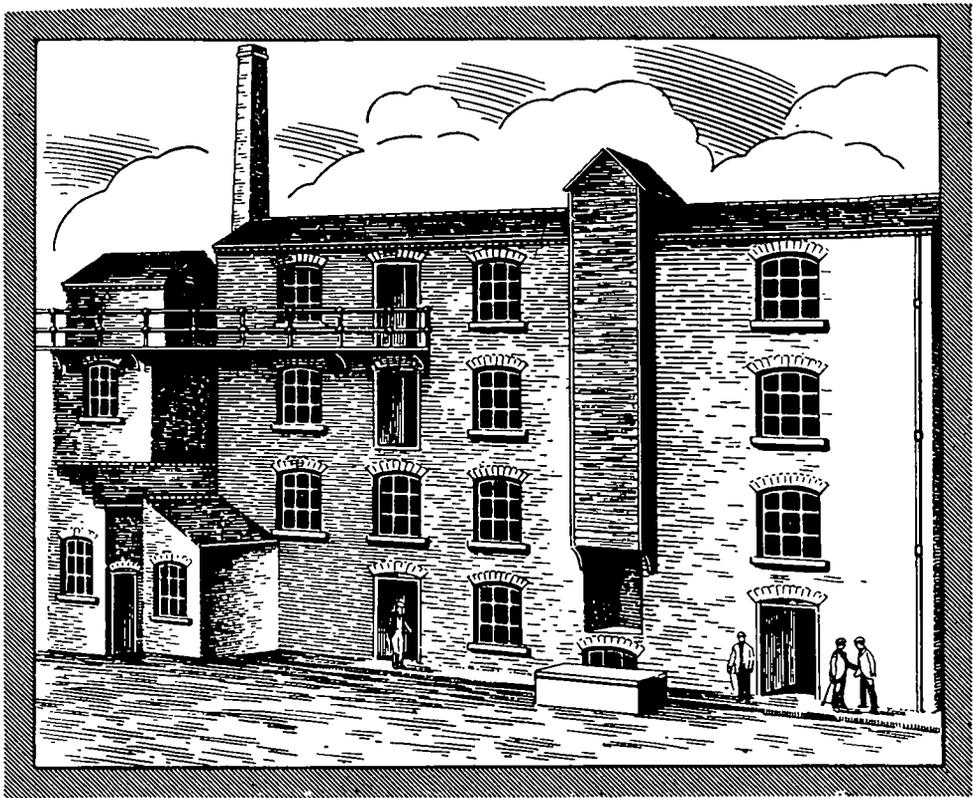


CAKE AND COCKHORSE



Banbury Historical Society

Winter 1968

2s.6d.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President:

Chairman:

G.J. Fothergill, M.A. 102 Bath Road, Banbury

Hon. Secretary:

J.S.W. Gibson, F.S.A.,
Humber House,
Bloxham,
Banbury
(Tel: Bloxham 332)

Hon. Asst. Treasurer:

Dr. G.E. Gardam,
11 Denbigh Close,
Broughton Road,
Banbury
(Tel: Banbury 2841)

Hon. Treasurer:

A.W.Pain, A.L.A.,
c/o Borough Library,
Marlborough Road,
Banbury
(Tel: Banbury 2282)

Hon. Editor "Cake & Cockhorse"

B. S. Trinder, 90 Bretch Hill, Banbury

Hon. Research Adviser

E.R.C. Brinkworth, M.A., F.R. Hist. S.

Hon. Archaeological Adviser

J.H. Fearon, B. Sc.

Committee Members

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The 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 & Cockhorse" is issued to members four times a year. This includes illustrated articles based on original local historical research, as well as recording the Society's activities. Publications include "Old Banbury - a short popular history" by E. R. C. Brinkworth (2nd edition), "New Light on Banbury's Crosses", "Roman Banburyshire" and "Banbury's Poor in 1850", all 3/6d, and a pamphlet "History of Banbury Cross", 6d. A Christmas card has been a popular annual production.

The Society also publishes an annual records volume. These have included "Oxfordshire Clock-makers, 1400-1850"; "South Newington Churchwardens' Accounts, 1553-1684"; "Banbury Marriage Register, 1558-1837" (3 parts) and "Baptism and Burial Register, 1558-1653". "A Victorian M.P. and his Constituents; The Correspondence of H. W. Tancred, 1841-1859", and the second part of the Banbury Baptism and Burial Register, 1653-1723, will shortly be published. "Banbury Wills and Inventories, 1591-1650", "Bodicote Churchwardens' Accounts, 1700-1822", "Wigginton Constables' Accounts, 1691-1804", and "Banbury Politics, 1830-1880" are all well advanced.

Meetings are held during the autumn and winter, normally at 7.30 p.m. in the Conservative Club. Talks on general and local archaeological, historical and architectural subjects are given by invited lecturers. In the summer, excursions to local country houses and churches are arranged. Archaeological excavations and special exhibitions are arranged from time to time.

Membership of the Society is open to all, no proposer or seconded being needed. The annual subscription is 40/-, including the annual records volume, or 20/- if this is excluded. Junior membership is 5/-.

Application forms can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary or the Hon. Treasurer.

SOCIETY NEWS AND ACTIVITIESWinter Programme

Meetings are held at 7.30 p. m. on Thursdays at Banbury Conservative Club (next to Martins Bank, High Street), except for the Deddington meeting.

30th January. Squire and Parson in Seventeenth Century Aynho. Mrs. S. Ransom.

20th February. Banbury Radicalism in the first half of the Twentieth Century. Mr. J. R. Hodgkins.

20th March. Local Churches Fifty Years Ago. The Rt. Rev. D. G. Loveday, Bishop of Dorchester, and a Vice-President of the Society.

29th April. Village meeting at Deddington. Speakers: Dr. H. M. Colvin and Miss B. Hill.

Past Events

Well-attended meetings heard illustrated talks on "Heralds and Heraldry", by Mr. John Brooke-Little, Richmond Herald and President of the Heraldry Society; "Oxfordshire Ironstone Mining over Fifty Years", by Mr. John Scott Young; and "Excavations at Shakenoak", by Dr. Anthony Hands. A printed report on this excavation is available, price £1, from Dr. Hands, at Exeter College, Oxford.

The autumn was brought to a triumphant conclusion with a tremendously successful dinner held by the Society at the Crown Hotel on 22nd November. This was the Society's first occasion of this sort, but the excellent attendance of 66 members and guests ensures its repetition. The toast of the Banbury Historical Society was proposed by the guest of honour Cllr. Mrs. P. Colegrave, Deputy Mayor of Banbury and Chairman of the Recreational and Amenities Committee of the Borough Council. Describing the Society as one of the success stories of the past eleven years in Banbury, she paid tribute in particular to the part it has played through the Hon. Secretary, who is a co-opted member of her Committee, in securing desirable exhibits for the Borough and its Museum - to her positive embarrassment on the Finance Committee! Replying on behalf of the Society, Dr. E. R. C. Brinkworth spoke of the support of the late President, Lord Saye and Sele, and of the work done by past and present officers; and exhorted those present to increase the membership. A most enjoyable evening was brought to an end with the showing of the documentary film "Twenty-four Square Miles", a reminder of the multitude of changes in north Oxfordshire in the last quarter-century.

Subscriptions

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due for 1969 on 1st January. Ordinary membership is now 20/-, and records membership 40/-, junior membership remaining at 5/-.

