CAKE & COCKHORSE

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Notes for contributors
We invite contributions on all aspects of the history and archaeology of Banbury and its surrounding region. Detailed contributors' guidelines are available from the Editor.

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Abbreviations used in the articles

BA	*Banbury Advertiser*
BG	*Banbury Guardian*
C&CH	*Cake & Cockhorse*
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
OHC	Oxfordshire History Centre
OXO	*Oxoniensia*
SMA	South Midlands Archaeology
TNA	The National Archives
VCH	Victoria County History

EDITORIAL

Once again we are in the position of dedicating an issue of *Cake & Cockhorse* to a former editor of the Journal, but this time it is to Jeremy Gibson whose obituary appears on page 70. His initiatives, started many years ago, means that Banbury Historical Society has an enviable reputation amongst local history societies and journals, not least for its publications which are hardly matched by any comparable organisation. As a tribute we are re-publishing his article 'Trouble over sheep pens', about which there were clearly considerable difficulties in the post-Civil War period. It ties in nicely with three of the other articles – 'Two gentlemen of Swalcliffe', 'Fishmongers fight over garlic', 'Two mills in Adderbury' – in that all involve court cases; these records are a fine source of information though in some cases may well be biased. Jeremy, of course, published very widely and many generations of family historians are indebted to him for his painstaking work on locating local sources in an era before the internet made such searches so much easier.

The archaeological discoveries made by Stephen Wass are of immense importance in the history of science, the history of the mid-seventeenth century and the history of garden design. His own article, and the review of his book which came out in the autumn on the wider subject of water gardens, demonstrates the value of a broad approach to what might have been deemed 'just archaeology'. By investigating the written sources as well as the artefacts he has put together a very plausible picture of otherwise largely undocumented activity by the Cope family at Hanwell Castle. The other archaeological work in the area, summarised by Pamela Wilson, is more a case of slowly building up a picture of activity in the area before our own time, though the work done as a result of the development of the HS2 railway line in the Banbury area is speeding that up, if also producing more questions than answers.

The meticulous documentation of the development of social housing in the country side surrounding Banbury by Jane Kilsby offers an insight into early 20th century local politics and politicians, to which the two items relating to Herbert Payne, erstwhile Councillor, member of the International Labour Party and conscientious objector, add insight.

Readers may remember the short article – and subsequent longer article on the BHS website – on the Banbury Star Cycling Club, published last year. As a result of that work the archives of the club, on which the articles were based, have now been deposited in the Oxfordshire History Centre which was very pleased to take them in.

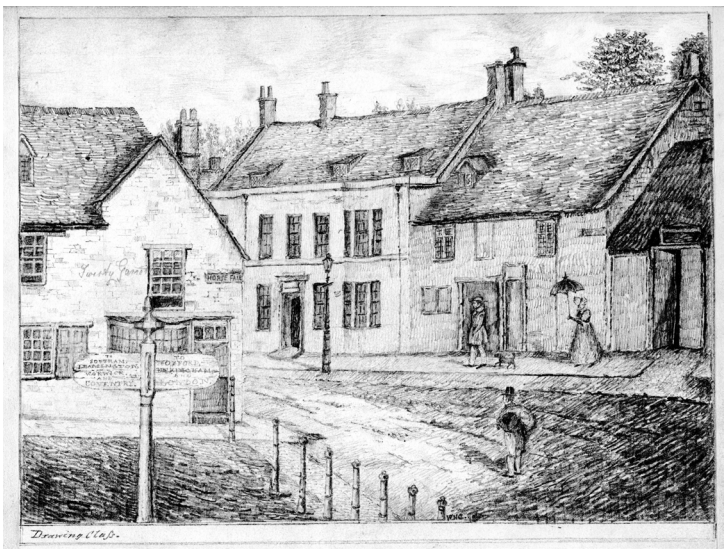
Contributors have been most generous with their time as ever; having produced an article in the first place they might reasonably regard queries from an editor as tedious but they are unfailingly helpful; I am very grateful. Meriel Lewis has done a fine job with the various texts and illustrations sent her way and George Hughes has been honing his skills in text scrutiny so that we are able to offer a journal with as few mistakes as is possible – any that have crept through are undoubtedly ours.

Helen Forde (Editor)

PS Don't forget to enter the quiz on page 82, there is money at stake!

TROUBLE OVER SHEEP PENS

Jeremy S W Gibson



Junction of Horse Fair and High Street Banbury formerly Sheep Street[1]
(By kind permission of Oxfordshire History Centre)

Much of what we nowadays know as Banbury High Street was in Tudor and Stuart times called Sheep Street. The very good reason for this was that within men's memories the sheep market had always been held there. It was an established practice for the householders in the street to set out sheep pens in front of their houses on market days, and the rent they received from these was an important part of their livelihood and of the value of their houses.

