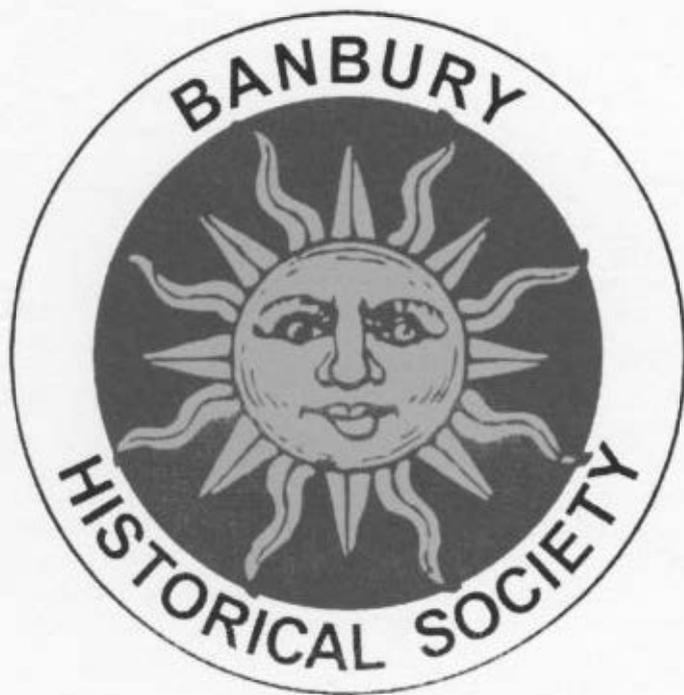


CAKE AND COCKHORSE



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BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

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Cake and Cockhorse

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

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We have a number of events coming up that merit reminders. On Thursday 16 April we shall hold a Historical Artefacts Quiz at Banbury Museum (7.30pm). Please bring along any interesting objects that you can get your hands on. The idea is that you know what they are and others will enjoy guessing. The most interesting object will gain a small prize, as will the best set of guesses. Do come along; it will be interesting and great fun.

On Thursday 25 June at Broughton Castle (7.30pm) we have an exciting event to mark the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta. Professor Miles Taylor will talk about Magna Carta through the ages, and Sir Robert Worcester (famous pollster), Chairman of the 800th Anniversary Committee, will discuss the charter's relevance today. Broughton Castle is particularly suitable as a venue since an ancestor of the Mienes family, Geoffrey de Say, was one of the barons who compelled King John to concede the charter. This is a joint event of the Magna Carta Trust, Broughton Castle, Banbury Museum, and the Banbury Historical Society. Tickets online at: <http://www.banburymuseum.org/MagnaCarta>

The major article in this issue is an account of the development of Queen's Road in Neithrop by our member Derrick Knight. I commend it to you as significant local history and as a fascinating social document. More, please!

Cover: Our new logo, 'The Sun in Splendour' (see page 296).



Queen's Road, Banbury (Neithrop)



Banbury and Neithrop in 1893

Queen Street (as it was then) slants down from Bath Road under the 'p' of 'Neithrop', running into Park Road

THE MAKING OF QUEEN'S ROAD, BANBURY

Derrick Knight

The Gillett family and other Quakers like the Cadburys had a huge influence on the growth and wellbeing of the citizens of Banbury in the nineteenth century and are fully acknowledged in all local histories. Yet there are events that have been neglected or not highlighted that deserve to be brought into the picture. Joseph Ashby Gillett was a partner in Gillett's Bank in Cornhill and, as Audrey Taylor in her history of the bank noted, was 'not only a successful banker, a man of property but also a practical man of charity'. Joseph and his brothers became part of a small but active strand of Quakers in Banbury who for three generations were prominent locally in all kinds of business and philanthropic activities. They gave freely to good causes and used the reputation of their bank to stir up the council to move more swiftly than it might have done to improve the quality of living: street lighting, a clean water supply for all, a proper sewage system. They, with others, pioneered new schools in Crouch Street, then in Dashwood Road and established the Quaker school at Sibford which is still thriving. They founded libraries, campaigned against the excesses of alcohol, and pioneered self-help schemes for the poor.

When Joseph died in 1853, his eldest son Charles, who had been trained at the Whitehead and Lowes bank in Shipston-on-Stour (where his father had also spent his early years) became at 23 the chairman of Gillett's New Bank in Banbury where in 1856 he was joined by his brother. The reputation of the bank had attracted a wide range of customers in the farming community and amongst local landowners. However, the agricultural depression of the later nineteenth century hit local farmers hard. Cheap wheat pouring into the country from North America drove many into bankruptcy. Even though Gillett's Bank offered fair terms there came a time when farmers could not repay their debts and their land fell into its hands.¹

¹ Effect of agricultural depression on the bank: Audrey Taylor, *Gillett's Bank at Banbury and Oxford*, OUP (1964), 121-4; Oxfordshire History Centre, Gillett Papers Gil/111/1 and Gil/1 v/v/2.

This land was a burden to the bank at the same time as business in Banbury was growing fast. A traditional market town, it had become a pivotal and busy station on a new railway line linking the South and the North Country. The canal system was being upgraded to provide greater opportunities for trade. As a result Banbury became a hub for new industries, especially engineering factories making steam driven agricultural machinery. It seems ironic now that their success, whether from the Vulcan Foundry in Neithrop or the new Britannia engineering works, were providing employment for a host of newcomers to Banbury but were making machines that were destroying traditional farming because they could do the work of many men in a fraction of their time. They threw a large number of small farmers and agricultural labourers out of work. Emigration seemed to be a possible solution. Nevertheless these new engineering companies were drawing their workers from all over the country. These new citizens were in need of housing. I believe that Charles Gillett, like his father, brought up in a Quaker culture of care and concern, saw an opportunity to provide new and better housing for a working population. The means of doing this were already in his hands.

Banbury town boundaries had remained more or less static in the first half of the nineteenth century but there was a mess of scattered hamlets on its fringes. These hamlets had a reputation for lawlessness, violence and dire poverty. The area known as Neithrop was particularly infamous. Contemporary writers described it as 'hell on earth', marked by extreme poverty, feuding, high unemployment, ragged kids, alcoholism, explosions of communal violence.² It is therefore no surprise that Banbury's Union workhouse was built out of town on the Warwick Road in Neithrop. It was well into the nineteenth century before Neithrop was policed. Banbury's two policemen had no writ there for much of the century.³

From the Gillett family home at No 2 West Bar Charles could well have ridden out towards Crouch Hill, noting the stream, known as the Cuttle Brook but more like a ditch, running from the Crouch Hill area through a shallow valley that is now Bath Road and then down by cottages called Rag Row, along Paradise Street, past a millwright's shop

² Barrie Trinder, 'Banbury's Poor in 1850', *C&CH* 3.6 (1966); Marjory Lester, *These Golden Years*, Banbury, 1992 (reviewed *C&CH* 12.4, 108-9).

³ Brian Little, *Banbury - A History*, Phillimore (2003).



Banbury from the west, Constitution Hill, in 1840, by S. Cox

He may have ridden up the Broughton Road, then edged with fields, past an isolated but busy brickworks where there is now an elegant row of terraced houses, to Woodgreen, where he could stop on the brow of the hill and look east across the bare fields dotted here and there by old ashes and oaks now regretfully owned by his bank. He was also aware that the hill on which he stood was in the bank's possession and that it would be a wonderful place to build a large family home with its own park. He had sufficient personal resources or expectations to treat himself to it and commissioned the eminent architect Sir Alfred Waterhouse, who had built the Victoria and Albert Museum, to design it for him. More importantly, he had the vision of the area of Neithrop in front of him, close to the western boundary of Banbury as an ideal space for a new suburb which could be planned and marketed by his bank and make good, perhaps profitable use of the idle land forfeited to the bank by landowners and farmers. There was no time to lose. Charles's brothers agreed with him that their bank should get into the real estate business under Charles's leadership. The plan was for the bank not be directly involved in the building process but to negotiate deals with small entrepreneurial builders on condition that they kept to his plan and his building standards. There were at the time a large number of potential takers in the Banbury area.

First the road layout had to be agreed and built. In the autumn of 1853 Charles issued a notice of intent to extend Paradise Street, a cul-de-sac off the Warwick Road in Neithrop, into a new Bath Road which would link the Warwick Road and the Broughton Road.⁴ The notice of intent

⁴ Oxfordshire History Centre, Gillett Papers, Articles of agreement: Gil/lv/iii, iv

was the beginning of a well-thought-out plan to make good use of the available land. Though the idea of 'town planning' did not become a recognised concept until 1904, I believe that the care with which Charles went about the scheme was an example of 'town planning'. Following the tradition of his Quaker upbringing, Charles made sure that the quality of the new streets would be as good as possible. A contract for their construction was issued in October that year and the work was supervised by the Banbury Board of Health. The phrase used at the time was 'to sewer, pave, flag and channel a street'. The materials at that time were a nine-inch layer of fine chippings topped with three inches of broken stone, and because Banbury had recently begun to establish main drainage in the town the new streets would be lined with nine-inch glazed Staffordshire pipes to link into the new mains drainage system which local Quakers had pressed for.⁵ Later in the century it became possible to macadamize the roads and with the use of the newly invented steamroller produce hard surface roads that did not require constant renewal.