Records Publications

Subscribers may well be wondering when they will receive their volumes for 1967 and 1968. Both volumes are in fact now almost ready for printing, virtually all the proofs having been passed, and it is hoped to issue them together within the first few months of 1969. The 1967 volume is "A Victorian M.P. and his Constituents: The Correspondence of Henry Tancred, 1839-1858", edited by B. S. Trinder with a Foreword by the Rt. Hon. Richard Crossman, M.P.; and that for 1968 is now to be the second part of Banbury Baptism and Burial Register, 1653-1723, transcribed by Mrs. J. Pain and edited by J. S. W. Gibson. The 1969 volume will be the previously announced "Banbury Wills and Inventories, 1591-1650", edited by E. R. C. Brinkworth and J. S. W. Gibson, with an Introduction by Miss G. H. Dannatt.

Bloxham Court House

This ancient building beside Bloxham Church, the property of the Bloxham Feoffees, has recently been completely restored and reroofed. The retention of wood for the window frames and thatch for the roof have ensured that the Court House remains a most charming foil to its great neighbour. The Feoffees and our members Mr. G. Forsyth Lawson, Mr. H. R. Alcock and Mr. R. W. Alcock, the architect and builders concerned, are to be congratulated on a really admirable piece of work.

THE CHARTIST LAND COMPANY

The name Chartism is usually associated with the agitation which arose in the late 1830's and the 1840's in connection with the demands of the working classes for political reform and for the implementation of the sixpoint Charter of political rights. While this was the most important side of Chartist activities, it was not the only one, and it is the purpose of this article to examine Banbury's association with a second string to the Chartist bow - namely the National Land Company.

The main inspiration behind the land scheme was Feargus O'Connor, the Irish-born demagogue, who had emerged as the virtually unchallenged leader of the Chartists by the middle of the 1840's. O'Connor first began to toy with the idea of sponsoring a 'back to the land' movement as early as 1841. ⁽¹⁾ His aim, perhaps inspired by memories of peasant holdings in his native Ireland, was to establish a vast network of self-sufficient small holdings, which were to be cultivated by spade husbandry. However, support for this utopian plan was not immediately forthcoming from the main body of the Chartist movement, and so no further progress was made for several years. Then, at a national meeting of delegates held in London in April, 1845, some feeling in favour of a co-operative land society became apparent, and a committee was appointed to draw up a draft plan for such an organisation.

The enthusiasm which developed as the scheme got under way is perhaps exemplified by the following extract from an open letter written by the Executive Committee to the Members of the National Charter Association: "The Charter and Land Association, although differing in name and form, cannot be viewed apart; they are like the Siamese twins inseparable. . . and should our exertions eventuate in nothing more than this Land project, Chartism will have rendered posterity its debtor."⁽²⁾

This zealous attitude was not confined to the Chartist leaders. Almost immediately public support for a land company began to manifest itself; even in 1845 the Oxford district was contributing to the scheme, but it is not known whether this included any Banbury members or not. At any rate, in 1846 all doubts were set aside, and a separate branch was established in Banbury. The first contribution from the town was acknowledged in the Chartist organ, "The Northern Star," on the 20th June; it was the small sum of 12s. 8d. remitted "per J. Hone" - this was John Hone, a weaver of South Bar Street. ⁽³⁾ About six weeks later a second contribution, amounting to £1. 15s. 8d. , was recorded, and it is obvious that the Banbury Chartists had become enthusiastic supporters of the Chartist land company. Perhaps the town's interest had been stimulated by the purchase of the company's first two estates, which took place in 1846; the first was at Herringsgate, near Watford, and the second at Lowbands, near Gloucester. In 1847 these were followed by another estate in Gloucestershire, one in Oxfordshire (Minster Lovell), and two in Worcestershire.

At this point it is perhaps necessary to consider briefly the actual nature of the organisation. Although the scheme was in operation by 1846, its rules (unfortunately for its supporters) were not considered suitable by the Registrar of Friendly Societies for registration under the Friendly Societies Acts. When application was made for registration it was, therefore, refused. This rejection came in July, 1846, but it did not daunt O'Connor. By the following October application was being made for registration of the Chartist Co-operative Land Company to the Registrar for Joint Stock Companies, but once again without any immediate success. Then, in 1847, after the name of the society had been changed to the National Land Company, and some of its rules had been altered, it was provisionally registered under the legislation governing Joint Stock Companies.

Legally, of course, the position remained most unsatisfactory, and in the early months of 1848 questions on the Company's exact status were being asked in Parliament. At the same time O'Connor - who had been elected an M.P. for Nottingham in 1847 - was sponsoring a Bill which would give the benefits of the Friendly Societies legislation to the Land Company; he had taken this action when he had discovered how expensive it would be to register the Company formally under the Joint Stock Companies Acts. In the event, this

Bill was never given a second reading and instead the decision was taken to appoint a Select Committee to investigate the whole question of the Company's organization and activities. (4)

In character the scheme was deceptively simple; participants were to pay 4d. entrance fee, which entitled them to a copy of the regulations, and were then required to pay a weekly contribution of 3d., 6d. , 1/- . or more, if they wished, towards the cost of the shares. These, in accordance with the rules of the National Land Company, were to the value of £1. 6s. each. (5) The capital of the Company was to amount in all to £130,000, divided into 100,000 shares, and each member had to pay 6d per share per annum towards the expenses of management. With the money the directors of the Land Company were to acquire estates. to be divided up into two-acre, three-acre and four-acre allotments. These were to be allocated among the shareholders by ballot, so that those who were fortunate enough to be drawn and had two paid-up shares received a two-acre allotment, those with three paid-up shares, a three-acre allotment, and those with four paid-up shares, a four-acre allotment. Each successful shareholder obtained, in addition to his land, a cottage and money for seed, stock, etc. , from the resources of the Land Company; the amounts of money for the latter purpose varied with the size of the allotment, and were at the rate of £15, £22. 10s. and £30, respectively, with the largest sum payable for the four-acre allotment. (6)

In the early months of its existence the progress made by the Banbury branch of the Company was somewhat slow; in October, 1846, when the branch's third remittance to headquarters was made, the sum involved was only £1. 19s. 4d. , or an increase of about 4s. as compared with the previous amount sent up in August - and the lapse of time between remittances was greater than had been the case at the earlier date. (7) Consequently, when the Land Company had its annual conference at the beginning of December, 1846, Banbury branch was too small to send its own representative, but instead joined with Reading, Oxford, Chipping Norton and other miscellaneous branches outside Oxfordshire to support M. E. Rouse of Reading. (8)

During the first months of 1847 Banbury's subscriptions towards the purchase of shares continued to be remitted rather irregularly, until April, when it was noted in "The Northern Star" of the 24th of that month that the large sum of £24. 19s 4d had been received from the town - the greater part (£21. 19s. 4d) being subscribed towards the most recently issued third allotment of shares. The remittance of this considerable sum was possibly due to the fact that only those who had paid for their shares (and their expenses) would be entitled to participate in the ballot for land on the Mathon estate which was to be held shortly afterwards. The Mathon estate was situated in Worcestershire, and when the ballot for it was held in the early part of May, John Buswell of Banbury was among those who were successful. (9) He was allotted a three-acre site. The purchase of the Mathon estate was never completed, but Buswell was compensated by the granting of an allotment on another estate, as will be seen.

