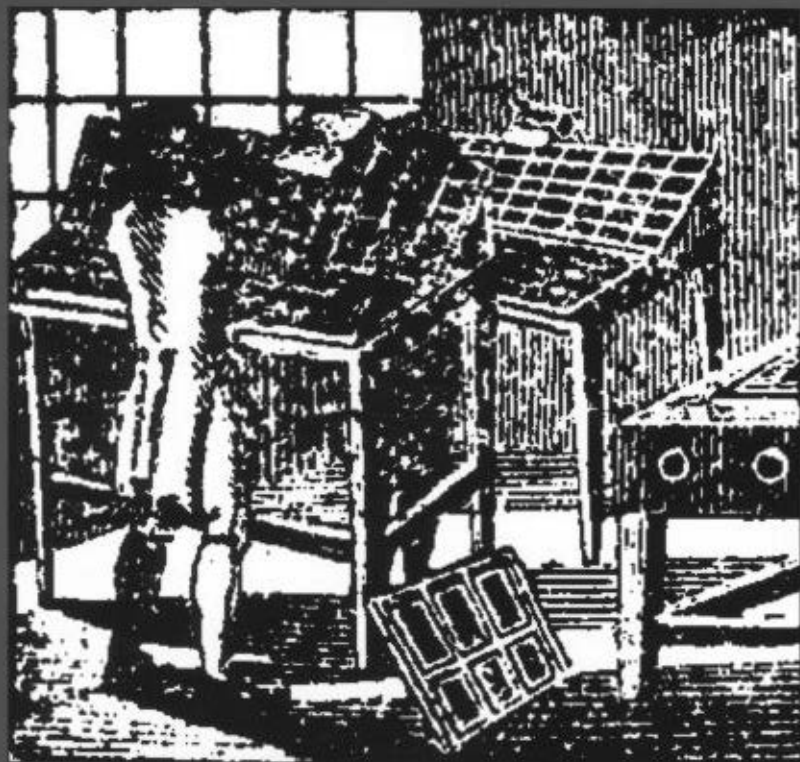


CAKE AND COCKHORSE



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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.

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This issue of *Cake & Cockhorse* was not intended to be thematic, but by happy chance a topic has emerged. The printing trade and its practitioners and products have played a significant part in Banbury's life so it is entirely appropriate for our journal to focus on them. The theme is maintained by the Society's publication this summer of *Rusher's Banbury Directory 1832 - 1906* (BHS vol. 34). The volume comes with a DVD containing the entire text. As Barrie Trinder says in his informative Introduction, the directories 'enable the history of the town through the nineteenth century to be analysed to a degree that is impossible in most other places'.

On 7 June Jeremy Gibson and I travelled to London for the AGM of the British Association for Local History (BALH). We were proud and happy to represent the Society at the award to Rebecca Probert, whose article 'Co-habitation and Marriage Amongst the Poor in 'Notorious' Neithrop' (*C&CH* 19.1, 2012) has been judged the BALH Publications Award Winner for 2014. It is a notable achievement for her and, of course, a great feather in the cap of our Society.

Chris Day

Cover: A printer's compositor, from *The Good Farmer*, one of J.G. Rusher's chapbooks (see Leo De Freitas, *The Banbury Chapbooks*, B.H.S. vol. 28, 2004)

Banbury 1st January, 1782.

*At a Meeting of the SOCIETY. For the Protection of Persons and Property against ROBBERS, THIEVES, &c
it is ordered ...*



BANBURY: Printed by W. CALCOTT, PRINTER and BOOKSELLER, opposite the RED LION.—

—COPPER-PLATES neatly work'd off.

Banbury 2^d January, 1783

At a General Meeting of the Subscribers this day held, it is ordered...



BANBURY: Printed by W. CALCOTT, PRINTER for the SOCIETY, opposite the RED LION.

*Table of the Distance from BANBURY in Oxfordshire to Cities,
Principal Towns, and Sea Ports in Great Britain...*

Printed for *William Calcott* in Banbury.

Facsimiles of William Calcott's imprint on the three posters in the Loveday of Williamscoote archive.

WILLIAM CALCOTT: Another Early Banbury Printer

An Update to *The Banbury Chapbooks*

Dr Leo John De Freitas

In my book *The Banbury Chapbooks*¹ I speculated that John Cheney may have acquired printing equipment, materials and even instruction from a near neighbour of his on the market place, William Calcott. Although I felt particularly strongly that such a connection had been possible I was obliged to add in a footnote that 'No examples with an identifiable imprint of his have so far come to light.' This has recently changed thanks to a donation of eighteenth century printed ephemera from the Loveday of Williamscoate archive, made to the Society by the heirs of our late member Sarah Markham, which allows me to confirm my earlier speculation.

The *British Book Trades Index* has William Calcott in business as a bookseller and stationer in Banbury in 1785 but no reference to him as a printer (the British Library catalogue lists him as William Calcot and 'flourishing' between 1759-1796, which is incorrect because Calcott/Calcot died in 1787). However, it was common in the eighteenth century for men (and the occasional woman too) to follow a number of book trades – e.g. 'Printers, binders, booksellers and stationers'² was the usual array of trades (in addition to operating as vendors of patent medicines among other activities!) – but for there to be no consistency in directory references when listed.

Amongst the original documents retrieved are three pieces that allow us to confirm now that William Calcott was printing in Banbury as well as acting as a bookseller and stationer. Two of these explicitly identify Calcott as a printer:

Banbury 1st January, 1782.
At a Meeting of the SOCIETY, For the Protection of Persons
and Property against
ROBBERS, THIEVES, &c / it is ordered

Banbury: Printed by W. Calcott,
Printer and Bookseller, opposite the Red-Lion –
Copper-plates neatly work'd off.

Size [portrait]: approximately 380mm (15ins) x 495mm (19½ ins).

¹ *The Banbury Chapbooks*, Banbury: BHS 2004. Vol. 28, p.28-30.

² And indeed in the nineteenth century. See Henry Stone's trade card on page 175 of *C&CH 19:5* (Spring 2014).

Banbury 2^d January, 1783
At a General Meeting of the Subscribers this day held
it is ordered...
Banbury: Printed by W. Calcott, Printer to the Society,
opposite the Red-Lion.

Size: [landscape]: approximately 445mm (18.5") x 413mm (17")

The third ambiguously suggests he was acting as a publisher of sorts:

Table of the Distance from BANBURY in Oxfordshire to Cities
Principal Towns, and Sea Ports in Great Britain...
Printed for William Calcott in Banbury. [No date]

Size [landscape]: approximately 540mm (22") x 410mm (16 1/4")

Again, there is much arbitrariness in eighteenth century provincial imprint information on books and printed ephemera and it is quite likely that 'Printed for William Calcott in Banbury' also supposed 'printed by William Calcott' and here Calcott the bookseller is promoting himself as a publisher having initiated and carried the cost of the printed sheet.

Although this definite printed evidence of William Calcott as printer *post date* John Cheney's start in printing in 1767 it nonetheless confirms that he was practising as a printer as well as bookseller and stationer in the town and allows me to remove the caveat "...if indeed he ever practised as a printer..."³ We are, as yet, still without the incontrovertible proof that Calcott was the source of John Cheney's press and training in printing but the recent additions to Banbury Museum of the printed sheets above clarifies that he was in a good position to have so facilitated Cheney's venture into printing.

Finally, I should like to add the following bibliographical reference to a Rusher chapbook that has been found since the publication of *The Banbury Chapbooks*:

The way to wealth, as clearly shewn [sic] in the preface of an old Pennsylvania; intitled [sic], Poor Richard improved. Written by Doctor Benjamine Franklin: extract from the Doctor's Political works. Banbury: Printed by J.G. Rusher, for W. Rusher & Son, [c1825]. Pp 24. f.ont. 9.7 x 8.7 cm.⁴

The Society acknowledges with gratitude the donation of printed ephemera from Loveday of Williamsote archives by Francis and John Markham.

³ As fn 1. *The Banbury Chapbooks*, p.29.

⁴ *A Catalogue of The Spencer Collection of Early Children's Books and Chapbooks*. Preston: Harris Public Library, 1967, p.181

A week in the life of mid-Victorian Banbury

Alan Crosby

As local historians we research and investigate people and communities, looking at processes and patterns of historical change, or focusing on particular sources to illuminate a theme or topic. But we rarely think about the routine, unremarkable, day-to-day existence of any community—the daily or weekly round which largely escapes attention. In this paper I take a week in the life of Banbury in late October and early November 1859 (the reason for the choice of this particular week is explained towards the end) and consider the ordinary events and activities which were going on, using as my source the *Banbury Guardian* for 3 November.¹

Local newspapers 150 years ago bore little resemblance to that disappearing breed today. It is hard for us to appreciate their central importance, because we have unequalled access to information and, no less significant, are accustomed to national newspaper circulation. In the 1850s and 1860s the only major nationally distributed newspaper was *The Times*, which largely disregarded what happened locally (whether in London or anywhere else) and was only read by an elite. The provincial and local press was by far the most important source of news and information for the public, and this is reflected in the vigour of the industry in this period. Titles proliferated, there was fierce competition, and would-be proprietors were numerous—and as the laborious process of electoral reform ground on, and an improved version of democracy was gradually created, the local and provincial press became a battleground on which political contests were fought.