The new Bath Road was to be a wide, gently curved and well-drained street close to the Cuttle Brook. It would have 'villas' or at least elegant houses on its Western side so that the front rooms of its houses got the best of the morning sun and a view of St. Mary's church and other prominent buildings along Horsefair across the parkland between them and the town wall. They would benefit from the arrival on the market of good quality and affordable window glass that turned former dark and pokey interiors into pleasant spaces. The Bath Road houses would all conform to a building line that was set back from the pavement by a four-foot wall with a small front garden space.

In 1856 Queen Street, as it was then called, was laid out to the west of Bath Road.⁶ It was destined to be a typical Victorian terrace for people of modest means but its plan was well thought through. In the morning the sun lit the front of most of the new homes and worked its way round to the back garden in the afternoon.

⁴ Sarah Beesley, *My Life*, 78-80. Lester, *Memories of Banbury*, 1986 (also reviewed *C&CH*, 12.4, 108-9, for the Cadbury connection.

⁴ Oxfordshire History Centre, Agreements with local builders re Bath Road, Bath Terrace and Queen Street; Gil IV etc.

⁵ Sarah Beesley, *My Life*, 78-80. Lester, *Memories of Banbury*, 1986 (also reviewed *C&CH*, 12.4, 108-9, for the Cadbury connection.

⁶ Oxfordshire History Centre, Agreements with local builders re Bath Road, Bath Terrace and Queen Street; Gil IV etc.

At the southern end of Queen Street there was a short *strump* of a street called Bath Terrace linking it with Bath Road as it twisted towards the Broughton Road turn-off. At the western end of this road, at the corner which is now the top of King's Road, was one of Banbury's largest brick works. Local bricklayers had found that there was a rich deposit of Middle and Upper Lias clay laid down on the sea-bed in distant prehistoric times when most of Oxfordshire was under water. They were supplying bricks to local builders as fast as they could make them. A working brickyard so close to the site of the new suburb was a bonus for everyone. It reduced transport costs enormously. It is likely that most of the houses to be built in Bath and Queen Street in the following years would have come from this yard. It did not bother the builders that the resulting bricks were not of a uniform colour. When baked they came out in washes of red, orange, grey and white. The builders who used them seem to have spotted their decorative possibilities and laid them in contrasting patterns. There is also a special quality and shape in hand-made bricks from local brickyards. There are rough edges, small dents and cracks. The best were used for outer walls, less good bricks were used for foundations and inner walls, later to be covered in plaster. Today these bricks that went into the first houses are over a hundred and fifty years old and show little sign of old age. The Gillett men folk were always interested in technical matters and soon had their own small brickworks next to the family house at Woodgreen, which was both experimental and commercial.⁷

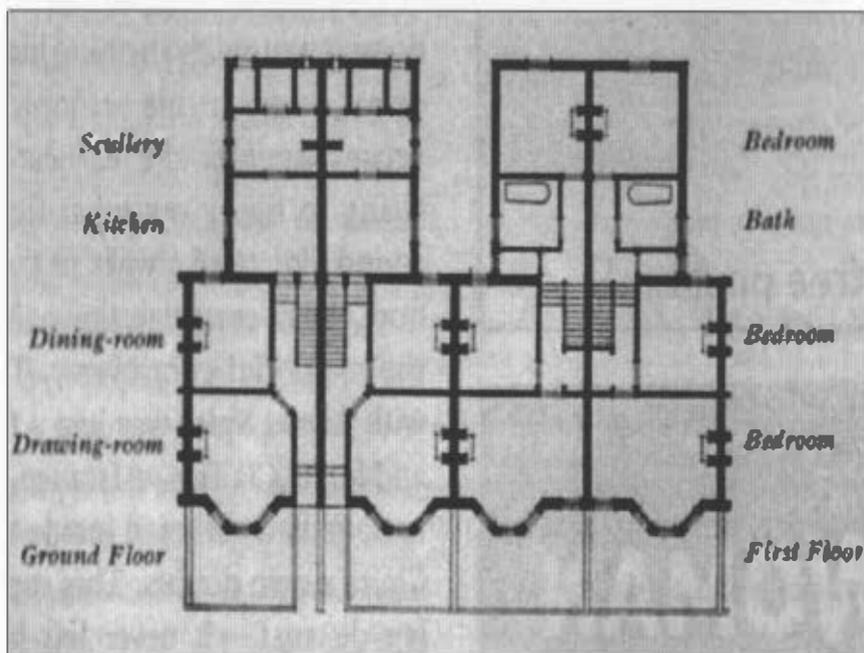
There were no local large property developers in the mid nineteenth century so the growth of Bath Road and Queen Street was slow and Charles's plan was to let, or sell, a series of plots of land for two or three houses along these two streets to local speculative builders. His customers were local builders, often former carpenters, brick makers and other associated tradesmen. Builders recurring in the Gillett archives are Charles Claridge, John and Thomas Davis, John and George Budd, John Grant, William Ariss, Samuel Kilby. All were ambitious but not all were reliable. The bank had to be aware of potential weaknesses and negotiate contracts that carried the lowest (or fewest) risks.

Charles Gillett now began to use his influence on the style and quality of the houses in his streets. In Queen Street he conjured up a pleasing vista along the new street by his insistence on a building line to create a

⁷ Oxfordshire History Centre, Gil 28/6/1898.

perfect row gently sloping down towards its junction with Bath Road. A wide road and generous paving was another of his conditions. The new houses were to be set back eight feet from their boundary line of their pieces of land and had to have a good brick or stone wall not less than four foot high on the northern, western and south eastern boundaries of each house. This small space at the front could be used as a garden or for other decorative purposes.⁸

The Gillett marketing plan aimed to attract local entrepreneurs who were offered small blocks along the street on which to build two or three houses. The plan did not stop at selling the land but laid down the rules to which the purchaser must adhere (see page 14). It requested that any builder wishing to buy a plot and build houses on it would agree to spend more on the property than was common at the time by the use of better materials, high quality Welsh roof tiling, durable foundations, and a choice of decorative features.



Standard house plan.

⁸ Conditions in every indenture of houses in street.

Instead of the common terrace style of the time in which the front door was at the centre of frontage and opened straight into the front parlour, the blueprint for Queen Street required a side passage into a walled hallway from which other rooms could be reached with a staircase attached to the party wall between it and the next house. The kitchen and the wash-house were at the back of the house. Each house would have a 28-foot garden. At the rear of the garden was a pathway leading past several houses linked at intervals with the street that could be used by tradesmen, coal deliveries or members of the family not wishing to bring dirt into the house. In the 1860s the availability of cheap but high quality glass allowed for more useful and more attractive window design with frames that allowed for opening and closing. This led in Queen Street to the addition of bay windows to new houses, as well as to existing houses. Finally, the concerned Quaker animus made sure the whole district was protected by a set of conditions, not only in the building but in the legal indenture documents, which have changed hands through several generations of house-owners or lessees and have still to be respected.⁹

Queen Street was not built up in one go. Only seven houses had been built by 1871, and 48 by 1882. Different investors bought land and hired local firms to build on it. By the time of the 1901 census 65 homes were occupied.¹⁰ It was fortunate for the street that the slow take-up rate meant that later homes were able to include new building materials which were coming on to the market. Also in the 1860s terracotta tiles had recently become a fashionable factory product. They had been used on a grand scale for the decoration of the Albert Hall and the Victoria and Albert Museum and became very popular not only for major architectural structures but in domestic housing. They can be seen flourishing in many of the older houses in Queen's Road in a variety of repetitive but different patterns, pretty edging tiles below the roof guttering, decorative surrounds to front doors and windows. The items were bought from a catalogue, the famous Laxton Price Book. It was the small builder's bible and catalogue. It catered for all his needs at prices he could afford from suppliers and it also carried pages on building and

⁹ All indentures of properties in Queen's Road contain environmental conditions that have to be agreed.

¹⁰ George Herbert, *Shoemakers Window* (1949; ed BS Trinder BHS 10, 1971); J. L. Langley 'Memories of Late Victorian Banbury', *C&CH* 2.4 (1963); also *C&CH* 5.2 (1972).



Decorative brickwork.

safety laws. In the 1879 copy can be found 'mosaic and tessellated pavements of very rich designs', chimney pots, heraldic devices, doors, window frames, wooden flooring, every kind of building material whether in wood, metal or plaster. At some point in the later nineteenth century bay windows on the ground floor became available and very quickly the whole street had benefited from them. They added to the street's attractive outlook.