Buswell's apparent good fortune no doubt stimulated others, for in "The Northern Star" of 22nd May it was recorded that the Banbury shareholders had remitted £32 to the Company, and in that of the 5th June the sum was £35 10s. 8d! (10) At this time it seems that the shareholders were meeting at least once a month - on a Monday - both for payment of their subscriptions and for discussions of the objects of the Land Company (and presumably of Chartism generally). At one of these meetings, early in June, it was agreed to ask Mr. T. Clark, a London-based director of the Company, to come to Banbury to deliver "one or two lectures... on the subject." He came down in response to the invitation and lectured on two evenings, Wednesday and Thursday, 15th and 16th June, to "most numerous meetings", which were held in the British school room, and were presided over by a Mr. Fisher, who was described as "an old and respectable democrat". As a result of these addresses the Banbury Chartists confidently believed that there would be "a great accession to the Company." (11)

Then, in August, 1847, it was decided to make the settlement of the Lowbands estate the occasion of the National Land Company conference for that year, and on this occasion, unlike the position eight months before, Banbury had its own representative. John

Buswell was finally selected, after a ballot had been held among the local members (in which he had secured 235 votes), and he went to Lowbands for the conference on 16th August.⁽¹²⁾ On the evening of the conference a ballot was held to allocate land on the next estate to be settled - and among those who were successful were Emma Adams, who obtained two acres, John Austin,⁽¹³⁾ who obtained three acres, and Martha Smith, who obtained four acres - all of Banbury. In the event, however, only one of them - Emma Adams - appears to have taken up her allotment. In actual fact, Emma was, at this time, a child of merely nine or ten years of age; she was the daughter of a weaver and her parents must, presumably, have paid for the shares on her behalf.⁽¹⁴⁾ In 1848 she (and her family) held two acres at the Snig's End estate. According to "The Northern Star" of 27th May, 1848, John Buswell also received three acres at Snig's End - presumably in compensation for those at Mathon.⁽¹⁵⁾

In a further ballot held during November, 1847, another Banbury man was successful - William Ballard. He drew four acres, but like John Austin and Martha Smith, did not take his allotment up. Since he was probably the William Ballard shown in Rusher's 1847 Banbury Directory under the heading "Millers and Mealmen", it is not surprising that he declined to leave his fairly secure occupation for the vagaries of spade cultivation of a four-acre allotment! Presumably men such as he joined the Land scheme because they wished to benefit those less fortunately placed than themselves, and because they believed in Chartism generally.⁽¹⁶⁾

Not content with establishing a Land Company, O'Connor also wanted to enter into the banking field, and at the Lowbands conference it had been agreed that the National Land and Labour Bank should be run as a quite separate organisation from the National Land Company. By the following September the Banbury Chartists were obviously thinking in terms of 'in for a penny in for a pound'. They, too, decided to set up a savings bank of their own in connection with the National Land and Labour Bank, and by the end of November of the same year it is obvious that the plan had reached fruition and that funds were being paid in.⁽¹⁷⁾

During this period the branch meetings were held either in the Butcher's Arms, Butcher's Row, or in the Star Inn, High Street; the landlord of the former was Edward Spiers and of the latter George Thomas - both of whom were sympathetic to the Chartist cause.

In the early months of 1848 contributions continued to come from Banbury at a satisfactory level; for example, for the week ending January 6th, receipts of £32. 9s. were acknowledged, and in the week ending 24th February the amount was £23. 18s. 0d. At a meeting on 31st January, at the Star Inn, the annual election of officers took place; according to "The Northern Star" of 5th February, John Hone remained secretary, G. Watson and S. Coleman were appointed auditors, and James Bolton acted as scrutineer.⁽¹⁸⁾ At the same time it was decided to open a subscription fund to defend O'Connor's seat in Parliament, for, as has been seen, in 1847, he had been returned as M.P. for Nottingham. "The Northern Star" of the following week reveals that, in fact, Banbury had sent £1. 8s. 7d. towards this fund.

Nevertheless, while support for the National Land Company had been growing among the public at large, the legal position of the Company remained clouded; as was mentioned earlier, questions were asked in Parliament on the matter and even by the end of 1847 attacks on O'Connor were being mounted by the press and by disaffected supporters of the Chartist movement. It is noticeable that at a meeting held at the Star Inn on 30th November, 1847, the Banbury Branch found it necessary to pass the following resolution: "That the members of this branch, and the depositors in the Land and Labour Bank, have the most unbounded confidence in Feargus O'Connor, Esq., M.P. notwithstanding that a portion of the press is trying to undermine his reputation, and that we are determined to assist him by all means in our power, until the Land is restored to its rightful owners, and every man is in possession of his just and equitable rights." Again, at a meeting held on Monday, May 8th, in the following year, another similar resolution was unanimously passed, stating that the Banbury branch had "full and entire confidence in Feargus O'Connor, Esq., M.P. notwithstanding the foul calumnies of a debased and hireling press."⁽¹⁹⁾ The press was, of course, revealing the financial problems of the Land Company and the irrationality of O'Connor himself - for he was increasingly showing signs of the insanity which within four years was to overcome him completely.

In spite of this outward show of loyalty by Banbury (and other branches) by the

summer of 1848 the murmurings of dissatisfaction were growing louder. In the political field the last major attempt to organise an effective National Petition to Parliament in favour of the granting of the conditions of the six-point Charter had failed, to the obvious disappointment of its supporters, while on 23rd May the House of Commons had appointed a Select Committee to investigate the running of the National Land Company. The report of this committee, which completed its hearings on 31st July, 1848, struck a considerable blow at the Land Company. It revealed not only that the Company was technically illegal (because its system of balloting for plots violated the Lottery Acts⁽²⁰⁾), but that it was most inefficiently managed; in addition, it was discovered that many of those who had been settled on allotments were unhappy with their holdings. This latter was not very surprising, for artisans who had come from the towns were obviously ill-equipped to cope with the difficulties of spade cultivation and animal husbandry. Finally, the committee recommended that the whole undertaking be wound up, although it rejected any suggestion of conscious dishonesty on the part of O'Connor. Indeed, it pointed out that he had lent over £3,000 of his own money to the cause.⁽²¹⁾

These revelations did not immediately destroy the confidence of Banbury members, although their faith must have been rudely shaken. For example, in July they took part in a series of open-air meetings held in nearby villages, such as Deddington, Hook Norton and Bloxham, but the hoped-for accession of members was apparently not achieved.⁽²²⁾ The share subscriptions sent from the town began to show a serious falling off, so that while for the week ending 29th June they had amounted to £11. 16s. 6d., for the week ending 3rd November they were a mere £3. 4s. 6d. - a dramatic decline compared with the position at the beginning of the year.

Nevertheless, the branch did send a delegate - James Bolton - to the National Conference of the Company held in the late autumn, and he was one of the signatories of an open-letter published in "The Northern Star" of 11th November, which called for continued support for the demands of the Charter. When he reported to the Banbury members on the 13th November they expressed themselves satisfied with his account of affairs. At the same time a new branch committee was elected (it largely comprised the members of the old one) and a levy of 3d was imposed on each member to cover the cost of the next quarter's expenses.

In 1849 the discontent of the Banbury branch became both more extensive and more explicit. On 8th January members passed a resolution opposing any idea of permitting those settled on allotments to "have the rents given them by the Company..."; in this they were justified, of course, for theoretically at any rate, those who had received land were the 'lucky ones.' On 12th March the situation became more serious. At a meeting held at the Butcher's Arms it was resolved not only to ask for details of the next estate to be settled, but to call for more information on the doings of the Land Company generally. The members considered that "the present apathy of shareholders (was) solely attributable to the want of information respecting the progress that the Company (was) making."⁽²³⁾

Despite O'Connor's assurances that the Land Company was quite safe the Banbury members obviously felt that his rather confused efforts to secure the Company's position did not bear out his claims. In this they were not alone. All over the country membership slumped, so that by the week ending 19th April the total national receipts of the Company were a mere £19. 11s. 2d., of which Banbury had subscribed £1. 4s. 6d.; in the week ending 14th June, Banbury sent £1. 10s. 6d. towards the share fund, 10s. 6d. towards the Expense account, and 8s. 6d. to the fund which had been established for the relief of the wives and families of victims imprisoned for their riotous conduct after the attempted presentation of the Chartist National Petition.

