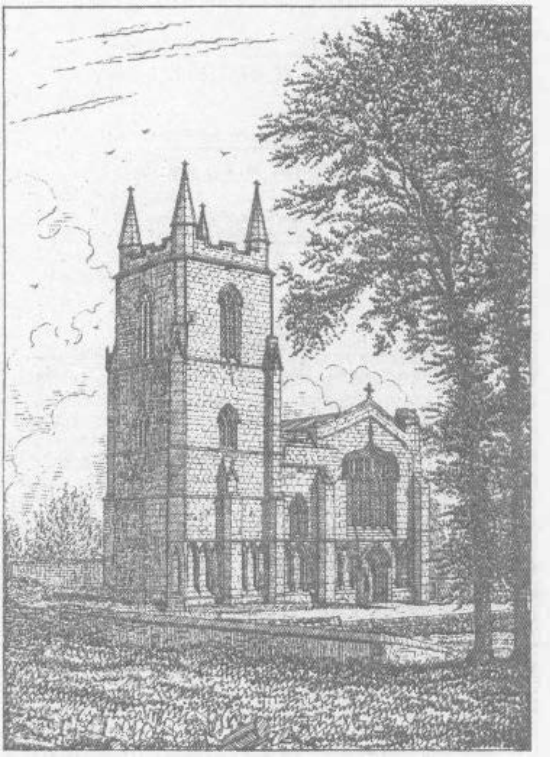
CAKE AND COCKHORSE



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

Cake and Cockhorse

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

Volume 19 **Spring 2013** **Number Two**

A reminder that our next meeting (ending the winter or starting our summer programme), on Wednesday 17th April, 7.30pm, takes rather a different form and is to be held at **Chacombe**. At the meeting we are inviting the people of Chacombe and nearby villages to see something of what the Banbury Historical Society offers – our meetings, our journal, our records publications and the expertise of our members. There will be two short presentations – Deborah Hayter will speak about the landscape history of the area; Barrie Trinder will describe the diary of Thomas Butler Gunn which includes splendid descriptions of two weddings in Chacombe in 1863. The diary forms part of a records publication now in an advanced state of preparation. There will be a bookstall and refreshments, and, it is hoped, a good attendance of Society members.

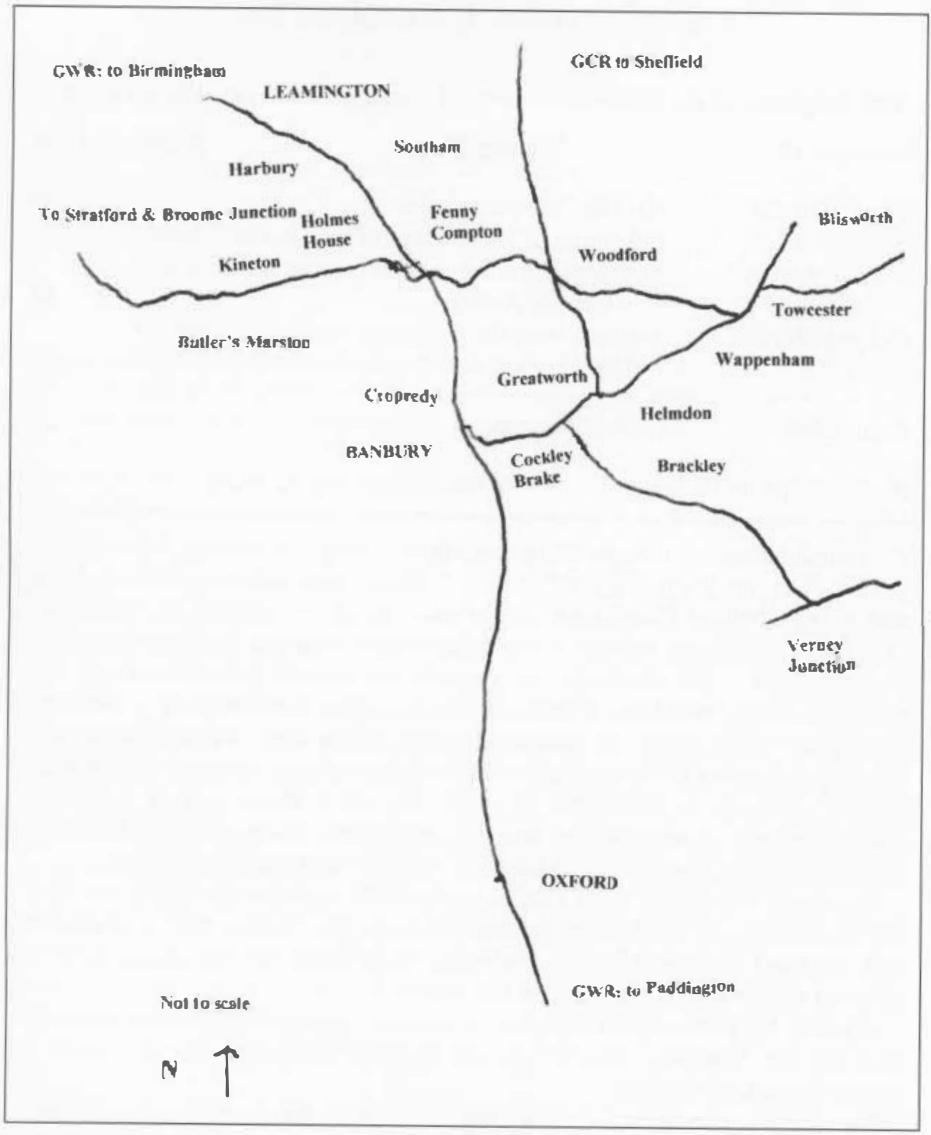
Chacombe is reached from Banbury (the M40 roundabout) taking the first right-hand turn off the A361 (Wardington) road. The Village Hall is at the far end, the third left (the Thorpe Mandeville road). However, the church will be open for earlier visitors (the second left turn).

We also have the normal summer excursions, arranged as always by Beryl Hudson. On Thursday May 9th we are to visit Chalgrove Manor (Grade I timber-framed hall house).

The A.G.M. is to be held on Thursday 27th June (5.00. for 5.30pm) at Combe Mill between Woodstock and Witney – a treat for industrial archaeologists with tour and we hope its working steam mill.

The season concludes, later than usual, on Thursday 22nd August, with a visit to the excavation of Piddington Roman Villa, and finds in the museum in the village. Note that the Piddington is a dead-end approached from Hackleton, just south of Northampton (north of M1) from Blisworth or the A45 ring-road.

Cover: The church at Canons Ashby (see page 54)



Railways discussed in this article.

GCR = Great Central Railway; GWR = Great Western Railway.

The word 'navvy' derives from 'navigator', a name applied as early as 1775 to the men of an earlier generation who built canals, about whom, historians must admit, little is known, although it is clear that a substantial and itinerant civil engineering labour force already existed by 1830. In the 1790s the Worcester & Birmingham Canal Co resolved to build barracks near Edgbaston Hall for 100 men, for whom they provided beds and a refectory. More than 300 men assembled at Market Drayton in February 1827 in anticipation of finding employment on the construction of the Birmingham & Liverpool Junction (now Shropshire Union) Canal. Some 1,600 were working in the area by the following August.[2] The railway contractor Thomas Brassey (1805-70) observed that 'Navvies were the pick of the agricultural districts through which new railways were being made, both as regards physique and intelligence'. Typically a young man gained employment with a contractor building a line in his native area. He might follow the contractor to work elsewhere in Britain or even abroad and when his strength ebbed or he was inclined to marry and settle he might find regular employment as a platelayer or porter. Most were essentially itinerant. The *Bath Chronicle* observed in 1839: 'The navigator appears to belong to no country, he wanders from one public work to another ... Go where he will, he finds some of his comrades whom he has met in some part of England before, and makes enquires as to their mode of living, the wages they were paid since they last met, &c'.[3]

Navvies characteristieally lived in huts close to the scenes of their labours, 'shanties' constructed of whatever building materials were to hand, stone, brick, mud or timber, usually roofed with tarpaulins. In 1861, 93 men with 32 women lived in wooden or mud huts on South Normanton Common in Derbyshire as they extended the Erewash Valley line of the Midland Railway northwards towards Clay Cross. Nevertheless many lived outside such encampments, in the taverns and lodging houses of market towns, as lodgers with villagers and in other rural accommodation rented by the more affluent of their number.

Ethnic divisions certainly created social turbulence on some contracts. In the early 1830s Hugh McIntosh accommodated English and Irish navvies separately when building the London & Greenwich Railway.

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[2] *Shrewsbury Chronicle*, 2 Feb, 14 Sep 1827.

