

CAKE AND COCKHORSE



BANBURY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Summer 2008 £2.50

Volume 17 Number 6

ISSN 6522-0823

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 269581

Website: www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk/banburymuseum/banburyhistoricalsoc.cfm

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

Cake and Cockhorse

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

Volume 17

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In our last issue we commented on the fourth centenary of the granting in 1608 of the Borough of Banbury's Second Charter, whereby we acquired a Mayor rather than a Bailiff. As our contribution to this anniversary, we print here a full list of the Mayors since 1608, but including the preceding Bailiffs who held the chief office from the creation of the Borough in 1553/4.

An earlier list was published in 1954, but of course since then 54 years have passed so there are many more to record. Also ongoing research has established the names of several more who held the office of Mayor, with the occasional correction. Such lists don't make fascinating reading (except perhaps to the compiler). Nevertheless, it was such men (and, lately, women) who supervised the government of our borough (and now town). To the historian of Banbury, they are as important as the sovereign is to the national historian. Although they may seem to be just names, to any assiduous reader of this journal or user of *Banbury Corporation Records: Tudor and Stuart* and other records volumes, they will be *familiar* names. These books and articles put flesh on the bones.

Another brief list for which we make no apology is on page 216. This is of the names of committee members over the past fifty years. Many served a long time and contributed significantly to the running and success of our Society. We hope the names will bring back happy memories of those no longer with us, as well as the dozen or so who were at the AGM (at least three from our earliest years).

Now, however, for an apology. We promised a report on our March talk by Nick Barrett, on the popular TV show 'Who Do You Think You Are?' This we overlooked until this issue was virtually made up. So, first, apologies to Brian Little who, as always, wrote a report, and also to our speaker. However, the essence of it is in the TV presentation itself. We understand a new series is to be appearing shortly, so we just hope it doesn't happen on Thursdays.

Cover: St Rumbold's Well, Astrop, in July 2008 (photo: Simon Townsend)

THE COBB MANSION, ADDERBURY and some of its occupants

Nicholas Allen

Most English villages traditionally have a manor house where the lord of the manor/squire resided and presided over manorial/parish life. Adderbury, by the eighteenth century, had nine large houses any one of which could have been the 'Manor House'. The Domesday survey recorded Adderbury as being divided into three manors and, quite soon after, these three manors became five manors – hence the parish was never overseen by one manorial lord. Adderbury, pre-Domesday, was split into East and West Adderbury. In the late eighteenth century when parish vestries were replaced by parish councils Adderbury was still divided into two civil parishes. Each by then had its own parish council (though it had only one parish church!); eventually East and West Adderbury were conjoined in 1971.

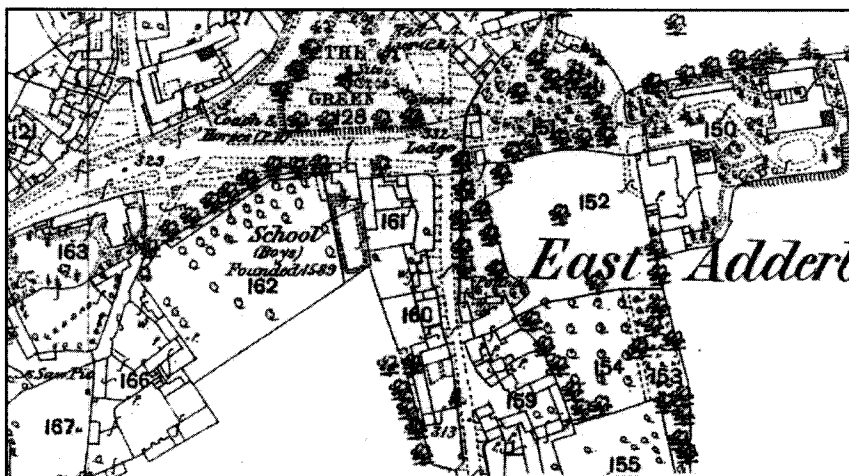
East Adderbury had the two largest houses, both sited close to The Green. Adderbury House was about a hundred yards to the east (across the main road, behind the Red Lion inn).¹ The Cobb Mansion, the subject of this paper, was sited on the southern side of The Green. The present Sir George's Lane separated it from the Jacobean house (now known as The Rookery), a smaller but still substantial house.

The section reproduced opposite from a 1735 plan of Adderbury has a sketch of the Cobb Mansion at its correct location (marked by an arrow). Alongside it is an extract from the 1881 OS Map showing where the site of the Cobb Mansion used to be (plot 162). The house faced north/south – the front elevation facing directly onto the village green. The rear of the house looked south over the valley to the ridge that carries the road from Deddington to Hempton. Argyll's cartographer was no doubt being tactful when he drew the Cobb Mansion somewhat smaller than Adderbury House.

¹ For the house and its occupants, see the *Oxfordshire VCH*, IX, *Bloxham Hundred*, pp.7-10; N. Allen, *Adderbury: A thousand years of history*, pp.95-105; and for an archaeological investigation of the site, the report by S.D.G. Weaver, with an introduction by N. Allen, *Oxoniansia* LXXI (2007 for 2006), pp.413-21. Fuller details are given under 'Further Reading', page 205.



The 1735 map [ORO SL/30/3/M/I 1735]



The Ordnance Survey of 1881

The Cobb family

The Cobb Mansion was a large Tudor house assessed, in 1662 and 1665, as having sixteen hearths,² two more than Adderbury House itself, though that was later substantially enlarged. It was described as 'the second most important house in Adderbury ... of which only two sets of seventeenth century gateposts remain'.³

² For 1662, TNA, E179/255/4; *Hearth Tax Returns, Oxfordshire, 1665*, ed. M.M.B. Weinstock, Oxfordshire Record Society [ORO], XXI, 1940, p.139.

³ *VCH. IX*, p.9-10.

The house was probably built in 1582; this date was carved into one of the gateposts alongside the old summer house. Celia Fiennes (1662-1741), in her fascinating account of her travels around late seventeenth century England,⁴ described Adderbury as '*a pretty, neate vilage where are two or three good houses; one of Sir Thomas Cobbs...*'. Celia would have known the Cobb Mansion, as her uncle Richard Fiennes's second wife was Susanna Cobb (1629-1712).

Although the family originated in Sandringham in Norfolk, William Cobb from London was the likely builder of the house; he was a freeholder and lessee of New College, Oxford. The college owned the 'Winchester' manor in Adderbury, and the rectorial advowson. The Cobbs seem to have acted as the college's agents or representatives. The Cobb family also owned land scattered all over England. William died in 1598; his wife Alice (née Wyld) lived on at Adderbury until her death in 1627. Of their sixteen children, only one son, William, and two daughters, Catherine and Christian, survived to maturity.

The second (Sir) William (d.1658) married Susan Floyd. Knighted in 1634, he had eight children, of whom seven survived childhood. Sir William's son Thomas (1627-1699) had two wives; between them they had twenty-one children. One of these was the Susanna who married Richard Fiennes, fourth son of William Fiennes, 1st Viscount and 8th Baron Saye and Sele of Broughton Castle. Thomas Cobb was created a baronet in 1662. His eldest surviving son, Sir Edward (1669-1744) died without issue so the title went sideways to his brother George. Sir George (1672-1762) married Ann Langdon from Somerset. They had three children, with one surviving son, Charles. He died, unmarried, before his father, so the family name and title died out.

During the English Civil war Adderbury suffered/experienced a great deal; the Cobb Mansion too had its share of the excitement. On the 26th October 1642, three days after Edgehill, the first battle of the Civil War, Prince Rupert, King Charles' cavalry commander, billeted himself on the Cobbs for a night. Later in the war, on 9th February 1645, Sir Samuel Luke in his letter-book reported '*That there is a Dutch troope at Kings Sutton about 50 or 60.....that there is another troop at Adderbury about 40 at Sr Wm Cobbs howse, & have made some small fortifica'cons about the howse*'.⁵ The Cobb family themselves, like the

⁴ C. Morris, ed., *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes*, 1947, p.26.