This appears to have been virtually the last appreciable contribution from the town. When the national conference of the Company was held in August, 1849, Banbury was neither represented nor mentioned as a branch, and such support as remained for it was obviously very small scale. Finally, in the week ending 30th August, 11s. was acknowledged by the Secretary of the Company from Banbury, plus 2s. towards the expenses. No information is given as to the number of contributors at this late date, but presumably they were merely a few persistent supporters of Chartist ideals. However, since each member was supposed to remit 6d. per annum

towards the Expense Fund and since Banbury's total contribution to this fund was 13s. during 1849 it is possible to guess that the membership at some stage of the year might have been as high as twenty-six. Nevertheless, even these faithful souls realised that they were nurturing a lost cause, and by the autumn of 1849 all contributions from the town had ceased.

Banbury's reaction was typical of that elsewhere. Indeed, so great was the general dissatisfaction felt at the course the Company was pursuing that in "The Northern Star" of 1st September, O'Connor complained of the large number of letters received from "parties wishing to withdraw the money that they (had) invested in the Land Company." He assured shareholders that if necessary he would secure the legalisation of the National Land Company by Act of Parliament. Few others shared his optimism. By 29th December the total national contribution to the Company amounted to a mere £1. 14s. 6d.

In these circumstances the Company could obviously go on no longer. During 1850 preparations were made for its dissolution, and eventually in 1851 the Winding-up Act was passed. For the Banbury members this meant the final disappearance of their hopes and desires - but they were not the only ones so affected. It has been estimated that only about 250 of the National Land Company's total membership of 70,000 were actually settled on allotments during the three years of the organization's effective existence. (24)

Banbury members did, of course, derive some very small benefit from the scheme. As has been seen, Emma Adams and, possibly, John Buswell both settled down, with their families at the Snig's End estate, and may have enjoyed a fair measure of prosperity for a few years at least.⁽²⁵⁾ According to the 1851 Census Returns for the villages of Staunton and Corse (in which the Snig's End estate lay), William Adams (Emma's father) was a farmer of two acres, while Emma, now aged 13, was shown merely as 'Farmer's Daughter'. She, her parents and her three sisters were apparently all living off the produce of their 'farm'; it is interesting to see, in this connection, that William Adams had apparently been able to make a successful change from his Banbury occupation of weaver to that of agriculturist. In 1861, the family were still tilling their two acres, although by this time Emma, herself, had left home.

John Buswell (or Boswell), the second possible Banbury allottee, was born at Hethe, Oxfordshire, and was in 1851 a farmer of three acres. He, his wife, his married daughter and son-in-law all lived on the Snig's End estate, although the two latter were shown as having employment outside the farm. The son-in-law was a cabinet maker and the daughter an upholsteress. By 1861 John Boswell was classed as a "Freeholder of 3 acres" and although his son-in-law was still employed as a cabinet maker, his daughter no longer had any specific occupation.⁽²⁶⁾

These two families might perhaps be thought of as the residuary legatees of the Banbury members' land society subscriptions. Such a harsh reality must have fallen very far short of their initial dreams and aspirations.

Pamela Hom.

1. Peter Searby, in a recent lecture at Attingham Park on the Chartist Land Plan, suggested that O'Connor's interest in a 'back to the land' movement was aroused even in the 1820's, although he did nothing very active to further his ideas at this time.
2. The Northern Star - 7th March, 1846.
3. 1841 Census Return for Banbury - H.O.107. -Public Record Office.
4. J. MacAskill - The Chartist Land Plan - Chartist Studies, ed. A. Briggs (1962) pp.310/311.
5. Report of the Select Committee on the National Land Company - First Report - Appendix. 1. The share value for the earlier Chartist Co-operative Land Company had, however, been £2. 10s. The Northern Star for 5th September, 1846, for example.

6. J. MacAskill - loc. cit., p. 316.
7. The Northern Star - 10th October, 1846.
8. The Northern Star - 28th November, 1846. Rouse even represented Land Company members in France!
9. John Buswell was a shoemaker of Church Lane. - See Rusher's Banbury Directory, 1847.
10. On each occasion the largest sum was subscribed to the third issue of shares; only £2. and £2. 0s. 4d. respectively, were in fact subscribed towards earlier issues on each occasion - thus underlining the recent nature of the recruitment of many of the shareholders.
11. The Northern Star, 12th and 24th June, 1847. Presumably the Mr. Fisher was John Fisher, tailor, of Market Place, who had earlier been connected with Chartist agitation in the town. - See Rusher collection, Banbury Public Library, p. 188.
12. Northern Star - 14th August and 21st August, 1847.
13. Perhaps connected with the firm of corn merchants, John Austin and Son, noted in Rusher's Banbury Directory, 1847.
14. Emma was baptised at Banbury on 26th November, 1837. Her parents were then living at Crown Yard, Banbury.- See MS. Oxf. Dioc. Pp. d. 217 - Bodleian Library.
15. The Fifth Report of the Select Committee on the Land Company gives a list of all shareholders at the various estates. This Report shows a John Boswell as a shareholder at Snig's End, and it is possible that this was, in fact, John Buswell. The surmise is supported by the disappearance of Buswell's name from Rusher's Trade Directory for 1849, although it had appeared in both the 1847 and 1848 editions. His name did not re-appear in the early 1850's. A John Boswell is shown in both the 1851 and 1861 Census Returns as living, with his family, at the Snig's End estate at Staunton, Worcestershire. - H. O. 107. 1960 and R. G. 9. 1762.
16. It is just possible that some of these non-accepting allottees may have sold their allotments to other would-be peasant proprietors. It is known that this was done in some cases.
17. The Northern Star - 27th November, 1847.
18. George Watson and James Bolton were both cordwainers.
19. The Northern Star - 13th May, 1848.
20. P. Searby - Great Dodford and the Later History of the Chartist Land Scheme - The Agricultural History Review, Vol. 16, Part I, 1968 - p. 33.
21. The Committee reported that "the books of proceedings of the National Land Company, as well as the accounts of the Company, have been most imperfectly kept..." Report of the Select Committee on National Land Company - meeting on 31st July, 1848.
22. The Northern Star - 8th July, 1848. Jackson's Oxford Journal of 10th June, also speaks of outdoor meetings held in connection with the Land Company at Banbury, and Barford St. John in early June.
23. The Northern Star - 21st March, 1849. The directors of the Company replied that they were still seeking to complete the Company's registration under the Joint Stock Companies Acts.
24. J. MacAskill, loc. cit. and Peter Searby, loc. cit.
25. Louisa Jebb - Small Holdings (1907), p. 137 stated: "At first some of the people were fairly successful... Wheat and potatoes were the two main crops, and in the days when wheat was 60s. a quarter and potatoes 1d. a pound a man had been known to make £100 off his four acres. The district seems to have suffered very much in the bad years of agricultural depression... In 1882 the 83 original holdings numbered forty..."
26. Census Returns for Staunton and Corse, 1851 and 1861; H. O. 107. 1960 and R. G. 9. 1762. All of the Adams family (except two) were born in Banbury; the exceptions were the baby, James (aged 2 in 1861) and another daughter, Eliza, who was aged 9 in 1861.