[3] Quoted in A Swift, *The Ringing Grooves of Change: Brunel and the Coming of the Railway to Bath* (Bath: Akeman Press, 2006), p.71.

NAVVIES IN BANBURYSHIRE

Barrie Trinder

The word 'navvy', applied to the men who built our railways, tends to imply riotousness, drunkenness, improvidence and Irish ethnicity, as well as strenuous labour. The Edwardian *Every Woman's Encyclopaedia* considered that navvies were 'a heathen class in our own Christian land ... a moral pest, not fit for decent people to associate... Not one in six could read. They were always drinking and fighting...' The object of this article is to examine some of those preconceptions.

For more than seventy years railway-building was a colossal but financially precarious industry which might employ up to 100,000 men at any one time. Some 6,266 route miles of main line railway were built between 1830 and 1851; 3,180 miles in the next decade, 3,942 in the 1860s and 2,346 in the 1870s, and before 1914 the total exceeded 20,000 miles. The rate of construction depended on the trade cycle, but every year, somewhere in the British Isles, gangs of men were excavating cuttings, dumping spoil on embankments, driving tunnels and building stations, freight depots and locomotive sheds. In the 1830s their working lives were recorded by John Cooke Bourne (1814-96) in his heroic views of the building of the London & Birmingham Railway, and the constructional technology and living conditions of the last Victorian navvies who built the London Extension of the Great Central Railway were memorably recorded by the Leicester photographer S W A Newton (1875-1960). The lives of those who in the early 1880s built the line from Glendon Junction near Kettering to Manton south of Melton Mowbray, the first main line in England to be constructed with the aid of steam-powered excavators and high explosives, were described by the Revd Daniel William Barrett (1851-1928).[1]

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[1] J C Bourne, *Drawings on the London and Birmingham Railway* (London: Ackerman, 1839, rep Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1970); L T C Rolt, *The Making of a Railway: photographed by S W A Newton* (London: Hugh Evelyn, 1971); D W Barrett, *Life and Work among the Navvies* (2nd edn, Lotdon: Wells, Darron, Gardner & Co, 1880, rep Kettering: Nostalgia, 2003); see also T Coleman, *The Railway Navvies* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1968); I Harris, 'Shropshire Navvies: the builders of the Severn Valley Railway', B Trinder, ed, *Victorian Shrewsbury* (Shrewsbury: Shropshire Libraries, 1984), pp 96-104.

Disputes between Englishmen and Irishmen were endemic during the construction of the Shrewsbury & Birmingham in the 1840s. When the Great Western was being built near Bath, Devonian and Cornish navvies displayed menacing mutual hostility.[4]

The census enumerators' returns, with other sources, enable a closer examination of those who were building railways in the early years of each decade and provide an opportunity to question some of the clichés. Banbury was the meeting point of seven railways, two of which were opened respectively in 1852 and 1872, so that at least some of those who built them were recorded by the census enumerators.

Broad Gauge towards the Mersey

The railways running north from Oxford were at the heart of the 'Battle of the Gauges', the conflict between the proponents of the 7ft 0¼ in gauge used by Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-59) and those favouring the 4ft 8½ in gauge that originated in the North East and was used on the first main lines, the Liverpool & Manchester, Grand Junction and London & Birmingham railways, and on the companies that from 1844 formed the Midland Railway. The Oxford, Fenny Compton & Rugby Railway (OFCRR) was intended to link the Great Western at Oxford with the lines to the north, and received the royal assent on 4 August 1845. A few weeks earlier parliament had established the Gauge Commission, whose report was followed by the Rail Regulation (Gauges) Act of 1846, which established the 4ft 8½ in gauge as the national standard while granting dispensation to the Great Western to complete broad gauge routes that were already sanctioned. The Birmingham & Oxford Junction Railway (B&OJR), which was to join the line to Rugby north of Fenny Compton, was authorised on 3 August 1846, shortly before the Gauges Act became law, and the GWR absorbed it two years later. In August 1849 the OFCRR abandoned plans to take the broad gauge to Rugby and made an end-on junction with the B&OJR north of Fenny Compton. Some earthworks for the Rugby line were constructed and remain visible near Holmes House, Knightcote.[5]

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[4] Swift, *Ringing Grooves of Change*, p. 75.

[5] For the background to the construction of the GWR lines through Banbury see B Trinder, 'Centenary Reflections on the Bicester Cut-off', *C&CH*, vol 18 (2010), pp. 103-23; E T MacDermot, *History of the Great Western Railway* (1927, rev edn ed C R Clinton, London: Ian Allan, 1964); F Booker, *The Great Western Railway: a new history* (2nd edn, Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1985).

One reason for the intense political wrangling that beset the building of the railway from Banbury to Birmingham was its strategic importance. The line passes over the Cherwell north of Banbury and crosses the watershed into the catchment area of the Warwickshire Avon south of Fenny Compton. It bridges the Avon between Leamington and Warwick after which it climbs for more than a mile at gradients around 1 in 110 to Hatton. On its approach to Birmingham it crosses tributaries of the River Tame, which flows into the Trent and in due course into the Humber. The line forms a route from south to north that within forty miles cuts across the grain of Midland England. Its success depended on relatively easy gradients which were achieved by skilful and expensive civil engineering. Much of the line runs along high embankments and through deep cuttings. The cuttings on either side of the 73-yard tunnel at Harbury were some of the deepest in England at the time they were excavated.

Political wrangling was amongst the reasons why the construction of the line was delayed. The first section of the OFCRR along the Cherwell Valley from Oxford to Banbury was opened on 2 September 1850, but two years passed before trains reached Birmingham. The first portions of the line to the north were staked out near Banbury as early as September 1845, but by March 1846 Banburians were complaining that construction had not started, and Charles Saunders, secretary of the GWR, found it politic to offer a public explanation for the delays. Work did begin in May 1846, south of Banbury at Spital Farm and Twyford and at Cropredy and Hardwick to the north, and, while parliament anguished over the question of gauges, on three further sites in the following month. The project encountered difficulties in the summer of 1847. Navvies rioted near Harbury in August, probably because they had not been paid, and all work had ceased by the beginning of September. Construction had resumed by May 1849 when the peace of the district was disturbed by thunderous explosions of gunpowder as navvies excavated the cutting north of Cropredy, which the *Banbury Guardian* compared to the cannon fire at the Battle of Cropredy Bridge in 1644.[6]

The census returns suggest that much of the work on the line between Banbury and Leamington had been completed by 30 March 1851,

[6] *Banbury Guardian*, 15 May 1846; 4 June 1846; 19 Aug 1847; 2 Sep 1847; 10 May 1849; 31 May 1849; 28 June 1849. See also B Trinder, *Victorian Banbury* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1982/2005), pp.77-79.

seventeen months before the line was opened to Birmingham. Only 192 navvies and associated workers were recorded in the returns for the parishes of Bourton, Cropredy, Farnborough, Mollington, Claydon, Fenny Compton, Burton Dassett (Knightcote township), Southam, Bishop's Itchington and Harbury.[7] The same night some 898 navvies were staying in the five Lincolnshire parishes north of Peterborough working on the Great Northern Railway which opened on 11 August 1851.

Navvies stayed in many kinds of accommodation, but it appears that the railway companies or the contractors had provided traditional shanties or huts at Fenny Compton and Harbury. There were 76 railway construction workers in Fenny Compton. Eleven huts, alongside more that were no longer occupied, provided accommodation near to the cutting alongside the canal tunnel for 68 people, 31 navvies, two blacksmiths, an engine driver and 34 dependents. Some had been recruited locally, from Drayton (near Banbury), Sulgrave and Middleton Cheney, but others came from distant parts of England, from Avebury, Bath, Bristol, Chelmsford, Norwich, Plymouth, Wells-next-the-Sea, and Whitstable. Six further households, described as 'Near the Tunnel' probably occupied similar huts. Two navvies, one of their wives and a contractor's agent were accommodated at the *Victoria* beer house near the tunnel. Sixteen navvies were staying with farm labourers, locally-born building workers and a shopkeeper, while four, three locally-born and one from Somerset, appear to have rented houses in the village where they accommodated their families with some fellow workers. The contractor's timekeeper had a house on Wharf Road where he ran a butchery business alongside his official duties. The contractor was able to make use of bricks from the nearby works which was established when the tunnel on the adjacent Oxford Canal was partially opened-up in 1838-40 (The process was completed in 1869). All the brickmakers recorded in the census were locally-born and were probably permanent employees of the brickworks.