Newspapers performed other roles. They were central to the commercial life of any market town or agricultural area: the medium by which towns kept in touch with their hinterland; advertising sheets for local businesses and for firms elsewhere which wanted to break into new markets or achieve national awareness of their products. Sometimes we are familiar with aspects of their content—the births, marriages and

¹ The *Banbury Advertiser* would be another possible source, but much of its content exactly replicates that of the *Guardian* and for practical reasons I only wanted to use one paper.

deaths column, the court reports—but much seems strange. Visually, they were very different: no pictures except on the rarest occasions and no photographs; front pages full of advertising; multiple columns of dense type; and a much higher proportion of syndicated (or copied) material from elsewhere—copyright laws, though tightened, were extraordinarily lax by our standards.



The 'Banbury Guardian' office in Parson's Street (from W. Potts, 'History of Banbury', 2nd ed., by E. T. Clark, 1978, by kind permission)

Banbury in 1859²

At the beginning of the year the *Guardian*, as was its custom, published its 'Banbury Almanack', the *vade mecum* for anyone

² It is perhaps scarcely necessary to state that Barrie Trinder, *Victorian Banbury* (DHS 19 and Phillimore, 1982) remains the definitive work on the period and provides a wealth of information and analysis.

interested in the official and commercial life of the town and its hinterland. The combined population of Banbury and Neithrop was 8,220 according to the census of 1851 and the register of parliamentary electors had 672 names, although the 'Almanack' stated that 'deducting 133 for duplicates, deaths, and removals, leaves the total number of Electors 539' (from an adult male population of around 2500). The lengthy lists of carriers and fairs reveal Banbury's place as the focus of a vast tract of countryside and minor market centres extending across much of four counties, a subject on which Barrie Trinder has written extensively,³ while borough status and the role of the town as a local capital are demonstrated by the sections on the Corporation, the banks, the officials of the Commissioners of Property and Income Tax and Commissioners of Land and Assessed Taxes. Civic consciousness, a sense of community, and the recognition that a modern town needed decent amenities are reflected in the listings of, for example, the Banbury Corn Exchange Company, the Banbury and Neithrop Associations for the Prosecution of Felons, and the Small Savings Society.

So, this town was much more significant than its relatively modest population would suggest—its hinterland provided trade and business drawn from the north Cotswolds, the Northamptonshire uplands, the Cherwell valley and the lowlands towards Warwick and Stratford. Its developing role as a railway junction built upon its centrality in the turnpike network and the artery of its canal, and it was far enough from large urban centres—Northampton and Oxford in particular—not to feel the cutting edge of competition. None of the nearest local rivals—Brackley, Chipping Norton, Shipston—could remotely match Banbury's advantages, and places such as Stratford, Daventry and Warwick were sufficiently distant to present no real threat.

Yet at the same time this was a town small enough to be intimate, where many people knew many other people, and where the shopkeepers and the skilled craftsmen could play their part in town life and civic business. Networks of family and kin, and of commercial and business contacts, were strong. The listings of municipal officials and elected representatives, bank managers and small company shareholders reveal the same names time and again. People had fingers in many pies, and

³ Barrie Trinder, 'Banbury: Metropolis of Carriers' Carts', *C&CH* 18.7 (2011) 210-43; 'Country carriers revisited', *The Local Historian* vol.42 no.2 (May 2012) 135-47

they often exercised these rôles for decades, cementing the solidity which mattered so much to the mid-Victorian bourgeoisie.

A week in the life

Banburians eager to keep abreast of current events in the wider world had plenty to read in the *Guardian* for 3 November 1859. Local newspapers usually devoted about half their front page and most of the following two to international and national affairs, copying from other papers or relying on reports sent by the electric telegraph. The national press was obsessed with events to do with France, where the emperor Napoleon III was pursuing an imperialist policy of intervention in the gathering conflict between the Austrians and Italian states such as Piedmont, and had designs upon the annexation of Morocco. Britain, France's ally in the Crimean War, now looked on with dismay as Napoleon III threw his weight around.

The *Guardian* printed the full text of a letter recently sent by the Emperor to the King of Sardinia, setting out his programme ('We demand that ...') for the pacification of Italy and its future political settlement as a federal independent state. Other letters were also printed, including a declaration sent by Signor Garibaldi to the people of Naples. Reports from Paris were published in detail, recounting news received in the French capital by telegraph from other parts of Europe and North Africa, while an entire article reproduced from *The Times* told the townspeople about the weighty views of 'The Thunderer' upon the Italian question. Other parts of the globe caused concern, too: an article from *The Spectator* expressed the anxiety felt in political circles about the disintegrating relationship between the northern and southern states in America. The paper printed a miscellany of snippets, ranging from the discovery of gold at Victoria, British Columbia, and a proposal to create new provinces in Canada, to an order issued in France stating that judges were henceforth forbidden from smoking in public. Lady Stamford, a noted *equestrienne*, had challenged another titled lady to a cross-country ride for a prize of £500, a company had been formed to build pneumatic underground tubes for the rapid transmission of mail beneath London streets, and at Kids Grove a woman had been killed in an explosion caused by her husband putting a flask of gunpowder in the oven to dry. Banbury people were no doubt grateful to know of a telegram from Vienna dated 22 October reporting that Baron Hübner, the Austrian minister for police, had resigned and that Baron Thierry, minister councillor in the Department of Foreign Affairs, replaced him.

There was also plenty of other domestic news, including a detailed account of an attempted murder at Redwick in Gloucestershire; the jury inquest on a fatal explosion in Birmingham; a great Conservative Party banquet at Liverpool; and juicy murder trials at the Central Criminal Court. Much greater coverage was given to the terrible wreck of the 'Royal Charter' off Anglesey. The ship, carrying emigrants to Australia, sank during a storm on 26 October, with the loss of 459 lives, and the aftermath was reported in vivid and melodramatic detail, with heart-breaking and poignant accounts of individual tragedy to appeal to Victorian sentimentality. Stories such as these, syndicated by journalists or sent by telegraph from the locality, were staple fare—as of course they are to this day. We can imagine them being talked about in pubs and shops, read aloud to the less literate and circulated to many more people than just the purchasers of the newspaper.

Local news probably could not compare, for even the most dramatic events of the previous week must have seemed pale in comparison. The weather, though, had been terrible, and the same storm in which the 'Royal Charter' was lost had caused problems elsewhere. Reports from London and the South Coast told of major damage to shipping on the Thames between Westminster and Woolwich, chaos in the dockyard at Portsmouth, and the destruction of hotels in Eastbourne. Locally, coverage was of the storm at Bampton and neighbouring parishes—a report, written the next morning and sent by post, told of hundreds of uprooted trees, barns unroofed, thatch torn from cottages, a hayrick blown 300 yards, and widespread devastation at Clanfield, though in Banbury damage was limited: 'the breaking or uprooting of a few trees'.

As to what happened elsewhere in Oxfordshire the issue is silent—the newspaper relied on what material was sent in, for there was little opportunity to undertake 'pro-active' reporting. News came after the event, and the modern mania for endless analysis prior to events was conspicuously, and inevitably, absent.

A striking feature of the *Banbury Guardian* is the way in which its more detailed factual reporting gives a clear impression of the town's hinterland. Every week it published reports from nearby towns and cities, including Oxford, Daventry, Bicester, Kington, Warwick and Leamington, helping to keep Banbury people up to date with some of the goings-on in the region. They served the same role as the regional news coverage which follows the national TV news today. The issue of 3 November 1859 told of a meeting of the Warwickshire Rifles at

Leamington, and the start of a scheme to build a sewage works at the same town. The hot news from Bicester concerned the proposed formation of a parochial burial board and the provision of a cemetery, while at Daventry there had been an inquest into the death of James Bennett (5) of Crick, burnt when his pinafore caught fire from a candle flame. With the same lugubrious delight in tragedy, the main Oxford news item concerned the 'melancholy drowning' of an undergraduate of University College, out boating on the Thames.

Municipal elections were held throughout England on 1 November, and the results in nearby boroughs were covered, unsystematically and anecdotally. Political labels are mentioned in a low-key fashion: of the elections to Oxford Corporation it was observed that 'all those elected are of moderate principles, except one, who belongs to the Radical party', although at Warwick 'the result of the contest, for there were many candidates, is considered a triumph for the Conservative party, and the ringing of bells and perambulation of the streets by a band were the modes adopted to celebrate it'. Greater attention was paid to the elections at Buckingham, however. It was observed by the *Guardian's* Buckingham correspondent that until very recently these had been a farce, for elections there (in contrast to openly democratic Banbury?) were conducted 'under the control of a clique or set of men who fancy and treat an official holding as a personal heritage'. With magnificent mid-Victorian phrasing, the report claimed that anyone else who wanted to claim a share of municipal power was treated as 'an assuming meddler and an arrant radical for daring to interfere with the abused usurpation of office, and the prospective chance of some great foodie becoming an eminent chief municipal noodle'. Now, however, there was change in the wind at Buckingham. The elections were fiercely contested and the report records the process of voting in great detail, ending with the verdict that, since four of the seven victorious candidates were new men, 'Such a rubbing up the old stagers never had'. But a warning note was sounded: 'We hope ... that Town Councillors have really something to do for the good of the municipality ... else why all this struggle to get possession of the comfortable cushioned chairs in the Chamber of the Town Council?'