THE HISTORY OF THE BANBURY CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

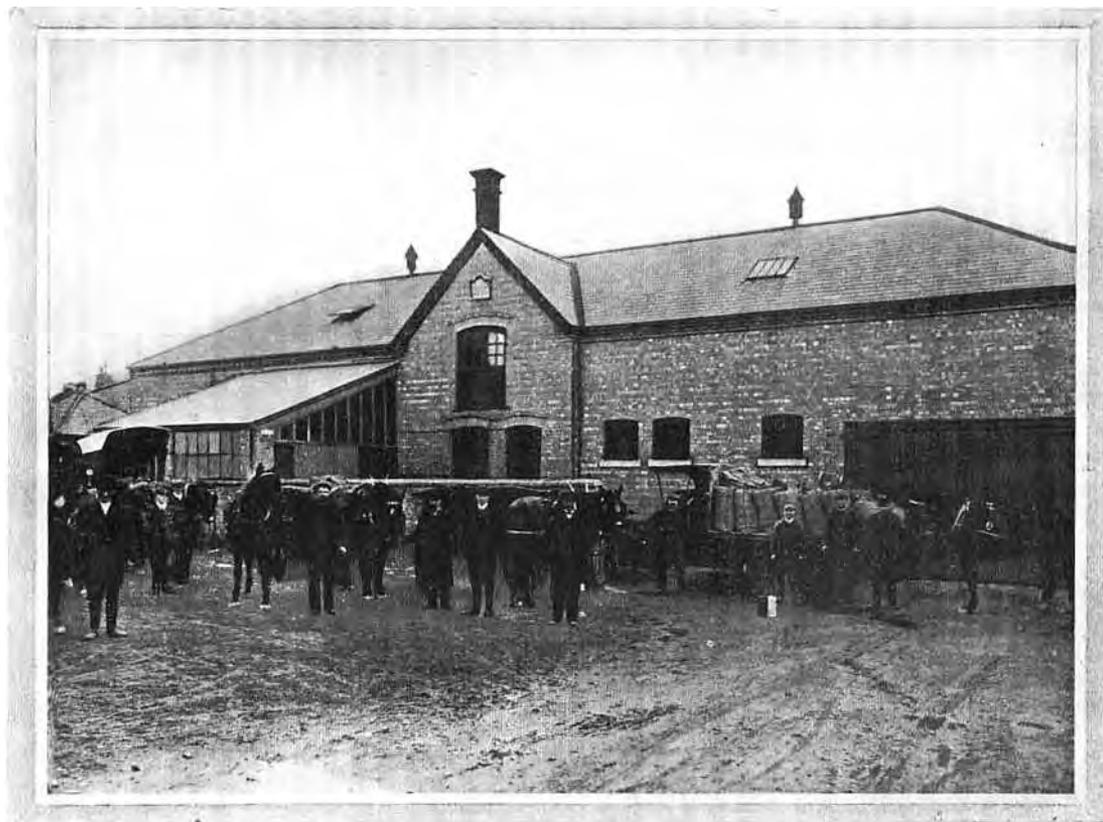
The Banbury Co-Operative Society celebrated its centenary two years ago, and discussions among those interested in its origins revealed that a full history of the Society had been published on the occasion of its jubilee in 1916. No copy of this work remained in the Society's records however, nor was one to be found in Banbury Public Library nor in any other known collection of local historical material. By great good fortune, Colin Bell of the Banbury Social Survey discovered a copy of the history among the stock of a secondhand bookseller in a distant part of the country.

The book "Our Jubilee Story, or Fifty Years of Co-operation in Banbury and the Neighbourhood" was written by W. H. Lickorish, then assistant secretary of the Co-operative Society, and published by the Society in 1916. In addition to the historical account, it contains numerous illustrations of the Society's premises and officers, an introduction by John Butcher, first secretary of the Society, appendices listing those who had served up to 1916 on the General and Educational Committees, managers of branches and departments in 1916, and an account of the Jubilee celebrations.

The Co-operative Society was originally an offshoot of the Banbury Temperance Society. Its inspiration was a Temperance Christmas Club and among its early leaders, John Butcher, Thomas Proverbs and William Tustain were all prominent Teetotallers. In the late 1860's, as at earlier periods, the Temperance Society was closely linked with local Nonconformist churches. Doubtless Co-operation appealed to Evangelical Temperance workers as a more effective way of changing social habits than mere Teetotalism or agitation for the Permissive Bill. Yet there was also a distinctly non-religious element in the origins of the Co-operative Society. William Bunton, editor of the "Banbury Co-operative Record" and author of many tracts was an engineer turned bookseller, an Owenite, a former Chartist lecturer, and to the end of his long life an unrepentant atheist. His adoption of Co-operation, and his acceptance of the patronage of such Liberals as Banbury's M.P. Bernhard Samuelson, without comprising his anti-religious principles or repudiating his Chartist past, is a further example of the way in which Chartist leaders of the 1830's and 40's went on to support Liberal causes in the 1850's and 60's.

Specifically working class political organisations continued to meet in Banbury long after the demise of the Chartist Land Company branch, described in Mrs. Horn's article. Bodies of non-electors were active in the elections of the late 1850's, and a branch of the Reform League flourished in the mid-1860's. These organisations continued to meet at public houses, long after the majority of middle class Liberal meetings had been transferred to other premises. Lickorish quotes an extract from "Tract No. 2" showing the tensions which obviously arose between the Co-operators and other working class politicians. The Society's acceptance of the patronage of Sir Bernhard Samuelson doubtless explains the hostility felt towards its members by such people as "Jack Spragg", who had "been a worker all my life... advocated the Charter and the People's rights... talked till he had been hoarse, and been up night after night at the Red Dragon to forward his principles". The difference between the Co-operators and the politicians was not merely one of tactics, but one of contrasting cultures. The Co-operators accepted the principles of sobriety and self help which were common to many members of both middle and working classes in Victorian England. In their view, those who saw Co-operation as irrelevant to the struggle for the extension of the franchise and disestablishment and who continued to meet and argue in public houses, were as much traditionalists opposed to real social change as a shopkeeper who challenged the Society with an allegorical picture in currants, lemons and cinnamon. There is much in common between the optimistic views of the Co-operators and those of Banbury's middle class shopkeepers and manufacturers who put an end to aristocratic control of the town in the 1830's. There is the same pride in commercial efficiency, the same feeling of superiority of social habits and the same confidence in future success.

Lickorish's history throws an interesting light on the work of the Co-operative Society in the countryside around Banbury. He demonstrates how Joseph Arch's agitation led agricultural workers to discover the benefits of co-operation. The Society's "cottage-policy" can be seen as another link with its Chartist past. Unfortunately Lickorish does not make it clear whether the village cottages were provided with sufficient land for the occupant to make a living.



The Banbury Co-operative Society Central Stables and Garage in 1916 (from 'Our Jubilee Story, 1866-1916, or Fifty Years of Co-Operation in Banbury and the Neighbourhood', by W. H. Lickorish, 1916).

