

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

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

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Cover: Banbury's most famous Member of Parliament – Lord North
(drawing appearing in *Lord North*, P.D.G. Thomas, Allen Lane, 1976,
reproduced by kind permission of the Mary Evans Picture Gallery)

DIGITAL CAKE & COCKHORSE

After a lot of hard work by our supplier (see next page) the whole run of *Cake & Cockhorse* from the first typed and duplicated issue of September 1959 to today's professional-looking magazine, to the end of Volume 15, is now available on CD-ROM in what is known as the Acrobat format.

It is difficult to do justice to *Digital Cake & Cockhorse* in an article: the CD-ROM does just what it says on the label, in that it gives access to the entire body of research published by the Society over the last 45 years: and it is, after all, on its content that we and our journal must be judged.

For those who are not familiar with Acrobat it combines two different functions in one. At its lowest level it provides an on-screen facsimile of every copy of *Cake & Cockhorse* and, if anyone really wants to, it is possible to read each issue on screen or to print out any issue or article.

However the most important aspect of the Acrobat format is its ability to provide an underlying, and invisible, Optical Character Recognition image. The use of OCR means that not only can the issues be read normally on the screen, but a computer can read the text too. The software to do this [Acrobat Reader] is on almost all computers and, if it is not, it is available free of charge on the internet and elsewhere.

As a result of it being in a 'machine readable' format it is possible to build an index to the entire run of *C&CH*. Users can type in any word that interests them and the computer will provide a list of each volume, issue and page number it finds. A mouse click on any reference takes the user directly to that page, which can then be read or printed out.

Those who are familiar with the Acrobat format do not need to be told what an astonishing tool this is – those who are as yet unaware of its potential are certainly missing out on a great research tool.

Digital Cake & Cockhorse is available on a single CD-ROM, with instructions, and can be used on almost any type of computer. It will be available to members for the provisional price of £35, and will be updated at modest cost every year or so.

So that you can have an idea of what it *looks* like (but not of the global indexing) a sample issue is on the Society's web site at

www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk/banburymuseum/candc.cfm

In the future we hope that all the issues will be available on line, as well as on the CD-ROM.

Colin Cohen

To enable us to estimate demand, enquiries – *without commitment to purchase, send no payment* – should be made the Hon. Secretary, Banbury Historical Society, c/o Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury OX16 2PQ. In due course a pro-forma invoice will be sent and copies provided on receipt of payment.

For anyone who wants to tackle a similar problem we used CS-Image (Simplifile) Limited, 35 Castle Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 1DA; telephone: 01455 631201. They cannot be recommended highly enough.

Whilst it will be possible to print-out articles of interest from the CD-ROM, it should not be forgotten that most back issues of *Cake & Cockhorse* are still available in their original printed version. On enquiry by letter or phone to Jeremy Gibson (see inside front cover) copies can be provided at give-away prices – effectively cost of postage and packing.

Edgehill Battlefield Project

The Battlefields Trust, working in partnership with the local community, has just begun a major new survey on the battlefield of Edgehill, the first great battle of the Civil War. The project is grant-aided by the Local Heritage Initiative, has the co-operation of the landowner (the Ministry of Defence) and the assistance of the County Council and Portable Antiquities Scheme. Over the next two years the Trust will be investigating the history and archaeology of the battle and battle field. For up-to-date information check the UK Battlefields Resource Centre:

<http://www.battlefieldstrust.com/resource-centre>

THE BANBURY JOURNAL, 1722-1761

R.K. Gilkes

The Banbury Journal provides a valuable insight into the workings of the town council over the years 1722 to 1761.¹

The town's governing Charter, granted by George I in 1718, had vested the whole business of the corporation in the Common Council, composed of the Mayor, twelve Aldermen (from whom the Mayor was chosen) and six Capital Burgesses;² for all municipal purposes these eighteen men constituted the ruling body of the borough.

At the base of the council hierarchy a minor role in proceedings was played by thirty Assistants, elected by the Common Council from among the 'good and discreet men inhabiting the said Borough or elsewhere', whose purpose – according to the Charter – was 'from time to time' to 'be assistant and helping to the Mayor'; in practice, however, their main contribution was to join with the members of the Common Council to elect the Mayor, who would, himself, have risen from the position of Assistant to that of Burgess and thence to Alderman.

The Charter required that the Mayor be elected on the first Monday in September and to serve for one year from the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel (29 September), on which date he would be sworn into office. The mayoral elections in the years from 1723 to 1760, which are recorded in the Journal, followed a simple procedure: first of all, the members of the Common Council would meet to select two of the Aldermen to stand as candidates; in 1736, for example, the first Council nominees were three former Mayors – Richard Burrows (1714), Blagrave Gregory (1723 and 1729), and Edward Box (1733) – but all were rejected; new names were put forward and, after further discussion and subsequent votes, Henry Pettipher and William Greenall – neither of whom had yet served as Mayor – were chosen for election; William Greenall became Mayor in 1736 and again in 1744, 1748 and 1758 when he died in office; Henry Pettipher was never elected [119, 120b].³ The Councillors were joined by the Assistants in the final choice of Mayor.

¹ Oxfordshire Record Office, B.B. XV/ii/1. First 35ff (1718-21) missing.

² Capital Burgesses are subsequently referred to (except in quotations) as 'Burgesses'.

³ Journal page numbers.

We could reasonably assume that the two nominated Aldermen would already have expressed their willingness to stand, but the Journal records fourteen occasions when the successful candidate then refused to serve, thereby incurring a 'reasonable' fine, the amount to be set by the Council, but not to exceed £5; the selection procedure had to be gone through again. The details of these refusals, as recorded in the Journal, are as follows:

1723 – 2 September.

Candidates: Anthony Haines, Blgrave Gregory.

Vote first taken on whether each should stand.

Then vote to decide which shall be Mayor:

Mr Haines chosen (16 votes), Mr Gregory (8) [39].

Mr Haines refused to serve and submitted to fine of 2 guineas.

Vote then taken whether Thomas Stokes should stand and agreed he should.

In deciding vote Mr Gregory elected (24), Mr Stokes (0) [40].

1724 – 7 September.

Candidates: Thomas Stokes, James West.

Mr Stokes elected (25-0); refused to serve and fined 3 guineas [he served as Mayor 1730/1 and 1737/8].

Agreed Richard Thompson should stand with Mr West.

Mr West elected (20-6) [43].

1725 – September.

Candidates: Richard Thompson, William Goodwin.

Mr Thompson elected (20-6); refused to serve, paid fine of £5.

Francis Goodwin then voted to stand [Mayor 1708/9, 1718/9].

Mr William Goodwin elected (23-4), but refused to serve and fined £5.

Thomas Wardd voted to stand.

Mr Francis Goodwin then elected over Mr Wardd [47b, 48, 48b].

1729 – September.

Candidates: Anthony Haines, Blgrave Gregory.

Mr Haines elected but refused to serve and fined £5.

Thomas Stokes voted to stand.

Mr Gregory elected (25-1) [64b, 65].

1735 – September.

Candidates: Foulk Rainbow [Mayor 1720/1, 1726/7], Thomas Stokes.

Mr Rainbow elected (13-11), refused to serve and fined 3 guineas [Candidate for Mayor in 1737 and 1740, but defeated by Thomas Stokes and Edward Box].

Henry Clarson [sen.] voted to stand.

Mr Stokes elected (15-10), refused to serve [Mayor 1730/1, 1737/8] and fined 3 guineas.

James West voted to stand.

Mr Clarson elected over Mr West (19-6) [109b, 110].

1738 – 4 September.

Candidates: William Goodwin, James West.

Mr Goodwin elected, but handed in his resignation as Alderman [no longer an eligible mayoral candidate]; resignation accepted and Henry Clarson [sen.] elected to stand as Mayor.

Mr West elected (24-1) [129b-130b].

1745 – 2 September.

Candidates: Thomas Stokes [Mayor 1730/1, 1737/8], Thomas Bradford [Mayor 1739/40, 1752/3].

Mr Stokes elected (21-0), refused to serve and submitted to fine of 2 guineas.

The amount of the fine had been discussed and amounts of 5, 3 and 2 guineas had been proposed.

Second election:

Candidates: Thomas Bradford, Edward Box.

Mr Bradford elected (19-1), did not accept and submitted to fine of 2 guineas.

Third election:

Candidates: Samuel Sansbury, Edward Box [Mayor 1733/4, 1740/1].

Mr Box elected (19-2), did not accept, fined 2 guineas.

Fourth election:

Candidates: Samuel Sansbury, Richard Wheatly [Mayor 1742/3].

Mr Sansbury elected. (20-0) [176b-180].

1750 – 3 September

Candidates: John Miller, Samuel Clarson.

Mr Miller elected (27-2), did not accept, fined 2 guineas, which he paid immediately to the Chamberlain [he would appear to have come prepared!].

Thomas Bradford voted to stand.

Mr Clarson elected (26-3) [206b, 207].

1754 – 2 September

Candidates: Edward Burford, William Overton.

Mr Burford elected (22-1), did not accept and paid fine of £5 to Chamberlain.

Henry Clarson voted to stand.

Mr Overton elected (18-5) [226b, 227].

1758 – 4 September

Candidates: William Deacle, William Greenall.

Mr Deacle elected (24-0), refused to stand, fined £5.

Samuel Clarson voted to stand.

Mr Greenall elected (22-2); he died in October, and on 1 November Samuel Clarson was elected [by the Common Council only] to succeed him for the remainder of the mayoral year [248, 248b].

Fines were also imposed on those who refused to serve as Aldermen. Burgess, John Miller, elected Alderman on 8 July 1745, on the death of James West, did not accept and was fined [172b, 173]. In 1753 there was another aldermanic vacancy, created by the death of George Robins, and the Rev. Francis Wise and the Rev. John Wardle, Vicar of Banbury, were chosen to contest it. Mr Wise was elected on 21 May, but refused to accept, as indeed did Mr Wardle, who was elected on 29 May [220, 221]. By unanimous vote of the Common Council, Mr Wise was again chosen to stand as Alderman on 1 November 1758, and again refused to serve; this, of course, meant a fine of £5 – as had his earlier refusal in 1753 – and it may well have been this expensive consequence which persuaded him to change his mind to accept election and to be sworn as Alderman on 7 December 1758 [251, 252].

However, refusal to serve as Justice of the Peace did not incur a fine. Thomas Stokes, licensee of the Three Tuns in the Horsefair (Banbury's leading tavern, now incorporated in the Whately Arms) and named in the 1718 Charter as one of the Borough's Capital Burgesses, refused the office on 16 October 1734 [101b], as he did again on 23 September 1735 [111].⁴

The voting figures given in the Journal extracts indicate a consistent lack of enthusiasm and commitment on the part of Aldermen, Burgesses and Assistants – 48 men in all – whose responsibility was the election of the borough's Mayor. A total of only 21 votes was cast in 1749 to elect George Robbins, Charles Hide in 1759 and William Hows in 1760. The highest total number cast – 30 – returned Thomas Bradford in 1752; in fact, the average turnout in the years 1723 to 1760 was no more than 25. It was the responsibility of the Sergeants-at-Mace to deliver – either in person or by message – the summonses to all council activities, but so few turned up for the election due on 5 September 1737 – Charter Day – that 'no Mayor could be chose' [126] until the following day when Thomas Stokes was preferred to Fulke Rainbow by 20 votes to 2. Thomas Stokes had also been involved in 1730, when absenteeism (only eight Aldermen, four Burgesses and six Assistants attended) delayed both his election and his taking the mayoral oath until 18 December [71b, 72, 73].

