CAKE AND COCKHORSE

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring 2017

Volume 20 Number 5

ISSN 6522-0823

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Charity No. 260581
www.banburyhistoricalsociety.org

Cake and Cockhorse

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

Volume 20 **Spring 2017** Number Five

As another successful and very well attended winter lecture series draws to a close our members' withdrawal symptoms should be eased by a series of attractive summer events. We have a historical quiz on Thursday 20 April (Grand Inquisitor, Tony Baldry), our AGM at Swalcliffe on 11 July, and visits to places of exceptional historical interest: the Bodleian Library in Oxford, Warwick, and Kenilworth Castle. Booking details are on the back cover.

In this issue we are pleased to publish an account of the career of a thrustingly ambitious man who skated successfully through perilous times during the Wars of the Roses to establish himself as a local grandee: William Cope of Hanwell (d.1513). What is especially noteworthy is that the article's author, 500 years on, is another W. Cope, an American descendant. How many historical twists and turns are contained in that statement! By coincidence, Hanwell also features in Stephen Wass's report on archaeological excavations in north Oxfordshire.

I am sometimes approached with suggestions of family history articles for the journal. I shall be happy to consider any such offer, though it is fair to point out that we do not normally publish straight genealogy. But we are very interested in family history set in a historical context. In other words, in what sort of society did my ancestors live? How did they make a living? What were their living conditions? To what extent were they in control of their own lives? What size and kind of family did they have? And so on. Bill Cope's article in this issue provides a useful exemplar. If you have a completed piece of historical research, or an outline for one, that you think might be of interest, please send it to me, preferably as an email attachment, to the address inside the front cover of this issue. It will be helpful if authors could also suggest relevant illustrations that will add to and illuminate the text. Every contribution will be acknowledged and read.

Cover: Hanwell Castle today *(photograph: Bill Cope)*

Recent Archaeological Work in the Banbury Region by Polyolbion Archaeology

Stephen Wass

Introduction

The summer of 2016 saw archaeological investigations conducted in a variety of contexts around the Banbury region by Polyolbion Archaeology. This is the name that I trade under working in the commercial sector but also use to facilitate my on-going D.Phil. research project at the University of Oxford entitled 'Voyages to the House of Diversion: Seventeenth-Century Water Gardens and the Birth of Modern Science'. The commercial element commonly involves working with clients in the area who are hoping to extend or convert historic properties and have planning conditions to discharge but it also includes a number of Heritage Lottery Funded projects which demand archaeological investigation alongside community participation. Consultancy work for the National Trust on matters relating to historic gardens and water features has also been undertaken.

Hanwell HANK sluice and stone-lined channel under excavation,

Hanwell Castle

After several very busy seasons working with both local volunteers and groups of students 2016 was a fairly quiet year. Previously, large-scale excavations were completed on a number of features associated with this important seventeenth-century garden including a cascade, a sluice and retaining walls from garden terraces. The focus this year was further down the valley where another sluice-like feature was examined which included well-built walling, a stone-lined channel and some timber features. As is often the case with garden archaeology specific dating features were thin on the ground but we hope to get a fix on this by relating it to other surveyed features within the landscape.

Excavations and survey work will continue at Hanwell for at least a further three years. [Please note there is no public access to this site.]

Farnborough Hall

As part of the continuing programme of repair and restoration in the park at Farnborough several weeks were spent this summer on the cascade at the foot of the yew walk west of the hall. Earlier work had identified a considerable degree of structural failure to the cascade and so a series of excavations were carried out to investigate methods of construction, sequencing and the wider landscape setting of the monument. The most significant finding was that the stone setting of the cascade was originally built as rising directly from the water's edge and that the bank currently fronting it and the lower extension to the cascade over a series of flat steps was a later, probably early nineteenth-century, addition to the original eighteenth-century structure. After some debate it was decided to maintain the current appearance of the monument and a watching brief was undertaken as the western portion of the cascade's mound and flanking wall were taken down and rebuilt. This gave us valuable information about the methods used in building but alas no firm dating evidence. A measured survey was also carried out of the partially collapsed culvert at the far end of Sourland Pool prior to repair.

Cropredy Church

As part of a HLF project to repair the roof at Cropredy Church and carry out some internal re-ordering, including the provision of a kitchen, two trenches were excavated through the northern part of the churchyard. The first, for water pipes, ran from the north door to a gate in the churchyard wall where we expected to discover a path and perhaps have fewer burials to contend with. The path was duly cleared

Cropredy Churchyard, Trench CRA looking south with work underway to lift and clean gravestones.

and found to consist of a series of gravestones, mainly from the seventeenth-century, which had been laid face down. Some of these had decayed badly but others were in excellent condition and two retained traces of paintwork. This is an unusual survival and raises the question as to what extent outdoor gravestones were painted at the time. Some other stones had had decorative elements carefully chiselled off before being laid. Stratigraphic evidence suggests the path was laid in the second half of the eighteenth century so later disturbance to underlying deposits was avoided. At a comparatively shallow depth, ranging between 700mm and 1100mm, a series of burials was excavated. They included one infant, one juvenile and 8 adults, one burial being an 'ear muff' burial where stones are packed around the head to keep it facing forward. Evidence suggests that all these burials were medieval and those skeletons directly on the line of pipes that were to be laid were lifted for further osteo-archaeological study. The foundations of the north aisle and a well built stone drain of indeterminate date were also examined.

Cropredy Churchyard, Trench CRB looking north-west, mainly nineteenth century burials cutting some earlier medieval stones.

Further to the east a second trench was dug to facilitate drainage from the area around the vestry. Once again multiple burials were encountered, including two fragmentary burials which were again probably medieval; however, these had been cut into by a series of later burials from the nineteenth century. Two had copper staining to portions of the skulls, indicating the use of hair pins and possibly in one instance a garland pinned across the forehead. Because of the clayey soil and damp conditions at this point there were some interesting items preserved. One of the skulls when lifted was found to retain some traces of hair and below it was a mass of ribbon and lacing which are clearly the remains of a bonnet or cap of some kind. These were lifted as a block and are now subject to specialist study as are the remains of what appears to be a buttoned shirt in a fairly coarse fabric from a second internment. A significant amount of coffin furniture was also recovered which will prove useful dating evidence for these burials none of which had accompanying headstones.

Other archaeological work associated with the project includes the recording and ultimate conservation of the doom painting. We are working together with the Courtauld Institute on drawing the complex joinery and repairs to the decorated medieval timber roof, and on further

analysis of the architectural fabric of the church. Finds processing will continue over the next few months. Future work will include surveying and field walking around Prescote Manor to the north in order to attempt to understand the early origins of settlement in the upper part of the Cherwell Valley. Community involvement has been a hugely important part of this project and thanks must go to all the local volunteers who have contributed to the work.

Wormleighton Churchyard, survey work underway with local volunteers

Wormleighton Church

This is another HLF project using local volunteers and again is associated with re-roofing the church. Initial work has focused on the churchyard where we have begun a survey of the existing gravestones. This involved planning the location of individual stones followed by detailed recording of each monument which is still underway. Future work will involve examining the wider context of the churchyard including work to test two preliminary hypotheses. Firstly that the west tower is much older than has generally been recognised, possibly even eleventh-century, and secondly that a significant element of the earthworks of the well known deserted medieval village to the north are actually part of a seventeenth-century park.

All of this work has relied heavily on the labours of a team of volunteers and many opportunities continue to exist for interested individuals to help out.

Contact Stephen Wass at: stephen.wass@conted.ox.ac.uk

William Cope of Hanwell (*c.*1450 - 1513)

Bill Cope

William Cope descended from a cadet branch of the Copes of Deanshanger [N'hants.], born about 1450. His father was Alexander, son of William Cope who was the third son of John Cope of Deanshanger. Alexander was obscure, to be sure, as our only evidence of his existence is his inclusion in a number of Cope family pedigrees from the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth Centuries.[1] He was not in service to the crown, as he left no documentary footprint, and probably died young. In the summary transcription of William of Hanwell's will, it states that the names of [his] parents are not known, thus adding to the confusion.