Lickorish shows clearly the extent to which the Co-operative Society provided for its members not just an improvement in shopping facilities, but a complete way of life. Recreation was provided through concerts, lectures, and evening classes in the Society's own assembly rooms; there was a Library, a reading room, a women's guild, a youth organisation and an annual flower show. In 1894 the Society sponsored the first radical working class candidates for the Town Council since the time of the Chartists, and although they were unsuccessful, their intervention may be seen as a prelude to the establishment twelve years later of a branch of the Independent Labour Party in Banbury. Clearly no adequate understanding of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Banbury can be gained without close attention to the affairs of the Co-operative Society. It is hoped that it may in future be possible to publish more detailed studies of the Society's activities, for, as related elsewhere in this issue, the full records of its early years are now available for the use of students. A typescript of Lickorish's history has been deposited in the Historical Society's library.

B. S. T.

BANBURY REFERENCE LIBRARY

Thanks to the generosity of two public-spirited local firms the Reference Library has recently acquired two new accessions which should be invaluable source material for historians and sociologists.

General Foods Ltd has given two large volumes which trace the transfer of the firm from Birmingham to Banbury. These volumes were compiled by Mr. John Davis formerly P. R. O. for General Foods. The first item is a letter dated July 1962 in which the possibility of the move is first mooted and the last entry, dated November 1966, is a reprint from Oxfordshire Roundabout. In the four year span the volumes cover every detail of the move right down to pictures of employees moving into their new homes.

Banbury Co-Operative Society have deposited on permanent loan Banbury Co-operative Records from the first one published in 1871 to 1945 and the Co-op Home Magazine which succeeded the earlier records from 1948 to 1963.

The early volumes deal more exclusively with Banbury than do the later ones. There is a letter from a local branch manager complaining of anonymous letters in which he says "any communications in reference to the Society whether suggestive or otherwise" must be signed. Echoes of agricultural unrest are shown by an extract from a speech made by the renowned Joseph Arch at Newmarket. The fluctuating prices of basic commodities such as fuel, furniture, food and clothing can be gained by a study of these invaluable records and then related to social and economic conditions prevailing at the time.

When the title was changed to the Home Magazine in 1948 the emphasis altered and from then onwards it became in effect a family magazine with predominantly women's interests represented - fashions, cookery, child care etc. with only slight coverage of specifically Banbury affairs.

I am very grateful to Mr. Pavitt, Chief Executive Officer, Banbury Co-operative Society for depositing these records in the library.

A. W. Pain.

The Rev. D. I. T. Eastman, Vicar of St. Mary's, Banbury, has recently allowed us to see a detailed catalogue, compiled by Prebendary A. Longden, of further records, mainly 19th century, formerly stored in St. Mary's Church, most of which will eventually be deposited in the Bodleian Library. We congratulate Prebendary Longden not only on the great deal of work that has gone into this catalogue but also on his recently attained 90th birthday.

B A N B U R Y M U S E U M - A C R I T I C A L A S S E S S M E N T

In the last issue of "Cake and Cockhorse" due prominence was given to Banbury's newly reopened Museum and to our considerable debt to the Department of Museum Studies at Leicester University for its planning and mounting. The result of this is a museum display incomparably better and more informative than in the old Museum, and this improvement is clearly reflected in the daily average of visitors to date; in making some adverse criticisms, I do not wish to detract from this considerable achievement. I would like at the same time to look forward to the appointment of a full-time qualified curator (whose establishment has now been agreed by the Borough Council), on whom any improvements will depend.

That a local museum should be local in scope should not need emphasising, but it seems to have been forgotten in the display of Local Archaeology, where among a relatively small number of prehistoric stone implements, several come from sites, Cassington for example, which are a considerable distance from Banbury. This would not matter so much if some attempt were made to describe the cultural pattern of prehistoric and Roman north Oxfordshire, but all we are shown are two small sections of one-inch Ordnance Survey maps rather confusedly marked with coloured pins. Agreed that Banbury and its environs may not, as an area, have been of great importance in prehistoric or Roman Britain, but this could have been indicated; a few longer labels in the case might have helped. Here too, the interesting hoard of Roman bronze coins found near Wroxton is displayed without any description or evaluation at all, which, in view of the interest generally evoked by coins, seems a pity. From a purely visual angle, these displays, and especially the lighting, are very good as indeed they are throughout the Museum and as against this, the general lack of information is the more regrettable.

This last criticism can also be applied to the small display on old Banbury Church and the Castle, in which a few interesting and attractive pieces of medieval sculpture are shown in almost complete isolation. This is a subject of great fascination to anyone who is at all interested in the history of Banbury and I feel that much more could have been made of it. Similarly, while we are shown some fine examples of 19th century agricultural implements and machinery, including some made at Bernard Samuelson's Banbury works, we are offered little description or background information on this revolutionary period in English agrarian history. Next to the agricultural display, however, we are treated to an undue profusion of exhibits concerned with the Warwick Road Reception Centre which was recently closed. While this no doubt has some small place in the social history of Banbury, I hardly think that it justifies this rather pathetic and over-detailed display.

I have dwelt upon these adverse criticisms at some length because they seem to demand some qualification, which is not to say that there is nothing to praise. The table display of domestic objects and by-gones is particularly good, for here they are shown in much the same context as when they were in use, and this seems to be a particularly effective way of making the Museum's displays reflect the material aspects of life as it was once lived. The refreshing absence of glass cases here is also repeated in the sections on Law and Order and Characters - especially fascinating here is the picture and description of "Old Mettle". The Victorian post-box and the sign from Brown's Cake Shop must be recent acquisitions and it is just this type of object, rescued from the rapidly changing Banbury scene which can so effectively enliven the new museum. The section on Plush-Weaving is also good and provides information on a craft which although no longer practised in north Oxfordshire, was, until the early 20th century, of considerable importance. Finally, a very effective introduction to the Museum is provided by Mr. Draper's excellent and nostalgic water-colours of Old Banbury - here are a number of buildings and street-scenes among which the 20th century has taken a sadly heavy toll.

We are fortunate in having this new Museum in Banbury, as anyone who remembers the old one will surely agree, but I cannot help wondering whether, in its modern, uncluttered displays, the essence of a local museum has not to some extent been forgotten. We have what is essentially a curator's museum in which a sense of Banbury's history has been too much neglected.

In the reign of Henry II Banbury was granted the right to hold a fair during Whit Week, and the town had several other fairs by the 14th century, but the first mention of the Michaelmas Fair is no earlier than 1677. The main purpose of the October fair was to enable farm workers changing jobs to find new masters, and to help farmers to find new men. The enclosures of the late 18th and early 19th centuries sharpened the distinction between farmers and labourers, and so probably increased the importance of the fair, and in the middle decades of the 19th century, when other fairs in Banbury were on the decline, the Michaelmas Fair attained its greatest popularity.

In 1836 the newly reformed Banbury Town Council revised the list of annual fairs and at the same time abolished the tolls which had previously been charged to traders entering the town at fair time. The year began with the Twelfth Fair, primarily for trade in horses, held on the first Thursday after Old Christmas Day and the three preceding days. Several of the confectioners in Banbury regularly baked special Twelfth Cakes for this occasion, but it was generally agreed that this fair was no longer as important as it had been in the past. On the third Thursday in March there was a hiring fair for farm servants. This was still being held in 1843, but seems to have disappeared by 1850. In May came the Holy Thursday Fair, held on Ascension Day. This was once a great holiday fair, but it gained an evil reputation in 1827 when it brought to the town an epidemic of smallpox, and in 1837, for the first time no amusements of any kind were brought to it. By 1850 it was indistinguishable from an ordinary cattle fair. The great Michaelmas Fair came on the first Thursday after Old Michaelmas Day. The remainder of the thirteen fairs were simply large cattle markets, mostly held on the third Thursday of the month. In the middle decades of the 19th century, therefore, the Michaelmas Fair was the only one of Banbury's fairs still prospering as a social event. In 1832 it was reported that there had never been a greater number of people in the town than were there for the fair, and throughout the 1840's and 1850's Banbury was so crowded on fair days that it was difficult to move in the streets, and many shopkeepers had to board up their windows to avoid having them broken by the crush of humanity on the pavements.