⁵ Alfred Beesley, *History of Banbury* (1841), p.394.

Fiennes family and many living in north Oxfordshire, were Parliamentary sympathizers. Indeed, in 1642 the King had specifically excluded Sir William Cobb (together with Lord Saye and Nathaniel Fiennes) from a declaration of pardon to persons in the county who had taken up arms against him.⁶

These Dutch cavalry troops were serving in the Royalist army and were being used to guard the local bridges. Lord Wilmot, a senior Royalist cavalry commander whose home was actually at the nearby Adderbury House, was a professional soldier. Before the Civil War, as a mercenary in the Dutch army, he had been a captain commanding a troop of cavalry. Wilmot was presumably the connection between the Dutch troops serving in the vicinity and the Royalist army.

Sir Thomas Cobb, baronet

With the Restoration, life everywhere returned to normality and, despite the family's parliamentary support, Thomas Cobb was created a baronet by Charles II in 1662. Such honours usually involved a monetary contribution to the Crown, and the King was always short of cash!

Warden Woodward of New College conducted progresses (administrative visits) from time to time to its many manors. These included the Winchester Manor of Adderbury, for which since 1381 the college had rectorial responsibilities. He recorded⁷ that he visited and received hospitality from Cobb regularly from 1659.

In 1659 the Parsonage house though large was *'impossible to bee made Convenient... without pulling downe.'* He suggested that lead to the value of £40 from the old building

'bee allowed Mr Cobb towards the Charge of his Building... a new House, it will cost him, hee believeeth about a hundred pounds more... There are also 4 Barnes, two of which Mr Cobb would willingly pull downe...'

'The Tenants of our Court there were very clamorous and unruly... They also layd claime unto certaine Customes, viz. that... the Colledge as Lords should find them a dinner... havinge enquired thereunto ... wee found that [this was] not by any Custome, but uppon Courtesy only. And soe Mr Cobb would provide for them still, but not otherwise, not as a Custome by any meanes.'

⁶ Beesley, p. 329.

⁷ *The Progress Notes of Warden Woodward round the Oxfordshire Estates of New College, Oxford 1659-1675*, ed. R.L. Rickard, ORO 27, 1945, pp.17-27.

Another 'Custom' required of the Lord of the Manor was killing a bull at Christmas as a gift to the poor.

'Unto this Mr Cobb answered, that his Father & mother then indeed keeping open House att Christmase & unwilling to have them at home with him, & to give unto the Poore any meale of meat there, did rather think it convenient to send unto the Poore a peece of meat unto their houses for them & their Families, rather than entertaine them in his house. But this was not of right but Courtesy...

'Mr Cobb at this time gives them more viz. 2s. by the weeke delivered in Bread every Sabboth which amounteth unto £5.8s. per ann, & yet they are not content. ...he payeth this 2s.... not as a Customary burthen incumbent uppon the Rectorie, but meerly out of Courtesy, & or Charity...

'Mr Cobb desired the forbearance of keeping a Court at Adderbury about Aug 23.1659. His Father being lately dead the goods of the House disposed of to make Portions, & thereby unfurnished.'

By September 1662

'The Parsonage, Mr Cobb haveing nowe a Tenant there, is reasonably well in repaire. I was told... that if in Progresse I would lye at the Parsonage, it would bee suddenly better repaired... tell Mr Cobb that I will lye noe where else, & that hee provide for us at the Parsonage. For now, if it raine, wee are forced to give mony to the Coachman to carry us from one place to another.'

But in October 1663 it was no better, and it seems Woodward had to rely on the vicar, 'Mr Bew',⁸ and his vicarage for a place to keep court.

'In the outside of the Church towards the Rectory there are corners that are filled with filth etc by the poore people that live in a house belonging to the Coll. It was leased out to the Parishioners at 12d. per ann; Sir Th. Cobb [he had just been created a baronet] doth yearely pay it... [he] would have it & pay us our Rent to take down the House & lay it to his Orchard, if soe, the Church yard would bee the cleaner...

'... many are much out of repaire viz. 1. The Barne with a Porch adjoyning to the Gate, the corners of the said Porch are ready to fall, Sir Thom. doth thinke, hee said, to take the said Barne downe & to sett upp in the lower Gate by the Pigeon house, see whether done?

'...wee came to Sir Th. Cobb's house, & going to Dinner somewhat late, wee had not done untill almost night, & soe I forbade any Supper...'

⁸ See 'The Church Militant: William Bew, Vicar of Adderbury and Bishop of Llandaff', N. Allen, *C&CH* 14(6), Summer 1999, pp.134-155.

The next visitation was on 5th April 1666, from Heyford '*...unto Adderbury about 8 a clock at night...*' The following day, Sunday, at the vicarage they '*tarryed untill about nine of the clocke, & soe returned unto Sir Thomas Cobbs.*' The Court was held at the Parsonage on Monday, concluding at four, when

'Haveing dined at Sir Th. Cobbs, about 5 a clocke wee rode towards Swalcliffe heareing by the way the Bells of Bloxham, very sweet and delightful bells, I was soe affected therewith that I sent unto the Ringers 12d..'

In September 1668 there was

'a complaynt by some Tenants that Sir Th. Cobb according to Custome, as they sayd, did not keep a Bull & a Boare, Sir Thomas replied, that there was noe Custome for it, his Father indeed Sir Will. Cobb, when for 4yard land hee kept a Bull, & had several kine, for that time might keep a Bull, as many other in the Parish doe, but, as keeping no kine, he denyed to keep one...' This was in effect a renewal of the Christmas bull claim settled in 1659. Sir Thomas was still giving 2s.-worth of bread weekly '*hee doth pay it, but of his owne bountie...*'

'Wee went to dinner about 2 of the clocke, ... the provision was very great, a chine of beefe & a venison Pastie with other answerable dishes, & at last a dish of Fruit, Peaches, Grapes, Plumbes, Walnutts etc that almost bent the dish. About eight, wee had supper, though few could eat any thing.' Next day '*all the morning it rained, & all the afternoone also, soe that, haveing expected untill about 4 of the clocke & it raineing still, Sir Th. Cobb would 1st have engaged mee to tarry the night, when that was not obtained hee caused his Coach & 6 Horses to bee made ready for mee, in which my Selfe & Mr Steward rode to Hayford.'*

For the next (and last recorded) visitation, in April 1673, '*I could not go my Selfe, there being neither at the Colledge Rectorie nor at Sir Th. Cobbs any place to lye in, Sir Thomas hath pulled downe part of his house, & not rebuilt it as yet.*' So concludes this visitor's occasional glimpses of life in Restoration Adderbury and the large part in it played by Sir Thomas Cobb. Might Sir Thomas's house, as at Aynhoe Park, have been 'turned round to face the other way' because it was more convenient?

Sir Thomas Cobb died in 1699, succeeded by his sons, Sir Edward (d.1744) and Sir George. Surprisingly no Cobb is named in poll books for the 1754 Oxfordshire election. Sir George, who, aged 90, died by accidental drowning whilst visiting one of his daughters at Reading in 1762, was to be remembered long after in Adderbury. Apparently he left word that four fine

oaks in his grounds were not to be felled. After his death this was done and his ghost appeared on the spot. Another story was that two men were poaching in the stream and on looking round saw Sir George's coach and four coming towards them, the horses breathing fire. They were so frightened that they said they would never poach again. Two women, on going to the well on the Cobb property, found one side fallen in and at the side was a pot full of guineas. They informed the constable and were allowed 4s. a week as long as they remained unmarried.⁹

George Montagu at Adderbury

Sir George's two daughters, Anne and Christian, leased their family home in 1768 to George Montagu (c.1713-1780), who had been living at Greatworth, a few miles east of Banbury. Montagu was connected to a wide-ranging aristocratic family. He had been M.P. for Northampton and in 1761 had been Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod in Ireland during his cousin Lord Halifax's vice-royalty;¹⁰



George Montagu - an engraving of a portrait by Eckardt.

