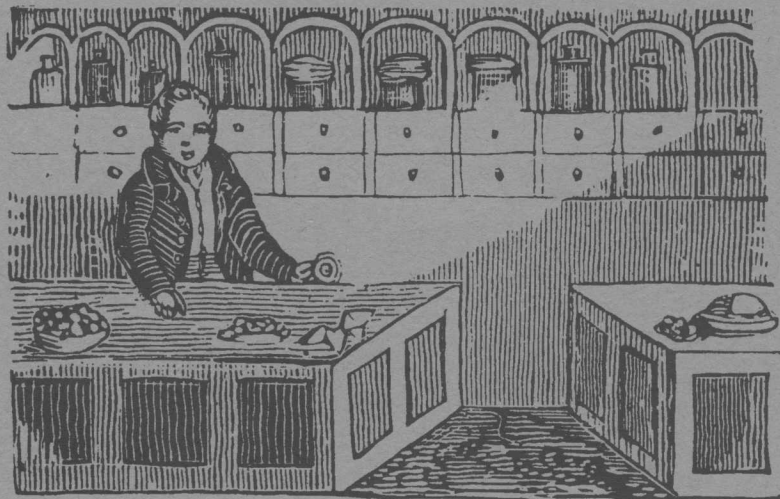


CAKE AND COCKHORSE



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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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Once again the issue of *Cake & Cockhorse* has extended the season, in this case 'Spring', to its limits. Fortunately history, unlike science, deals in the past, so what are a few weeks or months when we are covering the centuries!

Dr Horn's article on shopkeepers in the late eighteenth century is an important reminder of how central our town of Banbury was to all its hinterland, but how, nevertheless, statistics, in this case derived from tax returns, can be misleading. I had been tempted to marry up the list of Banbury shopkeepers on pages 257-8 with details from Banbury parish registers, showing who had died between the dates quoted, and, perhaps, who had arrived. However time precluded this – but members who have the relevant volumes of *Banbury Baptisms* and *Burials* may amuse themselves with such research – and if so, please let us know your findings.

We draw your attention to the crisis over the Cartwright of Aynhoe archives.

Cover: 'A Tradesman's Shop at Banbury', *Banbury Chapbooks*, Edwin Pearson (1890).

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SHOPKEEPERS and the SHOP TAX: 1785-1789

Pamela Horn

‘The traditional view is that market towns had shops, while country people bought from pedlars’. Ian Mitchell, ‘Pitt’s Shop Tax in the history of retailing’, *The Local Historian*, 14, 6 (May 1981), p.348.

Although it is the conventional wisdom that before the nineteenth century village shops were virtually non-existent, there is evidence that even in the later seventeenth century they were widespread in many parts of the country. In 1681 it was even alleged that ‘that which hath been the bane almost of all trades is the too great number of shopkeepers in this kingdom’.¹ However, precise information on their scale of operations in the Georgian period remains difficult to find.

With a few exceptions, such as the diary of the Sussex retailer, Thomas Turner, or of details provided in wills and inventories drawn up at death, personal documentation is sparse.² Admittedly trade directories were published in increasing numbers during the later eighteenth century, but the lists they provide are highly variable in their coverage. Thus Bailey’s *Western and Midland Directory* for 1784 includes the names of 22 shopkeepers in Banbury, yet the *Universal British Directory* of 1790-98 mentioned at least 39.³ Part of the discrepancy may be accounted for by the fact that Bailey’s *Directory* did not include bakers, butchers, tailors and shoemakers – all trades likely to be numerous in a market town. The 1784 list, therefore, comprised six grocers, seven mercers or drapers, four ironmongers, plus a bookseller and stationer, a wine merchant, a clock and watchmaker, a silversmith and a hatter and toyman. The last

¹ T.S. Willan, *The Inland Trade. Studies in English Internal trade in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (Manchester 1976), pp.87-88 and 99. Ian Mitchell, ‘Pitt’s Shop Tax in the history of retailing’ in *The Local Historian*, Vol. 14, No. 6 (May 1981), p.348.

² David Vaisey ed., *The Diary of Thomas Turner 1754-1765* (Oxford, 2000 reprint). See also T.S. Willan, *An Eighteenth-Century Shopkeeper. Abraham Dent of Kirkby Stephen* (Manchester, 1970). Nancy Cox, *The Complete Tradesman. A Study of Retailing, 1550-1820* (Aldershot, 2000), pp.89-90.

³ See Appendix 2.

combined the sale of hats with that of small or decorative metalware goods such as buckles, buttons and similar items.

By contrast, in the 1790s, in addition to ten grocers (some with second occupational strings, like James Austin, who was also a cooper, George Cattell, who was a chemist and druggist as well as a grocer, and John Golby, who was an innkeeper and grocer), there were five mercers, five ironmongers, a jeweller, a 'chinaman', who was a carpenter and joiner, too, and, significantly, five bakers, three tailors, two butchers and a shoemaker. Other trades listed included a hairdresser, a wine merchant, a watchmaker and a female chemist and druggist, and two hatters (one of whom was a leather-cutter as well, and the other a bookseller and stationer).⁴ Of the twenty-two retailers listed in 1784, fourteen were recorded in the *Universal Directory* of 1790-98.

But, as Ian Mitchell has pointed out, 'simply counting shop numbers from directories can be somewhat misleading, since knowing the number of shops in a place is not the same as knowing their relative importance.'⁵ Furthermore, as Bailey's *Directory* suggests, the compilers of these volumes were selective as regards those whom they mentioned. The 1784 list includes only one female retailer in Banbury – Mary Beck, grocer. Yet it is clear from advertisements in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* at this time that Elizabeth Beesley was in business as a chemist and druggist as well as acting as agent for the distribution of various patent medicines, such as Hodgson's Antiscorbutic Tincture, which treated anything from toothache to small-pox. Many women did have shops which they had either set up on their own account or had inherited from a male relative. Thus when young Joseph Bull, a Banbury mercer, died in 1791, he left his business to be equally divided between his two unmarried sisters, Sarah and Hannah. His personal assets were disposed of in similar fashion.⁶ Mercers sold silks and fine fabrics and were advised by a mid-century writer to make sure that they were themselves well dressed. They

⁴ Bailey's *Western and Midland Directory* (1784), pp.393-94, and the *Universal British Directory* (1790-98), pp.253-55, are both at the Centre for Oxfordshire Studies, Oxford Central Library. See Appendix 2.

⁵ Mitchell, 'Pitt's Shop Tax', p.348 (see fn. 1).

⁶ Will of Joseph Bull of Banbury on M'film Pec.15, f.127 at Oxfordshire Record Office. Bull was buried on 18 April 1791 and the will was proved on 20 September 1791. In the burial register for Banbury parish church he was described as 'a young man'. For Elizabeth Beesley's agency rôle see, for example, *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 22 February 1783 and 27 March 1784.

By the KING'S PATENT.
The TASTELESS AGUE and FEVER DROPS.
Price 3s. the Bottle, Duty included.

NO Medicine was ever offered to the Publick, that has a greater Claim to their Approbation than this, as many Thousands can testify. If taken regularly, and according to the Directions, it is the most efficacious Medicine in the World for the Ague and intermitent Fever, and in most Cases one Bottle is sufficient for a Cure.

The Bark is the usual Remedy in this Case: but being a very nauseous Medicine, and seldom taken in a sufficient Quantity, it very often fails; and Children, and those who have weak Stomachs, are frequently lost for Want of a more easy and pleasant Remedy.

In these Drops the Afflicted will find a Medicine, in which the greatest Safety is united with the utmost Efficacy, and so perfectly Tasteless, that they may be given to any Person without his Knowledge, yet so efficacious, that they have seldom or ever been known to fail.

N. B. As there are other dangerous Preparations that are sold under the Name of AGUE TINCTURE and DROPS, be careful to have none but those sold by the King's Royal Letters Patent, all Others being Counterfeits, and the Venders liable to be prosecuted.