If crime did not exist newspapers would be in a quandary—how to fill all that column space? The *Banbury Guardian* had no such problem, for a diet of items about the minor misdemeanours and petty transgressions of townspeople was staple fare in every issue, based on a relatively

formal layout of reporting the proceedings of the Borough Police Court, the Banbury Quarter Sessions, and the County Police Court, supplemented by, for example, the Middleton Cheney Petty Sessions. At the Borough Police Court on 28 October Caleb Adams, a carter of Syresham, was charged with 'cruelly beating, ill-treating, abusing, and over-driving a horse' in Bridge Street. The prosecution was brought by James Yewen, 'the well-known agent of the Animals' Friend Society', and the horse, brought before the Bench prior to the start of the case, 'was certainly the best witness on its behalf [with] no more flesh on its bones than one hungry hound would have devoured at a meal'. The defendant was fined 10s. and 10s. costs or, in default, 21 days' hard labour: he 'looked amazed, and left the Court in search of the money'.

Three days later the Court sat again, to deal with summonses issued by the Banbury Board of Health for non-payment of rates. In seventeen cases the arrears were paid without the individuals coming into court, but in seven others alleged offenders appeared in person and we obtain a good impression of the attitude of at least some citizens to those in authority. Sarah Gibbs of Fish Street was summoned for £2.7s.5d., which she paid, though grumbling that 'the rates were a great deal heavier than they ought to be', while her neighbour Richard Stanley had actually paid his rates but was summoned in error. The summons was withdrawn but he attended, claiming that he ought to be compensated 'for his trouble and loss of time'. The magistrates (Richard Edmunds the ironmonger, mayor in 1858-59, and councillors Goffe, Bennett, Rusher and Douglas) dismissed that claim with alacrity. Robert Dexter owed £1.2s.6d. and was represented by his brother John, who denied all knowledge, said he was only his brother's servant and lived in Binningham, and was bankrupt. The magistrates learned that John was in fact the occupier of the Banbury property and ordered him to pay up—his obvious perjury was ignored. Henry Allison, of the *Buck and Bell*, alleged that as he was only a part-time occupier he should not pay the full £2.7s.6d. due. This was conceded, but he had previously declared publicly that he would not pay the collector a single farthing, 'by way of "kicking the devil in the dark"'. To save face, he said that if Police Sergeant Thompson would pay the money from his own pocket, Allison would then reimburse him, and 'with this request that obliging functionary complied'.

At the Michaelmas Quarter Sessions the mayor and four councillors formed the bench, and Serjeant Marming was the recorder. A Grand Jury of sixteen men was sworn: William Baker junior, George Ball, Clement

Bromley, Henry Cowper, William Dickason, William Edmunds, David Falkner, Richard Faulkner, William Floyd, Thomas Graves, James Grimby, Henry Gulliver, Joseph Malsbury, John Page and Richard Stanley (he who had tried to get some compensation money at the police court). The foreman was Joseph Jarvis. Two others, Charles Grimby and Richard Baily, did not answer their names, but turned up late and were fined because they had no good reason: the former was 'detained by a commercial traveller' and the latter had been despatching mourning clothes for a funeral. The case against Eliza Burgess, indicted for stealing a purse containing 5s.7½d. from Jane Anne Gillett, was dismissed, but not so the case of James Newton (27) for stealing a waistcoat, knife and 7s. in money from a canal boat belonging to Thomas Lines at Banbury. The accused had been unloading the boat in return for sixpence and his victuals and beer, but later that day sold the stolen goods—the waistcoat for 4s. to William Lee, marine store dealer, and the waistcoat to William Garrett at the *Leathern Bottle*. He was found guilty on the spot, and because of previous convictions was sentenced to four years' penal servitude.

The County Police Court, held at the town hall on 27 October, heard the case of Charles Johnson of Williamscoate, who had unlawfully left farm service following the Michaelmas Fair in Banbury. In his defence the accused said he was willing to return 'if his master would find him a proper place to sleep in, instead of the granary, which was so cold that he had been obliged to get up in the night and grind some beans for the sake of warming himself. He had also taken the itch from another of Mr. Miller's servants, and if he went back he should want something for it'.

Miller agreed those terms and the case was dropped. Much more sensational was the prosecution of Richard Cousins, Jonas Reeves, Sarah Reeves and Hannah Cousins for assault on William Reeves on the day of the Michaelmas Fair. All the parties concerned lived at Kings Sutton and 'the original cause of the quarrel was a domestic faux pas'. The complainant, 'an elderly man with a large nose', had been to the fair and on the way home called in at the *Navigation Inn* 'to strengthen himself with some beer for his journey', and there found the four defendants similarly engaged. A fight broke out, in which the two men punched William Reeves in the face and 'the two ladies seized him by the hair and "lugged" it so vigorously that they nearly made his head bald, and entirely made it sore'. Richard Cousins was fined 5s. and the others 2s.6d. each, with 10s. costs in each case. Later on, reported under the

heading TWO VIRAGOES, Caroline Murray was charged with assaulting Elizabeth Barnfather at Neithrop, then outside the jurisdiction of the borough courts: 'They had a quarrel, the origin of which was not very clear, but appeared to have been something said by complainant's husband, when intoxicated. The quarrel commenced in the exchange of divers epithets more forcible than classic, mixed with imputations on each other's chastity'. A broken earring and a torn cap were produced as evidence, before the case was dismissed.

Lest this should give the impression that Banbury was a town of violence and misbehaviour, we must turn to the more elevated pursuits of some of the townspeople. Civic dignity had been greatly enhanced, with great controversy, by the erection of Banbury Cross, completed in mid-October.⁴ The Committee for the Erection of the Banbury Cross advertised in the 3 November issue that they had received individual subscriptions towards the cost totalling £299 17s. The names of almost all donors were given, together with the sums contributed—ranging from the £50 given by The Bridge Estate Charity and £10 each from such local luminaries as Lord Saye and Sele, Henry William Tancred MP, and Bernhard Samuelson the ironfounder (and future MP), to a few pence from anonymous benefactors. But the organisers could not cover the cost, and 'hope for further Contributions to arrange the Payments now due'.

The Banbury Choral Society was about to give its first concert of the winter season, a selection from 'Messiah', and readers were told that not only were the committee 'determined to make the performance of this selection as efficient as the available resources of the society will admit' but that Miss Whyte, the favourite soprano soloist of the previous season, had been engaged. 'Several gentlemen of Oxford and elsewhere' would be in the band (thus apparently increasing its 'efficiency') and members of the old Philhannonic Society would also be participating. So popular was the event expected to be that the town hall, rather than the Vicarage Hall, had been booked, and Banburyans were urged not to lose the opportunity to 'show their love of art by patronizing it in this its most generally available and certainly not least attractive form', which seems a strangely unenthusiastic form of advertising. At the *Buck and Bell* the Victoria Amateur Dramatic Society had just given their performance of 'The

⁴ Barric Trinder, 'The re-building of Banbury Cross', *Cake and Cockhorse* vol. 3 no. 10 (1967); Jeremy Gibson, 'Image and reality: Banbury Cross 1859-2013', *The Local Historian* vol. 43 no. 2 (May 2013) 159-160.


Bohemian Banditti', a play better known to theatregoers as 'The Miller and His Men'.⁵ Most unfortunately—and we learn to our dismay that bad behaviour might be found among even the *artistes* and cultured persons of Banbury—the performance had been invaded (using forged invitation cards) by 'sundry ill-behaved youths belonging to an opposition party of amateurs'. Towards the end one of the latter set off a squib, causing panic among 'the female portion of the auditory, and the whole was wound up by an extra scene, in the shape of a pugilistic encounter, in the course of which ... one of the combatants got his head knocked through a window'.

The people of Banbury—or at least those who read the *Guardian*—were bombarded with advertising. Some businesses used the same advertisement in every issue, week after week, and some expected their advertisement to occupy the same position every time, a confirmation of their status in the community. Few had illustrations, though many made creative use of different typefaces and unusual layouts to attract the eye, but a pointing hand, forefinger outstretched, highlighted the fact that 'Every fashionable novelty in new goods' was to be seen at Grimbley's, 7-9 Parson's Street, while Cockerill & Miles, 'furnishing and general ironmongers, tin-plate workers and braziers, dealers in bar, sheet hoop and fender iron, arm moulds, hops, oils, colours &c &c' of 16 Market Place demonstrated their modernity by including a drawing of Flavel's Prize Kitchener (a range with hotplates and ovens), for which they were local agents.

The ladies of Banbury were the target market for much seductive text. J. & E. Clarke, milliners of 74 High Street, used the typically phraseology of mid-Victorian retailers, taking 'this opportunity of returning their sincere thanks for the kind patronage of their Friends', before announcing that they had 'just Returned from London with a Selection of Novelties for the Season, which will be ready for inspection on Monday, November 7th, 1859', although the random nature of the newspaper production exercise meant that this advertisement appeared sandwiched between those for Russell and Co., gasfitters of 94 High Street, and Charles Cox, organ-builder and pianoforte tuner of Oxford Road. At 23 Horse Fair, Mrs Archer's showrooms were to be the venue for an exhibition of winter fashions beginning on 8 November, while Robert Kirkby of 6 High Street advertised winter clothing which included 'his assortment of mantles and jackets of the newest and most

⁵ A romantic melodrama by Isaac Peacock (1762-1835), first performed in 1813 and later recreated as a minor opera by Sir Arthur Sullivan

fashionable shapes, silk and other dresses in new materials, velvets, trimmings &c &c' and, selling off the fashions that were so last year, 'a very large stock of mantles, shawls, and a great variety of other Goods, at a considerable reduction in the price'.