Early in 1656 the Corporation under the lead of the then Mayor, Aholiab West, and two of the Justices, Nathaniel Wheatley[2] and William Allen,[3] decided, rather arbitrarily, that the sheep market should be moved from Sheep Street to another location in the town, a waste piece of ground. The ostensible reason for this was that Sheep Street was narrow and the market and sheep pens caused inconvenience. Perhaps a more influential reason was that such a move would enable the Corporation to lease out market rights and obtain a greater income than that available from the Sheep Street market, where householders had customary rights.

In any event, the Corporation's ruling, not surprisingly, provoked opposition from those whose livelihood was thus being eroded: a near riot ensued, and the outcome was two lawsuits, the first at Oxford Assizes and the second in the Exchequer. The witnesses' depositions for the latter survive in the Public Record Office [now The National Archives], and form the basis of this article.[4]

1. *Mechanics Institute Magazine Junior*, 5; (digital reference D268319a).
2. Justice of the Peace.
3. Justice of the Peace.
4. TNA E 134/1657-58/Hil23.

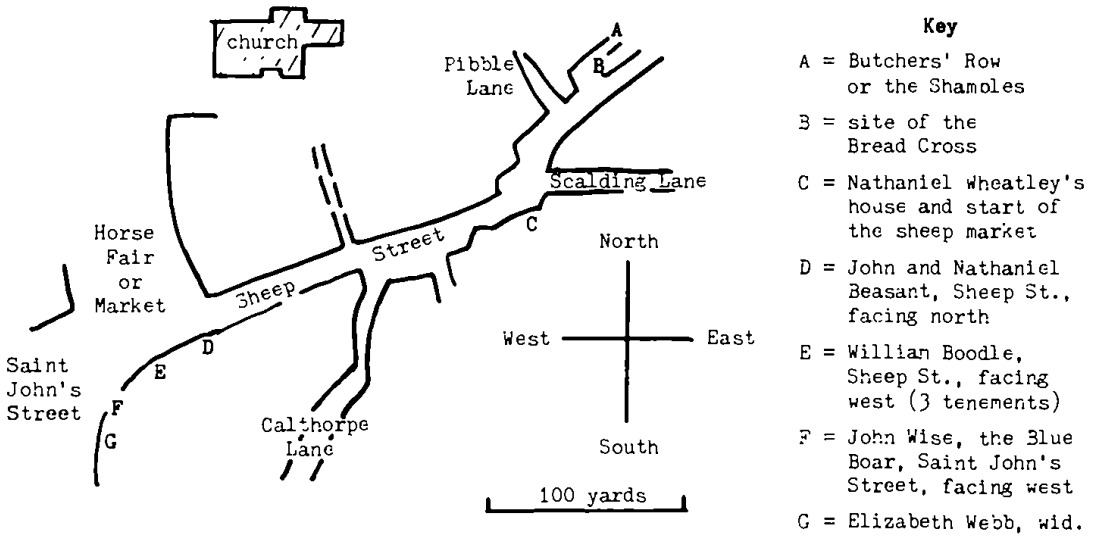
The Corporation byelaws of 1564 confirmed what was evidently an existing right of householders in Sheep Street 'where shepe pennes shall be sett; namely from the est syde of Master Hartlett yate where Thom's Necoll now or late dwellyde eestward and frome the est corner of Bartyl Ekelfeld housse westward'; they regulated the price of pens: no man was to 'take for the lyngth of an hurdell nott over & aboue jd.' (except on fair days and Corpus Christi Day when they could charge 4d.); whilst strangers bringing sheep to sell must use these pens ('if any be empty').

In 1657, to the question, 'What profits does the Corporation get from cattle stallage?' the replies included an estimate of £40 per annum, and statements that a toll of 8d per score of sheep sold in the sheep market, 'except it be freemen', was received, and that this toll was rented out to Thomas Coles and John Jarvis, or Jervis, for twenty marks. Evidence was also given on the cost of making oneself 'free of the Borough ... some more and some lesse accordinge as they can agree ...' Philip Cave, a brasier who was one of the churchwardens in 1656, paid the Mayor 'for his freedom £10 besides £10 more which he gave to the company whereof he was made free'. Edward Weston, a former Serjeant at Mace, deposed that £14 or thereabouts was received for piccage[5] and stallage, and during the six or seven years he served 'there were severall men made free of the Borough, some paid 50s., some £5 and some £8 ... for their severall freedoms, and noe stranger can come to inhabit within the Borough but must compound with the Mayor...' John Kinge, who was a servant of the Corporation employed in weighing wool in the wool market, had been heard to declare he had paid the Chamberlain for the Corporation £18 for last year's profits. Other evidence on the Corporation's income is amongst some damaged depositions which refer to £50 for the wool toll, renting of the toll of 'Bease and hogges' for £14, and the keeping of a toll book for horses by a servant of Mr Pym, a former town clerk.