Apart from mayoral elections there were also occasions when the business of the Common Council was similarly impeded by the failure of

⁴ See J.S.W. Gibson, 'The Three Tuns in the Eighteenth Century', *C&CH*, 8.1, 3.

members to turn up to meetings, when required. In 1734 Mayor Edward Box called a Hall for 22 July, but business was postponed as too few Aldermen and Burgesses obeyed the call of the Sergeants-at-Mace. For the same reason, the Hall called by the Mayor for 6 August 'to consult about divers weighty affairs and matters for the good and benefit of this Corporation' could not be held [96]. Halls called by Edward Box for 23 September and on two further occasions before 29 September, when his elected successor, Samuel Sansbury, was to have taken his oath of office and begun his mayoral year, did not attract a quorum, although Richard Page and William Bloxham, the Sergeants-at-Mace, testified that all Aldermen and Burgesses had been summoned, either personally or by message [98b]. Whatever 'divers weighty affairs and matters for the good and benefit of the Corporation' Mr Box had in mind, his apathetic fellow Councillors were not impressed! A notable absentee from the Hall held on 4 March 1758 was the Town Clerk, Mr Benjamin Aplin, who was promptly fined 10s.6d. for his negligence [244b].

The generally low level of attendance at the election of a mayor could be explained as apathy, especially among the Assistants; it might also suggest that the number of Assistants had fallen below the thirty prescribed by the 1718 Charter. The Journal records the election of very few Assistants, and there is seldom any mention of vacancies needing to be filled. On 2 September 1736 no fewer than twelve names were proposed as Assistants: William Cartwright, the Hon. John Wills, Henry Abraham, Christopher Doyley, Richard Wheatly the Elder, Thomas Strank, Richard Woodfield, Richard Kening, Francis Goodwin, Bernard Harris, Dr Metcalf and Thomas Paynton. All were rejected by vote of the Common Council; but then, just two days later, William Cartwright and the Hon. John Wills were elected; Henry Abraham, Richard Wheatly, Christopher Doyley and Thomas Strank were also considered again, but were again rejected [115b-117]. On 5 September 1743 the Rt. Hon. Richard Lord Saye and Sele and Richard Wycham[sic] were elected as Assistants, but, in both cases, the note 'not accepts' has been added to the Journal entry [161b]. John Jarvis in 1744 [169], Richard Turner, Nathaniel Goodwin and William Long in 1759 were rejected [255]. On the other hand, Assistants John Blencow and Ambrose Holbech in 1729 had wanted to resign, but their resignations were not accepted [68b, 69b]; however, Dr Andrew Tryst's⁵ resignation in 1744 was [168b].

⁵ See J.W. and B.C. Crook, 'The House at Pye Corner', *C&CH*, 13.8, 220.

The Common Council's selection procedure was certainly irregular. On 29 September 1734 Richard Wheatly was rejected as Assistant by a vote of 7-6, but a 12-2 vote on 16 October accepted him as both Assistant and Burgess [99, 101]. Subsequently, he was elected Alderman, on 21 April 1742 [151], and Mayor that same year on 6 September (his only service as Mayor) [153b, 154]. There are other instances of a man being elected Assistant and Burgess at the same time: the Rev. Mr Francis Wise, for example, on 11 March 1736 [123b]; Charles Hide on 11 September 1753 [223b, 224], and William Hows on 2 September 1755 [231]. The cutler, Nathaniel Reason, however, seems to have been *persona non grata* as far as the Common Council was concerned for, try as he might, he was unable to progress beyond the state of Assistant. Nominated as a Burgess candidate on 14 July 1749, he was rejected in favour of the Rev. John Wardle by a vote of 8-5 [200]; on 3 July and 22 July 1751 he was first rejected in favour of Henry Clarson [jun.] by 9-0 [209] and then in favour of William Jarvis, by 9-2 [209b]; even more decisively – by 14-1 – he lost to Charles Wyatt on 6 September 1756 [238b]; nominated for the last time on 11 September 1759, the Journal records that he 'was not allowed to stand for election' as Burgess by 8-6 [255].

In contrast to Nathaniel Reason, Henry Clarson [sen.], dyer, could hardly have been more popular with the members of the Common Council: on the one day – 30 December 1730 – he was elected Assistant, Burgess and Alderman [74b]; less than a year later – on 6 September 1731 – he just lost out to James West in the election for Mayor [77b], but succeeded in 1732 with a decisive 22-1 defeat of Edward Box [86b]; he went on (at the third ballot over James West) to serve as Mayor from 1735 [109b, 110], and again, from 1743, by 24-1 votes over William Greenall [162b, 163]; he was again preferred over William Greenall in 1747, by 23-1 votes [191b], but died in harness on 14 March 1748/9, William Hide taking over the remainder of the mayoral year [193b]. (His son – also Henry, baptised on 4 April 1713 – followed in his father's footsteps by serving as Mayor in 1755-6, 1765-6 and 1777-8).

For the most part, Henry Clarson [sen.] maintained his popularity to the last, but it had been threatened in 1736 when he unwisely overreached himself during his second turn as Mayor: in Common Hall on 31 March he took it upon himself to nominate 'two persons as candidates for office of Capital Burgess against consent of the majority of Aldermen and Capital Burgesses then present contrary to the ancient

custom and usage of the Borough and in pursuance to such nomination did pretend to elect William Jarvis as a Capital Burgess in the room of William Greenall at the same Hall made Alderman'. This unconstitutional behaviour was legally challenged by Mr Clarkson's fellow members of the Common Council, with the result that judgement was given against the Mayor's 'pretended right of nomination' and the subsequent election of William Jarvis was declared null and void [132, 132b]. This stricture was probably responsible for Henry Clarkson's rejection in favour of James West in the mayoral election of 4 September 1738 [130, 130b], but it cannot have been held against him for too long as he was Mayor again in 1743.

Another falling-out between the Mayor and members of the Common Council came about in January 1729/30, and is recorded in the Journal. For some reason – known only to himself – the then Mayor, Blagrave Gregory, took it into his head to adjourn, until six o'clock, the Hall which had met in the forenoon of 12 January 1729/30. His refusal to offer any explanation for this unilateral decision drew a written protest from Council members; they protested 'First because we conceive that the Mayor has not any power to adjourn a Hall contrary to the consent of the majority of the members present at such a meeting. Secondly, because Mr Mayor being asked what business he had to propose refused to declare the same.'

The protest was signed by the Recorder, George Wheate, and councillors Edward Box, Thomas Bradford, Richard Burrows, Robert Greenall, Henry Pettipher, Thomas Stokes, Thomas Ward and James West – four of them former mayors. The Mayor's response was to adjourn the Hall to 11 a.m. on 13 January, and then, when all were assembled, he adjourned the Hall until 11 a.m. on 14 January; once assembled, he adjourned the Hall until 6 p.m. that same day; at that time a little business was quickly dealt with – the decision to reject the resignation of John Blencow as an Assistant and to oppose the election of Charles Fox as Burgess – after which the Mayor adjourned the Hall to 5 p.m. on 15 January. Seemingly intent on acting perversely, the Mayor allowed the Councillors to meet, only to send them away until 11 a.m. on 16 January when yet again, no Council business was considered [68. 68b, 69].

The story fades away, because no further reference to, or explanation of this strange behaviour is to be found in the Journal.

It was the twelve Aldermen who constituted the main authority within the Common Council, on occasion acting independently of the six Burgesses; the Journal records 'a Hall held by legal summons by the

Aldermen' on 18 August 1730. The purpose of the meeting was to elect a Sergeant-at-Mace to succeed William Saunders, deceased. Five candidates were considered: Benjamin Falkerd, Robert Re[y]nolds, Jeremiah Palmer, Joseph Bloxham and his younger brother, William. The inclusion of Benjamin Falkerd is particularly surprising, as he had been dismissed as Sergeant-at-Mace at a Hall held on 17 July 1729 'for a misbehaviour to the Corporation' (the nature of his 'misbehaviour' is not given) [62b], and William Saunders had replaced him on 23 July 1729 [63]. Falkerd was rejected – 'he don't stand' – as were Renolds and Palmer. Joseph Bloxham was chosen by 8-2 votes to stand against his brother, but William, who had been only narrowly selected to stand – by 6-5 votes – was finally elected by the same margin [70b, 71]. With hindsight, it might have been better had Joseph been elected, as on 20 January 1740/1 it was agreed to remove William from office 'on account of misbehaviour and insufficiency.' Joseph Wise was elected in his place [142b] and the Wise family was to hold this office until the death of Joseph's great-grandson in May 1851.⁶

It is not possible, from the Journal, to establish what, for all Council meetings, was considered to be a quorum; the word itself is not used in the Journal, and the phrase '[so many] attended and were not a required majority', which is used, is not quantified to serve as a guide for all occasions [71b]. Consider, for example, the matter of the election of a Deputy Recorder on 10 February 1752: Alderman William Greenall was ill at home, so the Hall – that is, all six of the Councillors who had earlier gathered at the Town Hall – adjourned to his house to ask his approbation for the appointment of William Deacle as Deputy Recorder, 'he having been nominated by John Miller, Recorder'; by 7-0 votes Deacle was elected 'and immediately the Hall adjourned back to the Town Hall'; as far as the Journal was concerned, that closed the business of the day [214]. Are we to assume, therefore, that seven Councillors out of a possible twelve Aldermen and six Burgesses, or just seven out of twelve Aldermen was, to them, an acceptable quorum where six out of just twelve Aldermen was not?

At a Hall held on 21 May 1753 it was agreed that 'no one hereafter was to be chosen Capital Burgess without first taking up and being admitted Freeman of the Corporation for such money as the Corporation votes' [220b]. The Journal records the names of 107 Banbury citizens –

⁶ P. Renold, *Banbury Gaol Records*, B.H.S. 21, 210.

only some of them Burgesses – who were admitted as Freemen between 1723 and 1759; it also records how much they were required to pay for the privilege ‘granted on account of (1) service (2) birth’.⁷ These amounts were set by the Common Council and varied considerably: charges of two, three, four and five guineas were most often made, but there are instances where the figure was £6, £8, £10 and £15; even these were far outstripped by the £50 required of Rowland Gunion/Gungion on 27 September 1728 – the same day that John Gilkes was charged four guineas and Daniel Sale five guineas for the freedom, so we do have to wonder by what process of reasoning the members of the Common Council arrived at these figures in the first place [61]. Whatever the process was, it was dented somewhat by post-rider and innkeeper William Driver who, on 19 May 1740, challenged his assessment and managed to get a charge of £4 reduced to £3 [138, 138b].