⁹ H.J. Gepp, *Adderbury*, 1924, p.66.

¹⁰ See 'Three Lost Northamptonshire Houses and their owners', J.S.W. Gibson, *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, vol.5.4 (1976), 311-14; and 'The Manor House', Pam Carpenter, *A Village of Great Worth*, ed. W. Stageman, 1994.

Well connected locally, he was related to the Buccleuchs of Adderbury House and also to the Earl of Guilford (and his son Lord North) at Wroxton. He and Horace Walpole (son of Sir Robert) were very old friends, since their schooldays at Eton; both were prolific correspondents and it is from their surviving letters¹¹ that we can glean some details about the Cobb Mansion and leisured life in Adderbury.

On 14th April 1768 Montagu [GM] wrote to Walpole [HW] from Greatworth:

'I have settled myself and all that belongs to me at Adderbury in Oxfordshire, where I shall go and abide in about a fortnight.

'I have a charming garden and some pretty little fields adjoining, large dark chambers, to the north indeed, and a pleasant country with good roads; and the whole cheap and for a year [and a] half or two years to try it in.'

This crossed with a letter the following day from HW:

'Mr Chute tells me that you have taken a new house in Squireland, and have given yourself up for two years more to port and parsons. I am very angry, and resign you to the works of the devil or the church, I don't care which. You will get the gout, turn Methodist, and expect to ride to heaven on your great toe... Will you end like a fat farmer, repeating annually the price of oats and discussing stale newspapers? There have you got, I hear, into an old gallery, that has not been glazed since Queen Elizabeth, and under the nose of an infant Duke and Duchess, that will understand you no more than if you wore a ruff and a coif, and talked to them of a call of sergeants the year of the Armada! Your wit and humour will be as much lost upon them as if you talked the dialect of Chaucer.'

Henry Scott, 3rd Duke of Buccleuch, and his recently married wife (a cousin of GM's) were indeed young, 22 and 25, but GM himself was only 55! Nevertheless he was able to reply (from Adderbury) on 12th June that:

'The young Duke in my neighbourhood came most graciously to see me, and today I am to dine with him... He seems modest and good-humoured, and I flatter myself we shall do well together. I like my place more and more, and have all my matters most comfortable about me.'

¹¹ *Horace Walpole's Correspondence with George Montagu*, Vol. 2, ed. W.S. Lewis and Ralph S. Brown, 1948.

To this the disgruntled HW replied on 15th June:

'No, I cannot be so false as to say I am glad you are pleased with your situation. You are so apt to take root, that it requires ten years to dig you out again when you once begin to settle.... Yes, I will come and see you; but tell me first, when do your Duke and Duchess travel to the north? I know he is a very amiable lad, and I do not know that she is not as amiable a laddess, but I had rather see their house [Adderbury House] comfortably when they are not there.'

GM was away until 8th August, when he again *'settled in my old mansion at Adderbury, where I shall be most happy to see you...'* though *'Lord Guilford is to be in Wroxtonsire ... and expects me much to be with him...'*

In fact HW did visit Adderbury in September 1768, but in GM's absence. He duly saw Adderbury House, leaving a description of the pictures there in his book *Country Seats*.

There is silence until 7th November, when GM writes again:

'You will very soon receive a cheese from me, the best I could get of the sort, and I hope it will prove good. [Was this a Banbury cheese? The town was still famous for it. Alas it hadn't arrived by 10th November.] As to myself... this place agrees so well with me I am not over ready to leave it for London, where I am never well.'

'Our Duke and pretty Duchess are very kind to me but they are going to Bath. We went one night to the play at Banbury, but they acted too well to make us laugh.'

A grumpy letter from gout-stricken HW on 10th November has a reply two days later (something of an achievement even in the 21st century):

'I am surprisingly better here than at Greatworth, as that house was damp, and this, notwithstanding all the deluge of waters, has been always dry. Don't be angry with me for settling myself here. I have [a] good though old house cheap, and can live better ... than at London or near it...'

'I am to go this evening to play cards with my ducal neighbours. They are most obliging to me and free and cheerful. The Duke has his Eton tutor with him, a sensible man and bookish. The Duke is Eton all over, no disrecommmendation to me, and has a taste for literature, and most generous in his way of thinking and acting.'

HW was telling GM of lodgings in London that might suit him, though it's not clear if he was persuaded to spend time there in the winter. By March 1769 he was certainly back at Adderbury and on 14th May he was writing (in reply to HW's description of a visit to Vauxhall Gardens):

'While you have been with concerts of nightingales I have been sitting over a smoky fire... all the graces we have we expect from you, after the Duchess of Buccleugh [sic] is brought to bed [she gave birth to a daughter a week later].

'I have been putting new glass into my best chamber and it has greatly enlightened it; and the sun now has his levee there, who never was within these doors since the house was built... I have given him admittance.... I have been pulled to pieces for throwing away my money upon another man's house, but while I live here I must see, and save sea-coal.'

In another gossipy letter on 27th August he mentions *'I have done nothing here but planting my garden.'* He was much taken up with visiting Lord Guilford at Wroxton. *'Lord North comes there in a few days to be gracious at Banbury...'* North was M.P. for the Borough, and, although there was no election in 1769 and he was always returned unopposed, it was politic to keep in with the Corporation and townsfolk.

Whilst HW was visiting Paris in September, GM wrote on 18th, *'I have had such a house full of schoolboys for a week that their noise still tingles in my ears. Thank God their holidays are over and they are gone. ...Our weather is charming, and I am out all day and perfectly well. The boys have brought me to youth again...'*; his guests had discovered a play of HW's and *'had no patience till they finished it and we read the acts amongst us...'* HW replied with irritation: *'I am sorry those boys got at my tragedy. I beg you would keep it under lock and key; it is not at all food for the public...'* GM mollified him: *'My boys have only stole a few passages, but I will take care they come to no harm; but they would have got them by heart while I was asleep.'*

Just before Christmas, he was writing again:

'I hope I shall find you well in London, where I purpose being the beginning of January. I shall leave the country with regret, as our weather is charming and I have my health always well here; and little Graces in my neighbourhood I am often with and on an agreeable footing... They [the Duke's sisters and a friend were visitors] make me play at loo [a card game with penalties] with them and frighten me more than they hurt me.'

GM returned from London by 27th March 1770: *'I had an extremely good journey and got over my seventy miles and arrived at my old mansion by six in the evening. I already find the benefit of the country air.'*

On 18th June he wrote again: *'We have had no earthly summer yet but what I have passed by my fireside,'* and follows this with an entertaining account of a visit he had paid to Blenheim: *'The water is now amazingly beautiful and puts the bridge's nose out of joint...'*

Unexpectedly, HW writes on 29th June:

'Since the sharp mountain will not come to the little hill, the little hill must go to the Mont-aigu. In short, what do you think of seeing me walk into your parlour a few hours after this epistle? I had not time to notify myself sooner.' [Princess Amalie (Amelia, second daughter of George II) had summoned HW to accompany her on a visit to Stowe.¹²] *'Now as it would be extremely inconvenient to my indolence to be dressed ... by six o'clock in the morning, ... I trust you will be charitable enough to give me a bed at Atterbury [sic] for one night, whence I can arrive at Stowe in a decent time...'*

The inevitable happened. GM was with Lord Guilford at Wroxton: HW writes again, *'Adderbury, Sunday night, July 1st, 1770:*