Abandoned navvies' huts were scattered across the landscape of Harbury at the end of March 1851. The enumerator specifically

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[7] Only one railway construction worker was recorded in Mollington and one in Bourton. They have been included for statistical purposes with those in Cropredy. The one navvy in Bishop's Itchington has been included with Harbury.

mentioned 36 unoccupied 'railway houses' or 'railway cottages', 16 of them in the East Field, and noted that 'Most of the uninhabited houses in this district are houses belonging to the Birmingham & Oxford Railway Company'. Forty-five construction workers, 39 of them navvies, were living in Harbury with 108 dependents. No mention is made in the census of huts at Cropredy, where 30 navvies lived with 54 dependents, or at Claydon, where 19 men involved with railway construction lived with 39 dependents. Six of the eight railway workers at Knightcote were 'platelayers', one of whom, John Rafferty who originated from High Wycombe, appears to have taken over Hunger Farm (which no longer exists) and lived there with his wife, five children and five colleagues.

Table 1: Construction workers on the Banbury – Leamington line, 1851.

Parish	*Number of navvies & associated workers*	*Dependents*	*Total*
Cropredy+ Mollington & Bourton	30	54	84
Farnborough	11	8	19
Claydon	19	39	58
Fenny Compton	76	86	162
Burton Dassett (Knightcote)	8	1	9
Harbury+ Bishop's Itchington	45	108	153
Southam	3	19	22
Total	192	315	507

The census usually called navvies 'railway labourers' although a few were described as 'excavators'. The two groups comprised 162 of those working on the line. The others included five managers (a civil engineer, two contractors and two agents), three supervisory staff (two timekeepers and a foreman), six blacksmiths, two bricklayers, two clerks, a cashier and an engine driver. Navvying was necessarily regarded as a young man's occupation, and the median age of those working on the OFCRR and B&OJR was just over 30. A few appear to have been seasoned navvies. Thomas Simpers, who lived in 'Railway Buildings' at Harbury, originated from Lincolnshire but had children born at Chippenham and in Kent, possibly while working on railway

contracts. James Lewis, a Gloucestershire-born railway bricklayer, also living at Harbury, had children born along the line of the Birmingham & Gloucester Railway, at Chester and at three different places in Kent. Railway construction offered opportunities to strong and ambitious country boys. The youngest of those employed on the OFCRR were two twelve-year-olds living in Fenny Compton, Henry Stanford, son of a farm labourer, and William Cattell, son of a navvy, born in Northampton. The oldest were William Arkell, a Warwickshire born railway labourer living at Claydon who was 70, and 71-year old John Fitzgerald, born in Co Limerick who lived in one of the huts at Fenny Compton.

Table 2: Ages of workers on the Banbury – Leamington line 1851.

Age group	*Number of workers*	*Percentage*
10-19	16	8.3
20-24	36	18.8
25-29	38	19
30-34	27	14.1
35-40	29	15.1
40-44	24	12.5
45-50	12	6.3
50-59	5	2.6
60+	5	2.6
Total	192	100

The contractors for the OFCRR and B&OJR followed customary practice by recruiting many of their staff from the counties through which the lines passed. Almost half of those working on the railways in the parishes surveyed were born in Oxfordshire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire. Of those born elsewhere, 84 were natives of 22 different English counties, of whom 19 came from Buckinghamshire, especially from the south of the county around Slough, through which the Great Western Railway had been constructed, eleven from Essex and nine from Somerset. Only three Irishmen, and only one of them a navvy, were among the 192, together with four Scots and one Welshman.

Table 3: Places of birth of construction workers on the Banbury – Leamington line 1851.

Born in	*Number of workers*	*Percentage*
Parishes along the line	36	18.8
Elsewhere in Oxfordshire	20	10.4
Elsewhere in Warwickshire	15	7.8
Northamptonshire	19	9.9
Elsewhere	92	47.9
Not known	10	5.2
Total	192	100

The contractor for the Birmingham & Oxford line was John Mitchell (1810-73), an Irishman and a bachelor, who in 1851 was living in Farnborough, cared for by his mother and two household servants. He employed his brother-in-law, Thomas Flynn, as a clerk. He was probably a kinsman of David Mitchell (b 1812), born in Scotland, who was also an agent on the line, and was living at Bourton Mill. When the railway was completed John Mitchell spent several years farming in Bourton parish, but he was not recorded there on the 1861 census and migrated to Australia, where he died in 1873 in the gold-mining town of Maldon, Victoria.[8]

The 1851 census returns provide only a partial picture of the construction of the railway from Banbury to Leamington. Much of the work was clearly done much earlier. The men who used gunpowder to create the cutting north of Cropredy in 1849 were probably engaging two years later in similar pyrotechnics elsewhere. The census gives the impression of a slowly depopulating landscape, rather like the day after a county show or a music festival. The sites of the navvies' huts at Fenny Compton may have been destroyed, by the widening of the canal tunnel in 1869 and the construction in 1871-73 of the East & West Junction Railway,[9] and at Harbury by the widening of the cutting and quarrying for Greaves's cement works, but there must be a chance that some have survived, and one day archaeological evidence may add to the story of the line's construction.

[8] *Banbury Guardian*, 6 May 1873.

[9] J Selby, 'The Fenny Compton Tunnel: Oxford Canal', *Industrial Archaeology Review*, vol 24 (2002), pp.103-18.

Northampton and Banbury

The railway that linked Banbury with Towcester was, in contrast with the strategically-important line to Leamington, the weakly offspring of ill-founded ambitions. Banburians believed in the 1850s that a railway to the west was needed to ensure that their town's market would retain the trade in cattle from Wales. Pressure for a railway from Northamptonshire through Banbury and through the Cotswolds to South Wales was increased by the establishment of ironstone quarries in Northamptonshire after specimens of ore had been displayed at the Great Exhibition in 1851. The first Act for a railway linking Northampton with Banbury was passed in 1847, to be followed by a scheme that, with further legislation, envisaged a 96-mile route to South Wales. The company became for a time the 'Midland Counties & South Wales Railway' but by 1870 it was once more the Northampton & Banbury Junction. Its line from Blisworth to Towcester was opened on 1 May 1866. Delays followed but by the autumn of 1870 work was proceeding on the 15-mile route from Towcester to Cockley Brake Junction on the line from Bletchley to Buckingham. From there trains were able to travel over 5½ miles of track opened by the Buckinghamshire Railway in 1850 (by 1870 part of the London & North Western Railway) to Merton Street Station in Banbury. The line was opened for goods traffic from Towcester as far as Helmdon on 31 July 1871, and the first passenger trains from Blisworth to Banbury ran on 1 June 1872. In contrast to the line from Banbury to Leamington the N&BJR was built cheaply. There were sharp curves and the single track was lightly-laid. The line climbed almost continuously from Towcester to the summit near Helmdon where it crossed the watershed between the Great Ouse and the Thames. The final section of the climb was at 1 in 65 and the gradient on the Banbury side of the summit was 1 in 70.[10]

The first engineer of the NBJR was John Collister but from 1871 the resident engineer was Edward Richard, who designed the stations at Wappenham and Helmdon. The line was built by Aird & Son, the company established in 1848 by John Aird (1806-76), superintendent of the Phoenix Gas Co works at Greenwich, which moved from the

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[10] J M Dunn, *The Stratford-upon-Avon & Midland Junction Railway* (Lingfield: Oakwood Press, 1952); S C Jenkins, *The Northampton & Banbury Junction Railway* (Oxford: Oakwood Press, 1990); R C Riley & B Simpson, *A History of the Stratford-upon-Avon & Midland Junction Railway* (Witney & Banbury: Lamplight, 1999).

construction of gas installations into general civil engineering. The subsequently famous Sir John Aird (1833-1911), son of the founder, joined the firm on his 18th birthday in 1851. He became one of the principal civil engineers of the late nineteenth century, his works including the removal of the Crystal Palace from Hyde Park to Sydenham, the Royal Albert Hall, the Covent Garden Opera House and the Aswan Dam. He was proud that he provided consistent employment for his men.[11]

The 1871 census records 128 of Aird's men, with more than 200 dependents, living in the parishes between Towester and Cockley Brake, 70 of them in Wappenham with more than a dozen each in Greatworth, Helmdon and Marston St Lawrence. The influx of railway construction workers raised the population of Wappenham from 567 in 1861 to 627 in 1871, but it reverted to 464 by 1871. A dozen railway builders from as far away as Suffolk, Devon and London were householders in the parish, as were two local men, a 24-year-old from Syresham and the husband of the mistress of one of the village's two lace schools, who had found work with the contractor. Most accommodated other navvies. Others lodged with 21 different households in the village, four with shoemakers, five with farm labourers, and others with the two village publicans, a wheelwright, a tailor, a blacksmith, a nurse, the mistress of the other lace school and with Edward Bodley, shopkeeper and market carrier.