Of more direct relevance, perhaps, was a lease dated 8 January, 3 James I (1606/7), between John Gyll, gent., and John Knyght, which presumably referred to the profits from the sheep pens. It had been witnessed by one Edward Wisedome, and his son-in-law William Thorpe deposed that he recognised the signature, whilst a local attorney, Barnabas Horseman, confirmed its authenticity. Another important lease was that to Organ Nicholls,[6] alias Nix, one of the defendants, to which was attached 'the common seal of the Borough bearing the impression of the Sunne and Sheild ...'. This conferred the right or benefit 'of setting a pen by the wall of his house' and taking the profit thereof, the rent being £3 for the house and £3 more for the sheep grou**nds**. This rent was payable to the Churchwardens in trust for the poor, and George Anesley, the other churchwarden, deposed that he had received 'of Robert Wise,[7] by appointment of Organ Nicholls,[8] £3, wanting 2s.4d., for Taxes which £3 was for half a year's rent for a messuage in Sheep Street which Organ Nicholls held by lesse of the Corporation and that the money is employed for the use of the poor, save only ten shillings, which Mr Nathaniell Wheatly demanded to bestowe upon ten poor widows according to the donor's will'. This is identifiable with Henry Halhead's charity, which allowed for 20s. per annum to be paid to the poor out of a tenement in Sheep Street.

Sheep Street itself ran from the present junction of the modern High Street with South Bar (i.e. by the Cross), eastwards to approximately the point at which Butchers' Row turns off to the north. It had alternative names - Guler Street in medieval times, in the early 17th century Bo(w)lting Street and Breadcross Street. This last was because, as Dr Paul Harvey has shown, the Bread Cross stood at the junction of Butchers' Row with the main street. On a map of 1694 this part is marked as Sheep Street, and the eastwards continuation is

5. Money paid at fairs for permission to break ground for booths.
6. Defendant.
7. Defendant.
8. Defendant.



Reconstruction of central Banbury in mid 17th C showing houses and their occupants noted in the survey

called 'Lyon Street', a name not met elsewhere. The Lion Inn existed in the 16th and 17th centuries – used by the Corporation for their dinners, and stayed at by the Quaker Ann Audland in 1655. It seems accepted that it was the same as the later Red Lion, demolished in 1930 to make way for Woolworths. The western end of the High Street continued to be known as Sheep Street until 1835.

As for the location of the sheep market itself, the lawsuit has two explicit descriptions. The first is by Simon Unitt, 'from the house of one Keinton now in the tenure of John Wise knowne by the signe of the blewe Boare all along on both sides as far as the house of Mr Nathaniell Wheatly neere the end of Scaldinge Lane ...'; the other, by George Chamberlayne, that it began 'at the howse no in the occupation of Nathaniel Besant[9] and endeth att the house late in the occupation of Samuel Reynolds'.

In July 1653 a survey[10] had been made of former Crown property in Banbury (and elsewhere), and this gives the names of a number of house-holders in Sheep Street and nearby, providing invaluable corroborative evidence. Whilst the north-western corner of Sheep or High Street with the Horsefair is a definite right-angle, the opposite south-western junction of the street with South Bar (then called St. John's Street) is a gentle curve, with no obvious point at which one street ends and the other starts. There is no reason to believe it was otherwise in the 17th century. This will explain the apparent anomaly whereby the 1653 survey, which lists John Wise's house, places it in St John's Street, not in Sheep Street, facing west with his neighbour Elizabeth Webb, widow, on the south. However Wise's house is itself described as bounding on the south the first property listed in Sheep Street: this was three tenements in the possession of William Boodle, gent., which also faced west. The houses must have been on the curve where the two streets meet. This supposition is doubly supported: a deed of 1668[11] actually describes Boodle's property as being on the south side of Sheep Street; and the survey, after these tenements, next lists

9. Defendant.
10. TNA E 317/8 Oxon ff 3-6.
11. Bodleian Library, MS. Charters Oxon. 3582.

Butchers Row, 2013

a Sheep Street house (with the implication that it was next door) facing north (and with its neighbour on the east), being in possession of one John Beasant. This John died in 1655, and was father of Nathaniel Besant who would have been there the following year. With such close neighbours it can be seen how apparently differing limits to the market were in much the same place. If further confirmation is needed that the sheep market extended to St John's Street, it is given by the Corporation Accounts: a rental of 1616/7 refers to a house in St. John's Street whose inhabitant paid 3d for sheep pens.