'You will be enough surprised to receive a letter from me dated from your own house, and may judge my mortification at not finding you here – exactly as it happened two years ago. In short here I am [he then repeats his reason for the visit]. Well, I could not come so near, and not call upon you... for it would have been horrid to set out at seven o'clock in the morning... and to step out of my chaise into a drawing-room. I wrote to you on Friday, the soonest I could after this was settled, to notify myself to you, but find I am arrived before my letter. Mrs White [perhaps the housekeeper, or an in-joke] is all goodness; and being the first of July, and consequently the middle of winter, has given me a good fire and some excellent coffee and bread and butter, and I am as comfortable as possible, except in having missed you. She insists on acquainting you, which makes me write this to prevent your coming, for as I must depart at twelve o'clock tomorrow, it would be dragging you home before your time for only half an hour... I have treated your house like an inn, and it will not be friendly, if you do not make as free with me. I would much rather take it for a visit that you ought to repay.... pity

¹² 'Walpole's tone of studied amusement is reflective of his ambiguous feelings towards Amelia. A member of her inner circle of acquaintances for fifty years, he wavered continually between being inordinately proud and flattered to be a favourite and being sharply critical of character and behaviour.' E.H. Chalus, *Oxford D.N.B.*: 'Princess Amelia (1711-1786)'.

me for the six dreadful days I am going to pass [with Princess Amelia at Stowe]. Rosette is fast asleep in your chair, or I am sure she would write a postscript. I cannot say that she is either commanded or invited to be of this royal party, but have me, have my dog.'

A further letter from HW, 7th July, safely back at Strawberry Hill, entertainingly described the visit *'The party passed off much better than I expected.'* It is far too long to quote here. However, *'...the chief entertainment of the week, at least what was so to the Princess, is an arch which Lord Temple has erected in her honour in the most enchanting of all picturesque scenes.'* The arch is still there to delight Stowe's numerous visitors.

There are just three more letters in July whilst GM was at Adderbury. Their correspondence ceases entirely in October 1770. Then or shortly afterwards he must have left Adderbury, upon his sinecure appointment as Ranger of Salcey Forest in Northamptonshire.

Final years for the Cobb Mansion

Eventually Paul Cobb Methuen, son of Christian Cobb and Paul Methuen, in 1791 conveyed the Cobb Mansion to Richard Heydon, a local landowner.

On April 26th 1810 the property, near a ruin, was offered for sale at the Red Lion Hotel in Banbury. The sale particulars described the house as

'...pleasantly situate in the populous village of Adderbury East, and consists of the walls and roof of a very handsome mansion-house (formerly Sir George Cobb's) of about thirty yards in length and fifteen in depth, with a handsome entrance, and in the front there is a green court. Several of the stones and some of the timbers, wainscoting, doors, lead, iron, glass and the stone paving of the hall are on the premises. Also a building adjoining the mansion formerly used as a wash-house, but now occupied as a dwelling house by William Woodward, and a small piece of garden ground in front, and an ash tree growing thereon, and sundry buildings nearly adjoining, formerly as a brewhouse, coach-house and stable.

'Also a garden adjoining the mansion, now in sward (a lawn), containing about one acre and a quarter, planted with fruit trees, and a summer-house (now South House) therein, adjoining the Free School, and walled around. Also a close and meadow adjoining the said mansion and orchard, containing together with the orchard garden, yard and site of the mansion-house about 14 acres. On the close and meadow are standing 12 good oak trees and 5 small ones, 2 ash, &., &., and other trees. There is a dove house in the close, two fish ponds and a summer house surrounded by a shrubbery.... The gardens, close and meadow are in the occupation of Mr Walter Wilson.'



The Green, Adderbury, looking south to the site of the Cobb Mansion. The right-hand gate pillars are probably original but may have been repositioned. The house to the left is the original Summer House, the gate posts to its right are original with the date 1582 carved into them.



The elaborate rear elevation in 1801.



Front elevation of the Cobb Mansion in 1801

By 1815 the house was reported on (see below) as being completely in ruins... Quite why such a substantial house should have deteriorated so rapidly – it was, after all, only just over two hundred years old – is unclear, but neglect and wood-rot must have contributed. Demolition of the Cobb Mansion started in 1817. Some of the dressed Ashlar stone taken down was recycled and used for the front wall of the Baptist Chapel at Bodicote, the building of which was started in 1817.

Brewer's description of the Cobb Mansion in his book *A Topographical and Historical Description of the County of Oxford* published c.1815, said that '*Near a spot of ground, denominated by the Green, stands the ancient mansion of the Cobb family, its venerable walls pressing forwards to the last stages of decay and clothed with luxuriant ivy. Each mouldering fragment acquires additional effect from the contrast presented by a neat and flourishing residence which has been constructed close to the ruin [could this have been The Rookery sited only a few yards from the Cobb Mansion?]. The rooms of this mansion were lofty and spacious; and the attached grounds though small were pleasing. The Cobb family lived here for nearly two centuries [1582-1762] in the exercise of genuine English hospitality*'.

I am sure that the ornamental south face of the house must have been its original front. The picture labelled '*View taken from the garden*' (see p.202) shows an elaborately decorated five-bay Tudor house shaped in a hollow E. The bays to the left and right of the centre bay were topped by hipped gables, with flat tops surmounted by coping stones topped with finials. The elaborately carved Dutch gable to the centre bay had a cartouche that looked as if it were designed to contain the family's armorial bearings. Broughton Castle, also a Tudor mansion, has the Fiennes family coat of arms displayed in a similar shaped cartouche over the centre bay of the front elevation. Why would one build such an elaborate facade if it were not designed to be seen and admired? The picture labelled '*Front view*' shows a very plain, almost nondescript, frontage which despite its Tudor ancestry is almost Georgian in its simplicity.

Reproduced on pp.202-203 are the two extant, unsigned but competently executed, watercolours of the Cobb Mansion. The rear elevation has a contemporary note in pencil stating '*View taken from the garden of Sir George Cobb's house at Adderbury, Oxfordshire 1801*'. The other view depicts a plain elevation labelled '*Front view of Sir George Cobb's House, Adderbury 1801 taken down 1817*'.

A pair of contemporary gateposts is still used as an entrance to South House (originally the old Cobb summer house, converted into a residence in 1824 for a Mrs Martin). These gateposts are only a few yards to the east of the site where the Cobb Mansion stood. Coaches would surely, at one time, have driven through these gates to swing round to the right, on to a short drive, to discharge their passengers to the far more elaborate south facing front?

Note: I am most grateful to Christopher Baker of Colerne, Wilts., for pointing me towards George Montagu's correspondence with Horace Walpole, and subsequently to Jeremy Gibson for transcribing the relevant extracts from this. Mr Baker is presently researching yet another member of the prolific Montagu(e) family, a cousin of George Montagu – Dr Richard Trevor.

Further reading

- Allen, Nicholas, *Adderbury: A Thousand Years of History*, B.H.S. 25, and Phillimore, 1995, especially pp.95-107.
- Gepp, Henry J, *Adderbury*, The Banbury Guardian, 1924. This includes a detailed description of the monument to Dame Alice Cobb, d.1627, widow of William Cobb, subsequently moved to Corsham, Wilts. Also given are the inscriptions on stone slabs to members of the family: Sir Edward (d.1741), William (d.1699), Sir Thomas (d.1699), Christian wife of Sir Thomas (d.1696), Susanna Fiennes (d.1712) daughter of Sir William Cobb, and to Sir George Cobb, bart. (d.1762). The book also prints the 1810 sale description.
- Morris, Christopher ed. *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes*, 1947, p.26; *The Illustrated Journeys of Celia Fiennes, 1685-c.1712*, 1982, p.48.
- Lewis, W.S. & Brown, R.S. eds. *Horace Walpole, Correspondence with George Montagu*, Vols 9 & 10, 1948.
- Victoria County History [VCH] (Oxfordshire) – Vol. IX, Bloxham Hundred*, London, 1969, especially pp. 7-10.
- Weaver, Steven D.G., with an introduction by Nicholas Allen, 'Post-medieval buildings and medieval features at Adderbury House, Adderbury, 1996', *Oxoniensia* LXXI, 2007 for 2006, pp. 413-421.