 **DRAPERY AND MILLINERY.**

**EVERY FASHIONABLE NOVELTY
IN NEW GOODS,
TO BE SEEN AT C. GRIMBLY'S,
7, 8, & 9, PARSON'S STREET,
BANBURY.**

**JAMES BRAGGINS,
No. 8, FISH STREET, BANBURY,**

Sells the attention of the gentry and tradesmen of the neighbourhood to his well-assorted stock of
FOREIGN TIMBER, DEALS, LATHS, SLATES, FLOORING BOARDS, AND PINE PLANKS,
OF THE BEST QUALITY AND AT MODERATE PRICES

All kinds of ENGLISH TIMBER kept in stock; OAK GATES to Order.
* * * * * KINDLY ATTENTION SHALL BE PAID TO EXECUTION OF ORDERS.

**52, PARSON'S STREET.
S. & J. BAKER,
TAILORS AND BREECHES MAKERS.**

HAVE received their FIRST DELIVERY of NEW GOODS for the AUTUMN TRADE, in materials for BREECHES, SETS, TROUSERS, BREECHINGS, &c., to which they invite inspection.

BREECHES CUT ON THE MOST IMPROVED PRINCIPLES.

Henry Cowper of 2 High Street also indulged in persuasive advertising, holding out the mouthwatering promise of an 'extensive stock of new and fashionable materials for the present season, comprising a large and varied assortment of silks, dresses, shawls, mantles, French merinos, coburgs, prints, ribbons, hosiery, gloves &c.' However, he also identified a quite different market: a 'stock of goods for clothing clubs, charities &c. which is considerably larger than usual and for value and lowness of price cannot be surpassed'. Gentlemen were not forgotten: Cowper enticingly offered them 'a new and extensive stock of goods ... Bordered Angolas, Moscow, Venetian, and other Fashionable Materials, Scarfs, Handkerchiefs, Ties, Gloves, Hats, &c', and S. & J. Baker of 52 Parson's Street, tailors and breeches makers, proclaimed that their breeches were 'cut on the most improved principles'.

As befitted a town which was at the centre of a broad and diverse agricultural hinterland, farming and countryside topics were prominent. The only information about sport of any sort was a list of the hunting calendars for the Heythrop, Warwickshire, South Oxfordshire, Atherstone and Mr Drake's Hounds, demonstrating, if nothing else, that aristocratic and gentry life was not overloaded with more tedious business during the hunting season—the Heythrop and Atherstone Hounds, for example, met every day that week except Sunday and Thursday.

More serious matters included a highly miscellaneous series of brief reports on markets and prices, in which Brackley ('trade slow for all descriptions of grain') appeared between London and Leeds, and Heyford next to Sheffield. A detailed list of the prices fetching that afternoon on Banbury Market, in old and new wheat, beans, peas, barley, oats and flour, was published above the calendar of November fairs likely to be of interest to local farmers and producers—again revealing the wider trading hinterland of the town and Banburyshire, as it extended from Gloucester and Newbury to Loughborough and Ashby-de-la-Zouch. There were reports of local cattle fairs, and of the grain markets at trading towns which were in a hierarchy of main centres that included Banbury itself—Aylesbury, Bicester, Birmingham, Gloucester, Leicester, Northampton, Oxford, Reading, Warwick and Worcester. A syndicated survey of the European grain trade, which referred *inter alia* to the buoyant market in Odessa, was followed by a survey of agricultural prospects which emphasised the baleful effects of the recent weather.

Advertising of agricultural machinery was prominent, as we would expect in a town which was a major producer of reaping and mowing machines, mrimip cutters and oilcake machines. The largest advertisement on the front page was for Joseph Gardner of 65 High Street, extolling the many virtues of his hand- or horse-powered Improved Chaff Machine, 'by Royal letters patent', with a series of enthusiastic testimonials confirming that this equipment had transformed farm work: the nature of agricultural labour is revealed by the statement that with one of these machines 'a stout boy will easily do work that has hitherto been hard work for a strong man'. J.E. Kirkby of North Bar Works advertised 'every description of portable and fixed steam engines, thrashing and corn dressing machinery, wagons, cars &c' with a large secondhand stock, an after-sales maintenance service, and a sideline in adapting existing farm buildings to accommodate the monsters, while the adventurous could send off a guinea to W.H. Kennedy of Oxford Street, London, and in return receive

something truly terrifying, a set of Geyelin's Magic Horse Taming Nose Pinchers ('simple, ornamental, and can be fixed to any bridle').

The small private advertisements also reflect an agricultural world. Somewhat inexplicably, Mr Fortnum, cabinetmaker of Tadmarton, had for sale 'two tons of very fine red carrots'; James Hall announced the disposal of oak, ash, elm and timber from estates in Tadmarton, Swalcliffe and Sibford, and of two ricks of meadow hay at Bloxham; and G.V. Ball, retail chemist, was agent for the sale of penny, twopenny, fourpenny and eightpenny packets of Barber's Poisoned Wheat, which 'kills Mice and Sparrows on the Spot' and presumably would have a similar result on humans if the stock in the shop became confused. Property sales and lets are scattered through the advertising sections: at Farnborough a three bedroomed dwelling with two front rooms, kitchen, wash-house, cellar and a well of good water was to let, while in Neithrop a genteel residence of four bedrooms, dining and drawing rooms, kitchen, scullery, larder, gig house and stable was on offer. The less ambitious could consider a furnished sitting room and bedroom in 'a village near Banbury', with or without attendance, but the farming community would have turned immediately to the notices of farm sales and auctions. At Faulcott near Helmdon 50 cattle, 90 ewes, three horses, seven ricks of corn and 14 of hay, 200 acres of grass and ten acres of swede were to be auctioned, and at Hook Norton five acres of pasture and arable land were to be auctioned at the *Bell Inn* the following week.

Other small advertisements offered services to the discerning elements in local society. R.W. Smith, photographic artist, announced the opening of his rooms at 27 Horse Fair, while Messrs. Levesque, Edmondes and Co. of London respectfully informed 'the Gentry of Banbury and its Vicinity' that they would shortly be visiting 'for the purpose of tuning and regulating several of their PIANOFORTES'. Communications were to be addressed to the *Guardian* office. Potts & Son, printers of the newspaper, advertised their extensive stock of Italianmade violin strings; Heel's pianoforte warehouse, opposite the *Red Lion*, offered a treasury of instruments and sheet music selected from London sources—always London, that arbiter of fashion and good taste—and the illustrious Henry Stone had just published a new map of the district ten miles around Banbury, 'with all the ROADS', for 2s. plain, 2s.6d. coloured, 4s.6d. in a case and prices of 6s. and upwards for mounted on rollers.

The newspaper had recently begun to include advertisements for domestic servants, 'at the request of several clergymen and gentlemen who are desirous of finding a substitute for Statute Fairs' (that is, hiring fairs). 'The Friends of a strong active YOUTH, aged 16' at Stockton near Rugby were desirous of placing him with a good house of business or a respectable tradesman, but in dramatic contrast James Cadbury of 24 Parson's Street, 'Agents for the Selection of Emigrants to Her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners', offered free passage to Victoria and New South Wales for girls and young women who 'are or have been in service as DOMESTIC SERVANTS'.

What prompted this survey of Banbury at the beginning of November 1859? I wanted to find the borough's own municipal election results. Perhaps surprisingly or, given the slate of Banbury politics, perhaps not, these elections received almost no attention in the preceding weeks. There was a brief announcement that the poll would take place on 1 November, and on 3 November a paragraph was devoted to the results (roughly a quarter of the coverage given to the poll in Buckingham). Four sitting councillors, Messrs Edmunds, Bryden, Gardner and Merry, were bowing out, their terms of office having expired. Eleven men were nominated, by ratepayers, as candidates, including W.A. Bryden and John Lee Merry, who had just stood down. Five of the eleven then issued addresses to the electorate, declining to stand—the rather unusual procedure being that people could be nominated without giving consent. That left six candidates for four places (the borough being at this stage un-warded, so the poll was town-wide).

There were 417 registered burgesses and 231 voted, a 55% turnout which seems high by our standards but was well below the level of many towns in the period (and, as the *Guardian* commented, 'greater than it has been for some years past'). The four elected were Henry Cowper (49), the draper of High Street (143 votes); William Rusher (46), of High Street, actuary at the Banbury Savings Bank (121 votes); George Crosby (40), ale and porter agent of Fish Street (107 votes); and William Cales (43), farmer, auctioneer and estate agent of Bodicote (94 votes).

George Crosby was my great-great grandfather. Elected for the first time on 1 November 1859, he was a member of the Corporation until his death in the summer of 1886, and served as mayor of Banbury in 1872-1873. My intention is to write, in due course, a biographical study of this small town politician, who was not only a councillor but was also active on the Board of Health and other public or semi-public bodies, and over

the years became a leading figure in Banbury society. But when I read through the issues of the *Banbury Guardian* for the autumn of 1859 I became engrossed in the minutiae of town life and in the ways in which the newspaper reflected the wider concerns and the day-to-day activities of the borough and its great hinterland. It is remarkably difficult to delve deep into the life of communities in the mid-nineteenth century, and most townspeople are no more than silent witnesses to the history of their own times. Of course, a newspaper only gives us some evidence—not least, it tells us as much about the priorities and views of its proprietor as it does about the man or woman in the street. But it helps us to build up a more rounded picture of what life was like, what business was being transacted, what geographical horizons the inhabitants perceived, and what they chatted about in the market or during conversations over a pint or several. 'A week in the life of Banbury' could of course be expanded by looking at other sources—parish and chapel registers, town council minutes, poor law records, private correspondence where it survives ... but the pages of the *Banbury Guardian*, read on scratchy microfilm in the reference library, are a good starting point.