By Appointment of the Patentees, this Medicine is sold by W. Jackson, in Oxford; A. Williams, Westgate-Street, Gloucester; C. Pugh, Hereford; Piercy and Jones, Printers, Birmingham; Mr. Seeley, Bookseller, in Buckingham; Mrs. Elizabeth Seeley, Banbury; Mrs. Stevens, Grocer, Bicester; J. How, Bookseller, Great Marlow; by the Oxford Newsmen; and by a Dealer in most of the Towns in England.

Jackson's Oxford Journal, 27 March 1784.

should keep a close eye on Paris fashions, too, since in affluent circles nothing 'that is mere English goes down with our modern Ladies'.⁷ However, as Georgian Banbury was scarcely a prominent social centre, it is likely that Joseph Bull had to meet less exacting standards. It is not known if his sisters continued the shop after his death, but on 21 November 1792 Hannah Bull married John West of Ipswich at Banbury, with Sarah acting as a witness to the marriage.⁸

If trade directories are of limited value as sources of information on eighteenth-century retailing, the same must be said of such alternatives as advertisements in the press and trade cards, since these are likely to be used by wealthier or more pretentious retailers rather than by the rank-and-file. Many emphasized their metropolitan connections or exclusive clientèle. Thus in November 1783, 'M. Stringer, Milliner, in St. Giles's,

⁷ R. Campbell, *The London Tradesman* (London, 1747), p.197.

⁸ *Marriage Register of Banbury*, Part 3, 1790-1837 (B.H.S. 5, 1963).

Oxford', carefully noted she had previously worked for Mrs. Wright of Pall Mall, 'Milliner to her Majesty'. She was anxious to inform 'the Ladies that she has laid in a genteel Assortment of Goods of the newest Fashions. – Those Ladies who will please to honour her with their Commands may depend on her endeavours to give the greatest Satisfaction'. The previous October James Costar, an Oxford grocer, pointed out that he sold wax candles 'of all kinds, of the first Manufactory in London, at Three Shillings a Pound, for Ready Money'.⁹ There were many more such advertisements in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* during these months, though none was inserted by a Banbury retailer.

Account books are another resource, proving details of day-to-day transactions, including the granting of credit and the sort of stock held. The day book of Ann Gomm for the period 1791-98 shows she was a shopkeeper from Shipton. This was Shipton-under-Wychwood and the book reveals the wide variety of goods sold, often in very small quantities, and the long period that elapsed between initial purchases and the settlement of a debt.¹⁰ It also confirms that in the eighteenth century the village shopkeeper had to be something of a jack-of-all-trades, selling grocery, clothing, haberdashery, and such miscellaneous items as spices, hops and simple medicaments like brimstone and treacle and 'ointment'. In December 1794, for example, 'Young Hannah Davis' bought the following items from Ann Gomm:

Quarter of tea and ½ pound of candles	10d.
Quarter of sugar and ½ pound of soap	6d.
Worsted and pins	2¼d.
Bacon	6½d.
Half pound of candles	4d.
Quarter of tea	6d.
An ounce of tea	3d.
Half pound of raisins	10½d.
Half pound of currants	4¼d.

⁹ *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 29 November 1783; 18 October 1783.

¹⁰ The parish registers for Shipton-under-Wychwood reveal the birth of children to John Gomm and his wife, variously called Nany, Nancy or Ann, in 1796, 1798, 1800, 1803 and 1805. This may be Ann the shopkeeper. In 1812-13 there are entries in another hand of daily supplies of dairy produce to Sir John Reade, Bt., who lived at Shipton Court in Shipton-under-Wychwood. These were seemingly supplied by a farm or dairy rather than a shop. The day book is at Oxfordshire Record Office, B.118/F/1.

Further purchases were made in January and February 1795, so that by 16 February Hannah's shop debt had risen to 14s.1d. On 7 March a settlement was made with 5d. 'left to pay'. Fresh items were then bought and there was another settlement on 22 May, this time leaving 10d. 'to pay'.¹¹

A similar policy was followed over subsequent months with regard to Hannah's transactions. It also applied to other customers, such as Mrs Chaundy, who began making purchases on 28 April 1795 and whose bill seems to have run on until 23 September, when it was crossed through, doubtless indicating it had been settled. As well as buying sugar, tea, worsted, buttons, tape, and thread and needles for repairing clothes, Mrs Chaundy purchased vinegar, oil, hops, spice and half a peck of salt, this last costing the substantial sum of 1s.6½d.¹² Then there was Mary Smith who made tiny purchases, such as tea by the ounce, butter by the quarter pound, and candles singly or in pairs. However, she also made regular purchases of half an ounce of snuff for 1¼d. She seems to have made an effort to pay at least part of her bill monthly but was rarely able to meet all of it. Usually the sums left were modest, varying from around 6d. to 1s.6d., but in January 1795, 3s.9½d. was owing. Not until 19 October in that year had the bill been reduced to a manageable 1¼d.

Other customers bought stockings, lengths of cloth, handkerchiefs and even hats, with 'long pay' again the norm. Some, like Elizabeth Smith, purchased no groceries, only wearing apparel. This included 2s.4d. for a hat, 1s.10d. for an apron and strings, 2s.9d. for 'Ribband', and several handkerchiefs., doubtless worn at the neck and costing between 9½d. and 1s.5d. each. All of these purchases were made in 1791. Another purchaser of clothing and lengths of cloth was Mary Sheperd [sic] who in 1792 spent the substantial sum of 6s.0d. on a petticoat, 1s.9d. on a pair of stockings and 4s.7d. for a comb and a pair of buckles, as well as acquiring more mundane articles, such as handkerchiefs and an apron.¹³

Trade credit and the settlement of debt were perennial worries for shopkeepers, as the diary of Thomas Turner at East Hoathley, Sussex,

¹¹ See entries in B.118/F/1 (fn. 10).

¹² The salt was purchased on 15 May 1795, the same day that Mrs Chaundy bought half an ounce of 'peper' and the hops. Entry in B.118/F/1 (fn.10).

¹³ William Shepard was a customer at the shop, too, spending 10½d. on a pair of buckles, 2s.6d. on a pair of stockings, and 5s.3½d. on 'Cloth & making', during 1792. See B.118/F/1 (fn. 10).

makes clear. ‘Oh, what a melancholy and dull time it is! No business, nor can I get in my debts;’ he lamented in January 1757. ‘... What I shall do I cannot tell. I should never care how poor I lived in regard to eating and drinking if I could but make things keep in equilibrium, which I am afraid they cannot do as trade is so dull’. There were many such complaints in the diary.¹⁴

For some small or inexperienced shopkeepers, there might be problems associated with the simple mechanics of trading. George Herbert quoted the example of old Mrs Gazey who ran a shop in Banbury in the 1820s where he and his friends bought their sweets – ‘what we called “suck-balls”.’ However, when George Prescott, a plush weaver, called at the shop to buy a halfpennyworth of tobacco, Mrs Gazey had to confess that she did not know how to ‘make a halfpennyworth’. Prescott then asked for a pennyworth, which she was accustomed to selling, and when this was handed to him he divided it into two halves. In that way, wrote Herbert, ‘he taught the old lady how to make a halfpennyworth’.¹⁵

If trade directories, press advertisements, probate records and shop accounts give, at least, a fragmentary picture of Georgian retailing, there remains one further, little-used, source of information provided by the Shop Tax returns for the period 1785-89. Unfortunately the returns do not list individual shopkeepers, but they do state the towns and villages where they ran their businesses, and the amount each community paid to the exchequer.¹⁶

¹⁴ Vaisey ed., *The Diary of Thomas Turner*, 28 January 1757, pp.81-82. On 10 April 1758, p.146, Turner similarly complained that ‘money comes in but dull! I have now I think retrenched my expences as much as it is possible for me to do’.

¹⁵ Christiana S. Cheney ed. (1948), revised B.S. Trinder (1971), George Herbert (1841-1902), *Shoemaker’s Window: Recollections of Banbury before the Railway Age* (2nd. ed., B.H.S. 10), p.42.

¹⁶ These tax returns are preserved in a multiplicity of small individual sacks in The National Archives (P.R.O.) at Kew under Class E.182. The Oxfordshire returns are in E.182/793, Part 2 and E.182/794, Part 1. Window Tax returns, Land Tax returns, Inhabited House duty, and a number of other assessed tax returns are at the same references.