Map:

Inclosure Map of East Adderbury dated 1735 – drawn for John Campbell, 2nd Duke of Argyll, of Adderbury House. Reproduced by kind permission of Oxfordshire Record Office [ref. SL/30/3/M/1 1735].

Unpublished Source:

Copy of the 'Last Will and Testament of Sir George Cobb – 3rd July 1761'. The original will (and many other relevant documents) is in the hands of C. Bark-Jones Esq., a later resident of South House.

**BAILIFFS and MAYORS
of the BOROUGH of BANBURY,
1553/4 - 1973
and TOWN MAYORS, 1974-2008**

Jeremy Gibson

The year 2008 is being celebrated as the four hundredth anniversary of the Charter granted to Banbury by James I on 28th June 1608. This Charter was indeed of great importance, and under its regulations the Borough of Banbury was governed for much of the next two and a quarter centuries, until 1835.

However, Banbury had been incorporated as a Borough with its first Charter more than fifty years earlier. This introduction is to explain the significant differences between the two.

In 1954 our Borough Council issued a substantial commemorative booklet entitled a *Souvenir of the Quarter-centenary of the Granting of the Charter of Incorporation to the Borough of Banbury by Queen Mary on January 26th, 1554*. By this Charter the governance of the borough was granted to a Bailiff, Aldermen and Burgesses. It later becomes clear that the Bailiff was to be chosen from the twelve Aldermen and twelve Capital Burgesses.

The actual year of incorporation is slightly misleading, due to the different forms of dating which then applied. The year that is legally specific and is used in the enrolled charter is the regnal year. Grants and suchlike emanating from the sovereigns were dated by the year of their reign. Edward VI died on 6 July 1553 and, despite the brief attempt to install Lady Jane Gray, Queen Mary's reign was reckoned to have started from that day. Thus on the Charter our grant is dated "1 Mary". However, then (and until 1752) the civil and legal year began on Lady Day, 25th March, so that January, February and 1st - 24th March were in the same year as the preceding nine months. Banbury's charter was dated 26th January, which at the time would have been considered still to be in 1553.

The present style of measuring time was devised that century by Pope Gregory XIII, but, mainly due to Henry VIII's split with Rome, was not officially adopted in England and Wales for a further two centuries. Even

so, many did change to starting the year on 1st January. Banbury's earliest parish registers, recording events from 1558 (although before 1580 from lost originals) adopted this from the start.

To avoid confusion the year (for January to 24th March) might be shown as "Old Style" if starting on 25th March or "New Style" if on 1st January. Most historians silently accept the year as starting on 1st January, though records requiring precision and no ambiguity will show the year for these months as, say, "1553/4". So, although our first Charter was at the time granted in 1553, we rightly date it from 1554.

A description of the first Charter, Banbury's early years as an incorporated Borough and the events and reasons for the townsfolk seeking a replacement Charter in 1608, as well as sources for the detailed records of these times, are listed on page 000. For our purposes, the most significant of the changes were the reduction in number of [Capital] Burgesses from twelve to six (Aldermen remained at twelve), and the change in name for the annually elected leader from "Bailiff" to the prestigious "Mayor", as borne by most boroughs.

Throughout our town's history since then, the office of Mayor has been significant – the sovereign's representative in the borough until its abolition in 1974. At times, particularly in the seventeenth century, it was one of "hands-on" control. This was exemplified by the riots in 1656 in which the Mayor very visibly came into conflict with the townsfolk. In the eighteenth century and until the electoral reforms of the 1830s the Mayor and Corporation wielded little influence except in the election of Banbury Borough's Member of Parliament, for the franchise (those entitled to vote) was restricted to these eighteen men. The North/Guilford family at Wroxton Abbey successfully "persuaded" most of these to back their candidate, elections generally being unopposed. With 1835 and electoral reform, the borough council once again resumed their rightful place in local government and the prestige of the office of Mayor was restored.

The following lists of Bailiffs and Mayors of the Borough are based, initially, on that (to 1954) in the commemorative booklet issued in 1954. *Banbury Corporation Records: Tudor and Stuart* (B.H.S. 15, 1977) provided a fresh list, identifying many of the early Bailiffs and several later seventeenth century Mayors up to 1693. Some are still missing between then and 1705, a time of political dispute and even "rival" mayors, when, unsurprisingly, records are missing.

Names of Mayors of the Borough from 1954 to 1974 and subsequent Town Mayors have kindly been supplied by the Town Mayor's office.

Note. Bailiffs and Mayors were elected annually at Michaelmas (about 29th September), thus being in office for parts of two calendar years.

BAILIFFS

1553/4-55	William Barnesley	1585-86	Thomas Dixe
1555-56	John Longe	1586-87	John Knight (baker)
1556-57	[? John Hartlett]	1587-88	Robert Edens
1557-58	Henry Shuttillworthe	1588-89	Thomas Longe
1558-59	Edward Brightwell	1589-90	William Halhed
1559-60	[? Richard Moore]	1590-91	Richard Wheatley
1560-61	[? Richard Moore]	1591-92	Henry Showell/Shewell
1561-62	Edward Pentlyn/Bentley	1592-93	Thomas Wateley
1562-63	John Norris	1593-94	James Sawbridge [als. Richardson]
1563-64	John Longe	1594-95	Mathew Knight
1564-65	Edward Brightwell	1595-96	William Knight
1565-66	Henry Halhed	1596-97	Humfrey Hadley
1566-67	John Knight (baker?)	1597-98	Richard Wheatley
1567-68	John Hartley/Hartlett	1598-99	Edward Eddon/Eaton
1568-69	Roger Jackson	1599-1600	Thomas Wheatley
1569-70	Richard Brightwell	1600-01	William Knight
1570-71	Thomas Carter	1601-02	Henry Showell/Shewell
1571-72	Richard Weste	1602-03	John Gill
1572-73	John Knight (baker?)	1603-04	Nichodemus Edens
1573-74	Roland Mericke	1604-05	George Nicolles
1574-75	Thomas Dixe	1605-06	John Nicolles
[1575-83	<i>unknown]</i>	1606-07	Thomas Halhed
1583-84	Robert Haywarde	1607-08	Thomas Webb
1584-85	John Haskey		

MAYORS

1608	Thomas Webb	1625-26	Robert Russell
1608-09	George Nicolles	1626-27	Robert Bentley
1609-10	Robert Russell	1627-28	Epiphany Hill
1610-11	Thomas Foster	1628-29	Thomas Halhead
1611-12	Thomas Wateley/Wheatley	1629-30	Thomas Webb
1612-13	Henry Showell/Shewell	1630-31	Henry Halhead
1613-14	Nicodemus Edens	1631-32	George Robbins
1614-15	John Nicolles	1632-33	William Allen
1615-16	John Winge	1633-34	Richard Vivers
1616-17	Robert Bentley	1634-35	John Austen
1617-18	Robert Russell	1635-36	Francis Andrew(es)
1618-19	Thomas Halhead	1636	John Turton (d. Oct 1636)
1619-20	Thomas Webb	1636-37	Nathaniel Wheatley (from Oct.)
1620-21	Edward Wisdome/Wysdome	1637-38	Thomas Webb
1621-22	Richard Vivers	1638-39	George Robbins
1622-23	John Austen	1639-40	Nathaniel Hill
1623-24	Thomas Wheatley	1640-41	Andrew An(ne)sley
1624-25	John Nicholls	1641-42	Organ Nicholls