From 1752 the freeman’s payment appears to have been fixed at five guineas – except in the case of the Rt. Hon. Frederick North, Lord North, who was admitted freeman on 17 June 1754, on payment of ‘what his Lordship pleases’ and was pleased to pay ‘into the Chamberlain’s hands Ten Guineas’ [225b].⁸

For others, the charge was waived altogether. [Jochin Philip] Ludowig Ripkee, ‘former trumpeter in Lord Harford’s Regiment of Horse, Captain Marcham’s Troop’,⁹ was granted the Freedom of the Borough on 14 July 1749, simply on payment of fees for admission, ‘he being late a soldier’ [200b]. John Wrighton, ostler at the Three Tuns in the Horsefair, and victualler John Tustain were excused payment on 29 May 1750, ‘if they can show that they are eldest sons of freemen of Banbury’ [204]. On 30 March 1752 it was agreed that Thomas Wise – admitted in 1751 on payment of five guineas – ‘should not pay, he having served his apprenticeship to a freeman for one year’; the Chamberlain accordingly repaid him his five guineas; Samuel Sale was in the same situation – but there is no mention of his having been reimbursed [210, 210b, 215]! John Johnston and John Lambley in 1755, and Andrew Annesley in 1757, were also charged admission fees only [233, 234, 234b, 241b].

The Journal does not tell us how much these admission fees ‘for freedom filing and entering’ were, but we learn from the Chamberlain’s

⁷ Town Clerk’s Book of Forms and Precedents, 1797, 37.

⁸ See pages 104-111, Lord North’s correspondence relating to Corporation affairs.

⁹ Marriage Register of Banbury, Part 2, 1724-1790 (BHS 3), 24 April 1748.

Account that in 1747 they amounted to £2.3s.6d.¹⁰ A figure of 13s.3d. is given by the Town Clerk in 1797, made up as follows:

| | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 'Stamp which is on a Bailpiece | 2. | 3 |
| Mayor | | 6 |
| Chamber | 1. | 6 |
| Chamberlain | 2. | 0 |
| Town Clerk | 2. | 0 |
| Sergeants-at-Mace | 2. | 0 |
| Wine and Cakes | 3. | 0 ¹¹ |

Then, in the last days of the close corporations, the 1835 Report of Commissioners, appointed in 1833 to enquire into the state of the old municipal corporations, states that 'on taking up his freedom each person pays the sum of £5.14s. to the corporate fund, besides the stamp upon his admission. He also pays a fee of one guinea to the town clerk.' The Commissioners found that there were, at the time, 'no freemen excepting members of the Corporation' and 'as freemen all the members of the Corporation are by an express clause in the governing charter exempted from serving on juries for the county of Oxford out of the borough'; they 'could not discover any other privilege to which they are entitled.'¹²

Although a fair amount of space in the Journal is taken up with recording the election to office of the members of the Common Council – the Mayor, Aldermen and Capital Burgeses – and their Assistants, and the admission of Freemen of the Borough, there are sufficient entries to illustrate the Council's responsibilities in borough administration. Borough officers were appointed: Recorder, Chamberlain, Town Clerk, Auditors, Bridgemasters, Testers ('Gustators'), Searchers ('Scrutators'); and, for the first time, at a Hall on 17 December 1733, paid Scavengers were set to work cleansing the streets of the borough [94].

Property owned by the Corporation was let to provide income: on 15 January 1734/5 it was agreed that James Stewart could lease the room under the Latin school at 20s. per annum, payable quarterly [105b]; on

¹⁰ Chamberlain's Account, 1747-1816, 1.

¹¹ Town Clerk's Book of Forms and Precedents, 1797, 37. The item for 'Wine and Cakes' was first entered in the Chamberlain's Account in 1777 and regularly included thereafter as 'Cake Money'.

¹² First Report, Section 20, 11.

21 March 1743/4 a house in Sheep Street was leased to Robert Wild for twenty-one years at a charge of £6 a year, payable by two equal instalments at Michaelmas and Lady Day (the tenant was to put the house in repair and 'at the end of lease to leave it so') [155b]. The Leather Hall was leased to Henry Cole for seven years in 1752 at the yearly rental of £1.15s.0d. [215].

In 1752 it was agreed that Virgin Mascord should continue to rent 'a garden in Banbury till Michas. Day next', for which she was to pay £4 [219b]. Another extension of an agreement was made on 7 December 1758, with Mr Harrison, who 'from St. Thomas next' was to pay 20s. a year 'for his school and to keep and leave the windows in repair' [252b]. At a Hall on 5 November 1744 it was agreed that the Constables should erect, in the Cow Fair, a Common Pound 'at a convenient distance from the Chapel Well'; it was to be eight yards square, 'of oak, not exceeding 18d. a foot for the posts and 4½d. a foot for planks' [171b]. However, it does not appear to have been built, because on 5 November 1748 the Council granted to William Hide and Benjamin Aplin (recently appointed Town Clerk) a 21-year lease, to begin as from Michaelmas 1748, of a 'strip of ground between the two common roads from Chapel Well so far as the ground extends down where the said two roads meet'; for this they were to pay a rent of 10s. yearly, and on it they were to build 'a Pound and to have all profits arising' [198]. The last lease recorded in the Journal was granted on 4 June 1760 and was of land 'near Oxford Bar' to James Burling on payment of 5s. per annum for 99 years to the Mayor and Corporation [257b].

As lords of the manor the Corporation was also entitled to chief rents and rents for encroachment on the waste; these had usually been paid to the Chamberlain, but at a Hall on 14 October 1724 it was decided that they should be paid to the Mayor [46]. Assessments made by the Council on 5 November 1744 illustrate the kinds of encroachments that were made and how those responsible were dealt with:

'John Welchman to pay 2s.6d. a year for a Bulk¹³ which stands on waste projecting from his house at the end of Parsons Lane.

'Mr [Richard] Woodfield to pay 1s.6d. for his Bulk.

'Mr Busby [weaver], to pay 2s.6d. a year for his Pallisadoes before his door being on the waste.

¹³ A stall or framework built in front of a shop or house.

'Benjamin Falkerd to pay 4s.0d. a year for a Hovele¹⁴ built on waste in North Bar Street.

'Mrs Jarvis to pay 3s.0d. a year for a sign belonging to George Inn on waste.

'Mr Hawtyn, brazier, to pay 1s.0d. a year for a post erected before his door on waste' [171b, 172].

In 1756 William Calcot[t] had actually built the front of his house one foot on to waste land, as had Thomas Grant with his house in Parsons Lane; for this encroachment each had to pay 1s. a year [236]. At the same time, the Council set an annual rent for John Pain, who was allowed to have an area of waste ground before his house in North Bar Street [235b].

The Council derived further income from piccage and stallage, which on 23 July 1729 was let to the Sergeants-at-Mace for ten guineas, payable to the Mayor each year – a figure reduced to eight guineas in 1738 [63, 131b]; also from the lease of the Sheep Ground and 'Tolls for the sheep'; it was agreed on 21 March 1742 to grant these to Robert Wild for a period of 21 years and a payment of ten guineas each year, five guineas at Michaelmas and five guineas at Lady Day [159b].

The Council also played an important part in the administration of the charities of Joshua Sprigge, Mr Metcalfe and Captain Smith. The Journal records that the capital sums involved were, at times, invested in South Sea Company annuities (this was after the notorious 'South Sea Bubble' catastrophe of 1720), or lent, for varying periods of time, to members of the Council and, in 1744, 1746 and 1750, to the Rt. Hon. Lord North and Guilford [167, 181, 181b, 205]; the resulting income was used for maintenance repairs to the workhouse and for the employment of twenty to forty poor people 'which are out of the workhouse in spinning jersey and so forth' [94, 143, 143b]. At a Hall held on 5 January 1738 it was 'agreed the Bread Money be distributed on the first Sunday in every month according to the will of donor, Captain Smith, to 20 poor people, a 4d. loaf to each to commence on Sunday next' [134].

On 27 January 1753 the Council 'agreed on a petition to the House of Commons for an Act of Parliament for making good the road from Banbury to meet the Stratford Turnpike at the foot of Edge Hill by a Turnpike to be erected for that purpose.' A surveyor was to be appointed

¹⁴ A shed.

‘to take a view of the said road and make a report of its state and condition with an estimate of necessary expense of alteration thereof within ten days. Mr Wells, surveyor of Adderbury to be approached’ [219b]. No further progress is recorded in the Journal, but the necessary Act was passed in 1753 and this section of the road was turnpiked.¹⁵

Two challenges to the Council’s authority are recorded in the Journal. On 22 September 1755 the Council decided it was time to take action against ‘the inhabitants of Banbury who refused to pay the several ameracements imposed on them by the Jury at the last Court Leet for sundry offences’; the Mayor, ‘having an inclination to distrain for the said ameracements is threatened to have actions brought in case such distresses are made’; the Council agreed, therefore, ‘that the expenses of defending such actions should be defrayed out of Corporation money in the Chamberlain’s hands’ [232b]. Neither the Journal nor the Chamberlain’s Account, 1747-1816, makes any further mention of this matter, so we cannot say that the Council’s policy was successful and that the fines were paid.

The second challenge came on 17 November 1758 when the town’s bakers refused to submit to the Assize of Bread set by the magistrates, ‘preferring to sell their bread at a higher price than was allowed by the Assize’ [251b, 252]; here again, there is no record, in either the Journal or the Chamberlain’s Accounts, as to how, or when, this matter was resolved.

The last entry in the Journal is dated 17 June 1761, and records the agreement reached by William Howse and Henry Clarson [jun.], Bridgemasters, with John Webster for ‘a piece of ground, commonly called the Island, situate between the Bridge and Goslays [Goose Leys], at the yearly rent of 7s.6d., to pay for this present year due at AllSaints no more than 5s.0d. being the old rent he has for many years rented it as we agreed with him for 21 years to come from the above date’ [260b].

This is followed on the final few pages by a recital of the oaths required to be taken by the Deputy Mayor, the Aldermen and Capital Burgesses, the Assistants, the Town Clerk, the Deputy Recorder and the Sergeants-at-Mace [261-263b].

¹⁵ *V.C.H. Oxon* 10, 12; Turnpike Act 26 Geo. II, c.78.

LORD NORTH AND BANBURY CORPORATION

Jeremy Gibson

The foregoing article by Ross Gilkes on the Banbury Journal throws an interesting light on the arcane voting patterns of Banbury Corporation, though, as an official record, rather less on the influences which led to electoral results. It is therefore useful to have at least one source of personal and private comment by a Corporation member, however untypical he was of his colleagues.

Lord North, elder son of the Earl of Guilford, of Wroxton Abbey, then aged only 22, was elected Member of Parliament for the Borough of Banbury in 1754. He was returned twelve further times, until the Earl's death in 1790. The franchise was confined to the eighteen members of the Common Council (to which North himself was elected in 1758), and except in 1784 his return was unopposed. He was a member of the Government from 1759 and Premier from 1770.