We first hear of William in service in the Stafford household shortly after the death of Sir Henry Stafford in 1471.[2] Sir Henry had married Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry Tudor, the future king Henry VII, in 1458. Margaret was the great-granddaughter of John of Gaunt and was a very wealthy young widow. The Beauforts were the offspring of Gaunt and his long time mistress, Katherine Swynford, whom he eventually married. In early 1467, as Margaret and Henry were getting ready to move into their new and much larger home, the manor of Woking in Surrey, there was an influx of Stafford servants to the household, including one Reginald Bray. It was at about this time that a young William Cope, no more than a teenager, joined the Stafford household as one of Bray's servants. We know he was there prior to Sir Henry's death in 1471. After Henry Stafford died and following a brief period of mourning, Margaret married Thomas Lord Stanley in 1472:

> 'Continuity between the Stafford and Stanley households was provided as some of Lady Margaret Beaufort's most trusted servants moved to the new establishment: William Cope, John Heron, William Hody, and of course Reginald Bray. Margaret had insisted on bringing these men with her as part of the terms of her agreement with Stanley.'[3]

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[1] *Collins' Baronetage, Prominent Families of the USA, Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica, et al.*

[2] M. Jones, *The King's Mother* (Cambridge University Press, 1992) p.79.

[3] *ibid*, p.145.

This is the first documented entry of William Cope into the world, aged in his early twenties. As the transition indicates, even at this tender age, he had been in the Stafford employ long enough to establish a solid and trustworthy reputation.

William was married about 1470 to his first wife, Agnes Harcourt (1450?-1494). Agnes was the daughter and coheiress of Sir Robert Harcourt of Stanton Harcourt, often cited as standard bearer to Henry Tudor at the battle of Bosworth. They had one son, Stephen, born in 1473.[4] After his marriage and the birth of his first child, nothing more is heard of William until his first recorded property transaction in 1478.

William had a perfect classroom from which to observe and learn estate management, and excellent instructors in Bray and Lady Margaret Beaufort, as well as a stable of co-workers who became life-long friends and business partners. As we have seen in her marriage negotiations, Lady Margaret Beaufort was a person of strong will:

> '… her estate administration, always efficient and thorough, was also harsh and severe, and her territorial ambitions unprincipled and ruthless.'[5]

William was a willing student and learned valuable lessons early in his career. He put these to use later in life to accumulate large land holdings and manage them to maximum effect across a number of counties in central and southern England. William learned that one could buy land and either hold it and take the rents, enfeoff it, enclose it into one large farm, or sell it to make a profit. Reginald Bray used his influence to buy land, and William was at his side, to assist and at times participate in the acquisitions. In the twenty years between 1483 and his death in 1503, Bray was involved in over 80 land transactions across 18 counties.[6]

The political situation was particularly nasty in the run-up to the battle of Bosworth. Lady Margaret's husband, Thomas Lord Stanley, was loyal to King Richard III, while she was the mother of a potential heir to the throne in exile and challenger to Richard. Margaret had been feigning loyalty to Richard while secretly communicating with her son Henry. At the end of July 1483, Margaret abandoned her 'allegiance' to Richard and joined the plotters against him in an effort to rescue the princes in

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[4] *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica*, Third Series, Vol IV (1902).

[5] Jones, *The King's Mother*, p.115.

[6] M. Hicks, ed., *Profit, Piety and the Professions* (1990): article by M. Condon, 'From Caitiff and Villain to Pater Patriae: Reynold Bray and the Profits of Office' pp.155-161; Feet of Fines Abstracts can be found at www.medievalgenealogy.org.uk, starting with CP 25/1/207/35, number 1.

the Tower. The attempt failed, but because Richard needed Stanley, he did not come down as hard as he might have on Margaret had she not been married to Stanley. While not accusing her of treason, he did deprive her of her lands, making them over to Stanley, and restricted her rights to inherit, as well as her heir's rights to inherit. The king told Stanley to confine Margaret in some secret place without her household servants.[7] We do not know what role William played during this very dangerous time, probably keeping a low profile in the Stanley household. We do know that Reginald Bray sued for pardon in 1484 as a result of his participation in the rebellion of the previous year, with William acting as one of his mainpernors.[8]

There is no record of war service for Bray or Cope at Bosworth. They probably continued in service to Margaret. After the battle of Bosworth, their fortunes improved dramatically. William was employed in the royal household, named to a succession of low level posts and given grants of property in London.[9] Michael Jones tells us in *The King's Mother* (Cambridge Univ Press, 1992), that Margaret's loyal household and estate staff '… formed a useful reservoir for the king to draw on in his appointments to royal service.' Bray became one of the king's most trusted and influential advisors; William Smith became clerk of the Hanaper, and ultimately, Bishop of Lincoln; and, William Cope was sargeant of the catery and ultimately, the king's cofferer. Throughout the reign, Margaret continued to supply talented people who were promoted to the king's service.

The core group of co-workers in Lady Margaret Beaufort's household were talented and very well connected. Comparing it to a corporate management structure is useful.[10] The Managing Director is clearly Reginald Bray. This is a position he held in several households (*ie*, receiver general) prior to being one of the king's principal advisors. Richard Empson was a parliamentarian and Speaker of the House (1491), and also, the enforcer. He was trained as a lawyer, and was not afraid to flex his legal muscles. The principal legal mind was Humphrey

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[7] Jones, *The King's Mother*, p. 64.

[8] *ODNB*, Reginald Bray.

[9] Calendar of Patent Rolls (CPR) Henry VII, Vol. 1, p.196.

[10] Thanks to Dr. Margaret Condon for her guidance in Bray's land acquisitions. Somewhat tongue in cheek, she refers to this group as 'Lady Margaret Beaufort's Mafia'.


The Paternall Coate of the Copes before the Armes &
Creast w^th the Roses and Flowerdelices (aluding to the royall
Badges of the Crowne) were assigned for augmentation to w^m Cope
and the Dragons head out of the flowerdelice for the Cognieance
the Dragon being one of Henry the 7.^th supporters.

Conyngsby, Sergeant at Law. William Hody, Baron of the Exchequer, was a judge of the highest order, and Henry Colet was the municipal representative as mayor of London and merchant of the Calais Staple. The connection to the church was manned by William Smith, Bishop of Lincoln from 1496, often accused of being much more secular than sacred.[11] The accounting tasks fell to William. As cofferer (and treasurer) from 1494, he was the accountant for the king's household. During the reign of Henry VII '…household offices… were left vacant for long periods of time… in which the coffership grew immeasurably in stature."[12] As the members were promoted to new and higher level positions, they gained financial strength and prestige, and due to the make-up of the group, they had broad influence both politically and geographically. As was the practice of the day, they used their positions of influence to their advantage, particularly to acquire land.

Josiah Wedgwood lists William Cope as 'of Banbury' and MP for Ludgershall, Wiltshire in 1491-2. He wrote a detailed article about William in his *History of Parliament*, and only two of the many titles, dates, names and facts are off the mark. He lists William as '[son and heir] of Alexander Cope of Bramshill, Hants, and Dishenger, N'hants'. Alexander is correct, but the Copes did not see Bramshill until 1700. Beyond that, Wedgwood lists William's first wife as Barbara Quarles, which is not correct. That William sat in the 1491 Parliament should not be in question, though it appears in no other records. Some minor errors in Wedgwood's article can be overlooked in the presence of an impressive description of William's life.[13]

After his stint in Parliament William focused on his position in the royal household, by this time Sergeant of the Catery. This position was responsible for the distribution of provisions to and within the royal household, and was a great stepping stone to his future role as Cofferer.[14]

William's first wife Agnes had died by this time, but his fortunes took a significant upturn as he was named Cofferer to King Henry VII on 30 September 1494.[15] Not long after, he married his second wife Jane

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[11] *ODNB*, Reginald Bray, Richard Empson, Henry Colet, William Smith.

[12] C. Ross, ed., *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in later medieval England*, (1979): article by M. Condon, 'Ruling Elites' p.109.

[13] J. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament* (1936), p. 219.

[14] *CPR 8 Henry VII*, part II, 26 March 1493.

[15] TNA E 101/414/2 & E 101/415/15.