- 1642-43 John Webb
1643-44 Nathaniel Wheatley
1644-46 Aholiab West
1645 Sep. *"Banbury...was so infested with bloody and cruel enemies that the Mayor and [Corporation] were constrained to fly...to save their lives..."*, so
1645-46 Aholiab West (extended office)
1646-47 Richard Halhead
1647-48 Nathaniel Hill
1648-49 William Whately
1649-50 Edward Beale
1650-51 Thomas Halhed
1651-52 Thomas Robbins
1652-53 William Hawkins
1653-54 William Allen
1654-55 John Austin
1655-56 Aholiab West
1656-57 Nathaniel Wheatly
1657-58 James West
1658-59 John Hamms
1659-60 John Webb
1660-61 Edward Welchman
1661-62 Thomas Robins
1662-63 Richard Halhed
1663-64 Nathaniel Hill
1664-65 Henry Smith
1665-66 Samuel Rennolls
1666-67 William Hawtayne
1667-68 William Wheatly
1668-69 James West
1669-70 John Hams
1670-71 Samuel Hall
1671-72 Richard Wheatly
1672-73 Andrew Harvey
1673-74 Henry Stokes
1674-75 Henry Smith [d. Mch 1674/5]
1674/5-76 John Austen [from 10 Mch 1674/5]
1675-76 John Welchman
1676-77 Samuel Rennolls
1677-78 John West 'sen.'
1678-79 John Stokes
1679-80 Thomas Sutton
1680-81 John Allington
1681-82 James West
1682-83 William Hawtaine
1683-84 Richard Wheatly
1684-85 Samuel Rennolls
1685-86 Andrew Harvey
1686-87 John Cave
1687-87/8 John West 'jun.' removed
3 Feb 1687/8
1687/8-1688 John Austen from Feb 1687/8
1688 Nathaniel Wheately removed
25 Oct 1688
[These 'removals' and appointments were a result of James II's attempts to influence the political and religious composition of borough corporations countrywide]
1688-89 John West 'jun.'
1689-90 John Welchman
1690-91 John West 'sen.'
1691-92 Samuel West
1692-93 Edward Reynolds
1693-94 Richard Crook
1694-95 *[unknown]*
1695-96 Joseph Mawle
1696-97 *[unknown]*
1697-98 Richard Wheatley
1698-99 William Thorp (d.25 Feb 1698/9)
[After Thorp's death there was stalemate over the election of his successor, and 'rival' Mayors were elected by Whig and Tory factions]
1698/9-99 John Welchman or
Edward Reynolds
1699-1700 John West 'jun.' or
Samuel West
1700-01 John West 'sen.' or
Samuel West
1701-02(?) John West
1702-03 Malachi Harvey
1703-04 *[unknown]*
1704-05 *[unknown]*
1705-06 Richard Wheatly
1706-07 Edward Box
1707-08 Sanderson Miller
1708-09 Francis Goodwin
1709-10 Malachi Harvey
1710-11 Henry Lucas
1711-12 Foulke Rainbowe
1712-13 Benjamin House or
John Allington
1713-14 John West

- 1714-15 Richard Burrows
 1715-16 John Lane
 1716 *[Political rivalries again prevented the election of a Mayor, and, time running out, the Charter automatically lapsed. No Mayor served for 1716-17, though despite the suspension of the Charter, one is named for 1717-18]*
 1717-18 Thomas Wandd [Ward ?]
[Some time, presumably in 1717, a petition to the Crown from Banbury inhabitants sought a replacement, and our Third Charter was granted to the Borough on 16th July 1718].
 1718-19 Francis Goodwin
 1719-20 Thomas Ward
 1720-21 Folke Rainbow
 1721-22 John Welchman
 1722-23 Robert Greenhall
 1723-24 Blgrave Gregory
 1724-25 James West
 1725-26 Francis Goodwin
 1726-27 Foulke Rainbow
 1727-28 John Welchman
 1728-29 Robert Greenhall
 1729-30 Blgrave Gregory
 1730-31 Thomas Stokes
 1731-32 James West
 1732-33 Henry Clarson
 1733-34 Edward Box
 1734-35 Samuel Sansbury
 1735-36 Henry Clarson
 1736-37 William Greenhall
 1737-38 Thomas Stokes
 1738-39 James West
 1739-40 Thomas Bradford
 1740-41 Edward Box
 1741-42 Samuel Sansbury
 1742-43 Richard Wheatly
 1743-44 Henry Clarson
 1744-45 William Greenhall
 1745-46 Samuel Sansbury
 1746-47 Robert Cheyne
 1747-47/8 Henry Clarson (d. 18 Mar 1747/8; dyer)
 1747/8-48 William Hyde (from March)
 1748-49 William Greenhall
 1749-50 George Robins
 1750-51 Samuel Clarson
 1751-52 Francis Goodwin
 1752-53 Thomas Bradford
 1753-54 Samuel Sansbury
 1754-55 William Overton
 1755-56 Henry Clarson
 1756-57 John Hill
 1757-58 John Pain
 1758 William Greenhall (bur. 1 Nov 1758)
 1758-59 Samuel Clarson (from Nov. 1758)
 1759-60 Charles Hide
 1760-61 William Howse
 1761-62 Charles Wyatt
 1762-63 William Barratt
 1763-64 Samuel Clarson
 1764-65 Edward Burford
 1765-66 Henry Clarson
 1766-67 John Hill
 1767-68 John Pain
 1768-69 Samuel Clarson
 1769-70 Charles Hyde
 1770-71 Rev. Matthew Lamb
 1771-72 Benjamin Aplin
 1772-73 Rev. Matthew Lamb
 1773-74 William White
 1774-75 John Pain
 1775-76 Thomas Gibbard
 1776-77 Samuel Clarson
 1777-78 Henry Clarson
 1778-79 Rev. Dr. [Matthew] Lamb
 1779-80 Robert Knight
 1780-81 John Pain
 1781-82 John Metcalfe Wardle
 1782-83 Thomas Gibbard
 1783-84 Christopher Aplin
 1784-85 John Pain
 1785-86 Rev. Dr. [John?] Lamb
 1786-87 Robert Knight
 1788-89 Rev. Robert Spilman
 1789-90 John Pain
 1790-91 Robert Knight
 1791-92 Charles Wyatt
 1792-93 John Pain
 1793-94 Rev. Dr. [John?] Lamb
 1794-95 Richard Chapman
 1795-96 Robert Knight