The Earl's extensive correspondence is preserved in the North Collection at the Bodleian Library, Oxford [MS North].¹ There are several letters in 1758 and 1759 from Lord North to his father relating to Banbury and the Councillors, which throw an intimate light on the way the North family ensured retention of the seat.

MS North d.23, f.71. Grosvenor St. [London]. 19 January 1758 [extract]:

I was very sorry to hear of Sansbury's death.² Your Lp. Knows best how far it is eligible or necessary to admit Barrett. I wish you had a better Agent. I write a letter to Deacle by this next to tell him I have got Thos. Tayler restored to the out-pension. I do not know whether they intend to pay him his arrears or no. I will endeavour to procure the payment of them...

MS North d.23, f.85. Ash. 23 September 1758 [extract]:

I received a very polite letter from the Mayor of Banbury [William Greenall] with an account of my Election [to the Council], and return'd my answer last post before I received yours of the 17 of this month. In my letter to the Mayor I excused myself from waiting upon the Corporation at present, but promised to myself that honour on the first opportunity. If therefore we put off our journey thither till Spring I must write another letter and assign some fresh reasons for that further delay.

¹ Permission from the Bodleian for publication is gratefully acknowledged.

² Mr Samuel Sansbury, senr., Justice of the Peace, buried 18 January 1758.

MS North d.23, f.88-89. [Wroxton]. 29 October 1758 [*transcript*]:

My Lord,

I have a thousand thanks to return to you for your Lodging, your food, your letter, etc. I am here as well and as conveniently as possible. I went through all my ceremonies on the Twenty seventh. I took my oaths, paid my fees, and made my visits. I learnt from Mr Payne that Mr Barrett and the member of the Corporation chosen lately had each at their admission given five guineas to the Chamber. I thought therefore it would be proper for me to give ten, which I did. I remembered that at my admission as Assistant I had paid the Town clerk a fee of two guineas. I imagined he would expect more on my admission into the Corporation so I gave him three. It is a kind of expence that will never recur, and for several reasons I thought it was best to err on the side of liberality. I gave a guinea apiece to each of the Serjeants.

I was sorry to find my election had not been so unanimous as I had supposed it. Burford was out of Town at the time, and when it was mention'd to him on his return said he entirely disapproved of it, because it was contrary to a rule that had been laid down to chuse no person out of the Town. This I learnt from Mr Payne, and thinking that the only objection came from that quarter I went about with my mouth open returning thanks wherever I came. When I came to Mr Hill's, He was absent but I found his wife at Home. She made a thousand excuses for Mr Hill's having opposed my Election, which I did not know before, and gave the same reason for it that Burford, and at the same time excused his waiting upon me at my entertainment. When I invited him, he did the same, but I hope to get him to be one with us.

We are I am afraid, just going to lose poor Greenall. He was so ill on the Leet day that He could not come to the Feast, and when I sent yesterday, Mrs Greenall told the servant that he was as ill as he could be and alive.

[Final paragraph irrelevant.]

My duty to Ly. Guilford, etc.

NORTH.

MS North d.23, f.93. Wroxton. 30 October 1758 [*extract*]:

My Lord,

Poor Greenall died yesterday;³ I sent this morning to enquire after Mrs Greenall and the rest of the family, and hear that they are in great affliction and distress. Besides the loss of the poor man himself, his death will be, I am afraid, very perplexing to us for we have now all the business of electing a new member of the Corporation to begin afresh.

³ Mr William Greenall, Mayor, Chamberlain and Justice of the Peace of this Borough, buried 1 November 1758.

MS North d.23, ff.97-98. Wroxton. 1 November 1758 [transcript]:

My Lord,

I am just return'd from the entertainment at Banbury. All the Corporation were there except Burford and Hill. Burford was not at home when I went to call there this morning, and to enquire after the Health of Mrs Burford who was brought to bed on Saturday last.⁴ I found Hill at home, as I went my rounds to take leave, and press'd him to be at the entertainment by every argument that I could think on. He said, and repeated often, that His voting against me did not proceed from any dislike that He had to see me in the Corporation. That he thought I did the Town a great Honour, etc. That he hoped I would not take amiss what he did in which he thought he conform'd to an old argument that had been made amongst the Members of the Corporation. I represented to him, that as we were good friends, that as he had no displeasure against me, nor I against him, I hoped he would dine with me for fear the world should think we were ill together. But it was all in vain. He persisted in his refusal. He thought he ought not to be at my dinner as he voted against me. His Brethren who had never used him well would laugh at him and abuse him. Many other such sort of things he said, which it was impossible to heat out of his Head, so I [was] forced to give over and dine without him.

We did business today after dinner. We elected Mr [Samuel] Clarson Mayor, Mr Bradford, Chamberlain, and Mr Wise, Alderman. It was his turn, so that I am afraid He must fine again to avoid being Alderman unless he chuses to keep his fine till he is chosen Mayor.

I intended to have spoken to Mr Clarson about deferring the election of a Burgess, but it seem'd so much the opinion of the whole Table, that that business was better deferr'd for Half a year or longer, that Mr Clarson declared himself, that he did not see any reason for hurrying it, and I thought it was unnecessary to speak to him in particular about it.

Mrs Greenall has desired me to let her have the making of the Liveries, but I could not give her any answer, and it appears to me, that it will [be] impossible to come to it without affronting both Bradford and Wyatt.

There are some circumstances relating to the present State of the Borough, which will require us to be watchfull, and which I will communicate to your Lp. in another letter.

By what I can find Mr Lambe will not be at all disagreeable to the Borough.

My duty, etc.

NORTH.

P.S. I do not remember to have told your Lp. in any letter, that upon my arrival here I received an excuse from Mr Wise. Before I leave this place (which I shall

⁴ Mary daughter of Mr Edward Burford, surgeon and apothecary, and Anna Rebecca, baptised 9 November 1758. See J.S.W. Gibson, 'The Three Tuns in the Eighteenth Century', *C&CH* 8.1, 5.

tomorrow morning early) I must return you a thousand thanks for the splendid and convenient manner in which I have lived.

Shocking news from the K. of Prussia! [Frederick the Great] And surprized too!

MS North d.23, f.105. Burlington Street [London]. 16 January 1759 [extract]:

... I wrote to him [Watson, presumably a local steward] this post an order to bespeak my Liveries of Mr Wyatt, and my Hats of Mrs Robins. I have not bespoke my Livery Buttons of Mr Wyatt, because my last were furnish'd by Sansbury. The designs of Mr C----- T----- upon Banbury are talked of at London. At least Mr G. Williams mention'd to Lady Drake that he had heard of them. I have not yet seen him, and do not know his authority. That his intentions are such there is great reason to believe. It behoves us to be watchfull, and to take particular of filling the next vacancy. I am so afraid of delays in the promotion of John Davis that I have desired Mr Legge to recommend him to the Board of Excise, and he has been so good as to undertake it.

MS North d.23, f.108. Grosvenor Street. 15 September 1759 [extract]:

... I am sorry to hear of Burford's ill humour. As it is entirely without reason, I should hope it would not be of any long continuance, but I [am] amazed that it has lasted so long. At the time of my Election he did not appear. He was certainly very ill about that time, but by his behaviour since, I am afraid that he was not sorry to have an excuse for absenting himself.

... We were extremely sorry we were obliged to leave Wroxton, and the longer we are here, the greater reason we think we have to regret it.

Lord North's letters continue sporadically into the 1770s, with others from his younger brother Brownlow North, who evidently was resident at Wroxton at the time of the parliamentary by-election of November 1766 (necessitated by Lord North's appointment as joint paymaster-general of land forces) ('The weather is miserably bad. I fear Ld North will have but a wet ride in the Chair'). Although it is beyond the period covered by the Journal, Lord North's own letter and attachment are so relevant to the political scene in Banbury that they deserve inclusion.

MS North d.24, ff.12-13. Wroxton. 16 November 1766 [transcript]:

My Lord,

There is a Mr Taylor of Wilscot who complains that he is not invited, but, as he has been in former Lists, and is left out of that drawn up by your Lordship, and as I find against his name, a ? whether it is necessary to invite him again, I have not sent any card to him. The Mayor [John Hill], when he saw the List of Inhabitants of the Town who were to dine with us, mention'd the Keeper, Mr Wheatly and some others whose names were not there. They have been in no former Lists, and the Mayor has not said a word to me abt. them so I have taken

MS North d.3, f.85. Wroxton. 16 November 1766 [transcript]:

List of Persons who came to dinner at the Election at Banbury, Nov. 17, 1766.

The Corporation of Banbury

Mr Mayor [John Hill]
Mr Sam. Clarson
Mr Hen. Clarson
Mr Chs. Wyatt
Mr Hide
Dr Burford
Mr Lambert

Mr Barratt
Mr Pain
Revd. Mr Lamb
Mr Deacle [inserted later]
Mr Geo.
Mr White
Mr Howse

Gentlemen of the Town of Banb'y.

Mr Aplin, Town Clerk
Mr Wm. Wyatt
Mr Goodwin Apothe'y
Revd. Mr Harrison
Revd. Mr Hampton
Mr Newman Senr.
Mr Hobcraft
Mr Tate
Mr Tyler
Mr John Pain Junr.
Mr Towerzey
Mr Willson
Mr Rushworth

Mr Newman Junr.
Mr Goddard
Mr Heydon
Mr Calcot
Mr Spurrett
Mr Tho. Deacle
Revd. Mr Spilman
Mr Rd. Burford
Mr Walford Attorney
Mr Sparrow Attorney
Mr Bennett Junr.
Mr John Burford

The Neighbouring Gentlemen.

Mr Twisleton's
Mr Wykham
Mr Walford
Mr Barber
Mr Willis
Revd. Mr Bowles
Lord Willoughby
Mr Annesley
Mr Miller, Radway
Revd. Mr Hughes
Revd. Mr Gill
Revd. Mr Spencer
Revd. Mr Lord

Revd. Mr Miller
Mr Blinco
Mr Sharrock

Mr Jennings
Mr Wodhull
Mr Barthurst
Revd. Mr Hopkins
Mr Hobbs

no notice of his conversation with Will: Hudson, and have made no alteration except to admit Mr John Burford who was not in before.

I find in an old List of presents the figures 12 agst. Deacle's name. I suppose, that means guineas, and not a piece of plate that cost £12.

I gave your Lordship's order to Duffell, yr. blessing to Brownlow, and yr. compts. to Mr Lamb. I made likewise your excuses to all our friends at Banbury. I find them in general in good humour, and everything goes on smoothly.

[Final two paragraphs irrelevant].

I am, etc.

NORTH.

MS North d.3, f.85. Wroxton. 16 November 1766 [*transcript*]:

List of Persons who came to dinner at the Election at Banbury, Nov. 17, 1766
(*opposite, left*).