No navvies were living in Towcester, although Joseph Crabtree, the Yorkshireman who had been traffic manager for the N&BJR since the line to Blisworth opened in 1866, had a house near the tollgate north of the town on Watling Street, and an engine driver lived in Park Street. The population of Helmdon rose from 602 in 1861 to 656 in 1871 slumping to 529 ten years later. Five navvies became householders in the village, and accommodated four other construction workers, while the remaining seven in the parish lodged with farm workers. The situation in Greatworth was similar. The population increased from 180 in 1861 to 243 in 1871, then declined to 207 by 1881. Five railway workers became householders, accommodating two other navvies, while the remainder lodged with a shepherd, a sawyer and two farm labourers. John Turner who lived on Helmdon Road seems to have followed a career characteristic of navvying. Born at Twyford, Bucks, he married a wife from nearby Poundon, and was living there in 1848-49 when he

[11] *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Aird.

may have taken up navvying on the Buckinghamshire Railway's line to Oxford. He appears to have spent the next ten years in London before joining Aird's labour force in Northamptonshire. Of the twelve railway workers in Marston St Lawrence eight were natives of the parish. The remainder of the labour force were scattered in ones and twos through Abthorpe, Bradden, Greens Norton, Slapton, Sulgrave and Weedon Lois.

Of the 128 men working on the line in 1871, 60 were married, four widowed and 64 unmarried. Some 33 were from Northamptonshire parishes along its route. The remainder included men from 25 other English counties, and one Scot, but no Irishmen. As on other lines the labour force was predominantly young, with a median age of 33, very slightly older than those on the line to Leamington.

Most of the navvies recorded in the area in 1871 were no longer living there ten years later, and long-term residents must have felt keenly the loss of income from lodgers. In Wappenham, Henry Stanton, who kept a beerhouse where three navvies were lodging in 1871, was merely a farm labourer in 1881. John Chester, a shoemaker who had accommodated six railway bricklayers in 1871 as well as his three children, was living in 1881 with his wife and a boarder, a 57-year-old man born in Aston-le-Walls, who was blind, and a retired gold miner, presumably having returned from Australia or California. James Baker from Bethnal Green, married to a wife from Marston St Lawrence, was a baker who also kept a general store and a beerhouse. In 1871 he accommodated the two timekeepers on the construction project, and the wife and two children of one of them. By 1881 he lived with his wife, his son who had acquired an agricultural holding of 53 acres, and his 73-year-old widowed sister in law.

For most of its existence the N&BJR offered a passenger service of no more than two daily trains in each direction. Nor were its freight trains heavily loaded. Any wagons of Northamptonshire iron ore that passed over it towards South Wales via Didcot would have required two reversals at Banbury. The line was never prosperous and carried a heavy burden of debts. Its annual receipts in the 1880s amounted to about £7,500 p.a. It was operated initially with hired power. Some locomotives ordered from Neilson of Glasgow could not be paid for and went to the Caledonian Railway. After 1876 trains were worked with stock from the LNWR until on 1 July 1910 the company merged with the East & West Junction Railway, whose lines ran from Towcester to Olney and through Stratford-upon-Avon to Broome Junction, forming the Stratford-upon-

Avon & Midland Junction Railway. The company's historian, J M Dunn, remarked that the company was 'a curious example of the survival of the unfit' and that 'traffic obstinately refused to flow east and west along its single track'.[12] It is unsurprising that the line was closed to passenger traffic on 2 July 1951 and to freight workings the following September.

East and West

Other navvies were active in northern Banburyshire in 1871. The East & West Junction Railway was authorised in 1864 to run 33¼ miles from the N&BJR at Green's Norton near Towcester to Stratford-upon-Avon.[13] Construction was inaugurated by Lady Palmerston on 3 August 1864, but shortage of capital caused delays and it was not until July 1869 that a contract was made for the completion of the line. The 6¼ mile section from Fenny Compton to Kineton was opened on 1 June 1871, and must have been almost complete when the census was taken on 2 April. Further capital had to be raised before the sections from Fenny Compton to Green's Norton and Kineton to Stratford were opened on 1 July 1873. The E&WJR was extended to the west to Broom Junction, on the Midland Railway's line from Redditch to Evesham, in 1879 and to the east to a junction near Olney with the Midland's line from Northampton to Bedford in 1891. The early years of the E&WJR were far from profitable, but unlike the N&BHR it did carry long-distance traffic for some parts of its history.

Construction of the Kineton-Fenny Compton section of the E&WJR was directed by the distinguished engineer Thomas Russell Crampton (1816-88).[14] He worked on the Great Western Railway and in 1843 took out a patent for what became known as the Crampton locomotive, distinguished by a low boiler and large driving wheels on an axle behind the firebox. However, its success was perhaps due more to its wide steam passages, generous bearing surfaces and large heating surfaces, rather than its unorthodox configuration. Some 320 were built, only 45 of them for railways in Great Britain. None is preserved in the United Kingdom, but a French example is regarded as one of the treasures of the national railway museum at Mulhouse. From 1848 Crampton practised as a civil engineer in London, building railways in the Ottoman Empire and a waterworks in Berlin, and laying the submarine telegraph cable under the Straits of Dover in 1851. He also built the waterworks in

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[12] Dunn, *Stratford-upon-Avon & Midland Junction*, p.1.
[13] Dunn, *Stratford-upon-Avon & Midland Junction*, pp. 2-3.
[14] *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Crampton.

his native Broadstairs, now adapted as a museum in which he is commemorated by the Crampton Tower. It is likely that much of the work for which he was responsible on the E&WJR was actually undertaken by his sons Thomas Hellas Crampton, who was lodging in Bridge Street, Kineton on 2 April 1871, and John George Crampton who lodged on Warwick Road. The engineer for the two sections completed in 1873 was James B Burke, a Scots civil engineer, living at the Manor House, Butlers Marston in 1871, as was his Irish-born brother, Joseph J Burke, also a civil engineer. The birthplaces of Burke's daughters, St John's Wood, Abingdon, Balcombe (Sussex) and Bayswater reflect the itinerant life of a railway engineer. Work on these two sections appears to have been carried out by the contractor William Death, a Suffolk man, living in 1871 in South Street, Kineton. The census records that he employed 130 men which accords closely with the 136 identified in the area in enumerators' returns. In 1881 his son, William Price Death, was station master at Fenny Compton

The census records five railway construction workers in Stratford, 76 in Kineton and Butlers Marston, three at Gaydon, eight at Burton Dasset, and 25 at Fenny Compton, together with 15 at Harbury and four at Claydon and Cropredy, who probably walked several miles to their workplaces. Living with the navvies were 175 dependents, including 43 in Kineton and Butlers Marston, 51 in Fenny Compton, 46 in Harbury and 15 at Claydon and Cropredy. Some 118 of the men were recorded as Railway Labourers, Excavators or Navvies, the remainder including five civil engineers, two timekeepers, a horse keeper and two locomotive crews. The contractor had erected a shed at Kineton which was manned overnight by 16-year-old John Plester from Deddington. One of the engine drivers, John Elliott, living in Blakeman's Buildings at Kineton, was, like many locomotivemen, a native of Co Durham, from Felling. The locomotive that Plester cared for and Elliott drove was probably the 0-6-0 saddle tank built by Manning Wardle which worked the E&WJR's first passenger train, of which a photograph appeared in the *Railway Magazine* in 1910. It was originally named *Crampton*, but was later renamed *Kineton*, and remained on the E&WJR until 1910.[15]

This labour force was similar in many respects to that building the Northampton & Banbury Railway. Of the 136 men, 61 (45%) were

[15] *Railway Magazine*, vol 26 (1910), pp. 265-76; Dunn, *Stratford-upon-Avon & Midland Junction*, p.20.

married, five (4%) were widowed and 70 (51%) were unmarried. Table 4 shows that while there were some differences in the age structure of the two labour forces, workers on both had a median age of about 33. The proportion recruited from local parishes was 26 per cent in each case, and the NBJR employed men from 25 English counties other than Northamptonshire while on the E&WJR there were men from 24 counties other than Warwickshire. There were no Irishmen on the N&BJR and only one on the E&WJR.