In *Land and Window Tax Assessments* (2004, F.F.H.S.), Jeremy Gibson comments researchers should be warned that E.182 ‘is a gigantic class, and the annual county bundles, comprising scores of separate pieces, are completely unsorted, promising little but dirt and frustration.’ Congratulations to Pamela Horn! **J.G.**

The Shop Tax was introduced by William Pitt, then prime minister and chancellor of the exchequer, in the late spring of 1785 to help meet the cost of servicing the National Debt, which had been swollen by the expense of the American War of Independence. Pitt estimated that the new duty would yield around £120,000 a year, which was over a quarter of the extra revenue he was seeking to raise.¹⁷ It was to be based on the rent or rental value of the property in which a shop was conducted, whether the business occupied a part or the whole of the building. Only premises having a rent or rental value of £5 per annum or more were to be covered, so that very small ‘parlour’ shops in cottages with rents below £5 a year were exempt. Also excluded were shops selling bread, meal and flour only. Above the minimum, the tax was to advance in stages, so that for properties with a rent or rental value of £5 and under £10 a year the charge was 6d. in the £ per annum; for those with an annual rent or rental value of £10 and under £15 a duty of 1s. in the £ was imposed, rising to a maximum of 2s. in the £ for premises with an annual rent or rental value of £25 or more.¹⁸ This meant that in areas of high property values, such as parts of London, and in fashionable resorts like Bath, the burden was particularly heavy. In order to assess the impact of the tax a survey was carried out of thirty-one towns and cities to estimate the anticipated yield in each case. One of those selected was Oxford, where it was calculated there would be 286 retail establishments to be covered. However, unlike Bath and Bristol, where sixteen per cent of shops had a rent or rental value of £30 a year or more, in Oxford only about three per cent fell into that category. Around 82 per cent of the city’s retail businesses were assessed as having rental values of £5 to £15 a year.¹⁹ There are no statistics for smaller Oxfordshire towns like Banbury or for humbler shops paying a rent of less than £5 a year.

¹⁷ *Ipswich Journal*, 14 May 1785. *Hansard’s Parliamentary History of England*, vol. XXV, 23 May 1785, col.785. A flat-rate shop tax had been considered in 1758-59 but was rejected on the grounds that it would harm small retailers. The sliding scale proposed in 1785 avoided that particular objection.

¹⁸ 25 Geo III c.30. *An Act for Duties on Shops in Great Britain, 1785*. Initially Pitt had proposed a duty of 1s. in the £ on shops rented at £4 and under £10 a year and 1s.3d. on those valued at £10 up to £15 a year. But in the Bill itself the lower rates of 6d. and 1s., respectively, were substituted and the starting point was fixed at £5.

¹⁹ Calculated from the entry for Oxford in ‘Tax on Shops. Scheme for the Duty, 1785’ in OH.42/7 in The National Archives (P.R.O.), f.251.

When the tax was announced it aroused anger among retailers. They objected not so much to the sums involved, since in most cases these were paltry, but to its rental basis, which took no account of business profitability, and to the fact that they alone had to pay it. Wholesalers, bankers and merchants were exempt. Only retailers were covered.

Despite this hostility, the Act received the royal assent on 13 June 1785 and came into operation early in the following month. Opposition to it continued, however, spearheaded by London retailers, but with provincial shopkeepers joining in. Between 25 January and 6 March 1786 alone, 41 petitions against the tax were submitted to Parliament, emanating from 22 counties in England and two in Scotland.²⁰ They included a petition presented in February 1786 by the retail traders of Oxford and its suburbs, complaining of a tax they found 'partial and oppressive' and which if not repealed they feared would 'prove fatal to their Interest; ... there are a great Number of Retail Shops, the Profits whereof are known to be barely sufficient to support the industrious Owners, and the said Tax will consequently reduce to Want a Description of Men, who have been long considered the Strength of this Nation'. Hitherto 'the Retail Traders have, on all Occasions, cheerfully contributed to the Support of Government'. But the new measure, by excluding 'the Merchant, the Wholesale Dealer, and many other opulent Members of Society' bore particularly heavily on shopkeepers in a city where there was not only 'enormous' land tax to pay but where they had 'to support very expensive Poor' as well as meeting 'many local Expences which have brought on frequent Scenes of Distress'. They wanted Parliament to 'substitute some more general Taxation, equally productive, but less partial'.²¹

Pitt responded to the protests in April 1786 by reducing the tax burden on smaller retailers, so that those with premises rented or valued at from £5 to £10 a year would henceforth pay 4d. in the £ duty instead of 6d. This meant that a retailer with a rental value of £5 would now pay just 1s.8d. a year in tax instead of the previous 2s.6d.; for those with property in the range £10 to £15 a year rent, the duty was reduced to 8d. in the £ instead of the previous 2s.²² Also exempted from payment were all

²⁰ Hoh-Cheung Mui and Lorna H. Mui, *Shops and Shopkeeping in Eighteenth-Century England* (Kingston, Montreal and London, 1989), pp.81-82.

²¹ *Journals of the House of Commons*, Vol. XLI, 1786, entry for 20 February 1786, p.219.

²² 26 Geo. III c.9. *An Act for Duties on Shops in Great Britain, 1786*. Mitchell, 'Pitt's Shops Tax', p.349 (fn.1).

retailers too impoverished to pay church or poor rates, no matter what the value of their property. But for premises with a rent or rental value of £30 or more, the tax remained at 2s. in the £. This meant that a retailer with property rented at £30 a year was still paying an annual tax of £3.

The concessions did little to mollify the tax's most vociferous critics, especially in London, and eventually it was repealed in April 1789. Pitt had clearly concluded it was a measure not worth defending in view of the continued opposition to it, the difficulties experienced in its collection, and the fact that its yield, at around £56,000 per annum for the whole country, was less than half that originally envisaged.²³

Yet if the duty was largely unsuccessful as a taxing initiative, it is valuable in providing details of places where shops were established. As Ian Mitchell points out, in the case of returns between 1786 and 1788 it can be assumed that all annual payments of 3s. or less represented one shop per parish or township, while in the range 3s.4d. to 5s.8d. there would be two shops. 'Since relatively few large shops could produce a substantial assessment, it is not possible to use the tax to calculate the number of shops in major centres; it does, however, indicate which towns were of particular importance.'²⁴ Appendix 1 lists the returns for Oxfordshire over the period April 1786 to April 1789, when the tax ended, together with details of the population in each community as²⁵ shown in the 1801 census of population.

These data make it possible to draw several conclusions relating to the incidence and importance of shops in Oxfordshire during the 1780s. In all, between 31 and 36 places were listed as having retail outlets eligible for the duty in any one year. Numbers fluctuated as shops came and went, or rents ranged above or below the £5 tax cut-off point, or as shopkeepers themselves gained exemption on poverty grounds. This meant that around ten to twelve per cent of places in the county had retail outlets. These ranged from small parishes such as Epwell, with a population in 1801 of 284, and Bladon (near Woodstock), with 287 inhabitants, to major centres like Oxford itself. Epwell and Bladon both had just one shop which was eligible for duty for part of the period. In 1787-88, fourteen places had a single shop paying the tax but that had fallen to nine by 1788-89.

²³ Mitchell, 'Pitt's Shop Tax', p.349 (fn.1).

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ *Population Abstract: England, Wales and Scotland in 1801* (London, 1802).