The Michaelmas Fair still served a useful purpose as an employment exchange. Waggoners with whips, grooms with buttonholes of horsehair, shepherds with wool, and dairymaids would stand in groups in the Market Place between Butcher's Row and Parson's Street awaiting the approach of prospective employers. When terms were agreed, the new master gave his employee a shilling to bind both sides to the contract. In the early 1840's several Banbury tradesmen opened servant registry offices which took over much of this business and by 1858 the engagement of servants on the streets had diminished. The fair was the busiest time of year for the registry offices.

The fair was not just an occasion for the engagement of new servants. It was the largest market of the year for most types of farm animals and also for corn, since it came at the end of the harvest period. In 1832 4,600 sheep, 1,220 cattle, 300 pigs and 200 horses were brought to the fair. These numbers could be handled with ease at the modern cattle market, but in 1834 all of the animals were sold in the streets. Another important trade was in the rich, soft and expensive Banbury cheese, which could only be made in the period immediately after Michaelmas. The cheese market was on Cornhill, but by 1840 the number of people who knew how to make Banbury cheese was diminishing, and in 1848, for the first time, none of it was offered for sale.

Many "cheap Johns" came to sell their wares at Banbury fair. The chief trade was in novelties of various kinds, toys, pictures and printed songs. In 1855 one cheap John was offering for sale two pictures illustrating Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin", published in 1852. He claimed that these were engraved from originals by Michelangelo (dec. 1564). Another popular trade was in patent medicines. A worm leech, whose services were on offer in 1855, was said to have brought about the most astonishing cures. Other traders offered to measure the force of punches with a machine or to take heights for a penny.

The most impressive feature of the Fair was the vast array of amusements erected throughout the town centre. On the Wednesday of the fair week the town was filled with trestles, boards, canvas and caravans, as if a new canvas city was growing in its midst. Most of the attractions were shows of one kind or another, and there were few of the rides which now form the greater part of the fair. In 1855 there were only two merry-go-rounds, though there were a good quantity of swing boats. A theatrical company appeared most years, and two came in 1849, but few details survive of the performances they gave. The company who came in 1858 called themselves "The National Theatre" but aroused suspicion when they refused further to identify themselves. Boxing booths were a regular feature. There were usually two of them, and in 1858 one was staffed entirely by negroes. Shooting galleries, wheels of fortune, "spin'em rounds" and a dancing pavilion provided for those who wanted active amusements. Sideshows, full of "all the wonders of the world" were extremely popular. Some of these, such as Hudson's Wax Works which came in 1855 with likenesses of the soldiers of the Crimean War and the Emperor and Empress of France, were of a high standard. In different years there were performing canaries, boa constrictors and other "reptiles from the Ganges and the Nile", "Tom Thumb and a Giantess", a "man mountain", a "mysterious woman and a fat woman" and a "giant horse". In contrast with these curiosities, there was usually a Bible stall.

Almost every year a circus came to Banbury at the time of the fair, usually setting up its big top in South Bar. In 1849 Wombwell's Wild Beasts paraded through the town with the "Lion Queen" mounted on an elephant, following an elegant carriage conveying the circus band. The same menagerie appeared the following year, together with Cooke's Circus, which had visited the town on several previous occasions, not always with success. There were again two circuses in 1858 when Sanger's Hippodrome came with its wild beasts and displays of horsemanship, together with Howe and Cushing's Great American Circus, which was possibly the most successful ever to visit Banbury. The band carriage was drawn into the town by forty cream coloured horses, and such was the popularity of the show that £470 was taken at the box office.

The Michaelmas Fair was a great occasion for eating and drinking. At one time any householder who put a green bough over his door could sell beer to visitors at fair time, but this practice had stopped by the 1830's. Banbury's confectioners made great displays of their "mountains of Banbury Cakes and little hills of nuts and gingerbread". Pickled salmon was a speciality of fair time, and there were always large joints of hot and cold roast beef and roast pork from which rounds were cut according to the customer's wish. There were lollipops for children, and the public houses enjoyed their busiest period of the year.

Before 1850 the only way to reach Banbury Fair from the surrounding villages was by road, and on the morning of the fair endless lines of elegant carriages, workmanlike farm carts and lumbering waggons could be seen making their way towards the town. Thousands of poorer people from as far as thirty miles away made their way to Banbury on foot. The opening of the Great Western and the London and North Western railway lines in 1850 swelled considerably the numbers attending the fair. In 1850 the L N W.R. conveyed 2,900 passengers into Merton Street station, of whom over a thousand came from Brackley. In 1852, the first train of the day alone brought 1,500 people into Merton Street. The G.W.R. also took advantage of the fair, and brought 600 people in 1858 on a special excursion from Birmingham.

It was generally accepted that the fair would be a bustling, noisy and even rowdy occasion, with "the usual din of music, hooting, bawling, singing, laughing and firing". Inevitably it brought to the town large numbers of criminals, and almost every account of the fair in the period mentions pickpockets. In 1849 it appears that a number of Fagin-like master criminals were employing small boys to pick pockets and return to them with the pickings. In 1852 the "light fingered gentry" included representatives from as far away as Lewes and Worcester. James Brown, a pickpocket from Solihull was caught in action, disguised as a farm labourer with a smock. When sentenced by the magistrates to seven months hard labour he burst into tears - something which, according to reports of the time, was taught by the master criminals to their apprentices. Swindlers, house breakers and "smashers", men who simply wanted to fight, were also regular attenders at the fair, and there was inevitably a sharp increase in the intake of the local gaol during the period of the fair.

In 1852 Queen Victoria passed through Banbury by train on her way from Balmoral to Windsor on the day of the fair. Her train stopped at the station where she was presented with roses, Banbury cakes and a loyal address. Fifteen thousand people watched the presentation. It had been hoped to give Victoria a copy of Alfred Beesley's "History of Banbury", but no suitably bound copy could be prepared in time. The fair itself in 1852 contained many reminders of the notorious murder of the Italian watchmaker John Kalebergo on Williamscoote Hill which had taken place a few months before. A theatrical show entitled "The Banbury Murder" proved very popular and broadsheets with songs about the murder were offered for sale. In 1855 the theme of the fair was the Crimean War. The most popular ballad singers were those who sang of the siege of Sebastopol and the bravery of the British lads in the fighting there, and a number of the engagements in the war were featured in a waxworks. Engravings of the storming of Sebastopol sold more quickly than the hot Banbury Cakes.

Against the lively gaiety of the Michaelmas Fair in the 19th century must be set the monotony and squalor of the lives of the farm workers of the period. Wages were low, sanitation was often non-existent and cottages were often terribly overcrowded. Banbury Fair was the farm worker's one holiday of the year, and for many the only contact with the world outside their own village. Many accounts suggest that the fair was regarded as a temporary release from bondage, "rollicking humanity. throws off the curb and breaks through all the restraints of decorum".

B. S. T.

Note:

This article is a by-product of a study carried out jointly by the author and Dr. Brian Harrison of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, of changes in recreation in Banbury between 1830 and 1860, with special reference to the role of the Temperance movement. Virtually all of the references to fairs come from local newspapers of the time. Readers interested in the subject of fairs generally are recommended to consult Lord George Sanger's "Seventy Years a Showman" which mentions a number of the attractions which came to Banbury.