In Kineton men from Feltham (Middlesex), Chorley (Berkshire), Wisbech and Bromsgrove were among nine navvies lodging with a farm labourer in the Market Place. One of the householders was 48-year-old Richard Poole, a Yorkshireman married to a wife from Sleaford (Lincs), three of whose six children had been born in Kent. One of them, also Richard Poole, aged only 10 and born in Canterbury, worked with his father as a railway labourer. Also in the Market Place was John Fisher, aged 42, a native of Witney who had married a wife from Fenny Compton. The birthplaces of their children, at Reading, Salisbury, Canterbury and Aylesbury reflect the navvy's itinerant life style. A nearby house was the home of a farm labourer who provided accommodation for three recently-recruited navvies all born at Drayton near Banbury. Navvies were accommodated by 20 householders in Kineton, of whom eleven were farm labourers, and two slept at one of the village pubs. Ten navvies were themselves householders, most of them accommodating fellow workers as well as their families.

Table 4: Ages of construction workers on the N&BJR and E&WJR 1871.

	Northampton & Banbury Junction		*East & West Junction*	
Age Group	*Number of men*	*Percentage*	*Number of men*	*Percentage*
Under 19	16	12.5	11	8.1
20-24	20	15.6	17	12.5
25-29	16	12.5	30	22.1
30-34	20	15.6	20	14.7
35-39	24	18.8	22	16.1
40-44	14	11.0	10	7.4
45-49	8	5.5	18	13.2
50-59	6	4.5	8	5.9
60-69	5	4.0	-	-
Totals	129	-	136	-

The East & West Junction Railway lasted for less than a century but its history was eventful. In its early decades it struggled to survive, carrying no more than three daily passenger trains and only local freight traffic. In 1899 it was linked in both directions at Woodford to the Great Central Railway. Through passenger workings between the Great Central's Marylebone terminus and Stratford began in 1902 and some long-distance excursion trains ran to Stratford from Manchester via the Great Central main line. In 1910 the company was formally merged with the Northampton & Banbury Junction Railway to form the Stratford & Midland Junction Railway. For four years from 1908 it enjoyed the charismatic leadership of Harry Willmott (1851-1931), as chairman, and his son Russell Willmott (1879-1920), as traffic manager. When the latter left to manage the Isle of Wight Central Railway in 1912 it was remarked that he and his father had raised the SMJR from a poverty-stricken company to one with a 2½ per cent dividend, and that 'no day was too long for him'. The Willmotts' concern for their employees was reflected by a Sunday out for the company's whole staff organised at Compton Verney in 1911. While the Wilhnotts managed the line the Midland Railway began to exercise its running powers, working overnight freight trains over the whole length of the SMJR from Broom Junction to Olney. In 1913 the Midland Railway reputedly ceased to use the SMJR for through traffic, although the *Railway Magazine* reported in 1924 reported that some of these workings were banana trains from Avonmouth to London that had travelled by this route 'for many years'.[16]

After the grouping of railway companies in 1923 the SMJR became part of the London Midland & Scottish Railway. The company invested in new track in 1928 particularly for the benefit of the overnight banana trains. The basic passenger service in 1930 consisted of three trains in each direction between Stratford and Blisworth, one in each direction carrying through coaches from London (Marylebone) which were picked up and detached at Byfield, to which they were worked from Woodford. In 1933 this coach was part of a portion of the 18.20 Bradford express from Marylebone that was slipped at Woodford. This working continued until 1936 when slip coach working was discontinued on the Great

[16] *Railway Magazine*, vol 26 (1910) pp 265-76; vol 27 (1910), pp. 83/172; vol 29 (1911), pp. 435-36; vol 30 (1912), p. 169; vol. 54 (1924), p.485; Dunn, *Stratford-upon-Avon & Midland Junction*, p.21.

[392] The nature of railway construction before the introduction of steam excavators and high explosives in the 1880s. This view of the construction of Tring cutting on what is now the West Coast Main Line comes from J C Bourne, *Drawings on the London & Birmingham Railway* (1839).

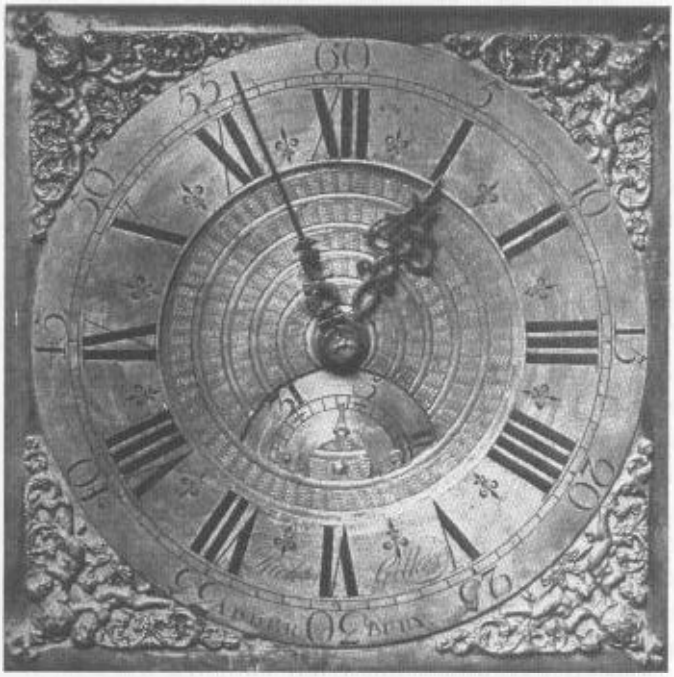
Central section of the LNER. A fast train from Blisworth to Stratford was inaugurated in 1931 to mark the opening of the LMSR's Welcombe Hotel. For a short time the service was worked by a single-deck motor coach fitted with both rubber tyred and flanged steel wheels that ran on the SMJR from Blisworth to a siding in the goods yards at Stratford, and then through the streets to the Welcombe Hotel. The working ceased in 1932.

During the Second World War a south-east connection was installed at Broom Junction enabling trains from the Bristol direction to access the SMJR without reversal, and traffic on the line was considerably increased after the opening of the War Department depot then known as Marlborough Farm Camp. After the war passenger traffic declined. The service between Blisworth and Stratford was withdrawn from 5 April 1952. However, long distance freight trains from the Great Central line to South Wales were diverted at Woodford to the SMJR from 5 June 1951. In June 1960 new connections at Fenny Compton and Stratford gave trains from Banbury to South Wales a shorter route to Stratford and South Wales than that via Hatton, which was known to local enginemen as going round the Gold Coast. For a few years in the 1960s the railway through Kineton was busier than at any time in its history, but the reduction of traffic from the Oxfordshire Ironstone Co and the diversion to other routes of freight traffic on the Great Central line led to the closure of the SMJR in 1965, apart from the link between Fenny Compton and the ordnance depot.

Conclusions

Our impressions of railway construction tend to be shaped by what we know of large-scale projects, the excavation of Tring Cutting on the London & Birmingham Railway depicted by J C Bourne, the chaotic landscape around Camden described by Dickens in *Dombey and Son* or the building of the Woodhead Tunnel in the Pennines during which navvies endured scandalous living conditions. The three construction projects in Banburyshire on which census returns provide information were rather different. The line from Banbury to Leamington had doubtless employed very large numbers of men in the late 1840s. If the construction of the cutting north of Cropredy reminded the *Banbury Guardian* of past battles, the excavation of the tunnel and cuttings at Harbury must have been on a truly epic scale. By March 1851 activity on this scale had ceased and the census portrays the last stages of the construction project. The N&BJR and E&WJR lines were cheaply built,

and, while eminent engineers directed both projects, the numbers employed were relatively small. The ages and origins of the men on all three projects were remarkably similar, and, contrary to the received impressions of navvies, scarcely any were Irish, although it must be acknowledged that large numbers of Irishmen were employed on other lines. These groups of navvies spent short spells in Banburyshire, as did members of the Royalist and Parliamentarian armies in the 1640s, or armed forces from the United States during the Second World War. Their memorials are the lines they built. The railway from Banbury to Leamington is now one of the busiest in England, carrying a more intensive service of passenger trains than at any time in its history. In contrast the N&BJR and most of the E&WJR survive only as overgrown earthworks scarcely more impressive than the house platforms of deserted medieval villages. It is fortunate that the census enables us to gain at least a modest impression of those who were responsible for building them.



Dial showing the ring and zig-zag engraving of Richard Gilkes of Adderbury. (*Clockmaking in Adderbury*, by C.F.C. Beeson, BHS vol. 4, 1962, fig.20.)

EXHIBITION of NORTH OXFORDSHIRE QUAKER CLOCKS

Saturday 8th June/ Sunday 9th June 2013 at Adderbury Parish Institute

Adderbury History Association is hosting an exhibition of approximately sixty, locally made, Quaker clocks. The village of Adderbury, in the eighteenth century, was at the heart of the North Oxfordshire Quaker clockmaking tradition of iron posted hoop and spike clocks with a distinctive ring and zig zag engraved dials. Adderbury was the home of the most prolific maker of Quaker clocks in the eighteenth century – Richard Gilkes.