Two of those mentioned in the 1656 lawsuit as having put sheep pens outside their houses in Sheep Street, William Weston[12] and Edward Weston[13] are listed in the survey as living on the north of the street; and another deponent, the constable Andrew Harvey, lived on the south. The sheep market itself ended at Nathaniel Wheatley's house 'neere the end of Scalding Lane' (the modern George Street). This house too is listed in the survey, with Sheep Street to the north, and 'his own land east' – something quite possible if the lane was little developed.

Dr Paul Harvey, in articles on the sites of the crosses, has suggested that the sheep market was further east in the street. His reasons for this hypothesis are, first, that in 1469 the sheep market was opposite the end of Pibble Lane (the present Church Lane) – but this is only a few yards from the end of Scalding Lane, and in almost two centuries the end of the market could easily have shifted that amount. Alternatively, Nathaniel Wheatley's house might have been on the north-east side of the Scalding Lane junction, and thus opposite Pibble Lane. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to identify the alternative end of the market, 'The house late in the occupation of Samuel Reynolds', which presumably was not Crown property. Secondly, he depends on the assumption that because the survey includes three Sheep Street houses facing west, that description could only apply to houses lying immediately north of the entrance to George Street or Scalding Lane. That this is not so has been shown – moreover Simon Unitt's description of the bounds of the sheep market would be nonsense if Wise's house as well as Wheatley's was so close to Scalding Lane.

The whole of Sheep Street was not given over to the sheep market, so it is perfectly possible that the street itself went as far as the Shambles, (Butchers Row) or even further. Timothy Harris deposed that 'there were, several other places in or near the said (Sheep) street where seldom any sheep pens are set which is commonly called the sheepe streete of a larger breadth or wideness ...'

The houses in Sheep Street were described as 'of good accommodation and repute for

12. Defendant.
13. Former Serjeant-at-Mace.

entertainment and people inhabit there that may be trusted to lay up chapmen's money that come to buy and sell ...'; whilst another grazier deposed 'there is convenient shelter both for Chapmen and their Cattell in wet dirty and tempestuous weather and for shade in hot and parchinge weather; the said Markett Place adjoining to the Howses, then in case they sell their sheepe there is very convenient backsides of whom they take their pennes to put their sheep in untill they can despatch other marketts and be at leasure to take their money; and there are howses that have very convenient accommodation for men both for dyett and otherwise to supply their wants...'

Views on the width and convenience of the street as a market inevitably conflicted. Supporters of the Mayor were out to exaggerate its inconvenience. One testified to this 'because of the narrowness of the place between the pens, the broadest being 17ft, in other places 15ft, 14ft and 12ft'. Greater credence might be given to this if the deponent was not John Hawes, one of the Sergeants at Mace. Likewise, it was a Constable, William Wheatly, who claimed 'the penns ... have been sett within these 12 or 14 years last past nearer the highway than formerly ... people cannot safely passe if they meete a loaded Cart between the penns'; whilst his fellow constable Andrew Harvey claimed 'two loaded horses cannot passe together neither can they passe meeting one another'. John Ball, a Banbury bookseller, concurred not merely 'because of the narrowness of the passage' but more understandably because of the 'Durtiness of the place'. Richard Halhead, an Alderman who had already supported the defendants and was clearly reluctant to depose on behalf of the Mayor, stated 'he dares not say anything to the Inconvenience of the Sheepe market [in Sheep Street] but the highway in the middle of the street between the pens is very bad and fitt to be amended' – which cannot have helped the Mayor's case much! William Taylor, of Williamscott, found 'the passage between the penns is very strait for horses and Carts to meetell'. William Goodwin of Hornton deposed 'that two cartes loaded with hey straw or furze cannot meet and pass ...' John Jarvis with somewhat of a vested interest in the market's removal as he was renting the toll of the new market, also deposed 'that Carts loaded horsemen and Carriages cannot conveniently passe ...'. Timothy Harris, the town clerk, strikes a typically modern note with a claim that as 'howses are situate on both sides of the place where the sheep stood [this] might annoy not only the inhabitants but passengers going to and fro by reason of the Excreaments. and smell of the said sheep ...'