As might have been expected, Oxford paid the largest share of the county's annual tax bill, supplying around 57 to 59 per cent of the total over this period, of which Banbury's share was between 5.7 and 7.2 per cent during the same three tax years. Degrees of affluence are also indicated by the fact that Henley-on-Thames paid a shop tax not far short of double that of Banbury, although the number of inhabitants in each case was not markedly different, according to the 1801 census. In general, the south of the county was better provided with stores than was 'Banburyshire'. But Oxford, Henley and Banbury together contributed more than three-quarters of the county's shop tax revenue. Within Oxford itself about a third of the tax's yield came from the parish of All Saints (the Carfax end of the High, bordered by Market Street, Radcliffe Square and Blue Boar Lane) – an indication of the concentration of retailing within a single favoured area (the Covered Market remains an elite shopping precinct). Indeed, in two of the three years covered, this parish alone paid more shop duty than did Banbury and Henley combined.²⁶

Finally, while all of Oxfordshire's market towns had shops, around 22 or 23 villages had retail outlets covered by the tax for at least part of the period. There may well have been other shops which were either rented at below £5 a year or were kept by people too poor to pay church and poor rates and who were thus exempt. As Ian Mitchell comments, the returns reveal a 'rudimentary hierarchy' of retailing centre within a county. Although Oxford was clearly dominant, the market towns, especially in the south of the county, offered a useful service to consumers in their area, and there were villages like Islip and Eynsham which provided more than one retail outlet for their parishioners and those in the immediate vicinity. Many country people in Georgian Oxfordshire may have chosen to buy from itinerant tradesmen, such as pedlars, but there was a viable retail network within the county which gave them some alternatives.²⁷

²⁶ The limited contribution of the Shop Tax to the revenue is indicated by the fact that in Banbury in the year ending 5 April 1787 the Window Tax alone yielded £217.19s.5d. and the Shop Tax, £13.12s.8d. In 1787-88, the respective returns were £229.14s.10d. and £16.6s.4d. In the latter year Banbury's Window Tax yielded more than the Shop Tax for the whole county. See E.182/793 Part 2 and E.182/794 Part 1 for both taxes (Fn. 16).

²⁷ Even in the 1880s Flora Thompson recalled periodic visits by travelling salesmen to her Oxfordshire hamlet. Flora Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford* (Harmondsworth, 1979 edn.), pp.118-133.

Appendix 1
SHOP TAX RETURNS: OXFORDSHIRE 1786-1789

Nil = No tax paid in the year; the shop had either disappeared or rent had fallen below £5 per annum, or the proprietor was exempt on poverty grounds.

<i>Place</i>	<i>1801 Population</i>	<i>Tax 6 April 1786 to 5 April 1787</i>	<i>Tax 6 April 1787 to 5 April 1788</i>	<i>Tax 6 April 1788 to 5 April 1789</i>
Oxford City	11,694	£131. 0s. 6d.	£127. 2s. 7d.	£139.15s. 8¼d.
Banbury borough	2,755	£13.12s. 8d.	£16. 6s. 4d.	£16.13s. 4d.
Henley on Thames	2,948	£29.18s. 3d.	£29. 9s. 3d.	£29. 0s.11d.
Woodstock	1,322	£12. 2s. 0d.	£11. 9s. 4d.	£11.14s. 8d.
Bloxham Hundred				
Adderbury East	818	2s. 0d.	2s. 0d.	2s. 0d.
Chadlington Hundred and the South Division of Banbury Hundred				
Charlbury	965	7s. 0d.	7s. 0d.	7s. 0d.
Chipping Norton	1,812	£3. 1s. 0d.	£2.17s. 4d.	£2.16s. 4d.
Shipton-u-Wychwood	406	3s. 6d.	Nil	Nil
Bampton Hundred				
Bampton & Weald	1,003	16s. 6d.	10s. 4d.	10s. 8d.
Burford	1,516	£7.18s. 7d.	£2.17s. 6d.	£2.14s. 8d.
Witney	2,584	£3.16s. 6d.	£2. 7s. 0d.	£2. 4s. 4d.
Curbridge	353	Nil	1s. 8d.	Nil
Bullingdon Hundred				
St. Clements (Oxford)	413	£4. 1s. 8d.	£4. 1s. 8d.	£4. 7s. 0d.
Cowley	345	1s. 8d.	1s. 8d.	2s. 8d.
Horton & Studley	283	2s. 4d.	2s. 4d.	1s. 8d.
Nuneham Courtenay	278	1s.10d.	1s.10d.	Nil
Wheatley	685	1s. 8d.	1s. 8d.	3s. 8d.
Binfield Hundred				
Bix	303	8s. 0d.	8s. 0d.	8s. 0d.
Caversham	1,069	3s. 8d.	3s. 8d.	5s. 6d.
Eye & Dunsden	705	1s. 8d.	1s. 8d.	1s. 8d.
Rotherfield Grays	677	15s. 4d.	15s. 4d.	15s. 4d.
Rotherfield Peppard	317	1s. 8d.	1s. 8d.	Nil
Banbury Hundred				
Epwell	284	1s. 8d.	1s. 8d.	Nil
Ewelme Hundred				
Benson	811	£1.16s. 0d.	£1.15s. 6d.	£1.18s. 0d.
Langtree Hundred				
Goring	677	Nil	2s. 0d.	2s. 0d.
Lewknor Hundred				
Chinnor	667	1s. 8d.	1s. 8d.	1s. 8d.

<i>Place</i>	<i>1801 Population</i>	<i>Tax 6 April 1786 to 5 April 1787</i>	<i>Tax 6 April 1787 to 5 April 1788</i>	<i>Tax 6 April 1788 to 5 April 1789</i>
Ploughley Hundred				
Bicester Market End	1,750	£5.15s. 8d.	£5.18s. 4d.	£5. 5s.10d.
Bicester Kings End	196	2s. 0d.	2s. 0d.	Nil
Islip	557	8s. 8d.	8s. 8d.	8s. 8d.
Bletchington	503	Nil	1s. 3d.	Nil
Pyrton Hundred				
Watlington	1,276	£3.18s. 0d.	£4.12s. 4d.	£4. 9s. 4d.
Thame Hundred				
Great Milton	509	3s. 8d.	3s. 8d.	3s. 8d.
Priestend)		2s. 4d.	2s. 4d.	2s. 4d.
Old Thame)	2,293	1s. 8d.	3s. 4d.	1s. 8d.
New Thame)		£6.10s. 0d.	£7.13s. 8d.	£7. 8s. 8d.
Wootton Hundred				
Deddington	1,172	5s. 8d.	5s. 8d.	6s. 4d.
Eynsham	1,166	6s. 8d.	11s. 8d.	11s. 8d.
Wolvercote	341	2s. 0d.	Nil	Nil
Bladon	287	Nil	Nil	1s. 8d.
<i>Total Tax Yield</i>		£228.13s. 8d.	£221.13s. 7d.	£233. 6s. 7d.

Source of the Shop Tax returns: E.182/793 and E.182/794 at The National Archives.

Appendix 2 **EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BANBURY SHOPKEEPERS**

(a) From Bailey's *Western and Midland Directory* (1784).

N.B. No addresses are included; spelling as in the original.

* = also appearing in the 1790-98 *Directory*, see below

Arnold, Thomas	Grocer*
Barker, William	Mercer and Draper*
Beck, Mary	Grocer
Bloxholme, John	Ironmonger
Bull, Joseph	Mercer*
Callcott, William	Bookseller and Stationer
Clarkson, Samuel	Wine Merchant*
Drury, William	Clock and Watch-maker
Fidkin, Urbin	Mercer*
Golby, John	Grocer*
Hayden, Richard	Mercer and Draper*
Loftus, William	Grocer*
O'Donnell, James	Linen-draper
Osborne, Robert	Ironmonger*
Pinfold, Thomas	Silversmith*

Shirley, William	Grocer*
Shirratt [Spurrett?], Bernard	Ironmonger*
Stone, Edward	Grocer*
Wheatly, John	Ironmonger*
White, William	Hatter and Toyman
Wills, Thomas and Thomas	Drapers
Wyatt, Charles	Mercer*

(a) From Bailey's *Universal British Directory* (1790-98)