The exhibition will have on display many examples of hoop and spike clocks from each of the main Quaker clockmaking villages of Sibford Gower, Adderbury, Deddington, Milton under Wychwood and the market towns of Charlbury and Shipston on Stour. There will, also, be clocks made by the early eighteenth century clockmaker Thomas Gilkes sr. of Sibford, John Farndon sr of Deddington and later members of the Gilkes family, as well as lesser known makers such as Thomas Harris of Deddington and Wm Green of Milton.

In conjunction with this exhibition Adderbury's Quaker Meeting House will be open on both days – this beautiful, historic building was built in 1675 and is one of only a handful of Quaker Meeting houses left in England still in its original state with some of its original furniture and still in use; its atmosphere is magical!

Do put these dates in your diary – and come and learn all about 'posted hoop and spike clocks'. This exhibition will be a unique occasion – to have so many, treasured and historic, local Quaker Clocks gathered together into one village hall is most unlikely ever to happen again. The Exhibition is open from 10.30am to 5pm on both days, admission £5. Refreshments will be available and The Adderbury Red Lion pub is only yards away!

Nick Allen

THE SECULAR INFLUENCE OF THE MONASTIC BUILDINGS OF CANONS ASHBY

Clare Jakeman

For nigh on eight hundred years travellers between Banbury and Northampton, and the inhabitants of a large swathe of southern Northamptonshire, have been aware of a gigantic ironstone tower with impressively long pinnacles, a remnant of Canons Ashby priory. Monastic churches were built to impress on the secular world the importance and power of religious houses. Canons Ashby takes its name from the Black Canons (the Augustinians) who founded their priory, thanks to their generous benefactor Stephen de Ley, lord of the manor in the reign of Henry II, 1154-1189, in the middle of the twelfth century. The tower was constructed a century later. At the same time the monks, who probably never numbered more than thirteen, were granted a licence to enclose a spring called the Norwell and the little building is still extant as are the sizeable fishponds.

The church was an enormous cathedral-like structure consisting of a nave of five bays (only two remain) and with the chancel totalling 217 feet, four times the length of the present building. Although the church would have been shared with the local community, Canons Ashby has always been a tiny village, so this massive edifice would have never served more than a hundred souls.

Initially Canons Ashby was a small group of farms and cottages, then in 1489 the prior enclosed 100 acres, converting them to pasture and demolishing three houses in the process.

In 1536 the priory was suppressed as part of the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Sir John Cope, a wealthy Banbury lawyer, acquired it in 1538. What attracted him? There were three reasons, I think. Firstly, he needed a home and part of the monastic buildings was easily converted into a house surrounded by a walled garden, known as Cope's Ashby, which survived until about 1665 in the ownership of the Cope family. Secondly, Canons Ashby was already a successful sheep farm – his Spencer relations had recently become extremely prosperous sheep farmers, having bought up enormous tracts of land throughout Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. In 1547 Sir John Cope kept no

fewer than 2000 sheep at Canons Ashby. Thirdly, the Copes were a prominent Protestant, then Puritan family. Unusually, since the Dissolution, the Church had been privately owned and so was free from diocesan control. Although this meant that the owner was responsible for both the maintenance of the building and the salary of the incumbent, he had the freedom to choose a puritan cleric and to worship in the manner he desired, and to construct the most opulent of grandiose memorials even if this caused damage to the church!

John Dryden, a scion of a Cumberland family, also needed a home. Astute enough to marry Elizabeth Cope in 1551, he was permitted to occupy and enlarge a modest farmhouse, which is now the gentry house, a little distance from the church, and his family remained there for four hundred and thirty years. They also acquired the 'site of the late monastery of Canons Ashby' in 1573. The Drydens were also staunch Protestants and Puritans, albeit very wealthy, as is evidenced by the memorial brass on the church floor to the first John Dryden, showing a large richly clad Tudor gentleman. John's second son inherited Canons Ashby in 1584. His name was Erasmus, after the great Dutch humanist, who was an important influence on Tudor Protestants. Erasmus, a Banbury M.P. 1623-24, was in fact a strict Puritan. In 1604 he circulated a petition on behalf of local Puritans resulting in his imprisonment in the Fleet. In 1608 he invited the charismatic John Dod, who was an author of an influential Puritan guide to child rearing, to become the family's chaplain. John Dod had been forbidden to preach publicly. Erasmus died in 1632 and was succeeded by his son John, also a Puritan.

Like most of the Midlands, Canons Ashby suffered in the Civil War. In 1644 a party of about thirty or fifty of the Parliamentarian infantry had been sent by the governor of Northampton to collect money in the Banbury neighbourhood. They quartered at the Drydens' house but by night a party of the Earl of Northampton's horse with eighty or two hundred foot (depending on which contemporary account is correct) arrived in Canons Ashby from Banbury. The Parliamentarians retreated into the church. The Royalists broke in. The Parliamentarians again retreated, this time, to the tower which they successfully held for two hours, until the Royalists set it on fire, when the Parliamentarians surrendered and were conveyed to Banbury as prisoners of war. According to Arthur Mee there are marks of shot on the walls of the tower, the inside of which remains an empty shell to this day.

Soon after the Civil War Sir Robert Dryden inherited Canons Ashby and it was he who demolished Cope's Ashby. His nephew Edward paid for a very grand funeral for his uncle which involved cutting away the medieval arch at the west end of the church to allow room for his funeral catafalque to be brought inside. His funerary achievement, consisting of a banner, a Dryden lion and sphere crested helm, a pair of pennants, a tabard, a ceremonial sword and shield, gauntlets and spurs, still hangs in the church and is of particular interest as it shows the continuance of a medieval tradition into the eighteenth century (by this time the Drydens seem to have forgotten the strictly Puritan principals of their faith – the first John Dryden's will stated 'I doe not allow of pomp in burialls').

The church was a useful place to display the family hatchments when they were removed from the house and Sir Robert's is the first of eleven very fine painted hatchments which line the nave commemorating successive Dryden baronets and their wives until the middle of the nineteenth century. Later Dryden monuments to Dryden baronets include two large and spectacular neo classical monuments by Rossi, the earlier showing a lady with an urn, the later a lady stooping over a shield manifesting the Dryden arms.

Perhaps the most interesting (certainly this is the opinion of the National Trust) of the baronets is Sir Henry Dryden who inherited in 1837 at the age of nineteen. Sir Henry became a very respected and renowned Victorian antiquarian and his curiosity about the past was kindled as a boy of ten when he helped his father excavate the remains of the priory buildings next to the church. He went on archaeological expeditions all over the British Isles and made thousands of drawings and watercolours of sites and finds. He wrote articles for learned societies on a vast range of subjects.

The church was structurally in a poor state when Sir Henry succeeded. He roofed in the tower and reinstated the fifteenth century octagonal font which is very beautiful with panels of different tracery on each face. Sir Henry had rescued the font from a nearby ditch.

However by 1984 it was nearly forty-five years since regular services had been held in the Church and many people driving past lamented its dereliction. As a result of the National Trust acquiring and opening Canons Ashby to the public, the restored church is now regularly visited, often by non Christians, who are still awed by the massive pinnacled ironstone tower, the magnificent Perpendicular window and the west front with its dark orange ironstone columns contrasting attractively with

the cream stone of the arches, before they even enter the impressive and interesting interior of the building, built to the glory of God in a bygone age.

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SNIPPETS FROM THE ARCHIVES: 6

Deborah Hayter

(From the microfilm held at Banbury Reference Library)

The very first edition of what was to become the *Banbury Guardian*, on Thursday April 5th, 1838 begins:

'The Guardian

OR

MONTHLY POOR LAW REGISTER

FOR THE DISTRICT COMPRISED IN THE UNIONS OF

BANBURY, BICESTER, BRACKLEY, CHIPPING-NORTON, DAVENTRY, NORTHAMPTON, SHIPSTON, SOUTHAM, STRATFORD-ON-AVON, WITNEY AND WOODSTOCK.

Printed and published by William Potts, Parsons Street, Banbury

No.1 ***Price 2d***

ADDRESS

The objects of the present Journal are to record, and to present in a cheap and convenient form, the general proceedings and statistics of the Unions surrounding Banbury; to diffuse information respecting the New Poor Law; and to afford a medium for fairly canvassing and discussing its principles and provisions.

It is our conviction that the New Law is most slandered where it is least understood; and that where it has been well administered, it has been productive of benefit to the poor. .....

