved.

The booklet concludes with reminiscences of three 'old inhabitants', always worth recording. The pagination continues from the preceding issue, which will greatly help the eventual index.

**The Story of The Oxfordshire Yeomanry, Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars, 1798-1998**, by David Eddershaw, Oxfordshire Yeomanry Trust (TA Centre, Oxford Road, Banbury OX16 9AN), 1998. A5, 96 pp., £7.95.

Four years ago we published T.E. Nicholls' 'The Year of the Yeomanry. 1794-1994', to mark the bicentenary of the foundation of the Yeomanry. It was not for another four years that the first yeomanry troop was formed in Oxfordshire, hence the bicentenary that this excellent history celebrates.

One's immediate impression is 'What an attractive book', from its colourful cover and many illustrations. David Eddershaw is a well known speaker on local history subjects, and his text is a model of readability combined with authority. A book of this size obviously includes much more than Mr Nicholls' 13-page article, even though covering much the same material. However they far from duplicate each other, though his *Yeomanry Memories* is rightly quoted as an important source.

In those two hundred years our local yeomanry, like most volunteer forces, has been through many vicissitudes and as many names. It has benefitted from the close involvement of the Churchill family, from the first award of 'Queen's Own' by Queen Adelaide in 1835 – which led to the Hussars' nickname 'Queer Objects on Horses' - to their place of honour in the funeral procession of Sir Winston Churchill, who had been associated with the regiment for much of his life.

One of those first troops formed in 1798 was for Banbury and Bloxham Hundreds (under Captain Thomas Cobb – the reference to him as 'Sir' is surely a mistake). In July 1998 this 200-hundred year tradition was appropriately celebrated with the presentation of a scroll granting the regiment (in its present form as 5 (QOOH) Squadron in 39<sup>th</sup> (Skinners) Signal Regiment) the Freedom of Banbury.

Let us hope that current threats to diminish territorial forces do not bring an end to this proud tradition.

**J.S.W.G.**

A special exhibition, '*Queer Objects on Horses – 200 years of the Oxfordshire Yeomanry*', is at present on display at the Oxfordshire Museum at Fletchers House, Woodstock. until 24<sup>th</sup> January 1999. It then moves to Banbury Museum, where it will be from 30<sup>th</sup> January to 10<sup>th</sup> April 1999.

Well worth a visit!

## **Deddington and District History Society**

We welcome yet another newly formed village and area society. Aims are similar to the many others in Banburyshire, to promote awareness of and interest in the history of their locality, in this case Deddington and its neighbourhood. Monthly meeting will offer a mix of lectures and events (such as exhibitions and visits) of interest not just to members but to anyone living in the area. Most will probably merely like to attend meetings, but anyone wanting to carry out research into local and family history can expect to find in this Society, as in any similar ones, a friendly and supportive environment, with much advice on offer. This is particularly the case here, as the Chairman is Chris. Day, formerly on the staff of the Oxfordshire *Victoria County History*.

Annual membership is £7 for individuals or £12 for couples. Non-members pay £2 a meeting, refundable on joining the Society. Meetings are usually held at the Windmill Centre, Hempton Road, on the second Wednesday of the month at 7.30 p.m. (fortunately the day before meetings of the B.H.S.).

*Contacts:* Chris Day (Chairman), 37 Gaveston Gardens, Deddington OX15 0NX; tel. 01869 337204; Mrs Moira Byast (Hon. Sec.), 5 The Lanc, Hempton, Deddington; tel. 01869 338637.

## **Bloxham Village Museum**

A new exhibition opens on 13<sup>th</sup> December, 'The Story of an old Bloxham Family', four hundred years of history seen through the eyes of one family.

Who rode on the first and last train through Bloxham? Who plastered ceilings in Los Angeles? Who founded the first village band? Who escaped the fate of the *Titanic* because of a sick child?

The answer each time is 'A Manning'.

A wealth of artifacts and archives, brought together from as far afield as Canada, enrich the four hundred years' history of this remarkable Bloxham family.

Opening times are from 2.30 to 4.30 on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December and then every second Sunday until Easter; thereafter until June every Sunday and Bank Holiday 2.30 to 5.30.

Congratulations to Bloxham Village Museum which has been awarded 'Full Registration' by the Museums and Galleries Commission, guaranteeing that the Museum meets high standards in collection care, public services and museum management.

The Curator, Yvonne Huntriss, can be contacted on 01265 720283.

## 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).

*Oxfordshire and North Berkshire Protestation Returns and Tax Assessments 1641-1642* (vol. 24).

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

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.

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**.