Acknowledgment

I'd like to thank the staff of the Centre for Banburyshire Studies for their assistance, and also my friend James Scannell of Dublin, whose articles on 'A day in the life of ...' published in the *Dublin Historical Record* inspired me to think of doing the same for Banbury.

WHITE HORSE HOTEL
COMMERCIAL INN AND POSTING HOUSE,
BANBURY.

RICHARD TANNER

Begs to inform the Nobility, Gentry, Commercial Gentlemen, Parsons and the Public generally, that he has entered upon the above (White Horse) and solicits a share of their patronage and support: He assures them that it will always be his constant duty to employ the best materials to cook the most excellent dishes who ever formed them with their best support.

**FAMILIES SUPPLIED WITH HOME-BREWED ALES AND POUTER, BUNTON AND OTHER ALES,
 IN CASES OR GOTTARS.**

Licensed to Let Pigs, Eggs, &c. for Hire

♦ ♦ **NAMKEST UNORDINARY EVERY THURSDAY.**

BANBURY ANGLICANS AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CENTENARY

J Dunleavy

The celebration of what is called the Sunday School centenary has assumed national proportions. Both in London and in the provinces, the hundreds of thousands of Sunday School teachers and scholars have been *en fête*.¹

The commemoration, often referred to as the Robert Raikes centenary celebration, was also observed in Banbury. According to Bannie Trinder the event locally proved to be one of the largest religious demonstrations ever held in the town. The idea of the celebration came from the London-based Sunday School Union, which had taken the lead in corresponding with countless Sunday schools, and several of the organising agencies such as the Church of England Institute and the Ragged School Union, inviting suggestions for ways in which this landmark in our educational history might be observed. Initially the reaction from most quarters was positive, the prospects of a united celebration seemed most likely. The presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury attending the earlier meetings convened by the Sunday School Union was taken as evidence that the Established Church was prepared to participate in events along with Christians drawn from other denominations. Prospects for a united celebration were dashed when the Primate ceased to attend meetings, Anglicans announcing they preferred to have control of their own celebration.²

For a time it looked as though the celebration in Banbury might have been among the few exceptional places where what was described as a united celebration would be possible. This was due to the decision of the

¹ *Reading Observer*, 3 July 1880. F Booth, *Robert Raikes of Gloucester* (Redhill, Surrey, 1980), *passim*.

² B Trinder, *Victorian Banbury* (BHS 19; Chichester, 1982), p.119. *Sunday School Union. The centenary of Sunday Schools 1880. A memorial of the celebration held in London, the Provinces and the colonies (1881)*, p.5. This is an invaluable but patchy record of the events of 1880. The unnamed compiler admits he was reliant on reports submitted by correspondents up and down the country. The entry dealing with Banbury is not unusual in that it appears to be based on accounts appearing in the local press. pp.339-40.

Bishop of Oxford, Dr Mackarness, to address a meeting of scholars drawn from the various denominations at a venue in Banbury. Plans for this were abandoned when the bishop was taken ill and was obliged to cancel all immediate engagements. What was more, a number of other differences between the Church and the Nonconformists surfaced and this led the local organisers to abandon any hopes of a united demonstration. Banbury like so many other places was left with no alternative but to accept an outcome that resulted in two parallel festivals.³

Religious services, tea parties, excursions and field days (especially the latter) were very much in evidence during the summer of 1880. Banburians seemingly set aside any feeling of disappointment at having to accept the idea of two festivals: one for the Anglicans, the other being made up of the numerous religious denominations. The former made it clear they would welcome their co-religionists from the neighbouring parishes, while the latter were keen to invite the Nonconformists from neighbouring villages. Two separate committees were formed to make the necessary arrangements. That of the Anglicans was made up of local clergy, the vicar of Banbury, the Rev H Back (also Rural Dean), invariably occupying the chair. One of the practical problems facing the committee was how to provide transport for scholars from the villages to the town. It was decided that no child under the age of eight would be permitted to join the procession. Conveyances would be provided for scholars going to Banbury, returning home later by the same form of transport.⁴

With contingents of scholars from the surrounding villages, the Anglicans managed to muster well over two thousand scholars who attended a special service in the parish church. With the religious function over the scholars were marshalled along the route from the parish church to a meadow on the Bloxham Road provided by Mr Denchfield. There they were regaled with tea, cakes, and so on, after which they were able to enjoy the wide variety of amusements provided that included a steam-powered roundabout. In the evening the scholars were joined by parents and friends, and during the course of the celebration each scholar was provided with a medal depicting Raikes and bearing a suitable inscription.⁵

³ E Lee, rev. V Miller, 'John F Mackarness (182089)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 35 (2004), pp.495-6.

⁴ *Banbury Guardian*, 29 Jan. 1, 15 July, 1880.

⁵ *Banbury Advertiser*, 1 July 1880.

The weather on June 29 proved to be ideal for such an event. Processionists were attired in their Sunday best, banners and mottoes added to the interest, while the mayor's suggestion that the day be observed as a general holiday added to the sense of goodwill. Many visitors coming into town remarked on the highly decorated streets and buildings. Throughout the day the bells of the parish church pealed out.⁶

Earlier in the year when it became clear the Anglicans were determined to have their own distinctive form of celebration, Bishop Mackerness addressed a letter to his clergy stating the coming centenary presented the Church with the opportunity for clergy and Sunday school teachers [when]:

'the purposes, prospects, and conduct of Sunday schools may be carefully considered by carefully chosen speakers. The effect will be, it is hoped, to send all back with new energy and interest to work for Christ's little ones under their care.'⁷

The bishop envisaged a series of meetings comprised of clergy and Sunday school teachers at a number of venues in the diocese – such as Banbury, Henley and Reading – where matters of concern to the clergy and teachers might be discussed. The Banbury meeting took place on July 8, and the format was largely along the lines suggested by the bishop. Following a church service the delegates made for the National School where they were greeted by the vicar, Rev H Back, who introduced the day's main speaker, Mr H G Heald, of the Church of England Sunday School Institute. Heald began by reminding his audience that the centenary ought to be much more than what he termed 'f.reworks... medalings, ribbonings, and processionings:'⁸ instead it was time for the role of the Sunday school to be reassessed. Teachers he maintained ought to be prepared not only to visit the homes of their scholars where they might become acquainted with parents, but to depend upon the parents rather than relying on the teachers to take the children to Church.⁹

Judging from press reports not only in Banbury but elsewhere the general feeling was that the effort and resources invested in the festival had been well worthwhile. With a fund of happy memories churches and chapels with their Sunday schools could resume the usual pattern of anniversary sermons, tea meetings, musical events, excursions, and so on, without having to refer to other agencies.⁹

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ *Banbury Guardian*, 29 Jan. 1880.

⁸ Ibid., 15 July 1880.

⁹ *Oxford Times*, 26 June, 3 July 1880.

Many of the speakers in 1880 displayed an awareness of the significant changes affecting education generally. Whereas the earlier Sunday schools had frequently provided poor with the first taste of education, over the past decade the state having recognised the necessity for universal elementary education, had entered the education field in a big way. The latest instalment coming in 1880, obliged children to attend school, failure to do so incurring a fine. While there were more day schools than ever, the school pence imposed hardship on many poor families. Not surprisingly there were some who questioned whether there was any need for Sunday schools. To this end the Bishop of Oxford told a meeting of clergy and teachers that there was now a greater need for Sunday schools; not perhaps to teach the elements, but to add to the lessons of the week the still more important work of spiritual education of the children. In this sense the Sunday school was required as much as ever.¹⁰

Philip B Cliffe, in his history of the Sunday school movement, maintains the numbers associated with the movement continued to grow until Edwardian times. He asserts the celebration of 1880 was the major event of the 19th century.¹¹

An indication of how the agency had come to enjoy widespread support and sympathy was obvious when Queen Victoria agreed to become patron of the movement and bestowed a knighthood on Charles Reed of the Sunday School Union. London's Lord Mayor allowed the use of the Guildhall for a week-long conference of delegates drawn from many countries. However the decision of the conference to recruit a million new members, and raise a million shillings for development purposes was never realised. For many in the movement the unveiling of the statue of Raikes on the Thames Embankment by Lord Shaftesbury proved to be one of more memorable of the national events. Gloucester, the home of Robert Raikes and where he founded his Sunday school, clearly felt they might capitalise on the example set by their famous son. An appeal was launched for donations to a Raikes memorial centre: the amount needed was insufficient and the money eventually went towards a public library. Finally, as if these setbacks were not enough, a plan to install a statue of Raikes in Gloucester cathedral was dismissed by the authorities there on the grounds that he was not suitably dressed.¹²

¹⁰ H C Barnard, *A history of English education from 1760* (1971), pp. 107-19. *Oxford Times*, 3 July 1880.