MS North d.24, f.15. Wroxton. 18 November 1766 [*transcript*]:

My Lord,

Every thing went perfectly well at the Election yesterday. The Weather was fine, and all the Electors in good humour. Poor Deacle looks sadly. He did not mention anything of the office he wrote to your Lordship about, and I did not think it proper to begin the conversation. We had a very full entertainment. Most of the Country Gentlemen whom we had invited being present. Mr Spencer was there in perfect health and spirits. He had rode that morning from Oxford and by his looks, one should not have guess'd him to be above fifty years old. I stop this morning at Banbury to return thanks and then go on as far as I can on my journey to London. Your Lordship shall hear from me, as soon as I get there.

I am, etc.

NORTH.

[P.S.] Lord Willoughby [North's brother-in-law] and Brownlow present their duty with mine to yr. Lp. and Ly. G.

* * * * *

What of the actual political affiliations of Council members? The North family were Whigs. The return of Lord North as Member from 1754 until he succeeded his father as the Earl of Guilford in 1790 would lead one to assume that the majority of those that constituted the eighteen-strong franchise would have been of like persuasion. However, the opportunity to judge their politics is given in the famous Oxfordshire election of 1754. Whilst the franchise for Banbury Borough was so restricted, anyone who was a 40s. freeholder, outside or within, could vote in this too, and the published pollbooks reveal how they did.

Table One shows those Councillors who voted at the 1753 and 1754 mayoral elections, and their political support in the County election – of those identified, six voted Tory, only two Whig (and two of the same surname). Table Two shows the Mayoral voting record of the Assistants, and, where identified, their affiliations in the county election, and here they are evenly split – six for each party.

This is an appetite-whettener. Closer analysis of the Journal and its voting patterns – who were the Corporation activists, the shadowy Assistants? – might reveal a bit more about Banbury's real politics.

In their support for the Guilford/North faction, with its financial contributions to the needs of the Borough, it appears that the benefits to the town, and to a modest extent themselves, over-rode personal politics.

Table 1: Mayor and Corporation: Mayoral Elections, 3 September 1753 and 3 September 1754; and County Election, April 1754.

| <i>Voting:</i> | 1753 | 1754 | <i>County Election 1754</i> | |
|---------------------------------------|------|-----------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| | | | <i>Tory</i> | <i>Whig</i> |
| <i>Mayor:</i> William Bradford | x | x | | W |
| <i>Recorder:</i> John Miller Esqr. | x | - | | [Assistant 1718] |
| <i>Aldermen:</i> | | | | |
| Samuel Sansbury | x | x [Mayor] | | |
| William Greenal | x | x | T | |
| Blagrave Gregory | x | - | | [Burgess 1718] |
| Henry Pettipher | - | - | | |
| Richard Burrows | x | x | | |
| Samuel Clarson | x | x | T | |
| Francis Goodwin | x | x | T | |
| Edward Burford | - | - | | W |
| William Overton | x | x | [John Overton | W] |
| Henry Clarson | x | x | T | |
| <i>Burgesses:</i> | | | | |
| Revd. Francis Wise | x | x | | |
| Revd. John Wardle [Neithrop] | x | x | T | |
| John Hill | x | x | | |
| John Paine [Pain] | x | x | T | |
| William Deacle | x | x | [John Deacle | W] |
| <i>Elected after 3 September 1753</i> | | | | |
| Charles Hide | | x | | |

**Table 2: Assistants: Mayoral Elections, 3 September 1753
and 3 September 1754; and County Election, April 1754.**

| <i>Voting:</i> | <i>1753</i> | <i>1754</i> | <i>County Election 1754</i> | |
|---|-------------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| | | | <i>Tory</i> | <i>Whig</i> |
| Rt. Honble. Lord Guilford | x | x | | |
| Monoux Cope Esq. | - | - | | |
| George Denton Esq. [of Wardington] | - | - | T | W |
| Thomas Blencow Esq. [1618-1765; of Marston St Lawrence and Hayes, Middx., bencher Inner Temple; Assistant 1718?] [no votes recorded] | | | | |
| John Twisleton Esq. [of North Newington/Broughton] | | | | W |
| William Russell Esq. [Bodicote] | x | - | | W |
| Rt. Hon. Lord Chief Justice Willes [Sir John, of Astrop, LCJ from 1737, d.1761] [no votes recorded] | | | | |
| Mr George Eddowes | - | - | | |
| Revd. Mr John Eddowes [of Broughton] | x | - | | W |
| Revd. Mr Samuel West [1717-67; son of James West, glazier, of Banbury. Rector of Maidford, Nhants., 1746, and Plumpton, 1753] [no votes recorded]. | | | | |
| Mr Nathaniel Reason | x | - | | |
| Christopher Doyly Esq. [of Milton/Inner Temple] | | | T | |
| Mr Richard Kening [Kenning] | - | - | T | |
| Mr John Welchman [no votes recorded] | | | | |
| John Willes Esq. | x | - | | |
| [of Astrop (son of Sir John), M.P. for Banbury 1746-54] | | | | |
| Edward Willes Esq. [brother of John, M.P. for Aylesbury 1747-54, d.1787]. [no votes recorded] | | | | |
| Revd. Mr Pettipher | x | - | | |
| Mr Benjamin Aplin | x | - | | W |
| Mr William Wyatt | x | - | T | |
| Revd. Mr Robert Greenal | x | x | | |
| Mr Samuel Roberts | x | x | | |
| Edward Metcalf Esq. [Drayton] | x | x | T | |
| Edward Cole Esq. | x | - | | |
| Sanderson Miller Esq. [Banbury/Radway] | x | | | W |
| Mr William Hayward | x | x | | |
| Mr Robert Doyly | x | - | | |
| Mr John Goodwin | x | - | | |
| Mr Robert Kening | x | - | T | [?] |
| <i>Elected after 3 September 1753</i> | | | | |
| Rt. Hon. Frederick North | | x | [commonly known as Lord North] | |
| Rt. Hon. Earl of Dartmouth | | - | [half-brother of Lord North] | |

GRANDMA KATE'S PREACHING CLOCK

Hazel Thurlow

The family of O'Coy were wheelwrights in and around Banbury. Isaac Alfred (always known as Alfred) married Louisa Cox the daughter of Police Sergeant John Cox. They had their wheelwright's shop in Grimsbury, where they brought up their family of very tall and strong *girls!* This was a great disappointment to Alfred – he had no sons to carry on the wheelwright and carpentry business, and his daughters' main interest was in Mission and Bible Studies.

His daughter Kate accompanied the Gillett family and members of the British and Foreign Society on their trip to what was then Constantinople, which gave her parents considerable anxiety. On arriving back in Banbury she was told very firmly: "No more travelling abroad!" – it was time she thought of marrying and making a home of her own.

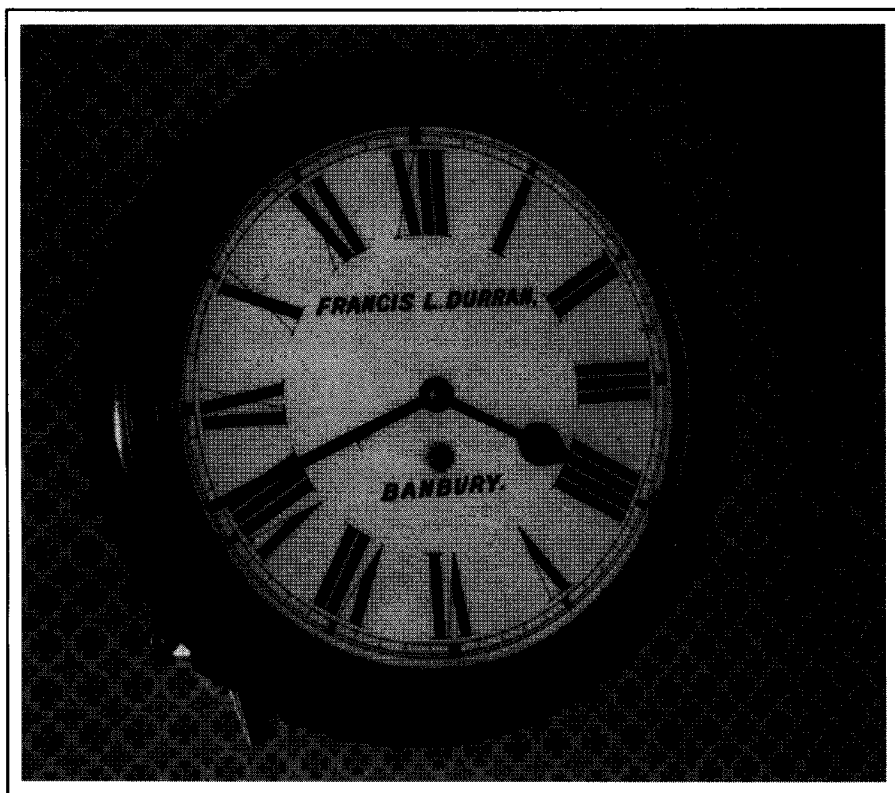
George Hutt of Buckingham, the son of a regular customer at the wheelwright shop, was Kate's choice. They were married in 1897 at the Methodist Chapel. For their wedding present Alfred, Kate's father, made the necessary cart and wagon, so that George and Kate could start up a business of their own. This was farming at Buckingham and also a very successful fish trading enterprise, which included mobile fish shops.

Kate was still very involved in church work and in time became a Methodist Local Preacher. However, she never learnt to drive, either the horse and cart or, later on, the car. George therefore was the driver to her appointments. He would not sit in the chapels for Kate's services – he said he had to listen to her all week long and on a Sunday it was somebody else's turn to listen.

Like a good husband he waited... and waited. Kate got longer and longer in her sermons until, one day, George lost his temper and asked "Haven't they got a clock in there?" The answer was "No". So George made sure that if there was no clock in any of the chapels where Kate was a regular preacher there very soon would be. Off he went to Banbury to buy what he called "good reliable clocks". This would have been in the 1920/30s.



George Hutt and his wife Kate. The photograph was taken in 1906 just before his son Alfred, named after his grandfather, went on holiday to his grandparents in Grimsbury. While he was there the other children died in an epidemic, leaving Alfred, the author's father, an only child. To be safe he stayed for some time and went to school in Banbury.



Many years later, a chapel at Tingewick was closing down. Her granddaughter had been a Sunday School teacher and organist there, so as a memento of her time spent in the chapel she bought the clock that had been placed by the organ – only to find it was a clock that had been bought by granddad from their friends the clockmakers Durran: Francis L. Durran of Banbury.¹

We know that Kate's uncle William Cox was a clock and watch maker and was apprenticed in Banbury. Maybe there was some connection here with the Durran clock. Whatever reason, the grand-daughter was thrilled now to be able to keep for the family what is known as "Grandma Kate's Preaching Clock".

¹ James Hopkins Durran was a clock and watch maker in High Street, Banbury, 1832-54; and Eustace Durran was at 90 High Street in the mid-19th century (C.F.C. Beeson, *Clockmaking in Oxfordshire 1400-1850*, B.H.S. 4, 1962; 3rd edition, ed. A.V. Simcock, Museum of the History of Science, Oxford, 1989).