However, against these, mainly partial, views, there was a chorus of dissent on the part of the defendants, as to the excellence of the facilities in Sheep Street, 'well and sufficiently paved', and the ease of passage on market days. Of these deponents, the most venerable undoubtedly was Richard Redman of Calthorpe, who claimed to be aged 102 – as he did not die until February 1664/5,[14] he may well have been Banbury's oldest-ever inhabitant! He was in fact called by both sides, but had little to say, in spite of having known Banbury for 80 years, that was not common knowledge. Others had 'seen great droves of Cattell severall times passe along Sheep Street when the sheep pens have been set up', and 'had seen a loaded cart pass along Sheep Street when the sheep pens have been placed on both sides of the street and at the same time a woman ride on horseback by the cart side'; while Robert Winge of Bodicote considered that 'Sheep Street is easier to pass in when the pens are set up than Parsons Lane where there are no stalls'. Samuel Tustian had 'measured Sheep Street between penne and penne in the middle as 44ft'; (so had Thomas Shepheard of Calthorpe); 'nor can there be better passage when the sheep pens are not set up than when they are in regard the sheep ground lyeth so high towards the houses wch if it should be levelled or abated would proove very preiuditiall [sic] to the very foundacon of the severall howses there'.

14. *Baptism and Burial Register of Banbury, vol 2*, 1653-1723 (Banbury Historical Society Records Series 9), p 119.

It is significant that Simon Unitt 'heard Edward Welchman one of the principal Burgesses saye at the time when the workmen were digginge downe the ground in the Sheepe Street that the sheepe ground in the Sheep Street was theirs and they would have it right or wrong'. Evidently after the ban the Corporation set about widening and levelling the street. Evidence was incidentally given that not only did three of the defendants, Thomas Goodwin, John Yates[15] and Organ Nicholls, repair 'the ground before their doors where the sheep pens stood' but that this was customary with all inhabitants of Banbury who 'do repair the streets before their doors at their own charge'. Robert Long, a silk-weaver living in Parsons Lane, testified that he and his neighbour Thomas Crook did so, and 'hath from tyme to tyme paied leavyes towards the reparations of the high ways in Banbury'. As we have seen, Parsons Lane boasted no market, but it was customary for other householders elsewhere in the town to 'have on fair days pitched and placed standings and stalls before their houses for chapmen (to wit) Pedlers, butchers, shoomakers, etc'.

There is some interesting evidence too of the distance men came and went to market. Richard Walker, a gentleman of Ti(d)mington in Warwickshire (near Shipston-on-Stour) had 500 sheep in pens at Banbury market; others he had visited included Stratford-upon-Avon, Evesham, Worcester, and of course Shipston. John Hollyer, a Deddington shepherd, was familiar with Daventry, 'Bissiter', Chipping Norton and Woodstock; Thomas Gaudorne, an Adderbury shepherd, had in addition visited Burford, Winslow (Bucks.) and Evesham.

This then was the background to the decision taken by the Mayor and Corporation, on 22 February 1655/6, ordering the removal of the sheep market from Sheep Street. The place where it was to be established instead was claimed to be more convenient and larger. Timothy Harris (who had been complaining about the smell) described it as 'a void and waste piece of ground whereupon there is little or no usual passage and is a great distance from any persons howse'. This was seen as a distinct disadvantage by most of the users: 'the place the Mayor would remove it to hath no shelter and part of it is not paved'; 'being not paved but myery and dirty and without shelter'; '... unfitt and inconvenient it being dirty and mireie that sheepe in the winter tyme by reason of the lowness of the ground will stand up to the hocks in dirt and men almost up to the knees, and it is altogether void of shelter ... and is fitt for nothing but to keepe ducks and Geese upon as formerly it hath done'. Henry Wise, of Bodicote, who had appreciated the houses of good repute in Sheep Street, complained that 'the place appointed by the Mayor being inhabited with poor people for the most part chapmen have nowhere to lay up their money; and the pens stand so openly and so far remote from houses that ... if a sheep gett out of the pens they are not easily got again if not quite lost'. It was also claimed that 'the people resorting thither [were] dealt with at cheaper rates for the standing of their sheep'. The Corporation had let the new ground, formerly unproductive waste, to Samuel Reynolds for £30 per annum. Thomas Coles deposed that 'he living with Samuell Reynolds and formerly having sett penns for him where the sheep market was formerly kept, and now setting penns for Reighnolds and himself [in the new place] he doth sett the same sheepe and att easier Rates by 8d. in the score'; and John Jarvis claimed the sheep pens 'are sett by him at easier and cheaper Rates than formerly ... 4d. in the score' – but then it was them that were running the new market! Robert Austin of Hook Norton was prepared to give conditional approval 'if it be not preiudicial to the inhabitants of the old Sheep markett'; while William Goodwin got to the nub of the matter, whilst admitting that at the new place pens were 'att cheaper rates ... but whether they will continue Cheaper this deponent knoweth not'.