¹¹ P B Cliffe, *The rise and development of the Sunday school Movement in England 1780-1980* (Redhill, 1986), pp. 173-75.

¹² N M Herbert (ed.), *VCH Gloucester*, vol. IV (Oxford, 1988), pp. 214, 251.

SNIPPETS FROM THE ARCHIVES: 8

Deborah Hayter

From an Indenture for the Inclosure of Culworth fields in 1612¹

'It was fully agreed and concluded between them... That all the said commone fields wherein the said severall yardelandes lay dispersedly as aforesaid should be surveyed and admeasured by such persons as they nominated.... To the intent that as well the said John Danvers and also all other the said parties might have set out for him and them respectively such and so much of the said common fields to be holden by him and by them or their heyres for ever in severallty.... And it was agreed that sixteen acres of grounde should be allotted and appointed forth for the depasturinge and keeping of nine beastes for nine cottagers in trew and full satisfaction of the severall cowes commons belonging to nine auncient cottages in Culworth and accordingly there is a parcell of meadowe grounde containing three acres and one other plot containing 16 acres.'

This large indenture records an agreement made between all the landholders and farmers in the open fields of Culworth. The excerpt above is preceded by a list of the people involved, all of whom signed the document at the bottom. They have agreed to give up the communal system of farming which had been practised in the village fields since the late Saxon period, and to go over to a more modern system where each farmer would have his own enclosed allotment of land in one plot, where he could plough, sow and reap according to his own plans, and keep his stock separate from the common herd.

We know much more about the process of Parliamentary Enclosure, which laid out a new landscape over much of the Midlands between 1750 and 1830, than we do about earlier enclosure by agreement, which is often poorly documented. If there were few parties to the agreement, and no difficulty in reaching consensus, we might imagine that it could take place without creating any documentation at all, but if there were large numbers of people involved, and some were less than happy about what was happening, it would be necessary to ensure that all parties were legally tied in to the decisions. Sometimes a spurious case was taken to the Court of Chancery simply in order to ensure that the

¹ [Northants Record Office F (C) 43]

agreement was enrolled and made legally binding on all parties. This cost money, of course, and in other cases the agreement would be dealt with on home ground with local lawyers.

Until 1612, the farmers of Culworth had held their land 'dispersedly', or scattered in separate strips right round the whole field system, so that each would have a share in the crops from the first field and a share in the other field – lying fallow – for grazing their stock in the common herd. (There were only two fields – a two year rotation – in Culworth.²) The 'yardlands' were the medieval farms, originally created by taking one strip out of every furlong right round the system, and amounting to about 25 - 30 acres. By 1612 in Culworth, as in most other places, there were some farmers who had accumulated large holdings of several yardlands, and others who had only a tiny number of strips.

It is noteworthy that the community of farmers recognized the rights of the 'ancient cottages' with their 'cows commons' – that is the right to graze a cow within the system despite having no arable land. This common right was recompensed with a special allotment of land to replace the grazing that they would otherwise have lost. This is interesting because in the next century when enclosure by Parliamentary Act became the norm, these rights were generally ignored. The owners of the cottages were recompensed with an allotment of the land whereas the inhabitants of the cottages, who were using the grazing, got nothing.

'Several' and 'severally' are interesting words: to us 'several' means more than three, but in the seventeenth century it meant 'separate' or 'individually owned' rather than being part of the communal rotation. It marks the beginning of distinctively private property in the fields that we see today.

² See D. Hall, *The Open Fields of Northamptonshire*, Northants Record Society Vol. 38, (1995), pp 245-6.

John Cheney – a Life

well the beginnings of one!

Typed-up from John's manuscript with his own corrections and additions by

Nick Allen

Chapter One: Beginnings in Broughton Road

I was born on 21st of September 1929 in the front first floor room at 72 Broughton Road, Banbury, the son of John Cheney and his wife Mary (nee Anson). They already had two daughters, Margaret Anne and Christine Mary. My father was hoping for a son, so rejoiced when Doctor Clement Wells shouted down the stairs 'Jack, it's a boy!'. The reason that father wanted a son, was to ensure the future of the printing business which had passed through five generations of the Cheney family since its foundation in 1767 at the Unicorn Inn, Banbury. I was the sixth generation.

No. 72 Broughton Road was, under a new numbering scheme in the nineteen-thirties, changed to 5 Broughton Road, the new numbers starting from the corner of Beargarden Road instead of The Cross. It is a tall, not very beautiful, semi-detached house. No. 1 was occupied by Tom and Madge Hankinson. Tom was a farmer, and his sister Madge had one of the earliest examples of the Fiat 500c Topolino (Mickey Mouse), a tiny, beautifully designed little car, which subsequently, formed the basis of the suspension for the successful Cooper racing cars. No. 3 was occupied by Mr and Ms Edgar Chapman and their daughter Gladys. Edgar Chapman was a partner to his brother, Howard in Chapman Brothers, at the time Banbury's leading furnisiers and drapers. Both Edgar and Howard were diminutive men, and were leading lights in the Baptist Church. Edgar Chapman had a most beautiful garden, which we overlooked from our bathroom window, so we gazed in wonder at the splendid garden parties that were held there, everybody in their best summer dresses.

On the first floor was the main bedroom (Father and Mother), a second bedroom (Margaret and Christine), and a small room at the back (me). This also served as a nursery for a time. There was a large bathroom, a tiny washbasin, subsequently replaced, and the world's noisiest flush cistem. The toilet was called The Maxim and had the manufacturer's name and address on it, presumably if we needed to write to them. The bath was lovely, with wrought iron 'claw' legs and huge taps.

The second floor consisted of 'the top back bedroom', the front bedroom and the bug-room! Here was also the 'top cupboard', a massive structure containing toys, including my clockwork Hornby Train set, a collection of carved animals, a Noah's Ark, Meccano jig-saws, a red Schuco model racing car, brace-a-brac, and the things that might be needed but of course, never were. I slept for some time in the front room.

Until the 1939 War and the Black Out there were a gas lit street lamp immediately outside. The lamp lighter would come round on his bicycle, with his ladder slung over his shoulder, hang the ladder on the rungs built into the lamp post, climb up and activate the gas lamp. It threw a soft, yellow friendly light onto the ceiling of my room and the sound of people's boots walking up the Broughton Road would be duplicated on the ceiling shadows, long, shortening then lengthening, again as people crossed the patch of light thrown by the street lamp. It was a secure little room and I liked it. There was a text above the bed, in a black frame: 'Commit thy way unto the Lord'. It was an iron bedstead but comfortable.

I have referred to the 'bug room'. My father was an entomologist, and, in the days when there were plenty of butterflies and moths, would stride about the fields with his butterfly net, or paint sugary syrup on telegraph poles, to attract nocturnal moths. Anything of any rarity or value would be consigned to the 'killing bottle', a screw-top jar with cyanide of potassium at the bottom, covered with a thick pad of cotton wool. The creatures never stood a chance, and no-one seemed to worry that this deadly device was left within easy reach of three young children.

On one occasion my father's hobby was being discussed with an elderly cousin. The hobby was always known in the family as 'bug-hunting' – hence the bug-room and the cousin suddenly chirped up with 'yes, we all love Jack's bug-hunting in fact we call him the family bugger!'

Our garden was long and rather narrow. It had a path with arches of rambling roses, a few fruit trees and a sandpit at the far end. Over the back wall was a tennis court and we would sit on the wall and watch the tennis players. Later we had a beautiful swing, on which I nearly killed myself. I thought I had perfected the art of jumping off when the swing was at its furthest point forward. I leapt off, caught my hand on one of the ropes, the seat came forward again and caught me a resounding blow on the back of my head.

Next door at No. 7 lived the Crouchleys, sisters who disliked us, and we them. If we made too much noise they would bang on the wall. Ultimately they moved out, and a friendly man, Mr Tustain, moved in.

The first we knew of his arrival was when we were in the garden and a handful of toffees came over the wall. We immediately classed him as a 'good neighbour'.

Inside No. 5 Broughton Road there was a small entrance hall with a stained glass door. This led into a hallway with a stairway to the right and a sitting room and dining room to the left. The sitting room had an open fire surrounded by bright painted square panels depicting British birds. They were colourful and I loved them. There was the piano on the right. My mother was a good pianist and used to play tunes for us to dance to, round the sofa. The door had a heavy velvet curtain to keep out the draughts. There were cabinets with displays of china in them and a lovely set of ivory chessmen.

The dining room was dark but had French windows leading into the garden. There was a massive dining table with pull-out leaves and a hideous, almost black wooden side board. With a picture of great - great Granny Esther Cheney hanging above it. I remember the dining room always being dark because during the war it was an Air Raid Warden's Post (Charlie One) and a high brick wall of concrete blocks was built beyond the window, to protect us from bomb damage, but also excluding about nine-tenths of the available daylight.

Chapter Two – Up the Broughton Road

Across the road was a neat detached house inhabited by Mr A E Chidzey. He had a shop in Parsons Street which sold wind-up gramophones, sheet music and gramophone records. Mr Chidzey gave music lessons. He was quite an accomplished musician and had a small group of string players who provided background music for social functions in the town such as the Mayoress's Dinner, 'At Home' and similar gatherings, all rather staid, they played with decorum, such things as selections from the 'Desert Song', 'Rose Marie', 'The white horse Inn' and other discreet novelties. Mr Chidzey had a slight stoop and, I seem to remember, a worried look.