Abraham, Solomon	Jeweller
Arnold, Thomas	Grocer
Austin, James	Cooper and Grocer
Barker, C.W.	Mercer
Beesley, Elizabeth	Chymist [sic] and Druggist
Bradford, Philip	Ironmonger
Bull, Joseph	Mercer
Butler, William	Butcher and Victualler
Cattell, Geo. S.	Chymist, Druggist and Grocer
Claridge, George	Baker
Clark, John	Taylor [sic]
Clarson [sic], Samuel jun.	Alderman and Wine-merchant
Fidkin, Urbin	Mercer
Gardner, Joseph	Ironmonger
Golby, James	Grocer
Golby, John	Grocer and Innkeeper
Grimbly, Samuel	Grocer
Haddon, Richard	Baker
Hall, John	Hair-dresser
Heydon, Richard	Mercer
Hill, Samuel	Leather-cutter and Hatter
Loftus, William	Grocer
Mosely, William	Carpenter, Joiner and Chinaman
Osborn, Robert	Ironmonger
Padbury, Thomas	Taylor and Salesman
Pedley, Tho.	Taylor and Salesman
Pinfold, Tho.	Watch-maker and Brazier
Rusher, Wm.	Bookseller, Stationer and Hatter
Sansbury, Thomas	Baker
Shirley, William	Grocer
Spurrett [Shirratt?], Barnard	Ironmonger
Stone, Edward	Grocer
Taylor, Richard	Butcher
Walford, Daniel	Baker
Walford, Samuel	Baker
Watson, Samuel	Shoemaker
Wells, Joseph	Liquor-merchant and Grocer
Wheatley, John	Ironmonger and Banker
Wyatt, Chas.	Alderman and Mercer

Indexing the *Banbury Guardian*: Any Volunteers?

Last autumn I sent a group of (adult) students off to the Banburyshire Studies Centre in the reference library to research a topic – any topic – of their choice in the back issues of the *Banbury Guardian*. They all came back with fascinating stories but had found the search frustrating in the extreme because of the lack of an index. One can dip into the paper, on microfilm, from the 1830s into the twentieth century, and find all sorts of wonderful things, from advertisements for obscure agricultural machines, to reports of workhouse outings, to house sales and farm sales, council elections and school openings: all the varied life of town, village and country is there. However, if you want to look up a particular place, for instance, and see if anything newsworthy had happened there, you cannot do so, because it is completely unindexed.

In some places a local history society has set about improving this situation, and by 1990 more than 650 indexes had been started or were already available for local newspapers. I wondered whether there might have been some interest among members of the Banbury Historical Society in having a go at making the history in the *Banbury Guardian* more available and more accessible for other local historians? No special skills are needed to start with apart from a bit of spare time (possibly two or three hours a week) and I am quite sure that all who participated would find it interesting and would come across all sorts of fascinating nuggets of information (there would be a ready market for these in the pages of *Cake & Cockhorse*). Are there members of the Society who would like to ‘do’ some history in this way?

If you might be interested and would like to discuss it further (but this would not commit you in any way) please contact Deborah Hayter (01295 811176) or email: deborahhayter@hotmail.com .

D.H.

Note. There *is* an index and synopsis to the county’s earliest newspaper, *Jackson’s Oxford Journal*, from its start in 1753 up to 1790, available at Oxfordshire Studies (formerly Centre for, Oxford Central Library) and at the Oxfordshire Record Office. It is described by its compiler, Eileen Davis, in *The Oxfordshire Family Historian* (Oxfordshire F.H.S.), vol. 1, no 9 (Autumn 1979).

Ideally there would eventually be at least three indexes, to personal names, places and subjects. The first is the simplest but much the largest, and, should the newspaper be digitized, could be provided by computer (as is already the case with *C&CH*). Most useful, to my mind, would be an index of places, with subject sub-headings. Such an index could then form the basis of a subject index itself.

Penelope Renold provided a series of extracts from the *Banbury Guardian* in *C&CH*, 9.7-9; 10.1,2,9; 11.5 (1984-90); copies still available.

J.G.

**WILLIAM ASPLIN:
An obscure Vicar of Banbury, 1717-1734,
and his later career**

Nicholas Allen

William Asplin was Vicar of Banbury from 1717 to 1734. Beesley (p.513) dismisses him in one line. At least he gets a paragraph in *Banbury Baptism and Burial Register, 1653-1723* (BHS 9), p.ix:

William Asplin was inducted on 6th September 1717, and his signature in the margin of the registers occurs that autumn. He was born about 1688, son of William Asplin, a Worcestershire gentleman. He graduated B.A. and M.A. (in 1707) of St. Alban Hall, Oxford, and before coming to Banbury had been chaplain to a regiment on foreign service. He married Mary, daughter of John Myster of Hoson(?), Oxon. Two of his children were baptized in 1721/2 and 1723. He also became Vicar of Horley and Hornton in 1723. He resigned from Banbury in 1734, and became Rector of Burthorpe, Glos., dying in 1758.

In the recently published *Eastleach: A History of a Cotswold Village*, we discover something of his life before and after Banbury. Eastleach is a Gloucestershire parish on the Oxfordshire border, south-west of Burford. Eastleach Martin (part of the whole) is also known as Bouthrop and here we find our man (pp.89-90):

One eighteenth-century parson and his wife were obviously held in high esteem by their parishioners as the latter caused a handsome memorial table to be erected on the south wall of Bouthrop church recording the lives of the Reverend William and Mary Asplin. William (1687-1758) was a man of parts; educated at Trinity College, Oxford, and awarded BA in 1707, he rapidly became the vice-principal of St Alban's Hall and was ordained in 1709 to become an army chaplain. By 1717 he was vicar of Banbury where he met his wife, Mary Myster of Hornton [the will of William Mister, yeoman, of Hornton, was proved in Banbury Peculiar Court, 1683]. He was a man of considerable learning and a prolific writer of very scholarly and extremely obscure tracts on theology, one of which, published in 1728, had the splendid title *The Kebla: Or a Defence of Eastward Adoration*. He was in correspondence with many of the great men of his day. Furthermore, he was very much a pluralist parson, having an incumbency at Horley and Hornton with the addition of an aristocratic chaplaincy; he served Bouthrop from 1734 to 1758.

The Latin inscription on the tablet commemorating the Asplins is in rather elementary, almost ‘dog’ Latin, making the precise meaning of some words difficult to determine; but basically it says that Mary (née Myster) came from William’s other incumbency of Hornton “in the fields of Oxfordshire” and that she was a “gracious, dearest true wife, who all her life performed her services in a diligent manner”. The text continued with the charmingly poetic, “She gently returned to God in 1736.” Mary was fifty when she died.

The Latin is so ambiguous that William is recorded as either an alchemist, or an apothecary (or he may have been something of a herbalist); he is remembered as a teacher and a cultivator of minds, also “a true worshipper of peace who envied no man”. The inscription finishes at the bottom of the tablet with the first line from verse 4 of Psalm 40: “Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust.”

In the book the help is acknowledged of Helen Oates of East House, Adderbury, a medieval Latinist, ‘for teasing out some sense from the Asplin memorial tablet... inscribed in very dog-Latin’ and a ‘splendid tutor’ on the course on ‘History of Local Landscape’ at North Oxfordshire College, Deborah Hayter.

Eastleach: A History of a Cotswold Village, Nicholas Allen (hardback, x, 140pp). ISBN 0-9543617-4-1. Guidon Publishing (The Dovecote, 6 Turville Barns, Eastleach, Cirencester GL7 3QB). 2004. £17.50.

Inscription in the chancel of Eastleach Martin parish church, recently transcribed by Jeremy Gibson – accuracy not guaranteed; not the transcript used by Helen Oates. Some of the carved letters have decayed, particularly at the foot and on the left.