Among systems for the government of the poor, undoubtedly 'That which is best administered is best'. The most essential condition, therefore, to the success of the present measure is, the election of wise and humane Boards of Guardians, consisting of men whose eye is single towards the best interests of the labouring population. This object will, we trust be furthered by placing before the Public eye, the proceedings of those who already hold office.'

The page continues with statistics showing the number of inmates of the Banbury workhouse during the month of March, categorized by age and sex and whether 'able' or 'disabled', and the number of deaths in each category. The contracts for supplying goods to the House are listed: bread (4 lb loaves), meat (including beef 'shoulder clods') and flour, basic groceries (cheese, tea, sugar, candles and soap), and coals.

'On the 19th of January, there were in the House, 282 Paupers – the highest number the House ever contained. It will be gratifying to our readers to find that the number has decreased rapidly, as the weather has become less inclement; and that so many of those labourers, which the almost unequalled severity of the late winter compelled to seek a temporary refuge under the warm cover of the Workhouse, are once more enabled to support their families by their own application and industry, out of doors.'

They must have been desperate indeed to go to the hated Union workhouse. The whole system of the New Poor Law was designed to make the receipt of poor relief as unpleasant as possible. Once inside, inmates had to wear workhouse uniforms and were separated from their families, men in one wing, women in another and children in a third. They were fed a monotonous diet, though it was probably adequate in terms of calories, and were put to unpleasant and demeaning tasks such as picking oakum. The idea was that the poor would work harder in order to avoid having to go the Union: a fine principle – if there had been enough well-paid work available.

Lecture Report

Brian Little

Thursday 13th December 2012

Feeding the Guns – the challenges of explosive manufacture during the Great War.

Wayne Cocroft (English Heritage)

This was a fascinating talk with strong local interest content, namely the Filling Factory in Grimsbury.

After a few basic definitions our speaker launched into an account of the various World War I industrial sites involved in explosives manufacture. He began with the key location of Waltham Abbey, which produced cordite and was in production prior to 1914.

This was followed by a careful analysis of other locations and ways in which these were developed differently and distinctively. Some factories were noted for their size such as Holton Heath whilst others like Gretna in Cumbria were major employers (20,000 at the height of its activity). In several cases the administration blocks were noted for high quality design. Then there were places with specialised outputs such as poison gas at Avonmouth. Popular sites were often riverside locations as at Cliffe on the Medway. Overall by the end of the war there were 200 factories.

An added advantage of his research work on behalf of English Heritage is that there is a strong social history element including references to the clothing worn in these factories.

Towards the end of the talk Wayne Cocroft focussed on Banbury and the activity of shell filling on the Grimsbury site, where buildings of historical value were surrounded by evidence of medieval ridge and furrow.

In an especially interesting section he referred to preparation and provision by the Germans. The high standard of their buildings encouraged retention as state monuments.

The talk was followed by a lively question and answer session, a fitting finale to an excellent evening.

Thursday 10th January 2013

Carriers and Stage Coaches before and after Turnpiking

Dorian Gerhold

This was a talk born out of considerable detailed if selective regionalised research. It focussed largely on links to London and because of the general lack of documentary evidence gave little weight to the role of casual carriers (such as farmers) who as an occupational group were somewhat elusive.

The choice of subject was determined by the fact that had the road services not been reliable and widely available despite bad road surfaces, there could not have been an industrial revolution.

Sources of material dominated the early remarks. Various lists, diaries and newspapers provided details of wagons and journeys made by packhorse, the latter long strings in single file. Their average speed of two mph meant that some 25 miles could be covered in a day. When and where they broke and ended their journeys innkeepers' records had a story to tell which stressed reliability.

Stage coaches formed the main focus of the latter part of the talk. Unlike carriers there was an emphasis on changes of horses to achieve higher speeds. Unsurprisingly a national network emerged though very much London dominated.

The talk was well illustrated throughout, including some very useful maps. One in particular showed how long it took to reach certain places from the metropolis. In the stage coach era Banbury was accessible in a day but it took four days to the likes of Chester.

Dorian Gerhold devoted part of his talk to an analysis of horse suitability. The ideal packhorses had long strides, were good on hills and economical to feed. Identification of the most travelled passengers was also possible. Their contrasting ranks included the gentry over longer routes and prostitutes on short journeys.

The impact of the turnpikes was variable; not all made a difference to journey times. Indeed some failed for lack of money or ambition. However for many travellers more important was the balance between cheapness and speed. Some coach owners decided to break down routes such as Bristol to London into handy sections along some of which speeds of up to 10 mph could be achieved.

Carriers were also influenced by the availability of turnpikes. After 1750 some resorted to flying wagons for overnight travel. Destinations were less purely and simply inns and more headquarters from which goods could be collected. Reliability assumed a new guise.

Thursday 14th February 2013
Time out of Mind: Custom and Ritual in the Nineteenth Century
Shaun Morley

Few in the audience could have been prepared for such a dramatic introduction to the subject. The image presented was that of a man leading a woman on a halter into a crowded market place to the spot where beasts were usually sold. She did not seem to be distressed but was smiling. An auction took place but there was only one bidder for the lady who went off happily with her purchaser. At this point Shaun Morley reveals that this wife sale in 1839 took place in Witney and is recorded in *Jackson's Oxford Journal*. Wife sales were a form of divorce and the key features were: a public announcement had to take place in

a market place, a halter, proceedings conducted by an auctioneer, money changing hands and a stamped bill of sale, exchange of pledges and the consent of the wife.

The speaker then differentiated custom and ritual. Customs were rarely written down but had happened 'time out of mind' relying on parish memory and the renewal of oral tradition. Many related to agriculture and were widespread throughout the county. These included rights to graze livestock on common land or to glean corn after the harvest had been gathered in. Wychwood Forest had its own laws and customs including certain rights for villagers. Some customs were specific to an area such as at Finstock where villagers had the right to take two trees from woodland, as compensation for a road built to serve the big house. In time many of these customs were challenged and redefined by statute, some becoming crimes.

Like gleaning, wooding – the gathering of fallen branches for firewood – continued until after World War II and was a childhood experience of a number of members. In the nineteenth century timber collected might be sold to generate cash to pay for beer for feast days

An intriguing topic was so-called 'rough music'. Gangs of people banging metal objects or blowing horns marching to the homes of individuals who had offended against the community norm, for example child abuse, wife beating, or ill-treatment of domestic servants. Disapproval was signified by noise and shouting.

At the conclusion of Shaun Morley's talk those present were left to reflect on a well organised presentation, high on interest and delivered with an enthusiasm for the world of custom and ritual.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT 2012

Your Society has made steady progress during 2012 in all its spheres of activity, in arranging meetings and field trips, in publishing and in advocating the importance of history in the local community.

Speakers at meetings during the winter programmes have included: Julian Munby of Oxford Archaeology, Wayne Cocroft of English Heritage, Clive Hurst of the Bodleian Library, Roger Rosewell, Mervyn Benford of the Milestones Society, Liz Woolley and Dr Elizabeth Gemmill of the Oxford University Department for External Studies. The serving of coffee at the conclusion of meetings has continued to be popular and your committee have ensured that those attending lectures have been welcomed at the main door of the Museum and if necessary directed to the lecture room. Most lectures have attracted audiences in excess of 50. The capacity of the Education Studio at Banbury Museum was not uncomfortably taxed in 2012 but your committee are aware that some form of transmitting lectures to a screen in the coffee bar area may be necessary in the future.

There was again a lively and varied summer programme. The customary village walk did not take place in April 2012 but a new-style village meeting, akin to a road show is planned at Chacombe for 17 April 2013. Members of the Society enjoyed a tour of the defences of Oxford led by Julian Munby in May and a visit to Smith of Warwick's Stanford Hall near Rugby in June. The annual general meeting took place at Hook Norton Brewery. Before the meeting most members were able to tour the brewery, and everyone subsequently enjoyed nibbles and samples of various kinds of beer or non-alcoholic alternatives.

Our major expenditure in 2012 was on the production and distribution of the Risley Diaries for which we received a generous grant of £3,000 from the Greening Lamborn Trust. This enabled us to show a small surplus of £341 on the General Fund. The balance on the General Fund at the end of the year is more than sufficient to meet the cost of the two records volumes in preparation.

We made two donations from the Brinkworth Museum Fund: a contribution of £500 to the Dreams of Gold exhibition at the Museum, and enlarged print-outs of Rushers Directory for 1832-1906, costing £89, for Banbury Museum and the Centre for Banburyshire Studies.

Members are kept up-to-date with details of meetings and other aspects of Society activities by Deborah Hayter's e-mails, as well as by releases to the local press and by posters for winter lectures which are displayed at appropriate venues in Banbury and district. There has been a modest increase in membership.