Just where this ground was is uncertain. However, from the description of it as 'dirty and mireie ... by reason of the lowness of the ground', fit only for ducks and geese, 'remote

15. Defendant.

from houses', and inhabited by poor people, a site towards the Cherwell or the Mill Stream suggests itself. That it could have been on part of the Horse Fair, as proposed by Dr Harvey, seems highly unlikely – supported as it is by his suggestion that the 19th century Sheep Street might be so named because it led to this new site. True it is that Horse Fair was used as a sheep market in the 19th century, and it would be very interesting to know when it was so established; but the important main road could never have been described in such disparaging terms. John Leland,[16] a century earlier had called it a 'fair street': it was bordered by church and vicarage, and, not many years later, the town's leading tavern, the *Three Tuns*. Nor, as one of the highest parts of the town, could it suffer from 'lowness of ground'. Be that as it may, the Mayor and Corporation were determined to enforce their will on the users of the sheep market. The order was first published openly in the sheep market on 17 April 1656, and at the next two market days. There was no disturbance at this publication – but for several market days thereafter 'the defendants John Yates, William Weston[17] and Nathaniel Beasant[18] did set up sheep pens where no sheep pens are to be set, and John Nicholls otherwise Nix had sheep in pens several Market days'. In fact, the Sheep Street householders continued doing just what they'd always done!

At this Aholiab West, the Mayor, clearly lost his temper and determined to stop this disobedience by force. A fortnight after the first publication of the order, he collected around him the two serjeants-at-mace, Samuell French and John Hawes; two Justices, Nathaniel Wheatley and William Allen; 'several other Aldermen attending', including John Webb; the Town Clerk, Timothy Harris; and the Constables, William Wheatley and Andrew Harvey. Accompanied by these supporters, he descended in wrath on the Sheep Street stallholders, 'furiously more like a Captaine of a Company of Souldiers than a Mayor of a Corporation'. When West 'commanded John Yates to take in his pennes, he replied yt was his right and he would keepe it as longe as he could ...' at which the Mayor was seen 'to goe out of the usuall highway up to Yates, he settinge on his sheepe penne close to his house wall in a peaceable manner, and in a violent manner tooke him by the arme and pulled him off his pen'; and afterwards it was seen that Yates' coat was 'torne in the place where Aholiab West laid hold on him'. West then 'did laye holde on the sheepe penne and by force pulled the same from John Yates and throwe the same flatt downe and Mr. Webbe did stampe upon the sheepe Racke and did endeavour to have broken it but could not but make it cracke'. John Hawes, the serjeant-at-mace, deposed that Yates and West 'struggling together about the throwing downe of his penn the said Yates did pull [the] Maiors Cloake off his backe', but Thomas Claridge, a Neithrop tanner, contradicted this: 'Aholiab West striving to pull down the sheep pen thereby his cloak slipt down ... it not being buttoned as he conceiveth, and John Yates did not pull off the cloak or offer any violence'.

Francis Weston gives another account: 'Mr West haveing untyed the sheepe penne at the end next the highway did also untie the upper end of the pen next the house, and John Yates comeing from his doore towards Mr West and asking him if he would vyolently take his goods from him Aholiab West thereupon very violently thrust John Yates from him, who went away towards the door of his house ... and was a good way distant when the cloake fell off ... Thomas Williams[19] servant to John Yates endeavouring to hold the end of the sheepe penne that Mr West pulled down, Mr West and Mr Wheatly sent Thomas Williams to prison by Samuell French one of the Serjeants at Mace and Mr Wheatley charged this deponent to assist French in haveing Williams to prison ... and Williams was carryed to

16. John Leland *The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the years 1535-1543*, ed Lucy Toulmin-Smith vol ii, p 39.
17. Defendant.
18. Defendant.
19. Defendant.

prison alonge the streete bare headed'. From Timothy Harris's deposition it seems that Yates himself was also committed 'to the Common Goal of the Borough ... and continues undischarged till this day', whilst another who was imprisoned for defending the pens was John Pedley.

Meanwhile the owners of the sheep were being threatened. To Richard Walker the Mayor came 'in a very violent manner, he having taken sheep pens of John Yates and having 300 sheep in them, and William Wheatley told his son that unless he would take his hands off the sheep pens he would cut off his hand with a hatchett, which he had then in his hand'; whilst Henry Wise 'having taken a sheep pen of Organ Nicholls and having sheep in it and one William Holloway having done the like Aholiab West, then Mayor, threatened them both and told them that unless they would remove their sheep to the place the Mayor [and Corporation] had appointed he would take his course at law against him'.