M.S. / MARIAE FILIAE IOHANNIS MYSTER DE / HORNTON IN AGRO
OXONIENSI GENEROSI / CARISSIMAE VERO CONIVCIS WILLIELMI /
ASPLIN CLERICI HVIVS ECCLESIAE RECTORIS / QVAE OMNIBVS
VITAE OFFICIIS PROBE / FVNCTA ANIMAM DEO PLACIDE REDDIDIT /
AD MDCCXXXVI AET SVAI L MORTALITATIS / AVTEM EXVVIAS HIC
DEPOSVIT MARITVS

HIC ETIAM EODEM SUB LAPIDE AD 1758 ÆT SUÆ 71 / SEPULTUS EST
PRÆDICTUS WILHELMUS ASPLIN A.M. ALKIBLÆ / AUTHOR. VERIET
ÆQUI CULTOR. PACIS AMANS. NEMINI INVIDENS / [?HU]NC TAMEN
(INIMICORUM UTPOTE SUFFITUM) SUMMAM SIBI / [...]TEN D[U]XIT
QUOD MALIS USQUE INVISUS FUERIT

[J]US[TUS] IN DOMINO PONIT FIDUCIAM SUAM / PS.XL.IV

A THREAT TO A LOCAL ARCHIVE: The Cartwright Papers

Deborah Hayter and Jeremy Gibson

The archives of the Cartwright family of south Northamptonshire consist of 85 boxes of part-listed material and 8,518 documents which have been individually listed, dating from c.1250-1954. The papers have been deposited at the Northamptonshire Record Office for many years and are much consulted by local historians. Our own Society has greatly benefited from the archive, from the work done by Marjorie Kennedy in the 1960s (sponsored by Miss Elizabeth Watt of The Pediment, Aynho) on the history of Aynho village, eventually revised by Nicholas Cooper and published in 1984 as a much-lauded narrative history as our record volume 20. In fact they are the primary source for those studying the south of the county, where the Cartwright' holdings were very extensive.

However they are still owned by a descendant of the Cartwrights, who no longer lives in the county, and now wants to sell them. She would prefer them to remain in the Record Office (where they have, without charge, been housed, preserved and to a considerable extent catalogued) if possible, but at a price of £300,000, to match an 'independent' valuation, which the Record Office would have to raise (there are no county council funds to support this). An American institution (interested on the grounds that they acquired the library from Aynhoe House many years ago) has already offered the full amount, and the whole archive will go there at the end of this year unless the money can be raised to keep them in this country, and in this county, with which the Cartwright family was so intimately involved for nearly four hundred years.

The Cartwrights were landed squires who lived in the extreme south of Northamptonshire from 1615 until 1960. The archive includes all the records of Cartwright estates at Aynho and many other villages (such as Deddington in Oxfordshire) for the whole of this period. There is also much documentation about political life, as the Cartwrights sat in Parliament as Knights of the Shire, in conjunction with the Knightleys of Fawsley, in almost unbroken line from the 1690s to the late nineteenth century. The papers include fascinating accounts of the often bitterly fought election campaigns of the late eighteenth century. In fact the family was so closely associated with the political map of Northamptonshire that the part of the county which borders on Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire was familiarly known as 'Mr Cartwright's Corner'.

In the Civil War the family were supporters of Parliament, being closely related to Fairfax. They had to leave the house at Aynho and retreat to London. The house was destroyed by Royalist troops fleeing to Oxford after their defeat at Naseby. The

present house, rebuilt after the war, was remodelled by Soane in 1800. This too is documented in the archive (see *C&CH* 13.8, Spring 1997, 'Sir John Soane at Aynhoe Park', Ptolemy Dean).

One of the striking features of the Cartwright papers is that they give such a lively and vivid picture of day-to-day life in a country house over a long period. However, the Cartwrights had ambitions which reached beyond their home and estate, and a view of the world unusually wide for a landowner of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Successive generations served as diplomats in the courts of Europe, sometimes bringing back sophisticated foreign brides to enliven the local scene. The Papers include a large body of material relating to political issues in Europe from the 1830s to the First World War.

One can understand American institutions wanting to acquire quasi-political archives which may relate to the past few centuries. However, as shown by the Stowe archive now in the Huntington Library in the Los Angeles conurbation (purchased long before county record offices were in existence), the blanket acquisition of family papers because of dubious political interest rides roughshod over the very legitimate importance of humble estate records. These are the very stuff of our own local history, and can rarely be of any relevance to overseas researchers. Stowe, whilst always of outstanding importance as a house and park, and only saved by becoming a public school, is now one of the most visited of National Trust estates. Its historian, George Clarke, has, at great expense, to research its history in San Marino, California.

The Cartwright archive is the documentary source for the study of several gentry families and for places both in south-west Northamptonshire and north Oxfordshire. It is the raw stuff of all our history – not just our local history – for no (inland) place, any more than any man – is an island.

Local, and national, historians are outraged that such material should be allowed to leave the country.

* * * * *

To show how passionately we feel about this matter, we are putting our money where our mouth is. Several local societies have donated money to the Northamptonshire Record Office appeal. The committee of Banbury Historical Society have agreed to contribute a thousand pounds.

OBITUARIES

Dr John Rivers, M.A., B.S., 1921-2006

It is with great regret that we record the death of Dr John Rivers on 18th April 2006 at Corby Glen in Lincolnshire.

On retirement in 1981, John Rivers and his wife Ruth came to live in the village of Balscote. With their love of nature and their interest in gardens they set about designing one of their own, which they opened to the public each year, and which, no doubt, many Banbury Historical Society members will have visited.

Dr Rivers soon joined our Society, and in 1985 was elected to the committee. Within a year he became Chairman, on the untimely death of David Fiennes. In 1992 he was succeeded by Brian Little, and himself took on from Penelope Renold the important post of lecture programme secretary until his retirement from the committee in 1996. In both offices he worked hard to ensure smooth running and interesting occasions for our Society's members.

Sadly a few years later an episode of illness coincided with the death of his wife. Although he made a good recovery and again became a regular attender at the Society's lectures and visits, in 2005 he decided to return to Lincolnshire to live near his family. Committee members and old friends were able to ensure he was given a relaxed farewell lunch in Banbury, and a framed reproduction of an old photograph of the lower end of the High Street.

It was a kind of going home, for after gaining his medical degrees, he had a practice near Boston for many years. During that time he began the first training courses for general practioner students. He was settling in well in his new home and participating in various activities. It was perhaps appropriate that he died in a chair in his conservatory, with his garden beyond.

He will be greatly missed by all who knew him. His kind, courteous and sympathetic manner, and his interest in many subjects, made him well liked and respected by all. Our Society was fortunate to have his devoted support. We extend our deepest sympathy to his family in their sad loss.

Fiona Thompson

Sir John Johnston, d. 2005

The quality newspapers gave appropriate attention last autumn to the death on 16 October 2005 of Sir John Johnston, a distinguished public servant in several spheres, but most notably 'one of the most skilled of that generation of diplomats who found themselves dismantling the British empire' [*The Guardian*, 15 November 2005].

John Baines Johnston was the son of the Revd. A.S. Johnston, for many years minister of the Baptist Church in Bridge Street, Banbury. He was born at Maryport, Cumberland, where his father then had a pastorate, and spent some time in Derby before the family moved to Banbury. He attended what was then the County School at Easington, that became Banbury Grammar School after the Second World War. He gained a scholarship to the Queen's College, Oxford, where he read Modern History.

He served in the army during the war, took part in the D-Day landings, and before demobilisation was a major in the Gordon Highlanders. He joined the Colonial Office in 1947, and was concerned initially with the Far East, but in the middle part of his career was chiefly concerned with Africa, and was high commissioner in Rhodesia at the time of U.D.I. After spending some years in Whitehall he was high commissioner in Canada from 1974 until 1978, and served for seven years as a governor of the BBC after his retirement.

A curious aspect of his life was the way in which he was regarded in the early 1950s at his old school, where he appeared alongside the headmaster, A.D. Rose, and the secretary, Gwen Bustin on several ceremonial occasions, most notably when the school celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in 1953. At that time he was a promising rather than a distinguished diplomat, but in the light of his subsequent career perhaps the school authorities displayed a remarkable prescience.

B.S.T.

Lecture Reports

Brian Little et al.

Thursday 8th December 2005

Excavations at Eynsham Abbey – Graham Keevil

This was a lively and well-illustrated talk about how archaeologists have contributed significantly to our understanding of this abbey and its related features.

Graham Keevil quickly established that surface geology had been a major factor in continuity of settlement at Eynsham. Unlike the Cherwell at Banbury, the river valley at Eynsham has well drained gravels that have encouraged site development since the Neolithic age.