TRACING ANCESTORS IN OXFORDSHIRE'S SECOND TOWN: BANBURY

Jeremy Gibson

[This article first appeared in the OXFORDSHIRE FAMILY HISTORIAN 18.1, April 2004, and has since been slightly amended]

Banbury is, I believe, unique in having an Historical Society (B.H.S.) records series devoted just to one not very large market town and its surrounding hinterland of villages within ten to fifteen miles. Records series are normally for whole counties or sizeable or important cities like Birmingham and Oxford. In a county series, records relating to the complete county usually have preference, and if there is a volume on a single place, that will probably be the only one for some years, or other parts of the county would start to grumble.

At Banbury we have no such restriction, and of the twenty-seven volumes so far published, eight have been of the Banbury parish registers, two of Banbury wills and inventories, one of Banbury Corporation records, one of the Peculiar Court proceedings, and four for the early Victorian period – reminiscences, the Banbury M.P.'s correspondence, the gaoler's journal, and a narrative history.

There have been four volumes of parish records from nearby villages (South Newington, Wigginton, Bodicote and King's Sutton), and narrative histories of Adderbury and of Aynho (in Northamptonshire). Another narrative history is *Edgehill and Beyond*, an account of the effect of the Civil War on the South Midlands, 1642-1645, based extensively on previously unresearched documents. Three are 'county' volumes, shared with national record societies: *Clockmaking in Oxfordshire*; *Oxfordshire and Berkshire Protestation Returns, 1641-1642*; and an *Index to Administrations and Inventories of the Archdeaconry of Northampton, 1711-1800*. The last complements the first records volume, the *Index to Wills Proved in the Peculiar Court of Banbury 1542-1858*, which, in addition to the town and parish of Banbury, includes Cropredy, Claydon, Mollington and Wardington; Horley and Hornton; and King's Sutton in Northamptonshire; as well as the tiny manorial court of Sibford Gower (in the parish of Swalcliffe), 1773-1829.

The records series has been backed up by the Society's journal *Cake and Cockhorse* [C&CH], of which approaching 150 issues have appeared to date, now available on CD-ROM (see pages 89-90).

Histories of Banbury

The town and area have been fortunate too in published histories. Still the outstanding work is Alfred Beesley's *History of Banbury*, which appeared in 1841-2. This is a monumental volume in true antiquarian tradition, with masses of transcripts of documents and lists of names, all well-indexed. Beesley's achievement – as son of a humble Quaker tradesman and with no academic qualifications, when many of his sources were still in private and difficult-of-access locations – never ceases to amaze me. I have occasionally had opportunity to check his sources, and have always found his transcription accurate – but it can be misleading, as he may omit phrases he considered unimportant (but which nevertheless, for instance in the case of deeds, might mention previous householders) with no indication of the omission.

Then there is Volume Ten of the Oxfordshire *Victoria County History*, published in 1972. In Oxfordshire we have been fortunate in that only the two introductory volumes of the *V.C.H* were published before 1950. By the time the splendid series of hundredal volumes started to appear, full recognition that history did not stop in 1485 (or, as a concession, in 1603) had occurred. Thus we have good coverage up to the twentieth century, and this is particularly so for the Banbury Hundred volume (and for Volume Nine, of the neighbouring hundred of Bloxham). Its major contributors included Barrie Trinder, Nicholas Cooper and Michael Laithwaite, all of whom have been closely associated with the Banbury Historical Society as well.

Several other histories of varying importance have been published. William Potts, the third generation of the family which founded and edited the leading local newspaper the *Banbury Guardian*, was a keen amateur historian, and his *History of Banbury* was published posthumously in 1958, edited by his successor, Ted Clark. A second edition appeared in 1978 with which I was closely involved. Several chapters, particularly for the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, were completely rewritten, taking into account research of the past thirty years, and, unlike the first edition, it has a very comprehensive index.

Another, *The Book of Banbury*, in the now ubiquitous popular series, by Christine Bloxham (published 1975), does in fact, despite its format,

have a lot of useful and important information presented in an attractive way. Christine was Curator of Banbury Museum and Secretary of the Historical Society, so was and is a knowledgeable historian with a proper academic tradition of accuracy and referencing, even though constrained by the limitations of the series.

The most recent to appear, *Banbury: A History* (Phillimore, 2003), is by Brian Little, lavishly illustrated like his three earlier books in *The Changing Faces* series: *Banbury Book One* (1998), *Grimsbury* (1999), and *Easington* (2000) (all Robert Boyd Publications). A good many other books of photographs or paintings of Banbury have appeared in the last two decades, of greater interest to local than family historians.

One other early *History of Banbury* should be mentioned, that by William Ponsonby Johnson, published about 1865 by the *Guardian's* rival, the *Banbury Advertiser* office. Its chief merit is a series of engravings of local scenes, the text being a mixture of national history and plagiarism of Beesley's *History*.

That is the outline of major published sources covering all periods of Banbury's history, with the exception of the last-mentioned all containing potential for the 'in-depth' family historian.

Relatively Modern Sources

Family historians start (or should start) with the present and work backwards, and so I will treat the available records in the same way. Obviously the basic sources for family history in the past 167 years are as relevant here as elsewhere – certificates of birth, marriage and death from 1837 are now held nationally at the Family Records Centre [FRC] in London, but the indexes to these (for England and Wales) can be consulted in microform at the Centre for Oxfordshire Studies [COS].

So far as modern probate records are concerned, the local Probate Registry is at the Law Courts building in St Aldates, Oxford (opposite the police station) (01865-241163), open 9.30-4.00 (Monday to Friday), but records there date only from 1957. Microfilm of printed annual indexes to probate records for all England and Wales, from 1858 to 1957, are available at COS. For the wills and, for intestates, letters of administration (admons.) themselves you must go to London to the Probate Department of the Principal Registry of the Family Division [PDPR].

Banbury's own trade directory was Rusher's *Banbury List*, which appeared annually from 1795 to the early years of the twentieth century, though before 1820 surviving copies are now very rare. From 1832 a

detailed traders' *Directory* accompanied the *List*, except for three years in the later 1830s. A full set is held at the Centre for Banburyshire Studies [CBS], together with microfiche of a card index to a large part of the directories; the card index itself is at Banbury Museum [BM] (index viewed by appointment only). In the county, other sets of this useful work (not all of them complete) are at the COS and the Bodleian Library. It is a very good source of personal information, with a great number of town dignitaries, tradesmen and other residents listed; the index makes it possible to track changes in occupation and address.

A directory to *The Licensees of the Inns, Taverns and Beerhouses of Banbury 'from the Fifteenth Century to Today'*, compiled by Vera Wood, was published by the Oxfordshire Family History Society in 1998. This undoubtedly useful work should be used with caution, as proof-reading could have been better, and, more seriously, no sources are given.

Annual voters' lists from 1832 to date are held by the Oxfordshire Record Office [ORO]. Facsimiles of the lists for Banbury Borough for 1859 and 1865 were published in 1974 by the Open University. Of related interest is *A Victorian M.P. and his Constituents: The Correspondence of H.W. Tancred, 1841-1859*, ed. B.S. Trinder (B.H.S. 8, 1967), in which may be found references to many leading Banburians of that period.

The Victorian Period

For the Victorian period Barrie Trinder's *Victorian Banbury* (B.H.S. 19 and Phillimore, 1982) obviously should be checked, though it is a narrative history rather than records as such. Another (unique) source for the early Victorian period is George Herbert's *Shoemaker's Window: Recollections of Banbury before the Railway Age*. There have been three editions of this, the second being in the B.H.S series, vol. 10, with Phillimore, 1971; the most recent edition was published by Gulliver Press in 1979; both are indexed and have an introduction by Barrie Trinder. Herbert lived from 1814 to 1902 and, a few years before his death, wrote down what he remembered of the Banbury of his youth, in particular of those who lived there, going from house to house almost like a census enumerator, but much more entertainingly.

Somewhat similar is a booklet *Reminiscences of Old Banbury*, by Thomas Ward Boss, published in 1903. Boss was ten years younger than

Herbert, and his early childhood was in Oxford. His Banbury memories are from 1834 to 1850, and have now been reprinted in *C&CH* 16.2.

Microfilm/form of the actual census years from 1841 to 1901 is available at the COS for the whole county (as well, of course, as at the Family Records Centre in London) and for the Banbury area at the CBS. The holdings at Oxford cover both the pre- and post-1974 county, thus including many places in what was once Berkshire. The Banbury registration district also covered neighbouring parts of Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. Those wishing to consult these microform records at one of these libraries should always book a reader in advance.

An analysis of the 1851 census and a contemporary enquiry by the Vicar of Banbury for the populous suburb of Neithrop was made by Barrie Trinder in *Banbury's Poor in 1850*, published in *C&CH*.4.6 (and as an offprint, 1966). Names are in the index to *C&CH*.4.

Newspapers

Other sources of information available in microform at the Centres for Oxfordshire and Banburyshire Studies are the various local newspapers published in Banbury from the late 1830s on. Always the most important has been the *Banbury Guardian*, from its origin in April 1838 as a monthly *The Guardian*, but under its present name as a weekly from July 1843 ('The Potts Family and the *Banbury Guardian*', Ted Clark, *C&CH*.10.6). In May 1844 around three hundred 'inhabitants of the town or neighbourhood of Banbury' signed a petition favouring a narrow-gauge (as against broad-gauge) railway through the town. The names were duly published and have been reprinted in *C&CH*.13.4. The other long-running newspaper was the *Banbury Advertiser*, 1855 to the 1960s (original files at Oxfordshire Record Office). There were other shorter-lived titles, such as the *Banbury Beacon* (1863, 1868-1905), the *Banbury Herald* (1861-69), and the *Banbury Leader* (1909-1912) – all on microfilm (so far as they survive at the British Newspaper Library) at the CBS and the COS.

Before Banbury's own local papers became established, the two of relevance were *Jackson's Oxford Journal* [*JOJ*] and the *Northampton Mercury*. The former is available in the COS and the Bodleian, and from its start in 1753 up to 1790 Banbury (and all pre-1974 Oxfordshire) items and individuals are easily located from the index to Eileen Davies' *Synopsis* (see *OFH* 1.9, Autumn 1979). The *Oxford Mercury* was another, short-lived, county newspaper, lasting only from August 1795

to October 1796. A partial comparison of Banbury items in this and *JOJ* appeared as 'A Few Weeks in 1795' (*C&CH.11.4*).

The *Northampton Mercury* was one of the earliest long-running provincial newspapers, starting 1720, though before the later eighteenth century such papers contained little local news of use to family historians. This can be consulted at Northamptonshire Record Office or at Northampton Central Library, and at the CBS (on microfilm to 1850).

Another unusual source for the first half of the nineteenth century is a volume of *Banbury Gaol Records* (B.H.S. 21, 1987), edited by Penelope Renold, a former editor of *OFH*. This includes a transcript of the gaoler's journal for the 1830s, and a detailed listing (from a variety of original records both local and national) of both its inmates and those involved in their apprehension and prosecution. So, your perfectly law-abiding ancestor may turn up as an injured party there!