In the meantime Woodgreen House was built by Charles Claridge, one of Charles Gillett's entrepreneurial builders. The Gillett family began to live there in 1866 and developed a large garden and park stretching down to and beyond the Cuttle Brook, on which the family built a small private swimming pool to the South side of what was originally Bath Terrace Road, but now became Park Road. Up on the hill Charles was able, with the help of a local brick maker, to experiment with different kinds of clay in his own brickyard. When he died in 1895, his wife continued to live in the house until her second son Joseph Ashby Gillett, who had been living in North Newington and was now a director of the family bank, moved to Woodgreen with his wife Sarah. He brought with him his staff: cooks, coachmen, gardeners and maids. Joseph was a

passionate swimmer. Not only did he develop his own pool. In 1939 he donated land from his estate to the town to provide Banbury with land for a public swimming pool: on the site of the present pool and only a few hundred yards from what had now been renamed Queen's Road. (This was a piece of communal snobbery: 'Road' had a higher social status than 'Street', and 'Avenue' even more). Joseph was also a keen amateur wireless operator and had a special studio at Woodgreen where he could give demonstrations to friends and fellow addicts. He and his wife were involved in all kinds of community affairs. Joseph was active in the Town Council and Sarah was Banbury Mayoress in 1926. The couple opened their house and grounds to all sorts of parties and meetings.

The 'affordable' suburb was not completed until the early 1920s. In the early years of the twentieth century the local Gillett influence was still present but the Bank had expanded, first with branches in Woodstock, Witney and Oxford and then in partnership with Barclay's bank in the 1890s. When Joseph died in 1942 and his wife in 1947, with no children to inherit the property, the trustees decided to sell the estate. It was bought by the Oxfordshire Education Authority and became the North Oxfordshire Secondary Technical School and later the Frank Wise special centre for handicapped children.¹¹

Queen's Road in the modern world

My wife Brenda and I moved to Banbury in 1996 at the request of our elder daughter who was teaching there and starting a family. We had spent our working lives in London. We had retired and were living in a large terrace house in a quiet North London suburb, well placed for shopping, tube stations, cinemas, theatres, museums, concerts and so forth. We thought of ourselves as Londoners although our origins and childhoods were elsewhere: Liverpool and Scotland for my wife and Poole in Dorset for me. In our retirement we intended to enjoy London's rich offerings and embrace its life-style. Despite this our daughter made a strong case. Housing was cheap in Banbury. We would be able to sell our London home and invest substantially. There was a good library and a nearby hospital. We would be within range of Oxford and Warwick universities if we needed intellectual stimulation. We would have a unique opportunity to see our grandchildren grow up. The countryside was beautiful. Above all she needed us.

¹¹ B. Little, 'Gillen family influenced town's future', *Banbury Guardian* 18 Dec. 1997.

When we looked more closely at the exteriors of the houses in Queen's Road it became clear that special care had been taken in their build. Good use had been made of the slight curve and gentle slope of the street to create a vista. There were bay windows on the ground floor overlooking the street on most of the houses, a six-foot garden space with a four-foot wall dividing it from the pavement, a generous garden space at the back. There was a conformity in the terrace that was neither tedious nor ugly. There was a style about it. On a sunny day the local brick glowed. The pavements and road width were also more generous than other modern streets we had seen. The whole aspect of the street was attractive. It was some time before we began to understand how this had come about and who was responsible.

We knew nothing about the Gillett influence until much later and had paid little attention to the ancient conditions laid down in our conveyance documents. We had left all that to our solicitors. There was the Woodgreen swimming pool within a five-minute walk and in our first summer we saw it as a real bonus for the community. Then came disaster. The pool was closed for some repairs, re-opened and then almost immediately closed because some child had got blue paint on his feet. The pool was emptied. Legal actions began against the building contractors. Time stood still. Another summer went by without the lido. Then came whispers that Cherwell Council was planning to convert the space into a new housing complex. A pool protest group quickly emerged, fearful that the closing of the pool might lead to the closure of bowling green, the ballroom dance hall, the health clubs. One of our members discovered that the pool was protected by a conveyance between Joseph Ashby Gillett and the Town Council stating that the land he gave the town was to be used to build a swimming pool and for no other use. The present-day Council members were either ignorant of this or hoped that the gift might not be discovered. As a former public relations worker in retirement with time to spare, I engaged with the decision makers in every way possible, linked us with lido groups around the country, organised meetings where campaigners from other parts of the country came to tell of their frustrations and their successes, briefed our councillors, even brought independent pool builders to survey the pool and make suggestions about bringing it back to life. Many of our local councillors were sympathetic but for a long time the majority, having been frustrated by the Gillett conveyance, maintained a stubborn resistance. Eventually, however, a deal with the commercial

sports agency running the Spiceball Centre in Banbury led to the pool's rebuilding. The Gillett wisdom in laying down conditions for the gift had proved shrewd and far-sighted.

In 2009 a group of neighbours in Queen's Road got together to answer a challenge by Tim Smit, the founder of the Eden Project in Cornwall, the great conservation centre built in a derelict old clay pit in which he had brought together in a series of climatically controlled domes, a display of endangered plant life from all over the world and from where he and his colleagues might campaign on the dangers of climate change and other threats to our environment. He was proposing a national Annual Big Lunch to bring together the inhabitants of their street or community in the spirit of sharing, friendship and communal enjoyment. The chosen date was July 18th, 'Earth Day'. Tim Tarby-Donald, a Queen's Road householder, circulated a leaflet suggesting that Queen's Road might seize the initiative. Planning began within days. Queen's Road in 2009 was home to a mix of people from widely spread social, geographic, racial, cultural and religious backgrounds, many with young families. A working group was quickly set up. They saw the opportunity of organising a 'Big Lunch' as a fun day but also an opportunity for its inhabitants who probably knew very few of their neighbours to meet, make friends and hopefully develop a more multi-national and multi-cultural spirit that not only might bring change to our neighbourhood, but have a positive role in the wider town. The event was very successful even though it rained. The street was closed to traffic and all cars temporarily parked elsewhere. 160 adults and 60 children attended and the rain brought people together under quickly erected gazebos and big umbrellas. All the residents who attended made a small contribution to the costs and provided food and drink – one side of the street offering main course dishes and the other all kinds of dessert. A raffle was held which raised £600 which was donated to local charities. The second year was equally successful, the weather was good, live music and a children's Bouncy Castle added to the fun. In the third year it was decided to have a Victorian theme. Some of us put on the correct clothes of the time.

I thought it would be a good idea to find out who lived here at the turn of the nineteenth century and do some sort of a display. I copied out the 1901 census of the street and listed all their names and occupations. I then copied and enlarged a street map of the same period and asked a neighbour who worked in planning at Cherwell District Council to fill in

the names and occupations of everybody in the street at that time. It was during this exercise that I learnt about the massive collection of Gillett papers in the Oxfordshire History Centre deposited there by the bank's solicitors. Messrs Aplin Summaries were available on the internet and it was immediately apparent that there were conveyances for every plot of land sold by the Gillett Bank to builders or other would-be purchasers of property in Queen Street and very precise instructions for the use of these lands and for the quality of houses built on it. His clientele were a mixed lot – former carpenters, brick makers, small builders and other associated trades. Not only that, but buyers had to commit themselves to a set of environmental conditions. The following excerpt is taken from a contract issued to two of David Gillett's most reliable builders, George and John Budd in 1879, for Number 19 Queen Street.

'George Budd and John Budd do hereby respectively for themselves and their heirs etc covenant with Charles Gillett and will not erect upon the said piece of ground hereby conveyed any dwelling house of less value than £120 inclusive of the necessary outbuildings and that the front of any such messuage shall be 8ft and neither more nor less from the boundary line as marked on the said plan on the southern side thereof and will not build on the land between the house and the boundary line anything but a four foot fence etc... and will within six months after the commencement of any building...lay down a good Staffordshire brick footpath or stone pavement of the width of 4ft etc.. and connect with any like pavement laid down in the front of the adjoining property and will keep the road opposite the said piece of ground and also the culvert or main drain... in good repair until the same shall be adopted and repaired by the public authorities... and will not burn bricks, tiles, pottery or lime on the said pieces of ground nor turn the building into an inn or alehouse, nor keep a pig sty or carry out any business that might be a nuisance to any of the owners of adjoining property...'

Progress in completing the building of the street was slow. In 1882 there were 27 completed houses in Bath Road, 48 in Queen Street and 24 in Park Road. Sometimes things went badly wrong. In the 1860s John and Thomas Davis had bought plots and were building houses on Gillett land at the southern end of Bath Road and elsewhere. In June 1877 the Davis business collapsed owing £21,095, of which only a fraction was recovered by insurance and mortgages. The bank lost some £21,000 owing to them.

Sometimes deals just fell through. There is a record of an offer at auction in 1892 by Sam Miller and Abbots at the White Lion Hotel in Banbury on the instructions of Mr F. Aplin, the Gillett's solicitor, of several freehold dwelling houses in Bath Road and No 22 and 23 Queen Street. The latter comprised parlour, sitting room, kitchen, two bedrooms and an attic and there was a large garden. The two houses together were valued at a rent of £23.8s0d. per annum.

By the time of the census in 1901 65 houses had been built and occupied and remaining gaps on the South side were filled before 1910.

At the time of the census the occupations of householders were as follows:

Brewery tradesmen	1	Linen and Plush trade	1
Building Workers	5	Laundresses	7
Bootmakers	1	Millers	1
Clergy	1	Own Means	3
Dressmakers	10	Office Workers	3
Engineers	10	Printers, etc	10
Farmers	1	Photographer	1
Factory Workers	5	Postman	1
Gardeners	1	Retail trades	16
Horse care or trade	5	Railway workers	2
Housekeeper	1	Servants	7
Leather trade	1	Teachers	3

In addition there were 54 children under 12 at the time of the census and many young families. It is worth noting that the social mix then was little different to that of the present population of the street.