1796-97	Rev. Robert Spilman	1836-37	Thomas Tims (Nov.)
1797-98	John Pain, jnr.	1837-38	Timothy Rhodes Cobb
1798-99	William Judd	1838-39	Lyne Spurrett
1799-1800	Wm. Walford	1839-40	John Munton
1800-01	Charles Wyatt	1840-41	Thomas Tims
1801-02	James Barnes	1841-42	Timothy Rhodes Cobb (res.)
1802-03	William Pratt	1843	William Potts (April)
1803-04	Joseph Pain	1842-43	William Potts (Nov.)
1804-05	William Judd, Snr.	1843-44	Thomas Draper
1805-06	William Walford	1844-45	John Gazey
1806-07	Richard Chapman	1845-46	Richard Goffe
1807-08	Charles Wyatt	1846-47	Edward Cobb
1808-09	John West	1847-48	Samuel Spurrett
1809-10	James Barnes	1848-49	Samuel Spurrett
1810-11	John Pain	1849-50	Richard Goffe
1811-12	William Judd, Senr.	1850-51	Edward Cobb
1812-13	Rev. Ed. Gibbs Walford	1851-52	Edward Bennett
1813-14	Joseph Pain	1852-53	Thomas Draper
1814-15	John West	1853-54	Richard Goffe
1815-16	John Pain	1854-55	Richard Goffe
1816-17	Joseph Pain	1855-56	Richard Goffe
1817-18	John West	1856-57	Richard Baughen (res.)
1818-19	Charles Wyatt	1857-58	Edward Bennett (Sep.)
1819-20	Robert Brayne	1857-58	Edward Bennett (Nov.)
1820-21	John Salmon	1858-59	Richard Edmunds
1821-22	John Pain	1859-60	William White Coleman
1822-23	Joseph Pain	1860-61	Henry Cowper
1823-24	Richard Griffin	1861-62	Henry Cowper
1824-25	John West	1862-63	Thomas Draper
1825-26	Robert Brayne	1863-64	Richard Edmunds
1826-27	Rev. Dr. [John?] Lamb	1864-65	Richard Edmunds
1827-28	John Payne	1865-66	John Harlock
1828-29	Rev. Dr. Hobart	1866-67	William Richard Harrison
1829-30	Burrows Matthias Kirby	1867-68	William Richard Harrison
1830-31	Thomas Brayne	1868-69	Joseph Osborn
1831-32	Charles Brickwell	1869-70	James Grimby
1832-33	Rev. Thomas Wyatt	1870-71	John Griffin
1833-34	John Golby Rusher	1871-72	Joseph Maisbury
1834-35	Henry Tawney	1872-73	George Crosby
1835	Henry Tawney (Sep.-Dec.)	1873-74	John Phillips Barford
	<i>[The Reformed Corporation, elected 26</i>	1874-75	John Phillips Barford
	<i>Dec. 1835 by the enlarged franchise</i>	1875-76	Henry Stone
	<i>(owners or tenants of buildings worth</i>	1876-77	Philip Tanner
	<i>£10 or more per annum, residing within</i>	1877-78	Philip Tanner
	<i>seven miles of the borough).]</i>	1878-79	William Edmunds
1836-	Thomas Tims (Jan.)	1879-80	Henry Flowers
	<i>[Council elections on 1 Nov, mayoral</i>	1880-81	Henry Walford
	<i>year from 9 Nov]</i>	1881-82	William Johnson

1882-83	William Johnson	1925-26	Theo, Clark
1883-84	George Stevens	1926-27	Sarah Beatrice Gillett
1884-85	George Stevens	1927-28	Edgar Chapman
1885-86	William Johnson (died)	1928-29	John Collingridge
	George Stevens (Sep.)	1929-31	William George Mascord
1886-87	William Edmunds	1930-31	Fred Mold
1887-88	William Edmunds	1931-32	William Thomas Palmer
1888-89	William Edmunds	1932-33	James Friswell
	<i>[Area of Borough extended]</i>	1933-34	Benjamin Alsopp
1889-90	William Edmunds	1934-35	Sidney Ewins
1890-91	John Mawle	1935-36	Theo. Clark
1891-92	William Denchfield	1936-37	John Cheney
1892-93	Joseph Shepherd	1937-38	Albert Thomas Butler
1893-94	Thomas Orton Hankinson	1938-39	Horace Spencer Lester
1894-95	Alfred Benjamin Field	1939-40	Horace Spencer Lester
1895-96	Percy Spencer Edmunds	1940-41	Frederick William Blincowe
1896-97	William Lake	1941-42	Raymond Bernard Miller
1897-98	Arthur Fairfax	1942-43	John Arthur Deacon
1898-99	John Hyde	1943-44	William George Mascord
1899-1900	Hubert Bartlett	1944-45	Theo. Clark (died)
1900-01	John Mawle	1945	William George Mascord (April)
1901-02	William James Bloxham	1945-46	Raymond Bernard Miller
1902-03	William Henry Walkley	1946-47	George Donald McLeod Braggins
1903-04	William Henry Walkley	1947-49	Frank Partridge [time of office extended until May 1949]
1904-05	William Henry Walkley		<i>[Electoral/Mayoral year altered to May]</i>
1905-06	Arthur Fairfax	1949-50	Mary Cheney
1906-07	William Hefford	1950-51	Thomas Haskins
1907-08	Henry Richard Webb	1951-52	Margaret Annie Johnson
1908-09	James Picton	1952-53	Joseph Henry Price
1909-10	Joseph John Chard	1953-54	Thomas Auld
1910-11	Henry Reginald Fryr. Brooks	1954-55	Celia Cicely Chilton
1911-12	John William Bloomfield	1955-56	Leonard Charles Walklett
1912-13	Henry Richard Webb	1956-57	Charles Emmott
1913-14	Arthur James Larkin-Smith	1957-58	Malcolm Spokes
1914-15	William James Harding	1958-59	Margaret Annie Johnson
1915-16	William James Harding	1859-60	Gwendoline Stella Bustin
1916-17	William James Harding	1960-61	Jack Padbury Friswell
1917-18	William James Harding	1961-62	John Portergill
1918-19	William James Harding (res.)	1962-63	Geoffrey Charles Lester
1919-20	William James Bloxham (Mar.)	1963-64	John Edward Ryan
1919-20	John Taylor Mawle (Nov.)	1964-65	Jack Walker Amos
1920-21	Sydney Joseph Mawle	1965-66	Gertrude Mary Wilson
1921-22	William Lampet Whitehorn (died)	1966-67	Eric Wordsworth
1922-23	Sydney Joseph Mawle (July)	1967-68	Patricia Joan Colegrave
1922-23	William J.R. Lidsey (Nov.)	1968-69	Leslie John Tustian
1923-24	John Perry		
1924-25	Arthur Edward Fox		

1969-70 Frederick George Piggott
 1970-71 Harold J. Heath
 1971-72 Richard Leighton Keys
 1972-73 Thomas Priestley
 1973-74 Donald George Frazer
[The ancient Borough of Banbury was in this sad year abolished under local government reform more drastic even than that of 1835. The office continued as 'Town Mayor' under the Banbury Charter Trustees.]
 1974-75 Florence M. Woolams
 1975-76 Donald E. Jeffs
 1976-77 Angela T. Billingham
 1977-78 Frederick C. Blackwell
 1978-79 Ronald Smith
 1979-80 Colin Taylor
 1980-81 Jayne Buzzard
 1981-82 Margaret Ferriman
 1982-83 Martin Carter
 1983-84 Somja Peto
 1984-85 Anthony J. Humphries
 1985-86 Jack Steer
 1986-87 Helen Gibbs
 1987-88 Anthony D. Carney

1988-89 Ray Buckley
 1989-90 Mike Evans
 1990-91 Dave Cowan
 1991-92 Wendy Humphries
 1992-93 Duncan Ainsworth
 1993-94 Enid Beere
 1994-95 John Giddings
 1995-96 George Parish
 1996-97 Richard Collins
 1997-98 Steve Kilsby
 1998-99 Helen Collins
 1999-2000 Jan Justice
[Banbury Town Council was established from 1st April 2000 headed by a Town Mayor chosen from its members. Since then that is the start of the Mayoral year.]
 2000-01 Elsie Milne
 2001-02 Jim Vine
 2002-03 Tony Mepham
 2003-04 Rosemarie Higham
 2004-05 Sarinder Dhesei
 2005-06 John Brooks
 2006-07 John Donaldson
 2007-08 Kieron Mallon
 2008- Ann Bonner



The Fiftieth Annual General Meeting, held at Astrop House.

We were delighted to be able to hold our Fiftieth Annual General Meeting, on Thursday 17th July 2008, at Astrop House, near Kings Sutton, by kind invitation of Mrs and Mrs John Ewart. This was a rare privilege, as the house is not open to the public. This picture shows the meeting about to commence, once the Hon. Secretary, who took the photograph, could join the President and the Chairman at the table. Around forty actually attended, many more being behind the camera.