Parish Registers – Nineteenth Century back to 1558

The staple tools of genealogists of course are the parish registers. Until the parish of South Banbury was formed in 1853, there was only the main parish of St. Mary's for Banbury – the town and borough, the suburbs of Neithrop and Calthorpe (closely intermingled with the borough and town), the hamlets or isolated farms of Easington, Wickham, Hardwick, all in the Oxfordshire part of the parish; and Grimsbury and Nethercote in Northamptonshire (but Banbury parish). It seems probable that Banbury was the most populous parish in the county, and its registers are correspondingly large and important. They date from 1558 and in general were exceptionally well-maintained, particularly from the end of the seventeenth century on. The B.H.S. has published the marriages from 1558 to 1837: **2**: 1558-1724; **3**: 1724-90; **5**: 1790-1837; and the baptisms and burials to 1838: **7**: 1558-1653; **9**: 1653-1723; **16** (baptisms) and **18** (burials): 1723-1812; and **22**: 1813-1838. The baptisms and burials include Quakers and other nonconformists, and the monumental inscriptions, such as survived in the 1960s. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries occupations of those buried and of the fathers of children baptised are usually shown. These volumes are now mostly out-of-print, but should be found on the shelves of major and nearby libraries (and also a number in the United States) as well as local record offices. Moreover both the published period to 1838 and the later nineteenth and twentieth century (transcribed by the O.F.H.S.) are available on CD-ROM.

Probate Records – Nineteenth to Sixteenth Centuries

For probate purposes Banbury and some neighbouring parishes formed the Peculiar of Banbury and Cropredy, exempt from the jurisdiction of Archdeacon and Bishop of Oxford. An index to these Peculiar Court Records was published as B.H.S. 1 (and Oxfordshire Record Society [O.R.S.] 40) (1959) (effectively the court operated from about the 1570s to the early nineteenth century). Since then the British Record Society [B.R.S.] has published indexes to the *Probate Records of the Courts of the Bishop and Archdeacon of Oxford, 1516-1732* (93, 94) and *1733-1857* (109, and O.R.S. 61). The latter also includes all the Oxfordshire Peculiars (1547-1856), so incorporates the Banbury Peculiar, but the earlier B.H.S. volume has more detailed entries. The B.R.S. volumes are of course relevant to all Oxfordshire parishes neighbouring Banbury but not within the jurisdiction of the Peculiar. The wills of Banburians like everyone else might also appear in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (P.C.C.), and a noticeably high percentage were so proved (detailed indexes to 1700 published by B.R.S.). A feature of the published burial registers is cross-referencing to all identified probate records – both for the Peculiar Court (throughout) and to the P.C.C. to 1700. P.C.C. references from 1701-1723 are in *C&CH.5.1*, pp.18-20. Some Banburians can be identified in the Society of Genealogists' P.C.C. Index 1750-1800.

Abstracts of all (over 400) Banbury (parish) wills, admmons and inventories proved in the Peculiar Court between 1591 and 1650 have been published as B.H.S. 13 and 14. A disproportionate number of those appearing in *Household and Farm Inventories in Oxfordshire, 1550-1590*, ed. M.A. Havinden (O.R.S. 44, 1965) are from Banbury and other places in the Peculiar (all from 1573-80, 1586-90).

The Eighteenth Century

Banbury ratepayers from 1782 are listed in *C&CH.7.7*, pp.225-27, this being the earliest book to survive. This and those for later years are in the Oxfordshire Record Office. In the same place are also Land Tax Assessments for the county, including Banbury (see *OFH.3.1*). The Banbury L.T.A.s exist for 1789-97 and 1807-31. Neithrop was assessed separately, and these survive for all years between 1785 and 1832 (inclusive) except 1798 and 1808. Owned property worth 40s. annually (in rent) was assessed and the tenants were usually also named. The records survive for this period as they were used to show who was

qualified to vote in parliamentary elections for county members. Until the Reform Act of 1832 the franchise for Banbury's own Member of Parliament was restricted to the eighteen Aldermen and Capital Burgesses that made up the Corporation. However, many Banburians were 40s. freeholders and thus entitled to vote for the county's two Members when opportunity arose. Facsimiles of the printed lists of voters eligible in Banbury and Bloxham Hundreds for the great Oxfordshire election of 1754 are published in *C&CH.11.8*, together with two canvassing lists. Associated with one of these canvassing lists was what turned out to be the earliest surviving L.T.A. for the county, for Banbury Hundred, dated 1753. This was transcribed and published in full (707 names, with index) in *C&CH.12.4*.

Apart from the registers, the most important parish record is the vestry minute book, 1708-1797, now in the Oxfordshire Record Office, as yet untranscribed or indexed.

The Seventeenth Century and Earlier

There were 256 signatories to the Association Oath Roll of 1695 for the Borough of Banbury. The names on this were published in *C&CH.10.4*, mostly identified with register entries giving occupations.

For a generation earlier, the article 'Taxpayers in Restoration Banbury' (*C&CH.9.6*) lists all appearing in the Hearth Tax returns of 1662 and 1665, the Free and Voluntary Present to Charles II of 1661 and contemporary Subsidy Rolls. They have been collated and identified with register entries, a total of about 250 individuals.

'Trouble over Sheep-Pens' (*C&CH.7.2*) is an account of a market dispute in 1656, a lawsuit which engendered fifty depositions and mentions over ninety individuals, mostly from Banbury, listed and identified in an appendix.

Other articles which mention a good many different Banburians of the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries are the two-part 'Century of Tavern-Keeping: The Stokes Family at the Unicorn and the Three Tuns' (*C&CH.7.4*) and 'The Three Tuns in the Eighteenth Century' (8.1); 'The Origins of Quakerism in Banbury' (7.4); and, for the 1620-1640 period, 'Providence and Henry Halhed' (7.7).

One standard source for most of the county is the Protestation Return. This is published in *Oxfordshire and North Berkshire Protestation Returns 1641-42* (revised and expanded edition, B.H.S. 24 and O.R.S. 59, 1994). It should be noted that the index to the Protestation Returns

published by the O.F.H.S. in 1993 was based on the earlier O.R.S. edition (36), which has been found to be seriously inaccurate, so the index in the revised edition should always be used in preference. Although the return for Banbury (parish) itself is missing, a near-contemporary Subsidy Roll, dated 31 May 1642, goes a good way to making up for this. In the north of the county this covers, as well as Banbury and Bloxham Hundreds, Ploughley Hundred for which the return is also missing. Whereas most of the subsidies taxed only the wealthiest of the community – in Banbury around 35 at this time – the threshold of taxation was evidently set much lower for this particular tax. Well over 300 names are listed for Banbury itself. All surviving Oxfordshire assessments for this subsidy are published in this volume.

However, undoubtedly the major source for the seventeenth and the later sixteenth centuries (apart from registers and wills) is the volume of *Banbury Corporation Records: Tudor and Stuart* (B.H.S. 15). This is an abstract of the one significant Corporation record of that period to survive, the 'Account Book', which in fact includes all sorts of information. To this have been added various documents connected with the Corporation, but in archives elsewhere (Public Record Office/The National Archives *etc.*). To the family historian a particularly important feature is the section providing potted biographies of all the many individuals who were members or officers of the Corporation, and many others too. For instance, the book opens with a list of the town's Freemen in 1554 (four years before the registers start) and includes the signatories to a petition in support of an ejected vicar in 1590, the names of those receiving financial help after the great fire of 1628, and so on. It is a complete 'lucky dip' which should be ignored by no one with Banbury interests or ancestors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

As a contrast to the Corporation records, which generally show 'the great and the good' of Banbury in the favourable light they would have liked, *The 'Bawdy Court' of Banbury: The Act Book of the Peculiar Court of Banbury 1625-1638*, edited by R.K. Gilkes (B.H.S. 26) reveals the under-side of the righteous puritan life for which Banbury was famous – or notorious.

Banbury Families

Finally, there have been a number of accounts of families over several generations. Those specific to Banbury are 'Cheney and Sons: Two Centuries (1767-1967) of Printing in Banbury' (*C&CH.3.9*); 'The

Whately and Wheatly Family of Banbury' (16/17th cents.) (4.3); 'A Disputed Inheritance' (Hawtin family of Calthorpe, 1630s) (6.5); 'The Mawle Family: Ironmongers and Mayors of Alcester and Banbury' (1643-19th cent.) (8.7); 'The Wheatsheaf and the Adam and Eve in Restoration Banbury' (Vivers, Westmacott, Hunt, Butler and West families) (10.1); 'Portrait of a Country Grocers: Dossetts – Grocers and Wine Merchants, 1887-1973' (11.3); 'The Ap(p)letrees in Banbury (C18-19) (11.5); 'William Rusher: A Sketch of his Life' (c.1759-1849) (11.9); "'The Immediate Route from the Metropolis to all Parts...": Henry Stone (1786-1850), Banbury carrier' (12.1); 'William Judd (1750-1832) and Banbury Corporation' (12.2); 'Kimberley's, Banbury Building Contractors (1853-1979' (15.3); and 'Aplins – The Oldest Solicitors' Practice in Banbury, Part 1: The Aplin Family, 1739-1897', (15.6).

I have picked out just the 'Banbury' articles which seem of particular interest to family historians – but with approaching 150 issues and up to 500 articles, many relating to nearby villages, obviously there is much more that might help those with ancestors from the Banbury area. A list of all articles published in *C&CH* vols. 1.1 to 15.7 (September 1959 to Autumn/Winter 2002) appeared just over a year ago. These are listed alphabetically by 'Subjects and Individuals' and by 'Places'.

There are full indexes, compiled at the time, to the first six volumes of *C&CH* (to Summer 1976 – vols. 1-4 individually, 5 and 6 together); and to the two most recent, 14 and 15 (Autumn 1997 to Summer 2003). Unfortunately vols. 7 to 13 have no individual indexes, though the consolidated listing does at least lead one to the articles they contain.

However, the very recent conversion of the whole run (to the end of Volume 15, Summer 2003, with regular updating) on to CD-ROM, as described on pages 89-90, means that, to users of this, *C&CH* is in a form indexed throughout. What must be borne in mind is that computers are very fast idiots. Thus a search, for instance, for "Hopcrofts Holt" will ignore occasions when an apostrophe renders it "Hopcroft's Holt". All possible variations of a name will need to be checked, in contrast to the published indexes to volumes 1-6 and 14-15.

Even after 45 years, copies of most issues of the magazine are still available at modest cost (by arrangement) from myself (Harts Cottage, Church Hanborough, Witney OX29 8AB) – so, when you have identified and read an article on the CD-ROM, even printed it out, it is worthwhile acquiring it in its original printed form.

Banbury is a fascinating town, with architectural links with the past still surviving (despite our deplorable tendency to pull down crosses, castle, church and cakeshop). I am proud and fortunate in having someone in every generation from my mother back born there (at least until Tudor times) – not many of you will share this luck, but I hope the publications of the Banbury Historical Society and our town’s historians will help some of you to establish some generations there.