Oxford Archaeology worked here in the early 1990s and dug several trenches. These revealed a Bronze Age enclosure but also provided evidence for a Saxon Minster that may well have been the key focal point of a pattern of religious buildings. The role of the minster ensured that Eynsham was at the time more important than Oxford, a status that owed much to its position close to a good fording point of the Thames.

The minster excavations yielded some exciting finds, notably a rubbish pit that had been a food dump and two silver coins in excellent condition. The buildings of the mediaeval abbey, which were partly erected over this rubbish pit, enabled the minster to turn into a monastery by 1005. This gradual process resulted in a close relationship between church and cloister and it was the aim of the archaeologists to explore the transition from what had become a ramshackle minster. Their efforts culminated in insights into the domestic life within the cloister, especially washing and cleaning.

One useful aspect of Graham's talk was that he did not focus exclusively on Eynsham but instead drew parallels from elsewhere in Britain and Europe. Some of these references shed light on the kitchen activity that generated some of the waste discovered by the Oxford archaeologists. This was in the form of well-preserved fig seeds and cherry stones.

Eynsham Abbey appears to have reached its greatest occupancy levels during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Some 30-40 monks resided there but in succeeding centuries the numbers tailed away and monastic life was never the same again.

Thursday 12th January 2006

Buckinghamshire in the Civil War – Julian Hunt

The inspiration for this talk came from a 2005 exhibition of portraits that was staged in Aylesbury and designed to reveal Buckinghamshire's role in the events leading up to the English Civil War and the War itself. Charles' marriage to the French princess Henrietta Maria, the 'Eleven Years' tyranny, John Hampden and the ship money case, the Grand Remonstrance, the conduct of the war and the strategic importance of Newport Pagnell were among the wide range of topics covered.

The speaker used slides of some of the exhibition portraits to illustrate the way in which painters have provided insights into character and produced works of art that show how appearances altered in response to the varying pressures arising from conflict between the royalists and parliamentarians.

This highly original way of looking at the Civil War was set in the striking context of puritanical Buckinghamshire. At once the relevance to Banbury was evident and the approach more than justified the attempt to examine who supported whom.

Julian Hunt mainly concentrated on the leading figures such as Charles himself, Queen Henrietta Maria, his ministers the Duke of Buckingham and Archbishop Laud, and on the puritan side John Hampden, Oliver Cromwell and Thomas Fairfax. Minor figures with Buckinghamshire connections also featured in the talk and included Arthur Goodwin, a friend of Hampden's, though only a fraction of those whose portraits were included in the exhibition.

Throughout an absorbing lecture the speaker's aim was to explain personality traits by reference to varying portrayals by artists such as Van Dyck. The stubbornness of Charles I contrasted with the independent Puritanism of Cromwell. Fairfax, although also a noted Puritan, had numerous disagreements on policy matters with Oliver Cromwell. Prince Rupert, Charles' very able adviser on military matters, emerged as a potential war winner if only he had been allowed to follow his innate sense.

One remarkable bonus for those members who turned out for the talk, and there were more than forty of them, was the chance to enjoy the images made from the portraits without having to track down the originals in a myriad of scattered global locations.

Thursday 9th February 2006

***Telling the History of Houses* – Nat Alcock**

Your editor wasn't present at this talk, although he had suggested the speaker to Nick Allen. I'm sure that Brian Little provided a write-up, but at the moment I can't find it. Sorry.

J.G.

Thursday 9th March 2006

***The Lost World of the Beales and Blinkhorn Families* – Brian Little**

Your editor, despite expected prior commitments, was in fact able to be present for this fascinating talk. As Deborah Hayter so rightly said at the start, the speaker could not possibly need to be 'introduced' to his audience.

Understandably, Brian felt it inappropriate to do his usual 'write-up', and, belatedly, asked your editor to do this. All I can say is that I am sure nobody in the audience enjoyed it more than myself – and if his recently published book, *BANBURY: A Century of Change*, doesn't say it all, it does say most of it. Pending an independent review, see my biased remarks on page 268.

J.G.

Book Reviews

BANBURY: A Century of Change, Brian Little, in association with the *Banbury Guardian* (hardback, A4, 208 pp.), Breedon Books Publishing, 2005. £16.99.

Brian Little as an author of books on various aspects of the history of Banbury has long been a familiar name to those of similar interests. His long-running page in the *Banbury Guardian* must be one of the most eagerly-awaited every week by all but the most sport-obsessed readers, certainly by members of our Society.

As our members know, Brian has been deeply involved with our Society, so it is totally inappropriate for myself to pretend I can write an unbiased review. This will I hope appear in our next issue. Meanwhile, it would still be inappropriate not to comment on this splendid book (and, of course, it means I can be as rude and personal as I like about it!).

First, I was going to say, why was there no reference in the index under 'Stone', the firm my great-grandfather Henry Stone in theory founded (in fact it was his wife who did it all until my grandfather Lewis took over) until I realized it was indexed under 'H' as 'Henry Stone & Son'.

But he does redeem himself with the index entry for 'Banbury Historical Society'. I couldn't have written the text better myself. The second photograph (p.161), showing my beloved Ted Brinkworth talking to Gwen Bustin, is so worthwhile, as we have so few photographs of the man who was the inspiration for our Society. The caption does not reveal that the lady on his right was Gwladys, who was then, or was to become, his wife and eventually chair of our Society.

The earlier photograph (p.160) shows members of our Society at an exhibition we staged as early as 1958. It is good to be reminded of our first president, Lord Saye and Sele (father of our now long-serving President), and of the support given to us by the Mayor of the time, and his Mayoress, when Banbury was still a Borough with all that that implied (I write as a descendant of seventeenth century and nineteenth century mayors of Banbury). Unidentified in the caption are the young man with a moustache, Valentine Bromley, who in our early days was an inspirational archaeological activist, and, behind Lord Saye, our borough librarian, Tom (pick up tha' musket) Muskett. The photograph is sadly marred by a cadaverous chap on the right who is, unfortunately, identified as myself.

So, this is not a review, just a personal quasi-grumble.

J.S.W.G.

Brailes History: Episodes from a forgotten past: 6, Alan and Philip Tennant (A5, 52pp). Published by A.J. Tennant, 49 Hawthorn Way, Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire CV3 4FD. Spring 2006. £1.80 (incl. p&p).

'In the name of God, Amen...' (analysis of mid-16th century Brailes wills). 'A Medieval Rebellion: The Turmoil of 1321-22' (says it all, but rare to get medieval local history).

RATLEY: The Story of a Warwickshire Parish (including the Rev. A. Child's Visiting List 1881-1882 known as the 'Black Book'), John Ashby and Dan Batchelor (card covers, A4, x, 204 pp., lavishly illustrated), Keystone (The Town Hall, Ratley, Banbury OX15 6DS). 2006. £11.95 + £4.00 UK p&p.

It is ironic that two important books relating to adjacent Warwickshire villages bordering Oxfordshire have been published within months of each other. Members will already have received the flyer extolling *The Diaries of Sanderson Miller of Radway* edited by William Hawkes for the Dugdale Society, and this will be reviewed in detail in our next issue. That is a painstaking and fully footnoted analysis of just two years, 1749-50 and 1756-57, with all the scholarly apparatus one expects of its editor and publisher.

In contrast, this account of Ratley is firmly in the estimable genre of local histories by local inhabitants, with local knowledge allied to full awareness of relevant records in Warwickshire Record Office. It is a pity that neither book can refer to the other, but in fact there are only passing references in Miller's diaries to Ratley and Ratley Grange, though of course much about what are now known as the Castle Inn and Egge Cottage at Edgehill. These, in the different context of the Ratley history, get considerable mention in text and illustrations, though technically outside the Ratley parish boundary.