Banbury Museum continues to be the Society's official address as well as the venue for its meetings and the host of its website. As noted in the report for 2011 the Museum is moving towards trust status. The Society continues to offer support to the Museum and was pleased to welcome the chairman designate of the Trust to the first lecture meeting of the 2012-13 season.

Dennis Basten and Colin Cohen have resigned from the committee after moving from the Banbury area. We would like to record our thanks to them for their past contributions to the Society, and welcome Clare Jakeman who has re-joined the committee. We record with regret the death early in 2012 of Alan Donaldson, a past chairman of the Society who served on the committee between 1971 and 1979.

As usual three issues of *Cake & Cockhorse* appeared during the year. The principal articles included Nicholas Allen on the Doyly family and the Quaker Meeting House at Adderbury, John Dunleavy on Mafficking at Banbury, Kathy Frost on nineteenth century winter tragedies, Jeremy Gibson on 'How North Oxfordshire Voted' (in 1690) and Rebecca Probert on Co-habitation and Marriage in Victorian Neithrop. There were also regular contributions from Deborah Hayter, Brian Little and Barrie Trinder, and reviews of varied publications that are concerned directly or indirectly with the history of 'Banburyshire'. Indices to volume 18 appeared punctually in the final issue of the volume in the summer of 2012. The Society is always pleased to collaborate

with other bodies and journals, and a nationally-focussed version of Barrie Trinder's article on country carriers (*C&CH* vol 18, 7, Autumn/Winter 2011) appeared in *The Local Historian* (vol 42, 2, May 2012), while a Rotherham-orientated version of the same author's note on 'The Wandering Flutes' appeared in the journal of the Rotherham Family History Society, *A Bridge in Time*, vol 12, 2, June 2012. It is worth repeating observations made in the editorial of the first issue of vol 19, that 168 issues of *Cake & Cockhorse* appeared between 1959 and 2012, including some 501 articles, a record that can be matched by few other local historical societies.

The Society did not organise a local history competition in 2012 but was pleased to publish in *Cake & Cockhorse* Caroline Bedford's article on 'Eydon's Photo Archives', which arose from the winning entry in our 2011 competition.

In June 2012 the Society brought out its thirty-second records publication the second volume of Geoffrey Smedley-Stevenson's edition of the diaries of William Cotton Risley of Deddington. (*Mid-Victorian Squarson: The Diaries of William Cotton Risley, Former Vicar of Deddington 1849-1869*, ISBN 978 0 900129 30 8). This is an exceptionally rich source for the social history of the mid-nineteenth century, of significance far beyond the limits of the parish of Deddington, or, indeed, of 'Banburyshire'. It represents the completion of 25 years' work by Geoffrey Smedley-Stevenson, by the Society's Editor and by other members who have been involved in its production. This volume, and earlier publications, *Turnpike Roads to Banbury* and *Banbury Past* have all received favourable review in the course of the year. Sales of back issues of records publications have remained buoyant.

Two further records volumes are at an advanced stage of production. A volume entitled *Victorian Banburyshire: Three Memoirs*, edited by Bartie Trinder, will include edited versions of the texts of Sarah Beesley's *My Life*, and Thomas Ward Boss's *Reminiscences of Old Banbury*, and the MS diary for the second half of 1863 of Thomas Butler Gunn, a Banburian who travelled for 14 years in North America but returned to England in 1863 to bury his father, to marry, and to 'live happily ever after' in a cottage at Wardington. The alphabetical digest to Rusher's *Banbury Directories, 1832-1906*, together with a DVD facsimile of the texts should appear later in 2013. The *Directories* are a uniquely detailed source, and the publication will be of interest to historians and genealogists far beyond the limits of 'Banburyshire'. Significant grants have been obtained to support the publication of both volumes.

The Society has provided historical information and advice to the Banbury Civic Society on several planning issues, and through items in *Cake & Cockhorse* has kept members informed of the views of the Battlefields Trust on the impact of the proposed HS2 railway project on the site of the Battle of Danesmoor, and of the results of the excavations carried out for 'The Pub Dig' television programme at the *Unicorn* and *Reindeer* inns during October 2011.

Banbury Historical Society

Income & Expenditure Accounts for year ending 31 December 2012

GENERAL FUND		2012 £	2011 £
INCOME			
Subscriptions		3,106	3,001
Income Tax refund		485	446
Building Society interest		25	25
Sale of publications		79	906
Other		53	97
Total income		3,448	4,475
EXPENDITURE			
Cake & Canapés		919	939
Records Volumes costs	4,293		57
Less grant from Greening Lamborn Trust	3,000	1,293	
Meetings		585	937
Reception & AGM		59	187
Postage and other Administration costs		1,242	757
Total Expenditure		4,108	2,457
SURPLUS to the General Fund		341	2,018
BRINKWORTH MUSEUM FUND			
INCOME			
Building Society interest		11	12
(Donation from member)		-	100
		11	112
EXPENDITURE			
Donations to Banbury Museum		589	100
DEFICIT from (SURPLUS to) the Brinkworth Museum Fund		(578)	12

Balance Sheets as at 31 December 2012

	2012 £	2011 £
GENERAL FUND		
Balance at 1 January 2012	11,139	9,121
PLUS Surplus for the year	341	2,018
Balance at 31 December 2012	11,480	11,139
BRINKWORTH MUSEUM FUND		
Balance at 1 January 2012	3,903	3,891
LESS Deficit (PLUS Surplus) for the year	578	12
Balance at 31 December 2012	3,325	3,903
TOTAL BALANCE at 31 December 2012	14,805	15,042
Represented by:		
ASSETS		
NatWest Bank Banbury - Current A/c	4,026	3,365
Lo Localbuilding Society - General A/c	8,158	8,514
Leeds Building Society - Brinkworth Museum A/c	3,325	3,903
Cash	8	30
TOTAL ASSETS	15,517	15,842
Less LIABILITIES		
Subscriptions in advance	712	800
NET ASSETS at 31 December 2012	14,805	15,042

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 2012

Peter Cottrell BA, ACCA, ACMA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In preparation:

Victorian Banburyshire: Three Memoirs, ed. Barrie Trinder.

Alphabetical Digest of *Rusher's 'Banbury Directory' 1832-1906*.

The Society is always interested to receive suggestions of records suitable for publication, backed by offers of help with transcription, editing and indexing.

Meetings are held during the autumn and winter, normally at 7.30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, at Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury. Talks are given by invited lecturers on general and local historical, archaeological and architectural subjects. Excursions are arranged in the spring and summer, and the A.G.M. is usually held at a local country house or location.

Membership of the Society is open to all. The annual subscription (since 2009) is £13.00 which includes any records volumes published. Overseas membership, £15.00.

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

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring and Summer 2013 Programme

Wednesday 17th April 2013, 7.30pm At Chacombe Village Hall

Looking at Chacombe's History.

This village meeting which begins our summer programme will take a rather different form (see p.33). The village hall is at the end of the village, third left (the Thorpe Mandeville Road). From Banbury reach Chacombe off the A361 (first right).

The churchwardens have kindly agreed to open the church of SS Peter & Paul (second left turning) between 6.30 and 7 this evening for members of the Society and visitors.

Thursday 9th May, 2.00 for 2.30pm.

Chalgove Manor, Mill Lane, Chalgrove.

Listed Grade I 15th century timber-framed hall house with notable wall paintings plus other original features. Tour c.2 hours.

£9.00 per head + £1 for tea and biscuits.

Also church (listed Grade I), mid-twelfth and fourteenth centuries. Lavish wall paintings, working turret clock.

The village itself has 34 listed buildings and three pubs (all serving food).

And we can pay homage at the John Hampden monument (off B480, by the Airfield, far end of the village).

From Banbury the simplest route to Chalgrove is by M40 to junction 6, B4009 to Watlington, right on to B480. Note no exit from M40 at junction 7.

Thursday 27th June, 5.00 for 5.30pm. **Annual General Meeting.**

Combe Mill.

Off A4095 Woodstock - Witney road. Through Long Hanborough, first right after mini-roundabout, well-signed left turning after crossing river, before the railway bridge.

Thursday 22nd August, 2.00 for 2.30pm.

Piddington Roman Villa excavations and Museum.

Roy Friendship Taylor has been excavating on this site for several years, with the help of volunteers. His finds are now housed in the Museum in Piddington village. £3.50 including tea/coffee on site.

Piddington is just south of Northampton (north of M1), a dead-end approached only from Hackleton (lunch available there at the White Hart). Reach Hackleton either via Blisworth (off A43) or Northampton A45 ring-road.

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