Spencer Saunders. Jane was the daughter of John Spencer of Hodnell, Warwickshire and widow of William Saunders, a prominent Banbury merchant.[16] Beesley in *The History of Banbury* (1842) has this wrong, with William Cope being Jane's first husband. Beesley justifies her burial with William in Banbury Church as choosing to be buried with the higher ranking of her two husbands.[17] In fact, William Saunders died by late 1493, and by Jane had four daughters. Jane's mother was Anne Empson, sister of Sir Richard Empson, a key member of Lady Margaret's mafia.[18] Interestingly, William Cope's eldest son Stephen, by his first wife Agnes, married Anne Saunders, eldest daughter of William's second wife Jane and her first husband William Saunders.[19]

The office of Cofferer would provide a significant challenge to anyone trying to satisfy the needs of the royal household without having control of the income. Additional challenges can arise as kings were encouraged to be prudent in their spending at the risk of being accused of profligacy. On 17 June 1499 an indenture (*Calendar of Close Rolls*, Henry VII, Vol 1) was executed between Henry VII and officers of the royal household. The structure of the bureaucracy and the accountability built into it are important if we are to fully understand William's responsibilities. This indenture does several things very effectively. First, it guarantees that the cofferer will have sufficient funds to provision the household, and the steward is bound to provide those funds. Second, it reiterated that there were budgeted funds (tallies) 'by authority of parliament', and if there are additional requirements, that allowances will be made. Third, it holds all of the household officers, not just the cofferer, accountable to 'content the king'. Fourth, it establishes that there is an objective of saving on expenses, and last, that the cofferer shall be held harmless by privy council. While the royal household was anything but frugal, there were limits to the spending.

In addition to William's duties as cofferer, the office of Treasurer was vacant from 1488, and the cofferer assumed those duties as well. In 1540, sometime later but still relevant, the annual salary for treasurer was £123 14s 8d, and for cofferer it was £100.[20] It is doubtful that William was paid both salaries, even though his star was in the ascendant.

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[16] *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica*, Third Series, Vol IV (1902).

[17] A. Beesley, *The History of Banbury* (1842), p.193, fn.43.

[18] TNA PROB 11/22/125, will of Jane Spencer Saunders Cope.

[19] TNA PROB 11/10/83, will of William Saunders.

[20] www.history.ac.uk/resources/office/greencloth_treas. Officers of the Green Cloth.

Both William and Jane had been living in Banbury prior to their marriage. It was about this time that William began accumulating land in that area. Jane's first husband, William Saunders was a merchant of some means in Banbury, and had a house on Barkhill Street opposite the market cross.[21] Saunders left all his worldly goods to his eldest daughter Anne, but her mother Jane 'shall have the custody, ward, rule and guiding of my said daughters.'[22] William Cope states in his will that he leaves 'Jane all my household stuff lying in the great house upon the Barkhill in Banbury where I was wont to dwell.'[23] He doesn't specifically leave her the house, as it may not have been his to leave. It may have been William Saunders's house. This was over fifteen years after William and Jane married, but it makes sense that they lived in Saunders's (now Jane's) house on the Barkhill, strategically located just outside the entrance to Banbury Castle.[24]

William and Jane had three sons: Anthony (1496-1551), who was styled 'the author' as he was well-educated, well-travelled and had penned several books; William (b.1498, d. by 1537) of whom less is known though he had a minor role at court; and John (1504 - 1558) who would become known as John of Canon's Ashby.[25]

In 1496, around the time of the birth of his second son Anthony, William executed a 99-year lease of the manor of Hardwick with the Bishop of Lincoln.[26] Hardwick is a mile or so north of Banbury church; the lease included all lands and fishing rights. The greater Banbury area was one of the Bishopric of Lincoln's major property holdings and the bishop often stayed at Banbury Castle.[27] About six months before this lease was executed, on New Year's Day 1496, Lady Margaret Beaufort threw a big celebration for her close friend William Smith on his elevation to the bishopric of Lincoln,[28] most likely at her palace at Colleyweston. This was the same William Smith with whom William

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[21] B. Little, *Banbury, A History* (2003) p.22.

[22] TNA PROB 11/10/83, will of William Saunders.

[23] TNA PROB 11/17/2, will of William Cope.

[24] Little, *Banbury*, map p.24.

[25] TNA PROB 11/17/2, will of William Cope.

[26] Hampshire Record Office, 43M48/90, 22 June 1496.

[27] Beesley, *Banbury*, p.188.

[28] Jones, *The King's Mother*, p.158.

Cope and other Lady Margaret Beaufort employees had participated in land deals over the past fifteen years. At Hardwick, over time, William evicted the four tenants, depopulated the hamlet, and began to turn it into a single enclosed farm. Without confirmation, it is difficult to understand whether there was any consideration for the tenants. Enclosure does eliminate common grazing areas likely used by the tenants prior to their eviction. Over time, William acquired other small holdings in the township adjacent to Hardwick so that after some time had passed, it was difficult to tell where the lease stopped and the freehold started.[29]

Less than two years later, on 7 May 1498, William was granted the manors of Wormleighton and Fenny Compton, lands forfeited to the crown on the attainder of Simon Mountfort in 1495.[30] Both were large properties for which William had to pay a total annual rent of 20 marks. In the year after he gained possession he depopulated the village of Wormleighton and enclosed 240 acres. We don't know whether he simply terminated the arrangements of the tenants and ran them off or bought them out as one source suggests.[31] Buying up large properties that were generally arable, and turning them into one large enclosed pasture for the grazing of sheep or cattle, significantly increasing the value of the property and the annual income, is a pattern that William followed throughout his life. Later that year in October of 1498, William was granted rights to the Manor of Hanwell. This too was land that was forfeit, due to the treason of Edmund de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk.[32] The original grant of 1498 was reconfirmed on 16 July 1502.[33] It was on this property that William began construction of his great manor house, Hanwell Hall or House, now Hanwell Castle.

While the late-1490's saw the acquisition of Hardwick by lease, followed close on by Wormleighton and Fenny Compton, and Hanwell, William was not done. It is difficult to comprehend the amount of time and effort involved in assimilating four major properties into one's portfolio, particularly in light of William's

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[29] *Victoria County History of Oxfordshire: Banbury Hundred*, Vol 10, p.42.

[30] *CPR Henry VII*, Vol 2, p.133.

[31] J. Wheeler, *Where Sheep Safely Graze – The Story of Wormleighton* (2010), p.29.

[32] Hampshire Record Office, 43M48/94, 17 October 1498.

[33] *CPR Henry VII*, Vol 2, p.259.

Hanwell Church and Castle-Tower. *Courtesy Bodleian Library.*

aggressive estate management philosophy. And it must be said that he was doing this all the while he had a full-time job 'contenting the king'. The following few years saw more land deals in Surrey, Sussex and Warwickshire. In addition, he added to his land holdings in the greater Banbury area, particularly lands adjacent to his manor of Hardwick.[34] As William was adding to his portfolio, his great patron and former boss, Sir Reginald Bray died in 1503.[35] The list of Bray's executors reads like a list of Lady Margaret Beaufort's employees, or a list of Bray's feofees in land deals: Smith, Oldham, Empson, Cutte, Conyngsbye, Digby, Compton and Cope. This was a very tightly knit group that had been co-workers, then partners in business, and likely friends, so it makes sense that Bray would select them to represent him in the after-life.

A unique episode in William's life occurred in August 1503. Princess Margaret, daughter of King Henry VII, Lady Margaret Beaufort's namesake and favorite grandchild, travelled from Henry's palace at Richmond to Collyweston and then on to Scotland to be married to King

[34] *Calendar of Close Rolls (CCR) Henry VII*, Vol 2, pp. 92, 214.

[35] *ODNB*, Reginald Bray.

James IV. William accompanied the young princess to Scotland and received a 'great gilt standing cup with branches from James, King of the Scots.'[36] King Henry further demonstrated his faith in William by appointments to various commissions of a law enforcement nature. In 1502, he was named to Commissions of the Peace for Surrey continuously through 1506 and Oxfordshire through 1509. In 1505, he was appointed to a commission in Surrey and Sussex, 'to enquire of concealed lands, wards, &c.'[37]

In 1504, William sat in parliament again, this time for the town of Southampton.[38] That was the first parliament to have met in seven years.[39] Wedgwood is somewhat circumspect in his article on William Cope, stating, 'His domicile had become Hants. If he sat in the 1504 Parlt., it was for a Hants. seat.'[40] He did sit in a Hampshire seat for the town of Southampton, but his primary domicile remained Banbury. There is no evidence that he relocated to the greater Southampton area. Grants of land in that area were not forthcoming until June 1509 when he was named Constable of Porchester Castle,[41] and later that year as keeper for life of Bedhampton Park.[42] In addition, since 1496, he had been accumulating land in and around Banbury and had been granted the manor of Hanwell six years earlier, likely having begun construction on Hanwell Castle by that time.