Abbreviations/Locations

BHS: Banbury Historical Society (see inside front cover).

BM: Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury OX16 2PQ, tel. 01295 672626. Web: www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk/banburymuseum

BRS: British Record Society.

C&CH: Cake & Cockhorse (see inside front cover).

CBS: The Centre for Banburyshire Studies: Banbury Central Library, Marlborough Road, Banbury, tel. 01295 262282. No web-site/Email facilities for enquiries (researchers should send written requests/Emails to staff at the Centre for Oxfordshire Studies, Westgate, Oxford: cos@oxfordshire.gov.uk. Opening: Mon. 9-12; Tues., Thurs. 9-12, 2-5; Wed., Fri. 9-12, 2-7; Sat. 9-4.30.

COS: Centre for Oxfordshire Studies, Central Library, Oxford OX1 1DJ, tel. 01865 815749. Opening hours: Mon., Fri., Sat. 9.15-5.00; Tue., Thurs. 9.15-7.00. Web: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cos; email as above.

FRC: Family Records Centre, 1 Myddelton Street, London EC1R 1UW, tel. 020 8392 5300. Web: www.familyrecords.gov.uk/frc/

JOJ: Jackson's Oxford Journal.

OFH: Oxfordshire Family Historian (journal of the O.F.H.S.)

OFHS: Oxfordshire Family History Society:

Secretary: Mrs Julie Kennedy, 19 Mavor Close, Woodstock OX20 1YL; Tel. 01993 812258; Email: secretary@ofhs.org.uk

ORO: Oxfordshire Record Office, St Luke's Church, Temple Road, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2EX, tel. 01865 398200.

Email: archives@oxfordshire.gov.uk; Web: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oro.

ORS: Oxfordshire Record Society, c/o Bodleian Library, Oxford.

PDPR: Principal Registry of the Probate Division, Probate Dept., 151 Avenue House, 45-49 High Holborn, London WC1V 6NP, tel. 020-7947 6939.

Web: www.courtservice.gov.uk

Book Reviews

Silver Street [Chacombe, Northants.]: **Rural Life in the 1900s to 1930s.** Betty D. Cameron (card covers, 188pp, illus.). ISBN 0-9546948-0-5. Published by the author (Poplars Farm, 19 Silver Street, Chacombe, Banbury, Oxon. OX17 2JR). 2004. £11.75 (incl. p&p); £9.99 at Banbury Tourist Information Centre, Ottaker's and W.H. Smith.

In *C&CH.2.9* (Sept. 1964), Geoffrey Dodwell described Flora Thompson's *Lark Rise to Candleford* as 'a rich seam for the social historian to mine'. Much the same can be said of Betty D. Cameron's *Silver Street*, which is a superb collection of insights into the Northamptonshire village of Chacombe in the 1920s and 1930s interspersed with her mother's memories of the years from the turn of the twentieth century.

This book was written in memory of Betty's parents, Alice Chinner (née Bennett) and Charles Francis Chinner and, also, 'of generations of the Bennett and Chinner families who have lived in Chacombe and tilled the land through many centuries'. In Betty's mother's day Chacombe was a small village in a largely agricultural setting. Its inhabitants lived in an assortment of mostly thatched cottages with nearby farmhouses but always there was an awareness of the doings of the big houses such as the 'Priory' and 'Chacombe House' where many in the village were employed.

Originally *Silver Street* appeared in sections in the village's own magazine called the *Chacombe Chimes*. However, Betty's childhood recollections and memoirs left by her mother will have an appeal for readers in general and not just residents of Chacombe and nearby villages. In part this is because the study is very much about how urban influences impinged on rural life.

Banbury was the nearest market town and its goods and services were accessed in a number of ways. Dr. Herbert de Burgh Dwyer, who lived in Grimsbury, provided medical assistance when this was needed. Mr. Tuzzio perceived a chance to increase his sales of ice cream by coming to Chacombe. His broad smile was accompanied by expressions such as 'you lika cone or sandwich, yes?'

Village folk made periodic visits to Banbury courtesy of carriers like Frederick Boddington who lived at 17 Silver Street or by train from Chacombe Road Halt on the Woodford Halse link line. Betty had close family living in Banbury including Uncle John (Bennett) and Aunt Nellie at the Wine Vaults in Parsons Street.

There are many other aspects of *Silver Street* that place the book high on any list of village accounts. These include recollections of the village shop kept by her great-aunt, which in addition to catering for everyday needs stocked such

fascinating items as Dr. William's Pink Pills for Pale People. One item the shop did not sell was 'gaddy' 'lastic that the older boys used for their catapults. On one occasion a boy trying to buy some was amazed to find the local policeman behind him in the shop and had to flee.

Celebrations took place at intervals throughout the year. May Day before the First World War was a holiday for the children who carried a sweet smelling May garland around the village. There were Christmas visits from the Mummers and on Club Day and its associated Whitsun Fair, entertainments brought out village folk in large numbers. In 1928 'swingboats were set up on the green opposite Berry Close, near the pub, and Little Bandy Leys, on the Banbury Road, was the rendezvous for a merry-go-round and sideshows'. Another annual high day was the Chacombe Flower Show

Silver Street is a must for anyone hoping to learn about the essential character of rural life between the Wars. Recently I was stopped in Banbury High Street by a gentleman who said that he had started reading it and could not put the book down. I can think of no better tribute to such a delightful, colourful and humorous miscellany of village memories.

Brian Little

Brailes History: Episodes from a forgotten past: 2.

Alan and Philip Tennant (A5, 56pp). Published by A.J. Tennant, 49 Hawthorn Way, Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire CV36 4FD. 2004. £1.80 (incl. p&p).

Note. A notice of the first issue appeared in *C&CH*.16.1 (Autumn/Winter 1993).

The Tennant brothers use a format of separate and (mostly) unrelated essays, exploring particular themes or events, the 'episodes' of the title. They use a spotlight to illuminate specific scenes, without attempting to light up the whole village story.

An essay on 'The Plight of the Poor 1550 – 1710', is followed by '*In the Rebellion Time*': The Elizabethan Crisis of 1569', and a much shorter third and final item, 'The George Inn, 1558', which consists of a transcription of the 1558 inventory of the goods and chattels of the then landlord, together with a very short commentary on it. The transcription is in modern English: I would have preferred the original spellings and words, footnoted if necessary (interpretations can differ, and readers might like to make up their own minds). Given the thorough modernization of the text, it seems odd that Alan Tennant has left the money values in the original L.s.d, without explanation: to some readers shillings and pence will be as arcane as rods, poles and perches. Inventories provide the historian with all sorts of information, but I would have liked a bit more comparison here: can the 1558 hall, best chamber, parlour, kitchen and so on, be related to the rooms in the modern George Hotel? What does the arrangement of the furniture in the various rooms tell us about how they were used? Comparison with the inventory of another house (not an inn) would have told us more.

The essay about the poor in Brailes is an excellent attempt to flesh out the lives and situation of the landless poor in the 17th century. I call it an ‘attempt’ as Alan Tennant has very little evidence to go on: there were no regular Poor Law records in Brailes until 1710, though he extracts all possible information from a chance record in the Quarter Sessions of 1639. The poor are seldom recorded, or having been recorded once, disappear without trace. In setting the scene, he ranges over the contemporary anxiety about enclosure and depopulation, probable population growth (though this is one of the hardest things to calculate accurately), the poor harvests of the time, the Midlands protests against enclosing landlords, and much else besides. It is not helpful to use population figures from a parish such as St. Mary’s Warwick as an analogy: at this period most town populations were growing very fast, much faster than their indigenous birth rates could supply; they must have been absorbing some of the surplus population from rural areas.

It would have been good to have a map: he describes the enclosures at Barcheston, and the reduction of Chelmscote to a single building – but does not say where they are. It would have been helpful also to have a fuller explanation of the settlement Law and how this affected the provision of Poor Relief: it is not made clear how vital a person’s settlement was.

Philip Tennant’s essay about the Crisis of 1569 concentrates on the measures taken to deal with the revolt of the Irish in Munster and the northern earls in England, and how these impinged upon the local people. Without a standing army, in a crisis the Monarch’s Lord Lieutenants were expected to summon the local militia and make sure it was equipped and ready. Philip Tennant has made excellent use of the mass of papers relating to the building-up of this army, and it is all fascinating stuff, down to the transcript of the actual muster roll for Brailes: ‘*able men above the age of 16 years*’, all 49 of them. The second half of the essay is about the northern rebellion and very little of it is really ‘local’ history, though there is a fair amount about the Warwickshire gentry. There is an admirable map showing the movements of the two armies and the confusing presence of Mary Queen of Scots.

There are minor quibbles (A.T.’s use of exclamation marks reminds me of teenage girls, and P.T.’s paragraphs are much too long), but the booklet is an admirable example of the way that the best local historical research illuminates the national scene, and in reverse, how the best sort of local history is itself illuminated by being set in a wider context.

Deborah Hayter

Oxoniensia. LXVIII, 2003, Oxfordshire Architectural & Historical Society, 2004.

The latest issue includes a scholarly but very readable article by Margaret Martins on ‘John Stanbridge (1463-1510): Early Tudor Teacher and Grammarian of Oxford and Banbury’. Stanbridge was the founding headmaster of what was effectively Banbury’s first grammar school. Strongly recommended.

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.

Records series:

Wigginton Constables' Books 1691-1836 (vol. 11, with Phillimore).

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

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 (vol. 26).

King's Sutton Churchwardens' Accounts 1636-1700, ed. Paul Hayter (vol. 27).

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

In preparation:

Banbury Chapbooks, by Dr Leo John de Freitas.

Turnpike Roads to Banbury, by Alan Rosevear.

Selections from the *Diaries of William Cotton Risley, Vicar of Deddington 1836-1848*, ed. G.W. Smedley-Stevenson.

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 Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park 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**.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Autumn 2004 Programme

All meetings are held at Banbury Museum.

Thursday 2nd September. 6.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.

Social evening at **Banbury Museum**, Spiceball Park Road, with conducted tours of the Museum.

Thursday 9th September, 7.30 p.m.

Banbury Plush. *Christine Bloxham*. The talk will be based on the artifacts in Banbury Museum. She will also include talking *in situ* about plush in the Museum. Christine was Curator of Banbury Museum in the 1970s and co-author with Vera Hodgkins of *Banbury and Shutford Plush* (B.H.S., 1980).

Thursday 14th October. 7.30 p.m.

The new Globe Theatre (from concept to realisation). *Margaret Thomas*.

Thursday 11th November. 7.30 p.m.

Medieval Villages in a Landscape (The Whittlewood Project). *Dr Richard Jones and Dr Mark Page, University of Leicester*.

Thursday 9th December. 7.30 p.m.

The History of Oxford College Gardens. *Michael Pirie, head gardener, Green College, Oxford*.

All meetings are held at the
Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury,
at **7.30 p.m** (September Reception at 6.00 p.m.)