HERALDS IN BANBURY

With the recent visit of Richmond Herald fresh in mind, it is interesting to speculate on the possibility that the last instance of a fully arrayed English herald carrying out military duties in the field occurred in Banbury.

Dr. E. Crundell writes to this effect in the January 1968 issue of 'The Coat of Arms' (the journal of the Herald Society). He quotes the autobiographical Life of Sir William Dugdale, published in 1712. Dugdale relates how at the outset of the Civil War, when he was Rouge Croix Pursuivant, he was directed by the King to "repaire to those castles of Banbury and Warwick, and to command the said Lord Brooke and his adherents to lay down all their forces, as well horse as foot. . . and in case of refusal, to proclayme them traytors against the King, his crowne and dignitie. All which being performed by the said Mr. Dugdale in his cote of armes and trumpets sounding before him, the castle of Banbury, with all the armes and ammunition therein, was delivered up accordingly".

The events which precipitated this were at the very outset of the Civil War, before the King had even raised his Standard. In August 1642 some ordnance was being conveyed to the parliamentarian Lord Brook at Warwick. An encounter with the royalist Earl of Northampton had forced its return to Banbury castle. The instruction from the King to Dugdale was dated at York on 4th August, and on 8th Lord Northampton's forces occupied the town. The Commission of Array was produced and the Parliamentarians' leaders in the Castle, Colonel John Fiennes and Captain Robert Vivers, were required, on threat of taking by force and firing the town, to deliver up the ordnance and ammunition. However Dugdale's account appears to be inaccurate in that the Castle itself evidently remained in the Parliamentarians' hands for the time being, whilst a royalist attack ten days later was repulsed.

Moreover it seems certain that Sir William Le Neve, Clarencieux King at Arms, performed a military role subject to this. After the battle of Edgehill the King sent Sir William, in "his robe of office" with a proclamation towards the Parliamentarian army. There he was treated

roughly and led blindfold before the Earl of Essex, where he protested against "the indignity and injury done to his office, contrary to the law of nations...". Later that week, on 26th October, the King having determined to take Banbury Castle, he again made use of Sir William Le Neve to send a summons; and on the following day, on the arrival of the King himself in the town the castle was surrendered after a remarkably feeble resistance.

Thus whilst Dugdale cannot perhaps claim the honour of being the last herald to fulfil a military role, it may well be that Banbury was the last place in which this was performed.

J.S.W.G.

References

Alfred Beesley 'A History of Banbury', 1841 pp. 302-04, 326-28
Peter Young, 'Edgehill 1642', 1697 pp. 128-29

Correspondence

From Captain Mark Taylor, R.N.

Mill Lane,
Middle Barton, Oxford.

Sir,

Scratch Dials

I have read with much interest Mr. J. H. Fearon's article on scratch-dials in your Autumn number. May I add a few remarks?

Two main theories about the graduation of these dials have sometime been put forward; and neither of them is proved.

As Mr. Fearon observes, these dials have a great seasonal variation owing to their horizontal styles. They are, mathematically speaking, polar dials for latitude 0° set up in the latitude of their churches; and their error from the reading of a modern south vertical dial with gnomon pointing to the Pole is a function of this difference of latitude.

The hours kept at the period concerned are known horologically as the "Babylonian Hours"; twelve from sunrise to sunset, and twelve from sunset to sunrise. Under this system, at Banbury where the midsummer sun is up from 0345 to 2015 local time, this gives twelve "temporary hours" each of $82\frac{1}{2}$ of our minutes in the daytime; similarly at midwinter these hours would have been of $37\frac{1}{2}$ minutes each, and 60 at the equinoxes.

The seasonal variations of the scratch-dial do very roughly compensate for this variation in hours. Take the dial in Fig. 10, at 1545 G.M.T. 14th August, which I am assuming to be more or less in this area. On that day the local apparent time happens to be nearly the same as G.M.T. in this longitude. The shadow of Mr. Fearon's pencil, which we will assume to be over a graduation, stands at about 55° from the (uncut) noon line. It would also stand at that angle at about 1320 in midwinter, 1446 at equinox, and 1615 in midsummer. Now the Office of Nones, at the Ninth Hour, would have been by our clocks at 1352, 1500 and 1607; so that graduation gives a fairly good approximation for that canonical hour.

If only all the scratch-dials were simply marked for the Divine Offices, that might be a solution; but they aren't.

Another theory is that the graduations are often in groups of three: a group for each canonical hour required showing it at the two solstices and the equinox. A few scratch-dials have lines which work out fairly well for this, too, and if all lines were so grouped that might be a solution; but they aren't.

In any case, no small parish church would have had regular Offices; for the early Mass was probably their portion, after which the priest tilled his glebe like other villagers. So the problem remains, as Mr. Fearon says, far from clear. As these dials must have been cut empirically, they probably were so to the devices and desires of successive local incumbents, and that is why there is no common system apparent. I hazard the opinion that there never was one.

I would be delighted to give anyone interested the formulae of the dial,

Yours truly,

Mark Taylor

The activities and publications of some or all of the following bodies should interest readers:

- Arts Council of Banbury (Miss B.G.Rooke, Cornerstones, St. Mary's Road, Adderbury West, Banbury). Minimum 21/-.
- Banbury Art Society (Hon. Sec., 24 Bloxham Road, Banbury). 20/-.
- Banbury Geographical Association (B.E.Little, 2 Burlington Gardens, Banbury). 10/6d.
- Bicester Local History Circle (Hon. Sec., Miss G.H. Dannatt, Lammas Cottage, Launton Road, Bicester, Oxon.). 5/-.
- Buckinghamshire Record Society (Hon. Sec., J.G.Jenkins, Twitchells End, Jordans, Bucks.,) 42/-.
- Council for the Preservation of Rural England, Oxfordshire Branch, (Miss A. Hanson, Wood Green Cottage, Witney, Oxon.). Minimum 10/-.
- Dugdale Society (publishes Warwickshire records) (Shakespeare's Birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon). 42/-.
- Farthinghoe Historical Society (Hon. Sec., R.E.J. Lewis, Abbey Lodge, Farthinghoe, Nr. Brackley, Northants). 5/-.
- Heraldry Society (59 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1). 30/-; or to include "The Coat of Arms", 50/-.
- Historical Association (59a Kennington Park Road, London, S.E.11) (Oxford Branch: A.J.P. Puddephatt, 93, Old Road, Headington, Oxford). 20/-; or to include "History", 35/-.
- Northamptonshire Record Society (Delapré Abbey, Northampton). 21/-.
- Oxford Architectural and Historical Society (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford). 15/- or to include "Oxoniensia", 42/-.
- Oxford Preservation Trust (The Painted Room, 3 Cornmarket Street, Oxford). Minimum 5/-.
- Oxfordshire Record Society (Dr. W.O.Hassall, Hon. Sec., Bodleian Library, Oxford). 21/-.
- Shipston-on-Stour and District Local History Society (H.G.Parry, Hon. Sec., 8 Stratford Road, Shipston-on-Stour, Warw.) 7/6d.
- Warwickshire Local History Society (47 Newbold Terrace, Leamington Spa.) 10/-.
- Woodford Halse Historical Society (J.W. Anscomb, 7 Manor Road, Woodford Halse, Rugby, Warw.) 5/-.

"The Amateur Historian", published quarterly is available from the National Council of Social Service, 26 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1 - single copies, 3/6d; annual postal subscription, 15/-.

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