But now there was further trouble: William Weston, another of the stallholders, on the publishing or proclaiming of the order 'came forth of his house with his sword drawn out a little way' – another described it as 'about Twoe handful – 'and his pistoll att his girdle', and 'said he would defend the standing of his penns', whereupon 'the Maior comanded one of the Constables [Andrew Harvey] to take away his sword and thereupon he that was Commanded went to him and told him that he did not doe well to stand there in such manner and soe the said Weston delivered upp his sword' and 'went backe againe into his howse and shutt the doore after him'. The sequel was dramatic: 'presently afterwards there was out of the said howse a pistoll or gunn shott off out off the windowe which shott did noe hurt and also there were stones thrown over the defendent Weston's house one of which hitt Mr William Stoakes[20] on the hatt and another hit Mr Nathaniel Hill[21] on the foote or heele.' Then yet another stallholder, Nathaniel Beasant 'came also forth of his house with his sword drawne in his hand' or, as another described it, 'with his sword and pistoll in his hand and said that if any man there did come uppon his grownd he should either have his sword or pistoll in his gutts'. With commendable valour, William Wheatly, 'being the constable charging him to keepe the peace and pressinge him backe he delivered the said sword to this deponent...'

This seems to have been the end of a confrontation which clearly might have turned out very unpleasantly, with tempers running high all round. That efforts were subsequently made to reach an amicable settlement is shown by the evidence of a Neithrop yeoman, Robert Youick, that he 'a yeare and a halfe since was present in company of Mr Nathaniell Wheatly, one of the Justices of the Borough, and Mr Daniel Eyre,[22] one of the defendants, desired there might be a friendly end made of the difference', with arbitrators chosen by both sides 'to end the difference without suit in a friendly way, whereupon Mr Wheatly replyed that they had byn affronted with swords and pistolls but if you (speakinge to Mr Eyre) desire to have it tryed with swords and pistolls we will bring ours and you bring yours and soe we will maintaine our right.' Richard Halhead, an Alderman, furthermore deposed that 'the defendant Daniel Eyre being at his house att supper, and his brother Thomas Halhead one of the Aldermen before any suit began, did declare that if the Mayor and Corporation would chose a lawyer the matter might be settled peaceably'.

But it was not to be. Lawsuits there were – to our great benefit indeed, for without them there would be no record. From the evidence – taken (for the Exchequer case) on Monday 4 January 1657/8 at the Unicorn Inn, built ten years earlier – one's sympathies are with the deprived stall-holders. Inconvenient though Sheep Street must have been in many

20 Burgess, later alderman.
21 One of the Mayor's party.
22 Defendant.

ways, the alternative seems to have offered few advantages, and the Corporation offered no compensation. As Thomas Torshill, a Wardington yeoman, put it 'At present the pens belong to several people and are let at reasonable and cheap rates, but at the new place it would all be in one man's hand, and could be set at unreasonable rates...' – and the suspicion is that this would have happened.

The first round went to the stallholders. John Richards the elder of Neithrop, yeoman, 'was present at Oxford Assizes and heard the trial of the cause between John Yates and John Webbe in a plea of trespass and at the trial the right of setting out sheep pens in Sheep Street was long debated with many witnesses (including this deponent) and the charters were shown to the jury and the jury brought a verdict for John Yates and the right of setting out pens in Sheep Street'. And Yates was awarded damages of £5.

The outcome of the Exchequer case is unknown, but it looks as if, as so often is the case, the Corporation got its way – eventually if not immediately. The Corporation account book records a lease for sheep pens, granted in 1674 to John Coles; and in 1693/4 '£5 due from John Coale for his half year's rent due for the sheep ground.' It was John Coles' father, Thomas Coles who had rented the sheep toll from the Corporation in 1656.

Sources

The depositions in the Exchequer case are quoted by Paul Harvey first in his articles 'Where Was Banbury Cross?' in *Oxoniensia*, xxxi (1966), p 96, and 'Where Were Banbury's Crosses?' in *Cake & Cockhorse*, vol 3/10 (Winter, 1967) p 190-1, and subsequently in VCH vol x (Banbury Hundred), p 59. *Banbury Corporation Records: Tudor and Stuart* (Banbury Historical Society Record Series, vol 15, 1977) includes extracts from the case, and also an abstract of the Parliamentary Survey of former Crown Property in Banbury, taken in 1653; the quotation from the Corporation byelaws of 1564 is taken from Alfred Beesley *The History of Banbury*, (1841), p 231-2 with evidence of the continuation of the name of Sheep Street until 1835, p 274.