William sold Wormleighton and Fenny Compton to his wife's cousin, John Spencer[43] in 1506 for £2,000, an enormous sum and quite a gain on a grant for which he was paying only 20 marks (£13 6s 8d) per year.[44] By enclosing Wormleighton immediately after he acquired it, he increased the annual income as well as the total value of the holding. With this war chest of £2,000, William continued to consolidate his positions in and around Banbury and likely covered some construction expenses on Hanwell Castle. In June of the following year, he concluded

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36 TNA PROB 11/40/278, will of John Cope, youngest son of William Cope.
37 *CPR Henry VII*, Vol 2, 27 June 1506.
38 *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, Vol vi, p.538.
39 P. Cavill, *The English Parliaments of Henry VII 1485 – 1504* (Oxford Univ Press, 2009) p. 169.
40 Wedgwood, *History of Parliament*, p. 219.
41 *Letters and Papers (L&P) Henry VIII*, Vol 1, p. 36 number 90.
42 *Ibid*, p. 98, number 23.
43 A. Flint, *Village Trail Countryside Walk Wormleighton* (leaflet, April 1996).
44 Wheeler, *Where Sheep Safely Graze*, p. 29.

a 99-year lease with William Dodyngton, prior of Bicester Priory and Convent, for the manor of Grimsbury, with lands in Warkworth, Middleton, Overthorpe, Huscote, and Nethercote.[45] Most of these were properties just across the Cherwell from Banbury and virtually contiguous, albeit in another county.

Henry VII had been ill in the last years of his life and finally succumbed in April 1509.[46] William was one of the Squires of the Body at Henry's funeral.[47] He was succeeded by his son and heir Henry VIII, who continued to recognize and reward William with re-confirmation of grants made by his father, as well as new grants and positions of responsibility.[48]48 Some of the grants included William's son Stephen who also worked in the royal households of both Henry VII and Henry VIII.

A previous Cope biographer, J. C. Biddle-Cope, who published *The Copes of Wiltshire* in 1881 while attending Oxford, makes the case that William had '…received the honour of knighthood at the hands of his prince…'[49] In addition, *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica,* Series 3 Vol 4, p.208 fn also refers to William as Sir William Cope, the Cofferer. This can be put to rest. The section above describes William as Squire of the Body. He even styled himself squire in the preamble of his testament,[50] and it was etched in marble at the site of his tomb.[51] He never achieved knighthood.

William started with nothing and made his way by his wits. He gained employment in the right household at the right time. Consequently, he associated with well-connected individuals and remained loyal to his friends, his employers and his kings, throughout his lifetime. He had an affinity for numbers and parlayed that into a career in the royal household, accumulating a portfolio of real estate that became a significant legacy for his children. We will learn more about William from his will.

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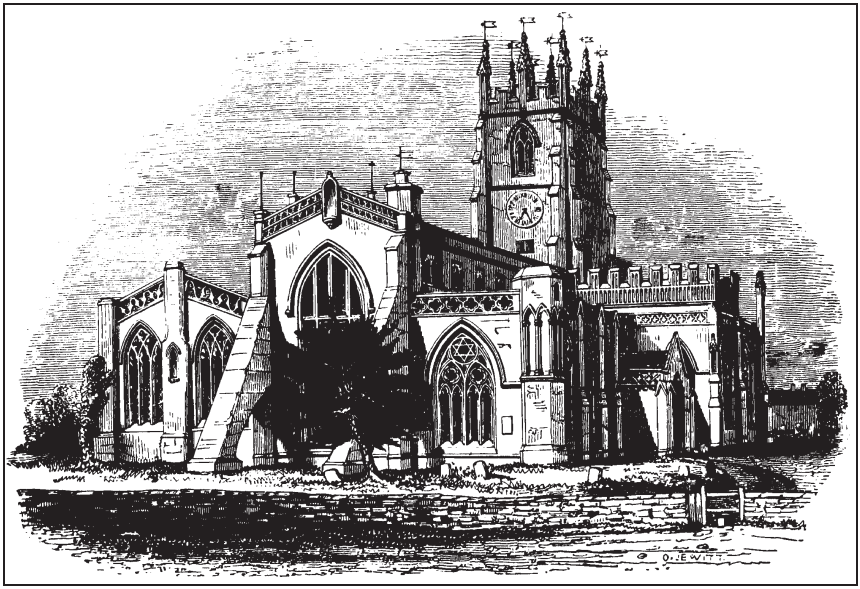
45 Hampshire Record Office, 43M48/92, 12 June 1507.
46 S. B. Chrimes, *Henry VII* (University of California Press, 1972), pp. 313-4.
47 *L&P Henry VIII*, Vol I, p. 8, f 130.
48 *Ibid*, p. 330, number 18.
49 J. C. Biddle-Cope, *The Copes of Wiltshire* (1881), p. 8.
50 TNA PROB 11/17/2, will of William Cope.
51 Beesley, *Banbury*, p. 193, fn 41.



Banbury Church, in Oxfordshire. *Hawkins sculp.*
Published according to Act of Parliament by Alexr. Hogg No. 16 Paternoster Row.

The Last Will and Testament of William of Hanwell

After starting with nothing and living some 60-odd years, William died on the 7th April 1513 having amassed significant wealth and leaving behind a very large historical footprint. His last will and testament tells us as much or more about William as any of the many grants, commissions, land transactions or other documents left in his wake. It demonstrates a level of organization and attention to detail that could be described as excessive with a degree of fairness bordering on the judicial. He was buried as requested[52] in the Trinity aisle of the old Church of Banbury (St. Mary), under windows he had reglazed before his death, beneath a tomb of black marble. Leland says of Banbury Church 'It is a large thing, especially in the Breadth. I sawe but one notable tumbe in the chirche, and that is of blake marble; wherein William Cope, coferer to Kynge Henry the vii is buried.'[53]

From Beesley, the Latin inscriptions, translated:

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[52] TNA PROB 1/17/2, will of William Cope.

[53] *Leland's Itinerary*, ed. L. Toulmin Smith (Southern Illinois Univ Press, 1964), Vol 2, p. 39.

Here lieth William Coope, esquire, formerly Cofferer of the household of the most famous and excellent King Henry the Seventh, which William died the 7th day of the month of April, in the year of our Lord, 1513. On whose soul may God have mercy. Amen [54]

William's second wife, Jane Spencer Saunders Cope, who survived him and died in 1525, was buried here as well and her epitaph is as follows:

Here lyeth Jane Coope wyddow late the wife of Will' Coope Esq. sometime Cofferar to K. Hen. VII. which Jane died on the xii day of Febr. an. Dom. MVcXXV on whose [soule Jh'u have mercy. Amen][55]

In addition to the tomb, the arms of William Cope were mounted in the south aisle of the church:

Argent on a chevron azure between three roses gules, slipped and leaved vert, as many fleur de lys or.

and for his work, allusive to his office as Cofferer:

Argent three coffers, [2 & 1] sable garnished or.

There was an inscription under the arms relating to the windows, in Latin, here translated:

William Coope, Esq., formerly cofferer of the household of the most illustrious Agnes and Jane wives. [56]

William's testament deals with the disposition of his soul and his personal effects. After the traditional opening paragraphs dealing with his soundness of mind, bequest of his body to the Almighty, and reparations to the church, he gets right to the heart of the matter. He leaves 500 marks in ready money to his wife Jane but specifies the manner and form that it be delivered over three years. He also leaves 'all my household stuff' in the great house in Banbury to Jane. William goes on to bequeath the lease of the manors of Hardwick and Grimsbury to his wife Jane until his son Anthony reaches age 26, instructing the executors that £40 should be taken from the income for 'Anthony at his learning in one of the four Inns of Court till he come to the said age of 26 years.' He then establishes a pattern that is followed throughout the balance of the testament and will. 'And if the said Anthony happen to die afore he come to the age of 26 years…' then the same treatment for the next son, William. And if the said William happen to die…then the same treatment for the next son in line,

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[54] Beesley, *Banbury*, p.193, fn 41.
[55] *Ibid*, p.193; fn.42 details the heraldry.
[56] Beesley, *Banbury*, p. 193, fn 41.

John, the youngest. Absolutely nothing is left to chance or to the interpretation of the executors. He makes provision for the education of William and John; instructs Jane to make sure she pays the yearly leases to the Bishop of Lincoln and Prior of Bicester, of whom the two manors are held; and provides instructions in the event that Jane should die or marry before one of the sons reaches age 26. It is only in the event that Jane and her three sons are out of the picture that Stephen, the eldest son, is in line to inherit the use of Hardwick and Grimsbury. Stephen was born in 1473, so he was aged about 40 when William was crafting this document. He was out in the world making his own way, surely with William's assistance. It seems that the leases of Hardwick and Grimsbury were special to William, certainly very valuable and worthy of special treatment, with the details and dates of each lease spelled out in the testament. He closes the testament with bequests for 'an honest priest to say mass for my soul', payments to the church wardens for obits, a bequest to two of his servants, and payments to his executors and overseers for their due diligence in the execution of his will.[57]

The final line of the testament is a specific instruction to his executors. 'And I will that mine executors in as short time as they can after my death shall finish and make my house at Hanwell in like manner & proportions as it is begun and according to a plat thereof made.'