Music also had its place on our side of the road. West of our house was the home of Mr Arthur Deacon, who was proprietor of Fox the Chemist (two shops; one in Parsons Street, one in Bridge Street). A little further up was Ena Grubb's house. Ena had a music school and lived with her father. They used to come down to our house once a week to play bridge with our parents. My sisters and I attended Miss Grubb's for piano lessons, which led to my one and only concert appearance.

It was Miss Grubb's custom to present her students in an annual concert in Banbury's Church House, now a restaurant and winebar, so even now after two glasses I seem to hear the distant tinkle of my pre-war efforts. My sister Christine and I were down to perform a piano duet, 'The White Cockade'. Christine looked very fetching in her best white dress with a coloured sash and puffed sleeves. I was in my best white shirt, tie with tie pin, grey flannel shorts, snake buckle belt and lace-up shoes. We played well, and were rewarded with my first-ever applause. This must have gone to my head as I've loved the sound of it ever since.

In my time I have written dozens of silly sketches for various amateur dramatic societies. Other people perform them and I stand at the side of the stage, in a panic. The sensation when I hear laughing and applauding the absurd things I have written, beautifully performed by my dearest friends on the stage is so rewarding. If I could choose my own epitaph it would be 'He sought to make people laugh'.

Back to Broughton Road. Beyond Miss Grubb's home was Berrymore Road corner. On that corner was a house occupied by the Hales. Mr Hale had a cycle shop in Parsons Street which specialised in cycle repairs, so Mr Hale's sons had continuous access to bike wheels of all sizes. Using these they constructed the most ingenious box-on-wheels vehicles which would hurtle down Broughton road. Steering was by string, and unreliable, but the Hale carts, as we called them, were a delightful feature of a virtually traffic free road.

Further up Broughton Road, on the right, was (and still is) a row of terrace houses. In one of these lived the Nash family. Grace and Gladys Nash were two sweet girls who acted as sort-of-nursemaids to us. Life's earliest memory is of being seated in my pram and pushed up the Broughton Road by Grace (Gladys). I remember the pram being given a hefty shove up hill by Gladys (Grace) and being caught on the rebound by Grace (Gladys). Their mother was a nice lady who used to invite us to tea, which was taken in the basement of their house and was always very good. In the same terrace was Mrs Gosden's. There was an area in front of her house filled with wonderful junk – a cross between Steptoe and Son and Auntie Wainwright in 'Last of the Summer Wine' of happy memories. There were bedsteads and, I suspect, rats.

A few doors further up was Mrs Reeves. There was a Mr Reeves but we never saw anything of him but his head. He would peer round a baize curtain and say "Ah, it's you, I'll get the missus". Did he have a body or

was he just some sort of animated head? A nice man but very shy. Ms Reeves was lovely. She kept this superb little shop, which had that indefinable smell of pre-war. A compound of paraffin, lifebuoy soap, fly-papers, cheap sweets and ageing biscuits. It was here that the three of us spent our Saturday penny. A penny each meant six halfpennies, six items from the ha'penny tray, which, as its name implies, had everything priced at a ha'penny: Sherbet Dab, Sherbet Fountain, Sharps Eton Toffee, Liquorice Coils, Aniseed Balls, Gob Stoppers, Sweet cigarettes (five to a packet). Choosing took time, but Mrs Reeves was large, calm and understanding and would serve other customers while we deliberated what to buy. I am glad I remember Mrs Reeves and her shop. They were part of our childhood that I recall with deep affection.

Chapter Three: On Up the Broughton Road

Woodgreen, the home of Joseph and Beatrice Gillett, was on the crest of Constitution Hill, the 'first hill' on our Broughton Road excursions. Joe Gillett was a Quaker and philanthropist who owned Banbury Bank, later to be taken over by Barclays. He set up a trust to provide aid for the poor and needy in and around Banbury. The Trust is still in existence, chaired by the delightful Geoffrey Braithwaite. My father for many years served as Almoner, a duty I took on after his death in 1958, and at the time of writing, continue to perform.

Woodgreen was a large, roomy (and rather ugly) house with pleasant spacious grounds bordered on the Broughton Road side by a thick holly hedge and iron spiked railings. At the western end of this hedge was a swing gate to a footpath which led across the fields to Bretch Pond. The first field had a small spinney. A notice fixed to one of the trees said 'mowing grass, please keep to the path'. Then there was a stile into the next field and one wandered over the other fields until arriving at Bretch Pond. This was a circular, rather featureless pool, but it had frogs and newts in it. Beyond Bretch a footpath ran up the Stratford Road, and one could walk across to Hanwell, or left to Drayton and Wroxton. A bit far for me in those days, and, even more certainly, now!

It was, I suppose, inevitable that after the war all this area would be built over. All the beloved fields are gone. There are shops, pubs, a dual carriageway ring road and houses, houses, houses from the Southam road to the Oxford road and beyond. It was pleasant undulating country, ideal for we three children to wander in, picking blackberries or mushrooms, watching out for cows and bashing our wellics into crusty cow-pats. It was our version of A E Housman's poignant 'blue remembered hills'.

If you didn't go through the swing gate to Brotch you carried on up the main road. My memory falters here, please forgive me, but this memoir is being written getting on for seventy years after the events described. On the left, where the road began to climb up the 'second hill' was a farm run, I think by a Mr Turbett. There was a noisy dog who stood with his paws on the parapet of a high wall and barked at everybody, especially Mr Matthew's Brailes bus. This was a green bus with a roof rack which sallied forth betwixt Brailes and Banbury. It was well patronised, especially on Market Day, when the roof was piled perilously high with market purchases.

Mr Turbett did a milk round. His milk was in chums in his horse-drawn milk float, a two-wheeled small cart with a door at the back. The chums had separate pint and half-pint measures with long handles with hooks on the end which hooked on the lip of the open churn. People brought their milk jugs into the street to be filled.

On the right was a low-built farm with a muddy farmyard in front. Going up the hill on the left was a rather oddly designed house in black and white while on the right was a large advertising hoarding which exhorted the few residents of Broughton Road: 'Don't be Vague, ask for Haig', then a row of little cottages called 'Brickyard Cottages'.

On the left, later, there was Crouch Hill Road and, of course, Crouch Hill itself -- was there with its distinctive landmark, a cluster of trees on top. Alas no more. On the long walk to Giants Cave one came across a big green notice outside a farm on the right. It had a splendid advertisement in capital letters, white on green:

EGGS

EGGS

EGGS

(they sold eggs)

There was a milestone, and there the path narrowed by a superb ash tree and there, around the next corner, were the mini hills and valleys of Giants Cave, ideal for cycling, picnics and hide and seek and games like kick the can. And, of course, Giants Cave itself, a dark dank entry which was obviously an artificial excavation and was said by some to go right through to Broughton castle. How did it get under the moat?

Chapter Four: The Crouch Hill Fields

Coming out of 5 Broughton Road, if you turned right and right again you found yourself in a little valley with a gentle stream running through it which disappeared into a conduit under Beargarden Road. There was a well trodden footpath with to the left a sloping field up to Bloxham Road, which was given over to allotments. To the right was a splendid elm tree. The footpath ended with a stile and a swing gate, opening on to the 'first field'. On the far right the tall chimney of the Berrymoor Laundry smoked blithely away, undisturbed by environmental regulations.

At the end of the first field the footpath led up to Crouch Hill, but to the left another field took over to the Springfield Hotel, off the Bloxham Road. North towards Crouch hill one came to The Butts. This was the firing range with quite sophisticated equipment. There were 'emplacements' every hundred yards – places where the marksmen laid down on low buttressed inclined positions from which they fired, with varying degrees of accuracy, at the targets. These were housed in a deep trench on pulleys and were raised up for firing purposes, and lowered into the concrete trench when not in use. They were used by the Territorial Army and later by the Home Guard, with the somewhat limited armoury available in 1940. I seem to remember going to the Butts and the Home Guard had just got a superb American Browning automatic rifle of which they were inordinately proud.

A long field ran to the south of Crouch Hill towards Salt Lane. At its western end was Bullrush Pond, a splendid 'conservation area' for frogs and newts and a good site, with its muddy banks, for getting wellies filled with water. My father, being an entomologist, had us hunting for caterpillars, and there were also blackberries galore. As with previous chapter endings this one concludes with the inevitable 'all housing now'. It is an estate with roads named after poets, inevitably christened Poet's Corner. It has some quite distinguished residents.

Chapter Five Sundays: Church and Churchill

Sunday morning meant church, and church meant St Mary's, Banbury. We would hear the bells ringing at home, and during the walk down West bar, but it was only coming round the corner into Horsefair by the County Garage (now Cox and Robinson) that one was assailed by that great riot of sound, the joyful glory of the bells beautifully and accurately ring. I still love to hear it. Some people object but as Dorothy Sayers writes in the foreword of her book 'The Nine Tailors' it seems

odd that (my paraphrase) people brought up to the jazz band, pop music, endless amplification and deafening discos should object to 'the one great noise made to the glory of god'.

So here we are (mother and three children) crossing Horsefair into the gloomy recesses of St Mary's church, which I never did like and still don't. It is highly decorated with coloured pillars, rather indifferent stained glass, and paintings in a sort of Pre-Raphaelite style. No I do not like it. It is glum.