At No 4 lived Alfred Lampitt aged 51 and his wife Sarah. In the 1891 census he gave his profession as a steam engine fitter though in 1901 he is described as an engineer. He was certainly not a partner in the Vulcan Foundry, founded by Charles and John Lampitt, up on the hill to the north of the Warwick Road more or less where Banbury's Fire Brigade has its HQ today. It employed some 50 men who lived in small cottages around the plant, their thirsty work quenched in four taverns or inns close by on the Warwick Road, the Vulcan Arms, the Eagle, the Crown and the Duke of Wellington. One of the Lampitt steam engines supplied the power for Hunt, Edmunds Brewery in Banbury for 90 years. Alfred was, I presume, a member of the same family and possibly the owner of a small millwright's shop and small foundry in Paradise Street about

which George Herbert in his *Shoemaker's Window* memoir is so disparaging. It was razed when Bath Road was built. He must, one can presume, have had some family income to be able to become a landlord.¹²

In 1891, however, Alfred was living at No 14 and later bought No 1 to No 4 and moved into No 4 and let the other houses. He was still there in 1931 while the large Cochrane family were in No 1. The manoeuvres that Alfred as landlord unleashed on this family to persuade them to move from the house they enjoyed to a bigger house next door which turned out to be less comfortable and convenient are amusingly reported by Brenda Kirkham (née Cochrane) in her childhood recollections *Our World Was New*.¹³

At No 21 lived George Letts aged 34 and his wife Eva with three small children and their son-in-law Ewen Col, a glueing machinist. George was a postman at a time when letter-writing was the sole way of keeping in touch with distant family and friends. He would have been as important to his district as email today.

At No 23 lived a Mrs Bolton, listed as a milk-seller. It was common at the time for milk to be sold from churns on a horse-drawn milk cart. One presumes that she sold milk both to the street and the neighbourhood. The house had been previously the home of Edwin Bolton and had been put up for sale in 1892 and then rented out at £23 17s p.a. I presume that Mrs Bolton was his widow. She shared the house with her 34 year-old daughter Lizzie Curtis, an upholsteress, and Kezia Bolton, a 61 year-old widower and retired upholsterer. The Bolton family were big Neithrop farmers who owned most of the land to the North of Queen Street and lived on a farm in Boxhedge. They kept a herd of cows and sold their milk. John Bolton was active in the Banbury Agricultural Association that was concerned in protecting farmers and their markets and improving animal husbandry. At No 27 was Edmund Buck, a photographer and picture dealer, with his wife Mary both aged 27. They had a month-old son at the time of the census. Edmund had a studio at No 11 South Bar, now a Chinese restaurant, only a few doors up from Blinkhorns, one of Banbury's oldest photographic studios. Buck traded as F. W. Buck & Son, from which we might presume that his father had brought him into the business. Edmund has left little trace of his work though he appears in the *Banbury Commercial Directory* in 1901. The

¹² B. Kirkham, *Our World Was New* (privately published, Banbury, 2012).

¹³ As 51.13. This was reviewed in *C&CH* 19.1 (2012).

couple had a living-in 18 year-old domestic servant Ethel Plant. This would have been an expensive luxury for a young couple striking out on their own, a sign of social pretensions perhaps funded by a well-off parent.

At No 28 where we now live were George Tite and his wife Louisa. He was 29 and she 23. They had no children. He was a bootmaker and as such part of an elite group of skilled artisanal tradesmen who were increasingly engaged in political and trade union activities. They had a lodger, Herbert Wadham aged 20, a draper's assistant, to help make ends meet. It is unlikely that George was set up on his own like George Herbert, another Banbury shoemaker who wrote the entertaining autobiography *Shoemakers Window*. The perils of working on one's own at a time when there was no legal protection against bad creditors were daunting.

At No 34 lived Alfred Taylor and his wife Agnes with their 12 year-old daughter Bissie. Alfred was a railway engine driver and at 44 considered almost a veteran. He would have grown up through the rapid spread of the railway system as it affected Banbury. A steam engine driver was a respected personage at the time. We don't know whether Alfred drove passenger trains or hauled freight trains in and out of goods yards. There was at the time a great deal of transporting live sheep and cattle from Banbury to the big cities. The machines produced either in the Vulcan Foundry or at the Samuelson plant had to be conveyed to their purchasers by rail. A local witness, a child at the time, remembers seeing mowing machines being loaded from the Samuelson foundry on to railway trucks while painters climbed about the trucks putting finishing touches to their work.

At No 46 was another railway employee Frederick Eveson. He was a young man of 24 and a railway clerk. He had a 22-year-old wife Ada and two infant sons. He is most likely to have entered the Banbury station staff in his mid-teens and been promoted swiftly. To qualify as a railway clerk, he would have to be literate, have the mind of a calculating machine, be able to keep exact records, know the times of trains and destinations all over the country. He had also to display a calm and outgoing personality. It was a challenging role. A proud date in his calendar would be the annual visit of Queen Victoria in her special train on the way north from Osborne to Balmoral. The station would be made to look its best and local bigwigs firmly managed as they offered her a loyal greeting and a gift of Banbury cakes.¹⁴

¹⁴ Sarah Coesley, 'My life', Nov 1866, *BHS* 33, *Victorian Banburyshire*, 94-5.

No 51 Ivy Villa was one of the scattered out-of-town houses built earlier in the nineteenth century around the fringes of Banbury by locals who wanted space and privacy. It was now the last house at the northern end of Queen Street. It had access to the old Paradise Street and it had a frontage of some 35 feet, more than twice the width of the yet-to-be built terrace houses. In it lived Frances Partleton and her daughter, also called Frances. It was listed in the 1901 census as a boarding house. The Partletons in their early days had been members of a travelling theatre company called the Jacksons. In 1844 George Partleton and his wife (formerly one of the Jackson family) decided to settle down in Neithrop. He gave as his profession violin player, sometime music teacher, and there is a photo taken in the early 1850s in Barrie Trinder's *Victorian Banbury*¹⁵ of George Partleton hefting a fiddle next to George Herbert, the bootmaker and other friends. George bought the land on which Ivy Villa is built from the Gillett Bank for £94 in 1862. He drank himself to death in 1866 leaving all his property to his wife. She and her elder daughter stayed in Neithrop and later turned Ivy Villa into a boarding house. The whole family, writes Trinder, were very religious. One of their daughters married into the Wheeler family and later became headmistress of the Blackwood Hills Mission School, one of the popular evangelical schools in Devon.¹⁶ In the 1901 census the only lodger listed was the Rev Lawrence Arden and he appears to have been the only lodger for many years. He was a Cambridge scholar and became curate of St. Mary's church in 1888. He seems to have played a significant part in the religious and communal life of Banbury. He was not only a curate but became the Secretary of the Association of Church School Managers and Teachers, involved in the Neithrop Association for the Prosecution of Felons, and Secretary of the Working Men's Club in Paradise Road while it still existed. He remained a lodger at Ivy Villa until 1904.¹⁷

Frances Partleton senior died in 1907 aged 93 but her daughter remained in the house. In earlier census records she is listed as a music teacher and governess and died aged 93 in 1935.¹⁸

¹⁵ B. Trinder, *Victorian Banbury* (BHS.19 & Phillimore, Chichester, 1982).

¹⁶ Large archive available online under Partleton family: www.ancestry.co.uk; C&CH10.1, p.13 (1985).

¹⁷ Census 1901.

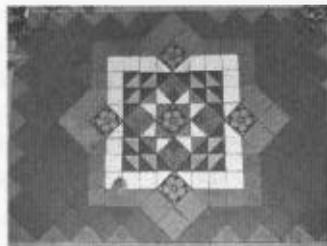
¹⁸ Census 1881, 1891, 1901.

We don't have horse traders today but we have taxi drivers. We have many more teachers than existed in 1901, retirees living on their savings, builders, factory workers, a postman, care workers, a photographer in a house owned by a portrait photographer in 1901, a house given over to music where an old piano teacher lived in 1901, many kinds of office workers. One difference is that modern transport has meant that many of our householders now work outside Banbury, commuting or driving to work. Few, if any, inhabitants in 1901 had access to a horse and gig and I have found no stable yard. Today, the street overflows with cars, bikes and vans.

All this seems fairly simple but it was not always so. A file relating to changes in ownership of Nos 10, 11 and 12 Queen Street illustrates the complexities of buying and selling at this period. In May 1882 there was a sale of the houses, then owned by Joseph Ganett, a Worcestershire farmer. The Budd brothers had earlier sold them to him for £450. The three houses were then bought, possibly as an investment, by Sophia Parnell, a widow, born in Colchester, now aged 74 and living on her own means. In 1891 the census records that she is living at No 12 Queen Street with her 34-year-old daughter, a dressmaker and her granddaughter aged 12. There appeared to be no men in this household.¹⁹

In the census of 1901, however, No 12 was occupied by Joshua Briscoe, aged 60 together with his wife Grace, a dressmaker, Ada Gibbs, a step-daughter aged 18, a nephew, Alfred Gibbs, aged 19, a cycle fitter and Eva Hyde, a boarder and dressmaker.