This is interesting on more than one count. It has been fourteen years since he was granted the manor of Hanwell and his great manor house is still unfinished. We don't know when construction got under way and we don't know what or even if any type of manor house was on the property when he received the grant. We do know he 'was wont to dwell' in the great house on Barkhill in Banbury, so the unfinished manor house was probably not habitable. Also, since Anthony was born about 1496, he had not achieved his father's somewhat arbitrary age of majority, 26 years, by the time of William's death.[58] From the *Victoria County History* for Oxfordshire:

> '…sometime after 1518, William Cope's executors brought a chancery action against Anthony for refusing to finish the rebuilding of the house.'[59]

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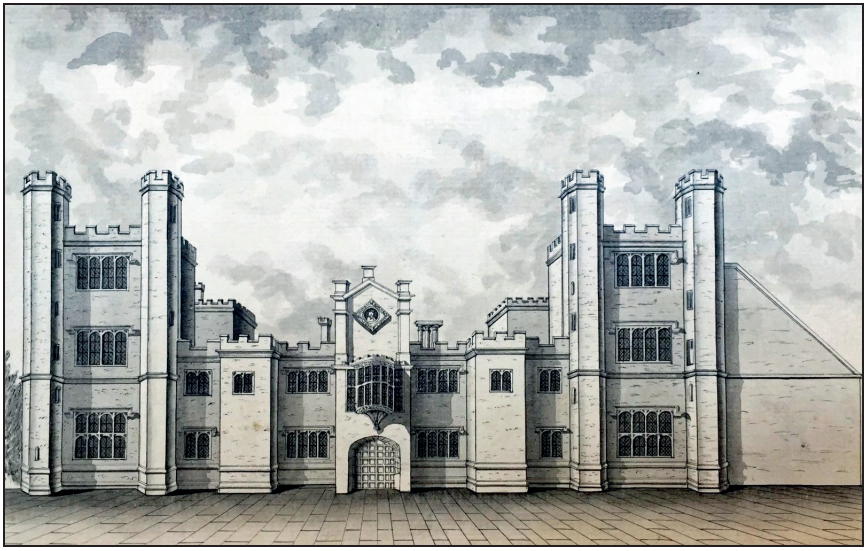
[57] TNA PROB 11/17/2, will of William Cope.

[58] TNA PROB 11/17/2, will of William Cope, as fn.57.

[59] *Victoria County History of Oxfordshire*: *Bloxham Hundred*, Vol. 9, p.113.



‘Hanwell Castle in ruins’ (hand-written caption on original)
or ‘before its partial demolition’ (as captioned in *VCH, vol*. 9, facing p.114).
Unsigned drawing (n.d. 18th century). *Courtesy Bodleian Library*.

The reference for this statement is a document in The National Archives. When this document is reviewed it clearly states that Anthony was the plaintiff, and the executors including his older half-brother Stephen, were the defendants.[60] This makes much more sense than the *VCH* version of the story. William clearly left instructions for the executors to finish the house ‘…in as short time as they can…’[61] Anthony was not yet 26 and consequently had no responsibility to finish construction, but stood to inherit Hanwell when he achieved that age, so it was in his best interest to have the house completed as quickly as possible, hence the legal action.

The will portion of the last will and testament follows the same format as the testament. Stephen, who was treated last in the testament gets first billing in the will, receiving specific properties in London and all of William’s assets in the counties of Essex and Surrey. Stephen had a position in the royal household and was in London frequently so it made sense for these properties to go to him. There are no additional provisions made in the event that Stephen were to die, as he was in his

[60] TNA C 1/399/39, Cope v. Cope, 1515–1518.
[61] TNA PROB 11/17/2, will of William Cope.

majority, married and had heirs of his own. Interestingly, there are no inquisitions *post mortem* (IPM) for the Essex and Surrey properties.

The bequest to Anthony, when he comes of age (26) include the manor of Hanwell and all William's lands in Oxfordshire, plus all lands in Banbury and Neithrop. 'And for default of such issue' *ie*, Anthony or his male heirs, the properties go to William, and then to John, and then to Stephen. For William, the manor of Howbery in Ewelme Hundred, with the succession being first Anthony, then John, and then Stephen. But if William dies before reaching the age of 26, the executors shall continue with the feofees in place until such time as William might have come of age had he lived. All contingencies are accounted for.

For John, it is the manor of Hyle (Heale) in Wiltshire plus the manor of Eastham in Somerset. William's Somerset IPM says that this land was held *in capite* by virtue of a fine levied Michaelmas term 16 Henry VII (1500).[62] There is some controversy regarding this land. Reginald Bray purchased the manor of Eastham in 1500. After his death in 1503, William, one of the feofees in the transaction, claimed the manor alleging that Bray had bought only an annuity. William posited that he had acquired the manor from John Hayes, who had been accused of treason. William paid the fine for Hayes to secure the King's grace, and the manor came to him as part repayment. The Somerset inquisition *post mortem* supports William's version of events and the manor subsequently went to his youngest son John.[63] The reversions are to Anthony, then to William, and then to Stephen. The same language exists as above for John's legacy should he not reach the age of 26.[64]

The *VCH* for Wiltshire notes that in 1513 William 'was said to have held Heale manor for a long time'.[65] Rather than 'a long time', Heale was only held by William for about three years prior to his death, having received the grant in 1510.[66]

The Curious matter of Jane Burnby

> 'Item, where I lately bought the custody and marriage of Jane Burnby, daughter & heir apparent of Thomas Burnby, I will that mine executors shall marry the said Jane to the said Anthony Cope if the said Anthony and Jane

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[62] TNA C 142/28/29, William Cope, *Inquisition Post Mortem (IPM)*, Somerset.
[63] Hicks, ed., *Profit, Piety & the Professions*: Condon, *Reynold Bray*, p.155.
[64] TNA C 142/28/29, William Cope, *IPM*, Somerset.
[65] *Victoria County History of Wiltshire*, Vol 6, p.221.
[66] *L&P Henry VIII*, Vol 2, p. 281, number 44; *CCR*, 18 Nov. 20 Edward III [1346]; *CCR* 18 Oct. 38 Edward III [1364].

will thereto assent and agree; And if the said Anthony and Jane will not agree to be married togethers, then I will that mine executors shall marry the said Jane to the said William Cope, my son, if the same Jane and William will thereto assent and agree. [67]

The purchase of an heiress was not uncommon in late-medieval England. Here we have Jane Burnby daughter and heir apparent to Thomas Burnby and the modest manor of Norton, Northamptonshire, purchased by William Cope in order to settle her and her estate on one of his sons, either Anthony or William. Stephen was already married by this time, and John was only nine or ten years old. As Jane and the manor of Norton would go to the son becoming the successful marriage partner, that son would give up his earlier detailed legacy, and there is the inevitable cascade of property reversion spelled out for each possible option. In addition, Norton evidently did not produce sufficient income relative to some of the other property bequests, so there is an additional £5 per year to come from Grimsbury to the successful couple. The incredible detail of who gets what if Anthony marries Jane, or if William marries Jane or if one dies, and the reversions in every case, are an indication of the organized mind that William developed from the time he worked for Bray, Lady Margaret Beaufort, and Henry VII, and the experience in real estate contract law gained from witnessing and participating in many land deals during his lifetime. Also it speaks to a level of discipline and control tempered with fairness that are at the very core of William's life. And just in case there was no successful marriage in his family, William provided for that as well:

'And if the said William, my son, and Jane will not agree to be married together, then I will that mine executors shall marry the said Jane by their discretion without disparagement'.