And there in pew 7 was Granny Cheney. Pew 7 was our family pew, and we sat in it with Granny Cheney on the end, then us and mother. The bells would stop, the choir would file in and the service would start. It was Morning Prayer as laid down in the Book of Common Prayer. I love it now (when we are allowed it once a month), but I found it hard going in 1935. The only good thing about it was the phrase 'miserable offenders' in the General Confession which my sister Christine and I always giggled at because we thought it referred to the fenders that were put in front of the fire to prevent coal falling out on to the carpet. There is also the phrase in the General Confession about leading 'a godly, righteous and sober life'. These days I miss out the 'sober'.

I never got on well with Granny Cheney. She was always on about education with the unspoken implication that everyone was cleverer than me. Probably, nay almost certainly, true, but nevertheless irritating. The vicar was A.L.E. Williams (known to those who ought to have known better as 'Beery Bill'). He radiated unctuous goodness and preached to my ears, incredibly long, dull and tedious sermons.

The best thing about St Mary's was the organist. Mr Charles R Palmer who liked playing loudly, with frequent use of the trumpet stop on the organ. The organ was rebuilt in the Thirties and the new organ gave Charles R Palmer full rein for his considerable talent. He was a nice man. His wife had a little Austin 7 and she and my mother used to go to Oxford in it weekly to rehearse in the Oxford Bach Choir. I still have the music, ticket programmes of their concerts. Among other alumni was a certain Edward Heath, later to become Prime Minister.

Mattins at St Mary's droned to a standstill and we all trooped up to 15 West Bar, me hoping that Grandpa Cheney would be there. I was lucky with my Grandpas - Cheney and Anson. More about Grandpa Anson later on, but let me write a gentle appreciation about Grandpa Cheney. A short man, a fine printer and a good musician. If he was home he would take us up the garden, across a little lane into his vegetable garden.

There were gooseberry bushes and blackcurrants. Grandpa Cheney would give us the gooseberries (don't tell your Granny) and an occasional new laid egg. He had a little beard and he didn't mind when we pulled it. Then home to lunch. My father used to visit a friend late on Sunday mornings and they would partake of a few glasses of sherry blended with gin, a lethal mixture as I was to later discover. Father ran off a short fuse and could sometimes be 'difficult'. I was in awe of him, and Sunday lunch did not always find him at his best.

The roast joint, from Rathbones, was always first class. Occasionally, as a special treat, we had roast chicken, before the war considered a delicacy (and even more so during it!). When it was roast beef's turn the Yorkshire pudding was always done under the meat, which gave it a superb flavour, not like the individual balloon-like flavourless Yorkshires today, with notable exceptions which I am not prepared to disclose. Pork had superb crunchy crackling. And the lamb, known as mutton in those days, was always good.

A diversion, while I remember it. There was a butcher in Banbury (at the top of Parsons Street I think) who specialised in first class mutton and lamb. His name was Mr Jelfs. He sadly died and mother and father went to the funeral. Father arrived home chuckling most irreverently "know what Charles R Palmer played at the end of the service? Sheep may safely graze".

John himself has, I'm afraid, now retired permanently from writing any more of his charming 'memoir'. May he rest peacefully somewhere in those Elysian Fields of his childhood. Goodbye old friend – it has been a real pleasure typing up your memoir as I was born the year before you were born and have similar memories of a gentler life pre-war.

Nick Allen, March 2014.

Book Review

The Steeple Aston Enclosure Map 1767. SAVA (Steeple Aston Village Archive), 2013. 80 pp; paperback, A4 size; many illustrations, photographs and maps. Available from SAVA www.steepleastonarchive.org.uk (£9.95 + p & p).

The Steeple Aston Village Archive is to be congratulated on another carefully researched and detailed volume in its series of local publications. Since its formation in 2001, this group has collected together an impressive amount of information and many items which reflect the life, times and environment of the two villages of Steeple and Middle Aston. Each year SAVA mounts an exhibition on a theme of local interest, and since 2008 the group has produced a booklet each time to record and publish the research involved.

The 2013 exhibition centred on the 1767 enclosure map, which had been donated to SAVA in 2001, together with the Enclosure Award, by local residents who had managed to save them from destruction during a house clearance. (Thus do many local records go missing and disappear.) The 1767 map had been partially traced in 1860 with the names of the landowners at that time, and that tracing and a copy of the Award are available in the Oxfordshire History Centre; however the original map contains a wealth of information about the pre-existing landscape of open-field furlongs and old enclosures, all of which were to be swept away by the enclosure process. Very few enclosure maps have all this extra information, and the Steeple Aston map is also one of Oxfordshire's earliest.

The heart of the book, and the most interesting for any inhabitant – past or present – of the village, is the part analysing the map, section by section, explaining how the 1767 depiction relates to the present day topography. This involved an enormous amount of detailed (one might almost call it obsessive) work. These sections are beautifully illustrated with apposite extra photographs and drawings, such as the 1863 notice of the forthcoming perambulation of the parish boundaries. Also of great interest to the locals must be the section about the village itself and its houses, which are described in relation to the map, giving a good depiction of the village as it looked in 1767, with a lot of extra information about the development of the various houses, and copious photographs, some new, some old.

The book is also very good on roads and paths, noting that some of the decisions made in the Award about new roads do not seem to have been carried out – there are inconsistencies between the Award, the map, and the present topography. (You need to be able to carry a map in your head to make the best use of this section.) There is a good discussion of the whole process of enclosure, the people involved as commissioners and surveyors, surveying methods at the time and the skills and tools involved. Some good chunks of the

Award are also quoted: this is the legal part which is more important in terms of local detail than the Act itself, as it gives the information about the names of the landholders, what they had in the old field system and what they would get in the new enclosed system.

Section 5 is all about a map-making project which SAVA carried out with Dr. Radcliffe's Primary School in Steeple Aston. SAVA received some funding from Sanctuary Housing and presumably had to carry out some sort of educational project in return: very much to be applauded, and it looks as if it was not only fun, but thoroughly worthwhile and interesting for all concerned – but it does sit somewhat curiously within a local history publication such as this. It might have been better published separately in the village newsletter, *Steeple Aston Life*.

There is a lot of good research in this publication and it is difficult to fault the local detail, but where it falls down (a bit) is in the general historical background. It is not at all clear exactly what was being enclosed and how that worked. The open field system depended on the village flocks and herds being able to graze on the fallows; the hay-meadows were grazed in common, but the hay was allocated to the owners of yardlands according to the amount of arable they each held; a 'Coney Gars' did not indicate 'the presence of rabbits', but a deliberately created rabbit enclosure or warren; the Rector received the 'Great Tithes' – much more than the paltry calves, chickens & produce mentioned on page 7. A tenth of all the grain, hay and wool produced in the whole parish was a serious local tax (and a serious income). There is only a partial explanation of what a 'yardland' was ('virgate' was an anglicized version of the Latin translation, 'virgata'); a yardland was a medieval farm, a share of all the strips right round the system. There is no attempt to explain what a 'yerd' was; the enclosure award allotted several small plots to a handful of people who held between 1/2 and 5 'yerd's' of land. As these were obviously very small plots (for 5 'yerd's' the Revd Thos Gregory received 2 acres, 0 roods, 1 perch), it looks as if in Steeple Aston the individual strips were referred to as 'yerd's'. In other places they might be referred to as 'acres' (even if they weren't an acre in size), or 'ridges', 'selions', 'lands' or (in South Warwickshire) 'feathers'.

But in general, and leaving aside some minor criticisms, this is an admirable attempt to get the maximum information out of an important local record, and to make it widely available. There is much of local interest to fascinate Steeple Aston residents both now and in the future. The book is beautifully presented and produced with excellent colour illustrations and Geoffrey Lane, its main begetter, is to be congratulated on a major achievement.

Deborah Hayter

An Alphabetical Digest of Rusher's Banbury Trades and Occupations Directory, 1832-1906, volume 34 in our Records Series, is being despatched with this issue. Please note that this includes a DVD facsimile of the whole Directory, to be found attached to the rear cover of the book.

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 *Coke 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. Over one hundred and fifty issues and five hundred articles have been published. All but the most recent volumes 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 over thirty volumes in the records series. Those still in print include:

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).

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

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

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

Turnpike Roads to Banbury, by Alan Rosevear (vol. 31); out-of-print.

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

Part 2, *Mid-Victorian Squarson, 1849-1869* (vol. 32).

Victorian Banburyshire: Three Memoirs, ed. Barnie Trinder (vol. 33).

Rusher's 'Banbury Trades and Occupations Directory' 1832-1906

(Alphabetical Digest and DVD facsimile) (vol. 34).

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

In preparation: *Banbury Vestry Book 1708-1797*

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 or location.

Membership of the Society is open to all. The annual subscription (since 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 2014 Programme

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

Thursday 11th September 2014

Preceded by Reception at 6.30pm-on, meeting at 7.30pm.

The Development of English Heraldry.

David White, Somerset Herald.

Thursday 9th October 2014

Companions or Contradictions: Methodists and Art?

Dr Peter Forsyth, Research Fellow, Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Oxford Brookes University.

Thursday 13th November 2014

Oxford and the Pre-Raphaelites.

Dr Colin Harrison, Senior Curator of European Art, Ashmolean Museum.

Thursday 11th December 2014

A World of Goods: Shops and Shopping in Georgian England.

Dr Jon Stobart, Professor of Social History, University of Northampton.

See the Society's Website www.banburyhistory.org
for plenty more information on the Programme's subjects and speakers