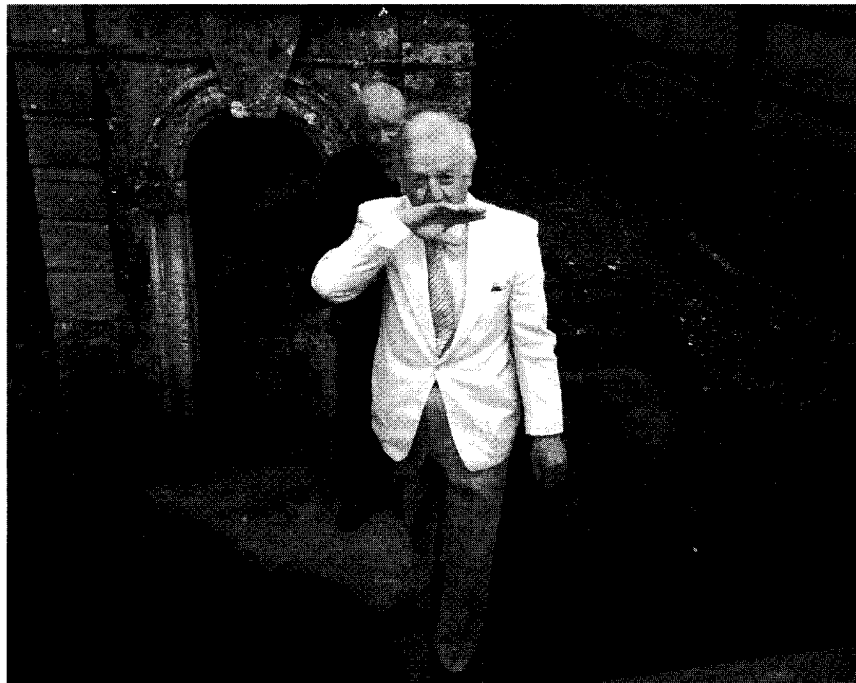
After the AGM, Deborah Hayter gave a brief account of the house, built by the Willes family in the 1730s, and of the famous Astrop Spa, which flourished throughout the eighteenth century.

After suitable refreshment, members made their way across fields to the actual St Rumbold's Well, on which the Spa was centred. A replica of the well stands by the public road, built for the villagers by the then owner of Astrop when he moved the road out of his park, but what we were viewing, still on private land, was the eighteenth century well-head for the original spring. As the pictures show, despite the disappearance of buildings, the well itself is very similar to that shown in Rowlandson's painting of 1813 (first reproduced in *Cake & Cockhorse* to illustrate an article in Vol.5, No.7, Autumn 1973, p.134).

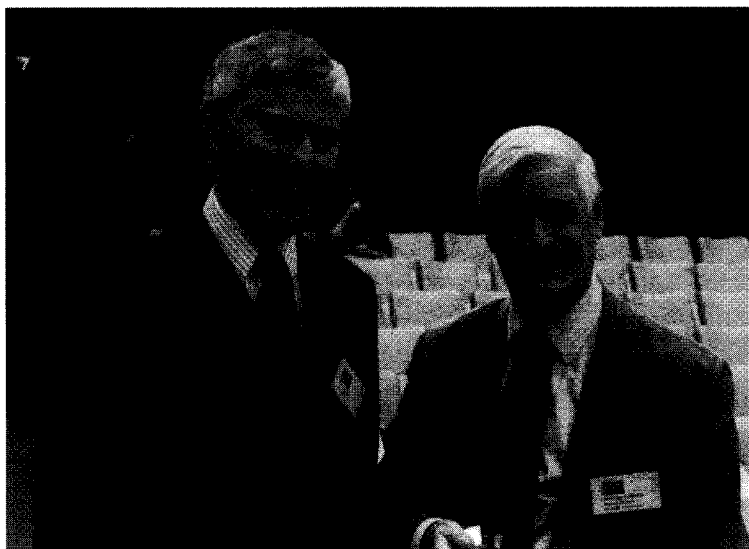
Truly a memorable day.



*St Rumbold's Well, Astrop: **Then** - 1813, as portrayed by Thomas Rowlandson;*



*and **Now** - 17th July 2008, as visitors to our AGM at Astrop courageously taste the rust-coloured water.*



An Award for our Society

At the 'History Day' meeting of the British Association for Local History, on Saturday 6th June 2008, at Friends' House, London, our Society was effectively honoured. Professor David Hey presented Jeremy Gibson with an **Award for Personal Achievement**, "for more than fifty years' commitment to local and family history as editor and author; founder member of Banbury Historical Society; generous with his knowledge and encouragement to others."

Asked for comment by local press, Jeremy remarked that the Society (and his 'Gibson Guides' directories to records for use by family and local historians) had been team efforts. "It was very gratifying to be there for all the work everyone has put in either for Banbury or the Guides."

Jeremy may be the 'front man' but, just to remind the many members who have supported us over so many years, here are the names of the 57 who have served to date as officers and/or on the committee since 1957:

Allen, Allitt, Asser, Barbour, Barnett, Basten, Beeson, Beeston, Bigwood, Bloxham, Bowes, ERC Brinkworth, Gwladys Brinkworth, Bromley, Carter, Clifton, Cohen, Day, Donaldson, Ellacott, Essex-Crosby, Fearon, Fiennes, Fillmore, Forde, Foster, Fothergill, Gardam, Gibson, Gosling, G. Griffiths, N. Griffiths, Hart, Hayter, Hitchcox, Hudson, Jakeman, Judge, Little, Lock, Loveday, Nicholson, Pain, Parmiter, Renold, Rivers, Roberts, Rose, D. Smith, K. Smith, Stanton, Thompson, Townsend, Trinder, White, Willy, Woodcock.

One other name, though two people, has been with us throughout, that of our first and of our current President, Saye and Sele, from whom we have had such constant benefit and support.

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. Approaching one hundred and fifty issues and five hundred articles have been published. All but the most recent issues have been digitised and are available on the Society's website (see inside front cover). Most back issues are also still available in their original form.

There are now thirty volumes in the records series. Those still in print include:

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

Banbury Gaol Records, ed. Penelope Renold (vol. 21).

Banbury Baptism and Burial Registers, 1813-1838 (vol. 22).

The earlier registers, *Marriages 1558-1837, Baptisms and Burials 1558-1812*, are now out-of-print, but are available on fiche and CD from Oxfordshire Family History Society, website at: www.ofhs.org.uk

Oxfordshire and North Berkshire Protestation Returns and Tax Assessments 1641-1642 (vol. 24, with Oxfordshire Record Society).

The 'Bawdy Court' of Banbury: The Act Book of the Peculiar Court of Banbury and Cropredy 1625-1638, 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 Frietas (vol. 28).

Early Victorian Squarson: The Diaries of William Cotton Risley, Vicar of Deddington, Part One, 1835-1848, ed. Geoffrey Smedley-Stevenson (vol. 29).

Banbury Past through Artists' Eyes, compiled by Simon Townsend and Jeremy Gibson (vol. 30).

Current prices and availability of other back volumes, and of *Cake and Cockhorse*, from the Hon. Editor (Harts Cottage, Church Hanborough, Witney OX29 8AB).

In preparation:

Turnpike Roads to Banbury, by Alan Rosevear.

Selections from the Diaries of William Cotton Risley, ed. G.W. Smedley-Stevenson:
Part 2. *Mid-Victorian Squarson, 1849-1869*.

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. The annual subscription (from 2009) is **£13.00** which includes any records volumes published. Overseas membership, **£15.00**.

All members' names and addresses are held on the Society's computer database for subscription and mailing purposes only. Please advise if you object to this practice.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Autumn/Winter 2008 Programme

*Meetings are held at 7.30pm at Banbury Museum,
entrance from Spiceball Park Road.*

Thursday 11th September

preceded by our annual 'Start of Season' reception from 6.30pm.

Mayors I have known – but not necessarily liked – over four centuries.

Jeremy Gibson

Thursday 9th October

New robes or old hat – the past and prospects of the House of Lords.

Sir Paul Hayter, KCB (former Clerk to the House of Lords)

Thursday 13th November

English Sporting Landscapes.

Dr Trevor Roper

Thursday 11th December

The Long Compton Witchcraft Murder.

Richard Ratcliffe