After detailing the land distribution outlined in his will, William's IPM for Oxfordshire tells us that his son William married Jane Burnby in St. James Church on Garlickhythe in London on 7 May 1513, exactly one month after his father's death. Consequently, the manor of Norton went to William and Howbery reverted to Stephen.[68] We only have a few notices of William, mostly in service at court; nothing at all survives of Jane and there is no evidence of issue. A Feet of Fines document dated Mich/Hil 29 Henry VIII (1537) details the payment of annual rent

[67] TNA PROB 11/17/2, will of William Cope.
[68] TNA C 142/28/31, William Cope, *IPM*, Oxfordshire.

to Anthony Cope for the manor of Norton. While there are no other corroborating documents this clearly implies that William had died by this time and Norton reverted to his elder brother Anthony. The last record of William in service at court was in May 1533, as a waiter at the coronation of Ann Boleyn.[69] Most Cope family pedigrees list his death as 1567, but it could be that his death date was confused with a great nephew, yet another William (eldest son of Edward Cope) who died 20 May 1566. His IPM is dated in the regnal year '9 Elizabeth', but it noted that he died on '20 May last past', hence some potential confusion over 1566 or 1567. There is no IPM for the elder William so his death date is unknown, but the fact that Anthony was collecting rents for Norton in 1537 certainly implies his demise.

The will gives us some insight into William of Hanwell's personality. He was a very detailed and controlling person. The level of detail of each bequest and the concomitant cascade of reversions in the event of default are repetitive and become tedious, making his will a very difficult document to read and digest. The detail of the Hardwick and Grimsbury leases are spelled out almost in an attempt to relive his victories or to remind his heirs of how important these properties were to him. This level of detail may have been an attempt to un-blur the lines between the leasehold properties and the freehold that was acquired later and added to a single enclosed farm in both cases. While some of his properties were described in detail, some were just generally described by their county. Paradoxically, more detail may have eliminated a dispute between Stephen and Anthony over property in the Banbury area that was settled in 1529.

While William provided significant lands to his wife and sons, his establishment of 26 as the age of majority for his sons was well in excess of the norms of the day – an indication of his view of when a man could properly handle the responsibility of large land holdings. On the softer side, he did not dictate who should marry Jane Burnby, whether Anthony or William, and included language requiring the couples' assent. William lived his life in service and remained loyal to his employers: Bray, Lady Margaret, Henry VII, and Henry VIII. He would certainly expect no less from his sons.

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[69] *L&P Henry VIII*, Vol. 6, p. 234, Add MS 21, 116, f.48 BM, Coronation of Ann Boleyn.

Calendar of Close Rolls, *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, and *Victoria County History* are sourced from the digital versions available on British History Online, and only the first page of the sequence is given.

The author:

I am a retired American steel company executive, amateur medievalist and avid outdoorsman. While taking Medieval Studies courses at Cambridge in 2011, I met Dr. Rowena Archer, director of the Medieval Studies Summer Program at Cambridge and a fellow at Brasenose College and lecturer at Christ Church, Oxford. At our first meeting after seeing my name on the student roll she said, "You're never going to believe this..." She and her husband Christopher reside in Hanwell Castle, near Banbury, built in the early sixteenth century by William Cope, cofferer to Henry VII, and descendant of John Cope of Deanshanger. The Copes in America are descended from Stephen Cope, eldest son of William Cope of Hanwell. My inspiration for the study of the ancient Copes came from Dr. Archer.

billcope44@gmail.com

A typical summer Saturday scene at the new Banbury station in 1959. On the left a 'County' class 4-6-0 is heading for the West Midlands with a train of mixed stock from the south coast. A V2 class 2-6-2 waits in a bay platform for a train for the Great Central line, while a 'Hall' class 4-6-0 acts as station pilot. *Courtesy of Ian Stratford.*

Banbury Historical Society

Junctions at Banbury: a town and its railways since 1850.

The next volume in the Banbury Historical Society's records series will be Barrie Trinder's *Junctions at Banbury: a town and its railways since 1850* which is scheduled to appear in the late summer of 2017. The book originated with a lecture that Dr Trinder gave to the Historical Society's village meeting at Somerton in the spring of 2014. A 20-minute survey of the history of the railway through the Cherwell Valley aroused such interest that it seemed worthwhile to put into book form an accumulation of data made over many decades. The book is a work of synthesis which uses many published sources some on obscure aspects of railway history. Some ideas of the ideas discussed are drawn from the works of the railway historians Simon Bradley, Michael Robbins and Jack Simmons.

This is a work both of railway history and of local history. It details the growth of the railway network in the South Midlands and analyses the services, both local and long-distance, offered by the railway companies. It is written by an experienced historian who enjoys and knows about railways but takes a more detached and dispassionate view of railway operations than many authors of published works on railway history. It makes extensive use of data from nineteenth-century Banbury newspapers, from census enumerators' returns, timetables, maps and archive photographs. The book is thoroughly referenced with a comprehensive bibliography.

Published railway histories tend to concentrate on companies, particularly the smaller ones. This study owes much to the histories of the Banbury & Cheltenham Railway by Russell and by Hemmings and partners, and those of the Stratford & Midland Junction Railway by Dunn and by Riley and Simpson. Branches attract more attention than main lines, and the value of the studies of the Buckinghamshire Railway by Simpson is gratefully acknowledged. Many books describe particular classes of locomotive, and an extensive literature is devoted to carriages and wagons. The study of Great Western coaching stock by the Banburian Jim Russell has proved particularly valuable. Images are an important source for all aspects of industrial archaeology, and collections of railway photographs, particularly those that show trains

rather than locomotives, have proved illuminating. There is a long tradition of amateur observation and recording of happenings on Britain's railways. The *Railway Magazine* began publication in 1897 and the *Railway Observer* in 1929, and there was a remarkable rise in interest in railways in the closing years of the Second World War, marked by the publication in 1942 of the first *ABC* locomotive listings by Ian Allan, but also by a proliferation of cyclostyled leaflets by groups of young railway enthusiasts across the country. Other publications record the recollections of railway workers, and those by John Drayton who lived and worked in Banbury in 1934-35 and Sam Grigg, who drove trains from Bletchley to Merton Street station have proved especially enlightening.

The first impact of a railway on a town was on its topography. The landscape of Banbury was not radically changed when the railways arrived, but the establishment of the stations led to some reorientation of the town centre. Railways certainly gave better opportunities for travellers to nearby market towns of the same order of size, and to London, while excursions provided prospects for visiting places previously accessible only to the wealthy.

Railways brought coal to Banbury from collieries that were not served by the canal system, and delivered it more conveniently to most country stations. Railways also supplied Banbury's shops with goods from the time they opened into the 1950s when a trailer stacked high with parcels would be delivered every weekday morning to the High Street premises of F W Woolworth. Manufactured goods sent to distant destinations in small consignments, in this case baskets of Banbury Cakes, also travelled by rail, as did larger manufactures, which at Banbury were agricultural machines carried on flat wagons. Railways also served primary industries, particularly the Oxfordshire quarries that produced ironstone for a century from the 1860s, but also the cement works at Harbury and Shipton-on-Cherwell.

Railway were significant employers within local communities. The navvies who constructed the lines can be analysed in detail only if they were present in one of the census years, as they were north of Banbury in 1851, and on two constituent parts of the Stratford & Midland Junction Railway in 1871. Many of those who subsequently worked on the railways were migrants from distant parts of England, and the census provides snapshots of the railway labour force at ten-yearly intervals. Banbury cannot be considered a railway town, in the sense that its

dominant industry was the construction of railway vehicles, as at Crewe, Swindon, Ashford, although there was a prospect in 1865 that part of the Swindon works would be re-located there. Nevertheless in the first 30 years of the twentieth century railwaymen were the largest occupational group in Banbury, and they probably comprised the second largest group after the opening of the aluminium factory in 1931 until the painful contractions of the 1960s.

The activities of Banbury's railwaymen had consequences beyond the town's boundaries. They drove, fired, signalled or shunted many passing trains which had few direct consequences for local people. They made it possible for West Midlanders to participate in King George V's Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1935 and for supporters of Newcastle United FC to see their team play at Fratton Park in 1952. The railways made possible the growth of the family seaside holiday from the 1930s, and its particular popularity between 1946 and 1964.

The freight carried by the railways, coal, shop goods, raw materials for foundries, obviously helped to shape Banbury's economy, but some traffics which made only a marginal local impact were of consequence in a national setting. Banbury railwaymen were involved for many decades in distributing fish, particularly from Grimsby and Hull, bananas from Avonmouth, tea and individual pork and fruit pies from J Lyons at Cadby Hall, Guinness from Park Royal, biscuits from Reading, Channel Islands fruit from Weymouth and Southampton and broccoli from Cornwall. They sustained the nation's need for energy by carrying coal and oil, and moved motor car parts between automotive plants in Oxford and the West Midlands.

Railways were the principal means of inland transport in both the world wars of the twentieth century. Official records are sparse, and censorship inhibited photography and the collection of data by individuals but it is possible to describe some aspects of operation. The junctions at Banbury lay at the heart of wartime railway activity.