Finally it is good to know that Queen's Road, as it was renamed in the 1920s, is part of the only preservation area in Banbury, which encompasses a stretch of the Broughton Road, Bath Road and Queen's Road. All of it is the legacy of one man who had the vision and the means to make it happen. Charles Gillett.



¹⁹ Census 1891.

SNIPPETS FROM THE ARCHIVES: 9

Deborah Hayter

Kings Sutton Surveyors' accounts¹

Disbursements for the year 1786 and 1787 – commencing from
31st October 1786. Revd John Deacle and Willm Coffe Junr Surveyors.

	£	s	d
To a new book	0	4	3
To warrant and surveyors' expenses	0	6	0
To Thos Coffe for 10 loads of stones	0	2	6
To Kitley & son four days labor (sic)	0	5	4
To Ditto & Do six days	0	8	0
To cleansing ye Water Course in Wales ²	0	1	6
To Kitley & Laurence Hall & Boy 2 Days Labor each & 50 loads of stone ...	0	17	4
To raising 100 loads of Stone at Hull's Pit at 1½d Pr Load	0	12	6
To raising 150 Ditto at Ditto	0	18	9

This is part of the first page of the account book of the surveyors of the highways for Kings Sutton parish. An Act of 1555 laid yet another duty on unpaid parish officers. Communities had always been expected to maintain their local roads, but from 1555 parishes had to appoint a 'surveyor [or two] of the highways' along with the churchwardens, sidesmen, overseers of the poor and the parish constable who filled their offices by rotation and were chosen at the annual vestry meeting at Easter time (though oddly these accounts run from October to October).³

By the end of their year these surveyors had spent a total of £24 17s 3½d. Labour was the main cost: although they had paid for 1024 loads of stone this only cost 1½d a load, whereas a man cost ls. a day, a boy rather less. We don't of course know how big a load of stone was – possibly it was a small cartload which could be pulled by one horse – but this still seems like an enormous amount of stone. Local knowledge might show whether

¹ This book is among the manorial documents and books in a box labelled 'Kings Sutton Parsonage Manor', belonging to Tim Nicholas of Kings Sutton Manor House. I am grateful to him for allowing me access to these.

² The name of the lane leading to the station in Kings Sutton is 'Wales Street'.

³ This system lasted until 1835 when JPs appointed paid surveyors for groups of parishes.

there are deep excavations still visible at Halls Pit, Cornborough Pits, Cobblers Pits and Nowbottle Ground,⁴ which are all mentioned as sources for stone, though in subsequent years there are a few payments for filling in pits (what with, one wonders?). There was also a payment for 'Raising stones between Towns' which might refer to the road between Kings Sutton and Astrop (now all part of the former). At other times the 'Road in Leaks Way' was widened, Twyford Bridge was 'mended', Richard Haynes was paid 2s. 10d. for 'three Wedges and Mending a Mattock', and there were occasional payments to the blacksmith (unnamed). The same Richard Haynes also provided a 'Sledge' at a cost of 3s.: this would be a horse-drawn flat-bedded platform used for transporting small loads particularly on ground where wheels could not cope.

This account book covers less than twenty-five years, and stone was dug in each year in huge quantities. In 1790 Thos Fathers was paid 2s. for two days 'trying for stones on Nowbottle Hill', though 200 loads had been taken from Nowbottle Ground earlier in the year, and there was a payment for 'opening a Pit at ye Top of Astrop' where 78 loads were raised. The next payment was for '18 perch of walling at ye Top of Astrop': this may have been to stop animals getting into (or falling into) the pit.

In 1790 the Workhouse Master Kitley was paid £1.10s. for ten weeks. This was not the Victorian Union workhouse of ill-repute, but the workhouse maintained by the parish for its own poor who had no means of support and nowhere to live. The payment may have been for an able-bodied pauper who was set to work on the roads.⁵ A few years later (at the time when all rural parishes were being overwhelmed by the numbers coming to the parish to claim poor relief) it seems that there were several paupers being set to work on the roads and they were paid 3s., occasionally 4s. per week. In 1811 two men called Holden and Heritage (no Christian names given) appear to have been full-time employees.

Like the overseers of the poor, the surveyors of the highways were empowered to raise local rates from the inhabitants of the parish. They were legally bound to keep accounts which had to be shown to the parish and then certified by two Justices of the Peace. In this book there are signatures at the end of each year's accounts to show that the audit had been done.

⁴ Newbottle, but spelt throughout as Nowbottle.

⁵ The word 'pauper' is used here in the eighteenth century technical sense meaning someone who was receiving parish relief.

After the 'Disbursements' the account book lists the monies coming in – the 'Receivings' for each year. These were the local rates, raised like the poor rate at so much in the pound (in 1806 at 'three halfpence in the pound'); in effect this was a tax on land, as farmers of large acreages paid more. Most of the rate payments were a few shillings. But the surveyors also had responsibility for the supervision of statute labour, the legal duty of the community to maintain the roads themselves.⁶ So the surveyors' 'receivings' included what are here called the 'contributions' from the ratepayers, and also 'compositions' from those who paid instead of working themselves. In 1788 the 'Farmers Statute Duty' listed the number of days each owed, with 'done' or 'paid' against each name. Widow Jeffkins in Astrop owed 30 days, and had done fifteen (presumably not in person) and paid fifteen; Robert Wyatt owed eighteen of which he had done half, but the most usual number was six, and the sum compounded for was 1s. per day. The list of the 'Labourers Statute Duty' shows that they all did it rather than paying up, and they owed far fewer days: between one and four days per year. By the end of the book it was obviously getting harder to get this work done: in 1807 most of the farmers had only done half of the days they owed, if that.

The parish officers were usually drawn from the 'middling sort', not the gentry, so it is noteworthy that the Vicar was one of the surveyors in 1786. Perhaps it was the difficulty of getting the statute labour done which necessitated a figure of some authority in the village in this role. Mr Deacle's successors also took their turns, and even the Lord of the Manor: on Oct 8th 1792 there is an entry as follows: '*John Freke Willes Esq. & Thomas Bricknell Surveyors of the Highways for the Parish of Kingsutton [sic] are fined Ten Shillings each for Neglect of their Duties in Matters for which no particular Penalties are imposed by the Act of Parliament.*' [signed by] L. Rokeby Chas Fox. As so often, and so frustratingly, there is no explanation as to what they had done or not done to incur this fine. Elizabeth Jeffkins, widow and clearly a substantial farmer, was one of the surveyors in 1800 and this must have been a startling innovation at the time.

⁶ The Act of 1555 obliged every householder to work for four days per year; a further Act of 1563 increased this to six days. The better-off were supposed also to provide carts and draught animals, but there is no indication in these accounts whether this happened or not.

BANBURYSHIRE GAZETTEER: IIa

North Oxfordshire (continued)

This selection from *The National Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland*, published in 1868, continues the series of extracts begun, with an introduction, in the previous issue, 19.7. **B.S.T.**

ASTON, MIDDLE, a township in the parish of Aston, Steeple, and hundred of Woodstock, in the county of Oxford, 6 miles to the N of Woodstock.

ASTON, NORTH, a parish in the hundred of Wootton, in the county of Oxford, 2 miles to the SE of Deddington. Woodstock is its post town. It is situated on the western bank of the River Cherwell. Along the eastern bank of the River passes the Oxford Canal. The living is a vicarage in the diocese of Oxford, of the value of £199, in the patronage of J Wills, Esq. The church is dedicated to St Mary, and has a tower prettily overgrown with ivy. Aston Park is the residence of Lord Clonmel. The village is a meet for the Heythrop Hounds.

ASTON, STEEPLE, a parish in the hundred of Wootton, in the county of Oxford, 6 miles to the N of Woodstock, its post town. It is situated in the fertile valley of the River Cherwell, and on the Oxford Canal. Middle Aston is a township included in this parish. The living is a rectory in the diocese of Oxford, value £582, in the patronage of the Principal and Fellows of Brasenose College, Oxford. The church, which is an ancient edifice and contains some monuments to the Molins, to whom the manor belonged, is dedicated to St Peter. There is a free school and some almshouses endowed by Dr Radcliffe, who formerly held the rectory of Aston. A mineral spring exists in the parish, and Roman remains have been found.

BAISCOTT, a chapelry in the parish of Wroxton, and hundred of Bloxham, in the county of Oxford, 4 miles to the NW of Banbury. The living is a perpetual curacy attached to the vicarage of Bloxham, in the diocese of Oxford. The name of this chapelry, which at full length is Beletscott, is derived from Michael Belet, who lived in the early part of the 13th century, and founded a priory at Wroxton.

BARFORD, GREAT, or **BARFORD ST MICHAEL**, a parish in the hundred of Wootton, in the county of Oxford, 2 miles to the W of Deddington. Banbury is its post town. The living is a vicarage in the diocese of Oxford, value £67, in the gift of J Hall, Esq. The church is in the early English style, and has a Norman tower and doorway, and some stained windows; it is dedicated to St Michael.

BARFORD, LITTLE, or BARFORD ST JOHN, a chapelry in the parish of East Adderbury, in the hundred of Bloxham and county of Oxford. 3 miles from Deddington, its post town. The living is a perpetual curacy annexed to the vicarage of Adderbury in the diocese of Oxford. The church is ancient and has a Norman doorway.