Of the six chapters, the first, 'A Brief History...' is the shortest, for the good reason, as explained in the Preface, that the sharp focus is concentrated on the second half of the nineteenth century. In fact the bulk of the book is in Chapter 2, of over a hundred pages, 'A Walk Through Ratley Parish – Then and Now'. As implied, this is a road-by-road, house-by-house, survey, with plenty of divergences to discuss, for instance, the village school (its log books and group photos – many with individuals identified), the church, the Working Men's Club, the Temperance Tea House. Although the local stately home, Upton House, gets its mention, it is clear that it is no more important, in this book, than the humblest cottage and its inhabitants. This information is enhanced by careful use of census returns and the 1881-82 'Black Book' or 'visiting list' compiled by the vicar, with additional notes in 1889. This includes revealing comments on the families listed. The full transcript of this, prefaced by the 1663 Hearth Tax Return and identification of the houses still remaining in 2005 (with clear maps of the village in 1881, and an aerial 1963 view), are a major contribution of specific record as against the many entertaining anecdotes.

This short review cannot hope to do more than whet the reader's appetite for what the Preface claims, with reason, to be in line of succession to Ronald Blythe's classic *Akenfield*.

My one criticism, which I have made often before, is that there is no index. There are masses of personal names in this book, and plenty of place names and subjects that deserve identification. Some, we hope many, may *read* local histories, but for any who are active as local or family historians, they want to *refer*. This book deserved indexes.

J.S.W.G.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT, 2005

Your Committee have pleasure in submitting the 48th Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, for the year 2005.

The transfer of the complete run of *Cake & Cockhorse* (to the end of Volume 15) to CD-Rom, has been greeted with interest and approval.

Officers and committee members continued unchanged. Membership of the Society remains close to three hundred, most as records members. Attendance at meetings and new membership has been variable, due partly, it is suspected, to the advancing years of some normally regular attenders. Posters (fresh for each meeting) are distributed by Deborah Hayter for display at a wide number of key places.

The year's meetings maintained their accustomed entertaining variety. Nick Allen has now been arranging these since 1995, and we have a full line-up for 2006/07. Reports on most, generally prepared by Brian Little, have appeared in *Cake & Cockhorse*. John Pelling spoke on the transition in building styles over the centuries in Oxfordshire houses, Kate Tiller demonstrated the importance of nonconformity in north Oxfordshire as revealed by the 1851 religious census, and the season ended with a survey of the archaeology of Roman Oxfordshire by Paul Booth. In the autumn, following the start-of-season reception at the Museum, at very short notice Richard Martin, Cotswold woollen weaver, spoke entertainingly on this craft; and Nicholas Cooper gave us a tour and history of Kelmscott Manor, with much on its occupants before and since William Morris. Reports on the excellent talks on Wychwood Forest and Eynsham Abbey appear in this issue.

In April advantage was taken of our long-term member John Gazey's term as Lord Mayor of Coventry to visit the Coventry Council House and adjacent St. Mary's Guildhall. It was a gratifying opportunity to remind us of the historic connection between our two towns, as exemplified by the generous gift by Coventry in 1628 of over £26 to relieve sufferers from Banbury's great fire.

In the summer, a visit to the Oxfordshire Bus and Morris Motors Museum at Long Hanborough proved a popular change from our more usual country house excursions, though the tour of Chicheley Hall, with its associations with Earl Beatty, was again enjoyed by the usual faithful attenders. Once again these were organised with initiative and efficiency by Beryl Hudson.

The A.G.M. was held at Deddington Manor, by kind invitation of Group Captain Denys and Mrs Buffy Heywood. This was the home from 1838 to 1869 of the Reverend William Cotton Risley, whose diaries are being published by the Society.

Once again our start-of-season reception was held at the new Museum, organised by Fiona Thompson, Kay Smith and Simon Townsend, and as always much enjoyed.

Only two issues of *Cake & Cockhorse* appeared, the second being a 'double' number, with contributions from Nick Allen, Ruth Brown, Penny Carey, Geoff Clifford, Colin Cohen, Maurice Cole, Clare Jakeman, George A. Smith, Margaret Spufford and Barrie Trinder, as well as from regulars Brian Little and Jeremy Gibson.

We had expected to publish at least the first volume of Geoffrey Smedley-Stevenson's edition of the diaries of William Cotton Risley, 1836-1869, covering his time as Vicar of Deddington 1836-1848. This is indeed almost ready for production, only requiring some minor work on the indexes, so we hope will appear during the first half of 2006. Volume Two, for the remainder of his continuing residence at Deddington Manor during the notorious incumbency of his successor the Reverend James Brogden, is also well advanced. They cover a wide variety of matters relevant to Banburyshire and further afield, and make absorbing reading – members are in for a treat. In the circumstances, the delay with *Turnpike Roads to Banbury* continues, but it *will* be completed in due course.

Our general income comfortably covered the cost of our monthly meetings and the publication of *Cake & Cockhorse*, and made a useful contribution to our end-of-year balance. This balance should be sufficient to cover the publishing costs of the records volumes in the pipeline. There were no calls on the Brinkworth Fund during the year.

The published accounts record the gift of £50 the Society made towards the repair of Hanwell church clock.

Banbury Historical Society

Income & Expenditure Account for the Year ended 31 December 2005

GENERAL FUND

INCOME	2005	2004
	£	£
Subscriptions	2,591	2,520
Income Tax refund	300	278
Building Society interest	433	393
Sale of publications	535	764
Other	92	61
Total Income	<u>3,951</u>	<u>4,016</u>

EXPENDITURE

Cake & Cockhorse coats	1,201	2,031
Records volumes costs	4	1,603
Meetings	575	702
Reception & AGM	116	213
Administration inc publicity	252	272
Contribution to repair of Hanwell church clock	50	0
Total Expenditure	<u>2,198</u>	<u>5,021</u>
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) for the year to (from) the General Fund	<u>1,753</u>	<u>(1,005)</u>

BRINKWORTH FUND

INCOME	2005	2004
	£	£
Building Society interest	79	80
(Legacy from Mrs Sarah Markham)	0	500
Total Income	<u>79</u>	<u>580</u>
EXPENDITURE		
(Transfer of Cake & Cockhorse volumes to CD-ROM)	0	989
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) for the year to (from) Brinkworth Fund	<u>79</u>	<u>(389)</u>

Banbury Historical Society

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2005

GENERAL FUND	2005	2004
Balance at 1 January 2005	14,712	15,717
Plus Surplus (Less Deficit) for the year	1,753	(1,005)
Balance at 31 December 2005	<u>16,465</u>	<u>14,712</u>
BRINKWORTH FUND		
Balance at 1 January 2005	2,640	3,029
Plus Surplus (Less Deficit) for the year	79	(389)
Balance at 31 December 2005	<u>2,719</u>	<u>2,640</u>
TOTAL BALANCE at 31 December 2005	<u>19,184</u>	<u>17,352</u>

Represented by:

ASSETS:		
NatWest Bank Banbury - Current Account	2,153	533
Leeds & Holbeck Bldg. Soc. - General Account	14,914	14,481
Leeds & Holbeck Bldg. Soc. - Brinkworth Account	2,719	2,640
Cash	42	42
Plus Sundry Debtors	19,828	17,896
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>19,828</u>	<u>18,037</u>
Less LIABILITIES:		
Subscriptions in advance	644	685
NET ASSETS	<u>19,184</u>	<u>17,352</u>

G.F. Griffiths, Hon. Treasurer

I have reviewed and examined the books and records of the Banbury Historical Society and confirm that the accounts prepared by the Hon Treasurer represent a fair and accurate summary of the financial transactions completed in the year ended 31 December 2005.

R.J. Mayne, FCA FCMA
3 February 2006

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).

The Banbury Chapbooks, by Dr Leo John de Freitas (vol. 28).

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

In preparation:

Selections from the *Diaries of William Cotton Risley*, ed. G.W. Smedley-Stevenson:

Part 1: *Vicar of Deddington 1836-1848*;

Part 2: *Squarson of Deddington 1849-1869*.

Turnpike Roads to Banbury, by Alan Rosevear.

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

Summer 2006 Programme

Thursday 18th May, 2.15 p.m.

The Bishop's Palace, Witney.

Thursday 22nd June, 2.15 p.m.

Kelmscott Manor, followed by Great Coxwell Barn.

Saturday, 8th July, 5.00 p.m. for 5.30 p.m.

A.G.M. at Oxfordshire Museum, Fletchers House, Park Street, Woodstock.