This book is written in the knowledge that it is not possible to trace every decision made about railways in the past. Hugh Jones's excellent book on Chiltern Railways shows the complexity of events between 1996 and 2010, making effective use of the memories of those involved. While political and economic circumstances were different in earlier periods, commitments were probably undertaken in similar ways.

The book has 15 chapters plus prelims and bibliography, and the anticipated length is around 85,000 words. It will be well-illustrated with

about a hundred images, many previously unpublished, although it is not primarily a picture book. It includes images from several notable archives and private collections, as well as some of the author's own photographs from the 1950s and 60s. The illustrations will be used as evidence, and will have informative captions. There will be four maps by the cartographer Geoff Gwatkin, whose work appears in *Victorian Banburyshire* (BHS 33, 2013) and in some of the author's Shropshire publications.

Barrie Trinder is an experienced author of works on industrial and urban history, has been involved for more than half a century with the history of the Banbury region and is currently vice-president and an active committee member of the Banbury Historical Society. He edited *Cake & Cockhorse* for eleven years and published *Victorian Banbury* (BHS 19) in 1982 (It was re-printed in 2005). He has written at length on railways in *The Industrial Archaeology of Shropshire* (Phillimore, 1996; Logaston 2016), *Twentieth Century Industrial Archaeology* (jointly authored with Michael Stratton, Spon, 2000), in K Tiller & G Darkes, eds., *An Historical Atlas of Oxfordshire* (2010) and in the *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Industrial Archaeology* (1992), where his article on the steam locomotive was singled out for praise by a distinguished American reviewer as a model of lucidity.

Banbury's railways have undergone profound changes in recent decades, and their future can be regarded with more optimism than in the past. The year 2017 will see the opening of a new depot by Chiltern Railways, some 51 years after the opening of the GWR's engine shed. The book ends at an appropriate milepost.

It is anticipated that 'Junctions at Banbury' *will be published in the late summer of 2016. Copies will, of course, be distributed to paid-up members of the Banbury Historical Society. Further details will be announced in the next issue of* 'Cake & Cockhorse'.

Lecture Reports

Brian Little and Chris Day

Thursday10th November 2016

Opus Anglicanum and the Steeple Aston Cope

Zoe Boden

The dual attractions of the embroidery skills needed to produce the fine 'English Work' and local interest in the Steeple Aston Cope itself attracted a large audience few of whom would have gone away disappointed.

The well-illustrated talk opened with our speaker asking us to imagine ourselves in the setting of a mediaeval cathedral with its brightly painted wall pictures, coloured pillars and carved screen. As a procession approaches we become aware of chanting and singing, embroidered robes, priests wearing elaborate copes depicting religious scenes which shimmered in the candle light; a feast for all the senses.

Zeo Boden then went on to talk about the high point of 'English Work' between 1250 and 1350 which was highly prized for the quality of workmanship, materials used, and the skill of the designs worked. She then turned to copes, in particular highlighting the Toledo Cope and an example from St Peter and St Paul, Southwark. Large cathedrals would have copes in different liturgical colours. Salisbury lists 50 and Canterbury 164 but most church only one or two. The cost could be enormous depending on design, materials used and if gold thread and precious stones were required. Male workers who cut cloth and transferred the artist's designs were paid 4½p whereas women embroiders about half that sum.

The first recording of the Steeple Aston Cope was in 1844 when it was discovered in a chest. Unfortunately there is no inventory for the early church so we do not know how it came to be there. At the time of its manufacture the Church was very poor with no rector so a wealthy patron would be needed as indicated by the exceptional high quality of the work, the choice of silk with gold thread and the probability that pearls were used. Bishop Smith of Brasenose College, Oxford who left a cope is a possibility.

At some period the cope was adapted to fit in with changes in church worship, then cut into pieces to save it from destruction. It owes its present good condition to fact it lay hidden in the chest for so many years. It was lodged in the V & A in 1905 and has since made only a brief visit to the village for a fund raising event. Looking to the future, the lecturer felt that there was every reason to feel hopeful about its continued survival.

B.L.

Thursday 8th December 2016

The Elgin Marbles

Dr Steve Kershaw

Dr Kershaw started by pointing out that 2016 marks the two hundredth anniversary of the sale of the frieze to the British Museum so it was a good time to be examining the controversies surrounding these relics.

The building of the complex on the Acropolis of which the Parthenon was a part can be precisely dated to the mid-400 BC. Athens was a democracy and we know from the accounts carved on the building that it was a communal project built over a short period, the vast costs covered by tribute money from the Persians.

The frieze itself measured 180 metres and ran around the four sides of the Parthenon. The scene depicted is an idealised procession featured in an Athenian festival. Greek heroes representing order and civilisation are fighting Amazons and Centaurs. An inner frieze depicts riders and horses, charioteers, old men, musicians, water jar carriers, sacrificial animals, and women with the instruments of sacrifice received by heroes. Gods and Goddesses preside over the entrance. Inside was a larger than life gold and ivory statue of Athena: the gold was removed in hard times 295 BC.

The Parthenon was not famous in antiquity and had a turbulent history. It was sacked by the Goths in 4th century AD, became a church in 1204, under Ottoman rule from 1453 a mosque and a garrison and was subsequently damaged by a Venetian shell and used as a quarry by the Greeks.

In 1780, heavily influenced by growing interest in ancient Greek civilization, the French ambassador ordered casts to be made and pillaged some frieze figures which are now in the Louvre. Twelve years later Lord Elgin, British Ambassador to Turkey engaged a team of artists to do accurate drawings and to make casts. In the process parts of the frieze were removed. Lord Elgin went home in 1803 but the without the artefacts, which were impounded by the Turks. Eventually a deal was struck and a £5,000 purchased price agreed. The 'Elgin Marbles' were put on display in his Park Lane House and offered to the nation. After an investigation into proof of title, they were finally purchased for the nation in 1816 at a cost of £35,000 and sent to the British Museum.

In the final part of the lecture Dr Kershaw considered the pros and cons of restoring the Elgin Marbles to Greece. The legality of ownership aside, previous arguments that the Greek government would be unable to care for them no longer exist with the opening of the new Acropolis Museum.

Overall this was a most enjoyable lecture presented in a lively manner.

B.L.

Thursday 12 January 2017

History from Underneath: Women and Girls' Experience in the Era of Industrialisation

Professor Jane Humphries

Professor Humphries' lecture began with us flinching from the formidable glare of Susannah Griffiths, the Wolverhampton pit bank woman whose photograph was the first of several images that brought to life the remarkable stories of women and children who experienced the tumultuous and frequently harsh times of the Industrial Revolution. Professor Humphries has compiled a data set of 224 biographies of women and has been using them to recreate the lives and times of them and their children. It is well known that there was an upsurge of child labour in the period 1790-1850; indeed, it was integral to the Industrial Revolution. Nevertheless, Professor Humphries stressed, there is still much to be learned about the lives of individuals and families. She told us that families were characterised by 'breadwinner frailty': mothers were central but fathers were commonly distracted, unreliable and absent. Children were valued as secondary earners. We were given a detailed account of one particular story, that of Lucy Luck. Born in 1848, she was deserted by her alcoholic father, transferred to a workhouse and put to factory work at the age of nine. Her autobiography, *A Little of my Life*, appeared in 1926. As Professor Humphries, a distinguished economic historian admitted, her discipline can sometimes lose individual lives amid the econometrics.

In the great majority of autobiographies love and admiration of mothers contrasts with a reserved, often fearful and downright hostile attitude to fathers. Fertility and mortality alike were high, hunger and privation were common. Family size was a huge issue for girls, who had to look after younger siblings and blamed their fathers. The fears and dangers of child bearing bound mothers and daughters together. Sexual predation, almost never mentioned in men's biographies, is ever-present in those of women. The danger pursued girls who escaped an unhealthy family situation into institutional care: unfortunately, institutions were unlikely to be safe havens. The result might be post-traumatic stress disorder, at a time when no-one knew what that was. Sufferers were likely to be classified as 'feeble-minded'.

In the long run women campaigned on many of the same political and social issues as men: trade unionism, enfranchisement, education, pensions. But women drew attention also to other issues that were beyond male purview: family size, family allowances, maternal care.