BARTON, STEEPLE, a parish in the hundred of Wootton, county of Oxford, 5 miles to the N of Woodstock. It is watered by a small stream, a branch of the Eventode, and contains the hamlets of Middle Barton and Barton-Seswells. The living is a vicarage in the diocese of Oxford, of the value of £112, in the patronage of the Duke of Marlborough and H Hall, Esq. The church is dedicated to St Mary, and contains monuments of the Dormers. The manor-house, erected in 1524, by John Donner, is an interesting example of Tudor architecture. One of its spacious upper apartments is adorned with frescoes. The village is a meet for the Heythorpe (sic) hounds.

BARTON-WESTCOTT, a parish in the hundred of Wootton, in the county of Oxford, close to Barton Steeple. Woodstock is its post town. The living is a rectory in the diocese of Oxford, of the value of £230, in the gift of Mrs Seagrave. The church is dedicated to St Edward.

BICESTER - held over to Part III.

CHARLBURY, a parish and market towns in the hundreds of Banbury and Chadlington, in the county of Oxford, 5 miles SE of Chipping Norton, and 7 miles NW of Woodstock. It is a station on the West Midland Railway. This ancient manor and market town, founded by the Mercian kings, and by them given to the Bishop of Lincoln, afterwards passed to the monks of Eynsham, in whose possession it remained until the reign of Henry VIII, when it was purchased by St John's College. The living is a vicarage in the diocese of Oxford, value, with the curacies of Shorthampton and Chadlington annexed, £800, in the patronage of St John's College, Oxford. There is also a district church at Finstock, the living of which is a perpetual curacy, value £75, in the gift of St John's College, Oxford. The parish church, dedicated to St Mary, is a beautiful ancient structure, in the early English style, with late roof. Portions of it are supposed to have been erected in the time of Edward the Confessor; it possesses monuments of the Somerset and Jenkinson families. There are places of worship for Wesleyans, Primitive Methodists, Baptists, Particular Baptists and the Society of Friends. There is an endowed school for boys, under the patronage of Brasenose College, Oxford, also a mixed British school, and an infant school, newly built. There is a fund, arising from land, for apprenticing poor boys. This is a market town, although not of so much note as formerly. The market day is Friday, and fairs are held on 1st January, the second Friday in Lent, second Friday after 12th August, and first Friday in October.

Book Reviews

Jane Austen and Adlestrop: her other family. Victoria Huxley. xii, 228pp, illustrations, pedigrees (Leigh and Austen families). Windrush Publishing (Windrush House, 12 Main Street, Adlestrop, Moreton in Marsh GL56 0UN). ISBN 978-0-9575150-2-4. £10.99.

A Spencer Love Affair: Eighteenth-Century Theatricals at Blenheim Palace and Beyond. Allan P. Ledger. 190pp. 32 colour plates, pedigrees. Fonthill, 2014 (ISBN 978-1-78155-352-7). £20.00.

Both these books include entertaining side-lights on the later eighteenth century Twisleton Saye and Seles at Broughton Castle, and, with Jane Austen, at Adlestrop, the main reason for reviewing them here.

To many the name Adlestrop means Edward Thomas's poem, but this sleepy Cotswold village has another reason for fame. Described as 'A new perspective on Jane Austen and her novels', Victoria Huxley's charming book shows how important the place was to the novelist as almost a second home. She visited her cousins there on several occasions. Descriptions of houses such as Adlestrop Park and the old Rectory, where she stayed, are skilfully juxtaposed with quotations from the novels, showing how these were the inspiration for their fictional versions. To any 'Janeite' this alone will justify the book's publication.

Parts were played by the Broughton Castle Twisleton family, in particular Lady Saye and Sele, and also of Sanderson Miller. Jane Austen's mother was a Leigh, and that more prosperous family played an important part in Jane's youth. Her uncle Thomas was rector of Adlestrop, and cousins doubly inter-married with the Twisleton and Turner of Ambrosden families. Their story was entertainingly told by our late members David Fiennes and Sarah Markham in 'Gossip Column' [*C&CH* 8.4, Autumn 1980]. Years after Thomas Twisleton's marriage to Elizabeth Turner (1767), Jane Austen's mother wrote from Stoneleigh (another Leigh inheritance) where she was staying: "Poor Lady Saye and Sele to be sure is rather tormenting, though sometimes amusing, and affords Jane many a good laugh..."

Victoria Huxley has lived at Adlestrop for many years, so has an intimate knowledge of the village (and, it is clear, of Jane Austen's novels). One can only wonder what other characteristics of the Twisletons and their cousins are to be found disguised in Jane's fictionalised cast.

Amateur dramatics became very popular in aristocratic families such as the Lennox/Richmonds at Goodwood and the Williams Wynns of Wynnstey, but especially with the Spencers at Blenheim. Edward Nares was an Oxford academic who became a frequent and welcome visitor there, close friends of the fourth Duke of Marlborough and his large family, in particular his fourth daughter Charlotte. The casts were predominantly made up of family members. Exhaustive details are given of the plays performed, as tellingly summed up in 'Act VI: Scene I, The dangerous intimacy of Private Theatricals' (Lady Saye and Sele features prominently). These came to a head with Lady Charlotte's love affair with Nares. To the Duke and Duchess, no one except another aristocrat would be acceptable as her husband. With all propriety Edward left Blenheim in March 1797 (having spent most of the winter there), to stay with his sister in Henley, telling Charlotte that he 'would not return until their mutual attachment had been disclosed.' A week later a message was delivered to him that Charlotte 'was alone at one of the Inns in the town', having felt unable to broach the matter with her parents and therefore had dramatically fled Blenheim.

Respectability was maintained by her rapid removal to Edward's sister's home, and the Duke promptly informed. Despite support from many family members, the Duke's refusal was inevitable. Nares was son of a knighted judge, Charlotte was 27, but she was forbidden, once she was married, ever to visit Blenheim again. Nevertheless the marriage took place, at Henley, quietly but performed by no less than the Provost of Worcester College. A lengthy honeymoon followed in a house lent them in Herefordshire, with constant visits from many local aristocracy. In no way were the happy couple shunned by society.

The author claims that this romance and the amateur dramatics that led to it are reflected in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*. Here it forms the core of a widely-researched book into these entertainments popular amongst the very 'best' families of the time. Beautiful and appropriate illustrations and lengthy detailed appendices enhance a most readable book about the trivialities of their home pursuits. There is no index; a magnifying glass is needed to read the pedigrees. These do little to detract from a most attractive book. This and that on Adlestrop both illuminate the lives of wealthy and not-so-wealthy but educated people in north Oxfordshire and nearby. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars were imminent. Both of which, as in Jane Austen's novels, receive scant mention!

J.G.

How Remote Was Our Valley Before Canal and Railway, Peter Deeley. 138pp. + 16 illustrations. Published by the author 2013. Copies £5 from peter.deeley357@btinternet.com

Peter Deeley in his new book on the Cherwell valley offers us a radical insight into the impact of the building of the Oxford Canal and the Oxford to Rugby Railway in the area centred on Lower Heyford. Unusually for a work of local history he has invented a local paper – the *Bicester Courant* – to provide an alternative voice of commentary on the planning and construction of the canal and railway. The *Courant* usually has something pithy to say about the ‘rumbustious events stirring the populace in the valley’ which do not redound to the credit of the local landowners! The author has trawled the extensive railway and enclosure literature for examples of the upheavals caused across the Kingdom, not least the 1846 year of Railway Mania. Much information is provided from a wide range of sources of the planning and building of the canal and railway, and the behaviour of the landowners on the one hand and the promoters and their workforce on the other. However it is not always clear where the author has researched the information despite the inclusion of a bibliography (which perhaps could have mentioned the Society’s publication on *Turnpikes* by Alan Rosevear (2010)). In all this information it is perhaps a pity that room has not been found for a map of the Cherwell valley picking out the key locations to help those less familiar with the locality.

Tom Forde

A Parish at War, A Military Record of three Oxfordshire Villages: Deddington, Clifton and Hempton, Michael Allbrook and Robert Forsyth. Oxford Publishing 2011, with supplement of 2012.

A Parish at War is Michael Allbrook’s and Robert Forsyth’s *magnun opus*. Originally published in 2011, Robert Forsyth added a substantial supplement in 2012. This book records the details of six hundred plus folk from Deddington, Clifton and Hempton who have served – and in many cases died – in Britain’s many modern wars. Truly it is a labour of love.

Both authors must have devoted many, many hundreds of hours in the research and the assembly of the masses of information they have obtained. They have found at least another nineteen names that should be added to Deddington’s war memorial. This exercise has been repeated all over the United Kingdom with many other researchers also discovering missing names to their local memorials.

There must be so many families, nationwide, who have suddenly found that the grandpa they perhaps never knew, or hardly knew, had taken part in one or other of the World Wars; perhaps he'd won a decoration for bravery or given his life – now, at last, his deeds have been recorded with his name possibly added to a war memorial for all time.

A small carp – I do think that this book deserves an index; if you have some idea what you are looking for it is possible to navigate through this book but if the information you have is a bit thin, or you are from abroad, then there is much to wade through – it could be a touch tedious.

The prose poem at the end of this book brought me up with a jolt, as I too was serving in Hong Kong in the early 1950s and I too was waiting to go to Korea as a replacement – all trained and kitted out – when I was posted to Malaya at forty-eight hours notice. As the late George Harris says in his poem, 'a soldier must go where he is sent'!

Nick Allen

Hook Norton Baptist Church, Births, Baptisms, Marriage, Burial and members. Transcribed and published by The Eureka Partnership, 64pp plus index. <eurekpartnership.com>, £6.00.

The Eureka Partnership have by now published dozens of modestly priced booklets listing names in various categories in midland counties from Bedfordshire to Worcestershire.

This publication is representative, containing abstracts from the Hook Norton Baptist Church Books, including births recorded in 1818 of persons born between 1772 and 1818, subsequent births to 1837, burials in the Chapel Yard and the Bury Orchard 1841–1935, marriages in the chapel between 1844 and 1877; and selective entries from the church minutes relating to admission to, and dismissal from, the Church and recorded episodes such as the misconduct (unspecified) of Mr White the organist in 1912.

Another local to our area is that of *Banbury Wesleyan Methodist Circuit Historic Roll 1899-1904*. A whole series from probate records (those actually named in the wills, not just the testators) include a dozen or so publications from the Oxford Diocesan and Archdeaconry Courts, mainly mid to the end of the eighteenth century, and two covering the Peculiar Court of Banbury and Cropredy, 1736-85, 1786-1857.

Though mainly intended for ancestry hunters, such findings are invaluable too for the local historian.

J.G.

Lecture Reports

Brian Little

Thursday 11th December 2015

A World of Goods: Shops and Shopping in Georgian England

Dr Jon Stobart

At the outset our speaker emphasised that the shop was not a new development in Georgian England. London in the Middle Ages was characterised by thousands of shops. In Southwark for instance there were numerous markets as well. Shops tended to cluster around market spaces. Here there was selling from windows and in town centres in general the bulk of shop units were often close to buildings such as churches.

Many places such as Banbury were characterised by concentrations of shops whose locations determined patterns of shopping. In Northampton these were dominated by the Market Square and Drapery, the latter renowned for quality. In 1780 this street was known for its mercers and drapers but not for butchers and bakers. Trading in general was helped by improvements in street lighting.

During the eighteenth century many retailers were recognised for the breadth of their wares as well as specialisms. There was a lot of choice for shoppers. An accompanying trend was the growth in advertising through the medium of newspapers, headed bills and hand-outs. Often the outcome would be boring lists, especially where they wanted to emphasise varieties within a commodity such as tea. A good example was a Norwich grocer Robert Baret who could offer ten different types of teas. People like him utilised Chinese imagery in their advertising as evidence of quality.

As the century progressed window displays of goods became increasingly important and these were enhanced by glazing. In addition there was dependence on tables and cabinets as part of presentations and customers came to make judgements regarding quality of goods especially, and to haggle about prices. From the retailer's angle price was often governed by a need to shift goods quickly.

Another trend was that shopping became an increasingly common social activity. Such customer behaviour may well explain the emergence of destination shops as the eighteenth century advanced.

Dr Stobart's presentation was greatly enhanced by his lively style of presentation as well as a strong focus on the history of shopping as an evolutionary process.

Thursday 8th January 2015

Henry Moseley: from Oxford to Gallipoli

Dr Stephen Johnson, assistant Director of the Museum of Science,
Oxford

Dr Johnson's topic was linked to the Science Museum's remarkable collection of scientific instruments and apparatus and also to a project focussed on Henry Moseley covering the period from his birth in 1887 to his death in 1915, which is part of a World War I study shared with Gillingham and Blandford Museums.

In essence Henry's story is about a scientist of extraordinary stature whose talents were lost to the demands of war. Accordingly those participating in the project are looking for unique stories about Henry Moseley.

Henry Moseley was educated privately at Summer Fields, Oxford, and Eton College. Subsequently he had two periods at Oxford University, first as an undergraduate at Trinity College reading physics from 1906-1910 and later as an unpaid Research Fellow from 1913-1914. The period in between was spent at Manchester University under the Nobel Prize winner Ernest Rutherford where he worked with X-rays.

Coming from an academic scientific family - his father was a Professor of Anatomy and Physiology - it is not surprising that much was expected of him and that his career has been well documented. Interestingly this was despite only getting a Second Class degree instead of the expected First and Oxford not being renowned for scientific studies at the time.

Dr Johnson then turned to reasons for remembering Moseley. In particular this was about his revision of Mendeleev's Periodic Table. The problem was that the position predicted by atomic weight did not always match the position predicted by chemical properties. By inventing a machine to shoot high energy electrons at different chemical elements and measuring the wavelengths and frequencies of the resulting x-rays he could rank them numerically by atomic number. His machine is the centrepiece of a forthcoming exhibition at the Museum of Science.

In 1914 the Chair of Physics at Oxford became vacant and was offered to Henry Moseley but he turned it down. Despite family pleading, he joined the Royal Engineers and became involved in signals work, going to Gallipoli with his regiment. On 10th August 1915 he was shot in the head whilst telephoning an order to Division Headquarters.

A month later *Nature Magazine* expressed his death in terms of the loss of special skills. The writer called it a national tragedy. His old boss Ernest Rutherford used his death to campaign for governments to make better use of scientific skills in time of war.

Dr Johnson ended by encouraging his audience to think about a related exhibition and what would attract support for it.

Thursday 12th February 2015
The Romans who shaped Britain
Dr David Stuttard

Significantly our speaker, David Stuttard was publicised as a dramatist as well as a lecturer and author. This was quickly apparent as he brought alive the Roman invasion of southern England in 55 BC. Sounds of men with spears and arrows mingled with their impact on the shingle. More significantly these new arrivals, who were the first Romans to set foot in this county, had no intention of staying. Indeed ignorance of the tides took a heavy toll on ships and men. Caesar emphasised this was an expedition to prevent the British tribes from aiding the Gauls.

The land they were about to discover was well farmed and dotted with small settlements as signified by Butser in Hampshire.

As the talk unfolded it was clear that the emphasis would be on the contrasting impacts of Roman leaders who came in AD 43. Dr Stuttard then used finds from archaeological investigations of evidence of advance and retreat, town life and growth of roads. Woven into this pattern was the role of individuals such as Boudicca who had both the ability and determination to modify Roman advances.

An interesting theme was identification of the main emblems of civilised Roman life – from aqueducts to amphitheatres. Other lines of investigation included periods of growth such as AD 80 – AD 160 when a Sussex vineyard gave birth to an economic miracle. The years from 270 onwards were characterised by villa growth.

The Roman occupation was not all about success. Notably the Romans were unable to establish a lasting presence in Scotland and elsewhere it seems likely that previous settlement forms were adapted rather than adopted.

A legacy of the time was the accumulation of forts to counter the threat of raiders such as those at Scarborough, Portchester and Pevensey. Their construction did not render unnecessary the ultimate withdrawal of Romans from Britain. Dr Stuttard is in the ranks of historians for whom their departure from our shores remains one of the unsolved mysteries of the whole invasion sequence.

Banbury Historical Society's new Logo

The Society's new logo is based (as is that of our friends the Banbury Civic Society) upon the use by Banbury Corporation of the 'Sun in Splendour' as its coat of arms. Alfred Beesley's *History of Banbury*, page 233, records that the antiquary Browne Willis (1682-1760) stated that the arms had been taken by the Corporation as:- '*Azure the Sun in glory Or*'. In non-heraldic terms this means: 'A Golden Sun on a Blue background'. There is no suggestion that our Society is actually assuming the heraldic arms for itself.

Banbury Historical Society
ANNUAL REPORT 2014

When this society was founded in 1958 there weren't many other local history societies, so if you were interested in local history you had to join one of the county societies. In Banburyshire, of course, that meant Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire or Warwickshire. But now there are lots of really local history societies in many of the villages and the challenge for the Banbury Historical Society is to continue to attract new members who, if arriving in a local village and wishing to find out more about its history, naturally gravitate towards the local village society. Many of these are doing really good research, particularly with their own archives, and producing excellent publications. But local history is about more than just one village and is always improved by being set in a wider context. This society has always been interested in much more than Banbury town itself: our records volumes include work on Wigginton, Bodicote, Aynho, Kings Sutton, Deddington and Chacombe, for example, and *Cake & Cockhorse* is full of articles about Banbury's hinterland. We need to keep selling the point that this society is for village historians too.

Our lectures during 2014 were interesting, varied and fairly well-attended. We try to invite historians with original research to present. We had Tim Healey talking about the 'Green Man Trail in Oxfordshire', John Leighfield with a lecture on the development of printed maps of Oxfordshire, entitled 'From Gough to Google', Robert Harris on 'The Early Life of Lord Nuffield and the Birth of the Motor Industry', David White, Somerset Herald, on the development of English heraldry, Dr Peter Forsaith of Oxford Brookes University about Methodism and Art, Dr Colin Harrison of the Ashmolean Museum about 'Oxford and the Pre-Raphaelites', and Professor Jon Stobart of the University of Northampton on 'Shops and Shopping in Georgian England'.