It might seem to anyone not present that this was an unrelentingly grim evening, given the subject matter, but that was far from the case. Many of the people to whom we were introduced were truly inspirational. One thinks immediately of the amazing Mary Lucy, who served in the Royal Navy. As a man! The unquenchable human spirit of so many of the people we saw and heard from shone through. Their sacrifices, determination and sheer humanity helped guarantee that we would not have to live as they did. What would they make of us? **C.D.**

Annual Report 2016

from Deborah Hayter in the chair

The highlight of last year for me was our AGM held at Thenford, by kind invitation of Lord and Lady Heseltine. Lady Heseltine insisted on providing us with her own drinks and canapés, served by her butler – and this was definitely a first for this Society. I don't think we had ever before been looked after by a butler and it's not likely to happen again. She also gave us an excellent talk about the history of Thenford House and told us something about the modern developments of the garden and arboretum over the last forty years. In three different groups members were given the opportunity to see the Roman mosaic which had been lifted from the Thenford villa excavations in the 1950s and relaid in the house, and then Lady Heseltine gave us all a detailed tour of the ground floor rooms, full of beautiful things. It was a lovely day, and members were free to wander into the gardens as well. Altogether it was most successful and not surprisingly we had a huge turnout for it.

We have also been having large audiences for our monthly lectures: when I first started booking speakers I used to tell them that we sometimes had as many as fifty or sixty members attending, but in the last year we have often had seventy or so, and we had eighty four on one occasion. This led us to investigate the possibilities of moving to a bigger venue but all enquiries led us to the same conclusion – that there is no very satisfactory alternative lecture venue in Banbury, and we value our close connection to the Museum. So instead the Society made a donation to the Museum which enabled the purchase of a set of eighty- four folding chairs (which we tested out for comfort and fit) that go comfortably into the space without anyone feeling too cramped. The Museum's chairs which we had been

using before were rather over-generous in width which made it difficult to fit larger numbers in.

Our donation also went towards new audio-visual equipment so that the picture on the screen could be sharper and clearer as well as higher up: this meant that those sitting at the back could see, and all could hear better. We don't want any of our members to feel that there is no room for them, and at the same time we obviously want to bring in non-members if we can. At least two of our recent speakers have said how much they enjoyed speaking to the society and specifically mentioned the room: in a large lecture theatre there is little feeling of connection with the audience, whereas the Museum's education room does maximise direct communication with those listening. Our donation to the Museum – for the benefit of the Society – came partly from our General Fund and partly from the Brinkworth Museum Fund which has now been closed.

We began the year with Dr. Susan Walker of the Ashmolean Museum talking about the recent excavations at Steane Park: this is a puzzling site and Dr. Walker was trying to find parallels with other sites which might explain what was going on. Then we had Dr. David Robinson, a former county archivist, on local clergy in the Middle Ages, and Jennifer Thorp, the archivist of New College, talking about the legacy of William of Wykeham to New College and how he set it up. Our final lecture of the season was from Norman Hudson, with a mixture of optimism and pessimism about Historic Country Houses. At this lecture the education room was bursting at the seams.

We laid on three summer visits in 2016, all of which were well attended: Dale Johnston of the Museum led a tour round the remains of Banbury's First World War Munitions Factory in April; I led a tour round Fawsley Hall, Fawsley Church and the site of Fawsley deserted village at the end of May, and David Pym had organized a visit to Shakespeare's school in Stratford in June.

In September we welcomed back Julian Munby of Oxford Archaeology. He had been invited to talk to us about the new discoveries at the Westgate in Oxford, but instead what he really wanted to tell us about was the English Coach in the Kremlin. Not as odd as it sounds, as he is an expert in timber-framed buildings and seventeenth-century coaches are timber-framed, and he does a lot of linking of documentary history with extant remains. Christopher Danziger gave us a terrific account of the relationship of Wellington and Bonaparte which was full

of extraordinary facts, and then we had Zoe Boden, a doctoral student who told us all about the Steeple Aston cope which is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and formed part of a special exhibition of *Opus Anglicanum* embroideries. Our last lecture of 2016 was from Steve Kershaw, a popular tutor at OUDCE, who gave us a tour of the genesis and history of the so-called 'Elgin Marbles'.

The society's journal, *Cake & Cockhorse,* maintains a high standard and last year we published contributions from George Hughes, Walter Stageman, Nick Allen, Robert Caldicott, Judith Harvey and members of the committee. The journal owes much to Chris Day's work as editor and we still rely on Jeremy Gibson's expertise in paginating and getting copy ready for printing.

We are aware that members might be expecting a records volume sometime soon, and there are two in the pipeline: Jeremy Gibson continues to work on his volume on *Georgian Banbury*, largely based on the vestry books of the late eighteenth century, but meanwhile Barrie Trinder's next book *Junctions at Banbury* is almost complete and we look forward to publishing it later this year. This is all about the railways through Banbury and we think it will have a wide appeal to railway enthusiasts. There is also a third book in the offing: Brian Goodey is writing about the Morris & Co. stained glass in Middleton Cheney church.

We are delighted that new members continue to join us, so numbers remain healthy and our treasurer remains cheerful, despite the large sums that have gone towards improving facilities at the Museum. Your committee continues to work hard and I am grateful to all of them for all the tasks they undertake which enable the society to function and to flourish.

Banbury Historical Society

Income & Expenditure Accounts for year ending 31 December 2016

GENERAL FUND	2016	*2015*
INCOME		
Subscriptions	2,930	*2,864*
Income Tax refund	414	*456*
Sale of publications	569	*288*
Building Society interest	25	*25*
Transfer from Brinkworth Museum Fund	2,948	*0*
Other	173	*108*
Total Income	7,059	*3,741*
EXPENDITURE		
Cake & Cockhorse	1,176	*995*
Records Volumes costs	0	*240*
Meetings	781	*629*
Reception & AGM	104	*88*
Postage and other administration costs	970	*1,232*
Donation to Banbury Museum	5,457	*0*
Total Expenditure	8,488	*3,184*
Deficit from *(Surplus to)* **General Fund**	**(1,429)**	*557*

BRINKWORTH MUSEUM FUND		
INCOME		
Building Society interest	6	*7*
Share of surplus from Magna Carta event	*0*	*872*
EXPENDITURE		
Transfer to General Fund	2,948	
Balance of contribution to new Banbury Museum website	*0*	*280*
Deficit from *(Surplus to)* **Brinkworth Museum Fund**	**(2,942)**	*599*

Banbury Historical Society

Balance Sheets as at 31 December 2016

GENERAL FUND	2016	*2015*
Balance at 1 January 2016	12,389	*11,832*
LESS Deficit *(Plus surplus)* for the year	1,429	*557*
Balance at 31 December 2016	**10,960**	*12,389*
BRINKWORTH MUSEUM FUND		
Balance at 1 January 2016	2,942	*2,343*
LESS Deficit *(Plus surplus)* for the year	2,942	*599*
Balance at 31 December 2016	**0**	*2,942*
TOTAL BALANCE at 31 December 2016	**10,960**	*15,331*

Represented by:

ASSETS		
NatWest Bank Banbury - Current A/c	1,842	*4,351*
Leeds Building Society - General A/c	9,985	*8,512*
Leeds Building Society - Brinkworth Museum A/c	0	*2,942*
Cash	17	*52*
TOTAL ASSETS	11,844	*15,857*
Less LIABILITIES		
Subscriptions in advance	884	*526*
NET ASSETS at 31 December 2016	**10,960**	*15,331*

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 2016.

Peter Cottrell 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 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 Frietas (vol. 28).

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

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' 1832-1906
(Alphabetical Digest and DVD facsimile) (vol. 34).

Current prices and availability of other back volumes, and of *Cake and Cockhorse*, from the Society, 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.

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.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will take place on Thursday July 14th 2016 at 5.30pm in the Church Barn, Thenford, by kind invitation of Lord and Lady Heseltine.

AGENDA

1) Apologies for absence
2) Minutes of the previous AGM
3) Annual report and accounts for 2015 (published in *Cake & Cockhorse)*
4) Election of Honorary Officers (Secretary and Treasurer)
5) Election of Committee members
6) Adoption of revised constitution (as previously circulated)
7) Appointment of auditor
8) Any other business

Please send any nominations for Secretary, Treasurer or Committee members to Simon Townsend, Hon. Secretary (c/o Banbury Museum or simon.townsend@banburymuseum.org).
Directions: go through Thenford village towards the church which is signposted on the corner; there is a paddock in front of it and the Barn is on the left.
After the meeting and refreshments we will go up to Thenford House where Lady Heseltine will say something about the house.

ABSOLUTELY NO CAMERAS PLEASE

Digitally printed by Parchments of Oxford
Printworks, Crescent Road, Cowley, Oxford, England OX4 2PB
email: print@parchmentUK.com www.ParchmentUK.com