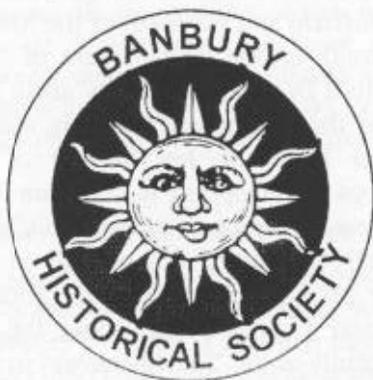
Following the success of our open meeting in Chacombe in 2013, we were in the beautifully appointed village hall in Somerton in April. There Barrie Trinder gave a short presentation about the trains that ran through Somerton, and I gave a talk about the early landscape of Somerton, looking mainly at the 'Lot Meadows' in the Cherwell valley. These village meetings are a way for the Society to reach out to historians in the hinterland who may not have considered that Banbury had anything to do with them.

Our summer outings, organized by Beryl Hudson, were to Holdenby in Northamptonshire and to Sezincote in Gloucestershire. We were delighted to return to Broughton Castle for our AGM in July when members were given an opportunity to have a tour of the castle led by

We continue to be closely associated with Banbury Museum as it develops and expands its activities as an independent trust. One of the major developments during 2014 was the redesign of the Museum's website and also that of the Society which is hosted within it. Both are now much more attractive and user-friendly: you can book tickets online for Museum events, find out what is going on, and join our Society. Existing members can pay their annual subscriptions there too. The designers of the new website suggested that we should have on our 'landing page' three 'unique selling points' (USP's in advertising-speak). After much cogitation we came up with these:

- For local historians – of town, village and countryside
- Access to articles and publications about Banburyshire
- Help and advice - getting started, sources and archives.

At the same time as having a new website we had a new logo created so that the Museum site could advertise all society and museum activities together but distinguish the ones that were officially those of the Society. To any of you familiar with Banbury documentation, or who, like me, attended Banbury Grammar School (as it then was), this will seem very familiar, as it is based on the 'sun in splendour', thus:



In theory we should use it in all communications from or about the society but I, for one, have not used it as much as I could have.

Chris Day is continuing his predecessors' good work as editor of *Cake & Cockhorse* and there have been some excellent and varied articles during 2014. We were delighted that Professor Rebecca Probert's article on 'Notorious Neithrop' was awarded a prize by the British Association for Local History. We are always keen to receive articles of local research for inclusion in the journal: the editor was heard to complain recently that he had a good stock of articles for the next issue but he wished that they hadn't all been written by members of the committee. We would love to publish more of all that good research going on in the villages and give it a wider readership through *Cake & Cockhorse*.

Our 34th records volume appeared in 2014. This was an alphabetical digest and index of *Rusher's Banbury Directory, 1832-1906*, its 135 pages typed up by our member Catherine Pritchard. It was produced together with a DVD (a first for our Society) containing a facsimile of the actual directory (a scan of well over a thousand pages). We are very grateful to the Greening Lamborn Trust for a grant towards this publication. One of the stipulations of the grant was that the information in the book should be made available digitally online. The new website is now up and running and all the data can be searched there. This is likely to be the way forward for future volumes of like material. For family historians, and for those interested in the trades going on in a busy market town in the Victorian period, this is a fascinating volume. Jeremy Gibson is, as general editor, to be congratulated for suggesting this project and making the contents of the late Mary Stanton's card index available beyond Banbury Museum which houses it.

Barrie Trinder instigated what we hope will be an ongoing tradition: having held a successful book sale both at Chacombe in 2013 and at Someiton in 2014, we had another at the November lecture meeting. These provided opportunities not just for the Society to sell its own publications and back issues of its journal, but also for members of the Society to bring along and sell their own publications. There is an impressive number of these and lots of sales were made.

We still have more than two hundred members and a lively committee but we would welcome some new blood, particularly if they would be willing to take on one or two of the tasks involved in running a society such as ours. Our funds, ably managed by Geoff Griffiths, continue to be sufficient to meet current and future expenses.

Deborah Hayter, March 2015

Banbury Historical Society

Income & Expenditure Accounts for Year ending 31 December 2014

GENERAL FUND	2014	2013
	£	£
INCOME		
Subscriptions	2,800	3,015
Sale of Publications	910	560
Income Tax refund	438	407
Building Society interest	24	24
Other	65	388
Total Income	<u>4,237</u>	<u>4,394</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Cake & Cockhorse	853	1,134
Records Volumes costs	2,452	3,624
Less Grant from Greening Lamborn Trust	<u>1,500</u>	<u>2,250</u>
Meetings	952	1,374
Reception @ AGM	596	573
Postage and other Administration costs	61	163
	1,134	2,039
Total Expenditure	<u>3,596</u>	<u>4,683</u>
Surplus to (Deficit / from) the General Fund	<u>641</u>	<u>(289)</u>

BRINKWORTH MUSEUM FUND

INCOME		
Building Society interest	<u>8</u>	<u>20</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Contribution to new Banbury Museum website	500	500
DEFICIT from the Brinkworth Museum Fund	<u>(492)</u>	<u>(490)</u>

Balance Sheets as at 31 December 2014

	2014	2013
	£	£
GENERAL FUND		
Balance at 1 January 2014	11,191	11,460
PLUS Surplus (less Deficit) for the year	<u>641</u>	<u>(289)</u>
Balance at 31 December 2014	<u>11,832</u>	<u>11,171</u>
BRINKWORTH MUSEUM FUND		
Balance at 1 January 2014	2,835	3,325
LESS Deficit for the year	<u>(492)</u>	<u>(490)</u>
Balance at 31 December 2014	<u>2,343</u>	<u>2,835</u>
TOTAL BALANCE at 31 December 2014	<u>14,175</u>	<u>14,026</u>
Represented by:		
ASSETS		
North West Bank Banbury - Current A/c	4,494	3,540
Leeds Building Society - General A/c	8,206	8,182
Leeds Building Society - Brinkworth Museum A/c	2,343	2,875
Cash	<u>33</u>	<u>13</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>15,076</u>	<u>14,570</u>
Less LIABILITIES		
Subscriptions in advance	<u>900</u>	<u>544</u>
NET ASSETS at 31 December 2014	<u>14,175</u>	<u>14,026</u>

GF Griffiths, Hon Treasurer

I have reviewed and examined the books and records of the Banbury Historical Society and confirm that the accounts prepared by the Hon Treasurer represent a fair and accurate summary of the financial transactions completed in the year ended 31 December 2014.

Peter Costrell BA, ACCA, ACIMA

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 Corkhorse* 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 Protestantism 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 Ficias (vol. 28).

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

Tumpike 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. Barrie Trinder (vol. 33).

Rusher's 'Banbury Trades and Occupations Directory' 1832-1916

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

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

In preparation: *Georgian Banbury before 1800: Banbury Vestry Book, 1708-1797 and other contemporary records*

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

Spring/Summer 2015 Programme

Thursday 16th April 2015, 7.30pm, at Banbury Museum

Historical Artefacts Quiz. Please continue to check your curio cabinets for interesting objects to bring along. The idea is that you should know what they are, and that others might have fun guessing. There will be a small prize for the most interesting object, and another for the best set of guesses.

Do email <deborahhayter@hotmail.com> if you have a query about this, or if you have an interesting object and are wondering whether to bring it along.

Thursday 1st May 2015

National Waterways Museum, Stoke Bruerne, near Towcester. This holds a small but fascinating display of Canal memorabilia, especially for the Grand Union Canal and our own Oxford Navigation. Sited immediately beside the canal, the visit includes (if wanted) a half hour trip on a narrow boat to the entrance of Blisworth Tunnel; and/or walks along the towpath.

Access, approaching Towcester by A43, right at first roundabout, right again at traffic lights (by *Saracen's Head*), follow Watling Street (A5) out of town, left at first turning, signposted to Stoke Bruerne and Canal Museum. At the village, cross over the bridge, continue a hundred yards or so to first turn left, signed 'Car Park'.

This is immediately adjacent to the canal. Charge £3 (£1 reimbursed at Museum for driver, take car park receipt). Museum £3.40 each. Canal trip about £3.

Lunch available at *Boat Inn* (over canal by pedestrian bridge) or *The Navigation* (close by). Teas at Museum or *Beck Inn*.

Thursday 18th June, 2.30pm

Visit to **Farnborough Hall (National Trust) grounds only**, as follow-up to the March talk on the use of water in the park, led by the speaker, Stephen Wass.

A few miles north of Banbury, off the Southam Road (A423), sign-posted.

National Trust members, bring membership card. Probable charge, £2.20; plus £3.80, for grounds only, for those *not* members of the National Trust.

Gather at (free) car park. Initial *short* walk, rough grass, will start there, stout shoes or wellies advisable. Further walking will be determined at the time.

Thursday 25th June Magna Carta event at Broughton Castle. See editorial.

July: Annual General Meeting. Location and of date to be circulated shortly.

See the Society's Website <www.banburyhistory.org>

for information on the future Programme's subjects and speakers.

Stock of most back issues of *Cake & Cockhorse* are held by Jeremy Gibson (as on inside front cover), to whom enquiries should be sent.