(*First printed in Cake & Cockhorse, vol 7/2 p 35-48 Spring 1977*)

TWO GENTLEMEN OF SWALCLIFFE: 17TH CENTURY POLYCHROME MONUMENTS IN SWALCLIFFE CHURCH

Cathy Stoertz

The church of St Peter & St Paul has watched over the village of Swalcliffe for 1,000 years and bears evidence of development from Saxon times to the 21st century. Like most parish churches, it contains many wall monuments and ledger stones commemorating members of local families, including gentry and clergy although, in Swalcliffe, none is earlier than the late 16th century. Among the earliest are two fine wall-mounted polychrome monuments, dedicated to Richard Wykeham (d. 1635) and John Duncomb(d. 1646). These monuments represent two men from the gentry class, each associated with Swalcliffe in different ways. The decoration and inscriptions on the monuments, combined with information from the men's wills and other surviving documents, provide insights into the family stories and personalities of each man.

Monument to Richard Wykeham (d. 1635) and his wife Anne (d. 1649) (Imogen Paine)

Richard Wykeham's monument hangs at the east end of the north aisle, in the part of the church that once served as the Wykeham family chapel. There are many ledger stones and smaller wall monuments dedicated to family members: one ledger stone bears a very worn inscription and a possible date in the late 1500s, while the last Wykeham monument, which hangs in the south aisle, is dated 1800. Apart from the very worn ledgerstone noted above, Richard Wykeham's monument is the earliest in the group, and certainly the largest and most ornate. Its design provides a clear statement of the family's long history and ancestral connections.

The Wykehams of Swalcliffe[1] were an ancient family of the gentry class, whose land holdings in the Banbury region included manors in Wickham (until the early 15th century), Broughton, Shenington, Evenly, and Shutford. In Swalcliffe parish, they were the longest-tenured land holders – they first acquired the principal

1. A note on spelling: the spelling of the family's name was extremely fluid in the 16th and 17th centuries. The inscription on Richard's monument uses both Wykeham and Wykham; on the ledger stones in the church we see Wykeham, Wykham and Wikham. In the Swalcliffe parish register we also find Wicham, Wickham and Wikham. Even Richard's will uses at least two different spellings in the same document. The author has chosen to use Wykeham, except when quoting from contemporary documents, in which case the spelling from the document has been preserved.

manor of Swalcliffe in the early 13th century, and held it continuously from 1345 until the mid-20th century.

Although Swalcliffe ceased to be the family seat in 1800, and most of the estate was gradually sold off, Wykeham descendants continued to own the manor house, Swalcliffe Park, until it was sold to the Swalcliffe Park School Trust in 1963.[2]

Richard Wykeham, born in about 1553, represented the 12th generation of Wykehams to hold Swalcliffe manor. By the time he succeeded his father, in about 1585, the family had been lords of the manor in Swalcliffe for over three centuries. As the head of such an ancient family, Richard Wykeham clearly expected to be commemorated in some style, and bequeathed a substantial sum for that purpose in his will:

> 'I comitt my Soule into the hands of Almightie God and my Bodie to the ground to bee buryed neere my Auncesters in the church of Swacliffe aforesaid ... I give for my tombe, and funerall One hundred and twentie pounds'[3]

This is the equivalent of over £14,000 today.[4] The author has not yet attempted to track down family accounts or correspondence that might tell us who specified the final design, where the monument was made, or whether Richard's bequest was enough to cover the cost of such a magnificent structure.

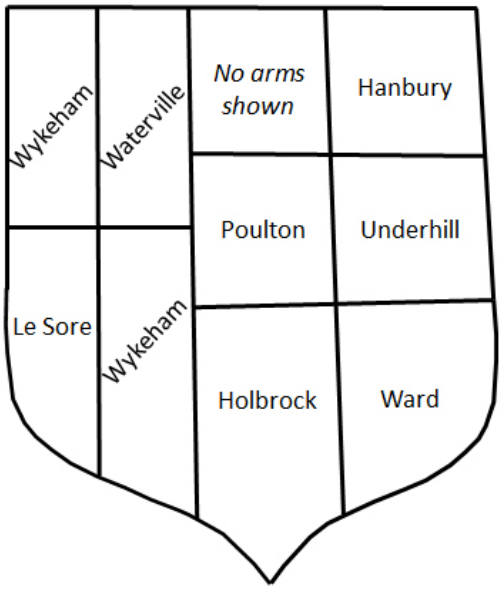
The monument is about 3.65m high, 2.15m wide and about 0.43m deep, and is attached to the wall 1.30m above the floor. It features a round arch and an elaborate architectural canopy supported by Corinthian columns of black marble. Beneath the arch, facing one another across a prayer desk, are the kneeling effigies of a man and a woman whose dark clothing speaks of respectable prosperity. The man has flowing grey hair and a neat moustache and beard; he wears a ruff about his neck, a cloak hangs from his shoulders, and his legs are encased in fine tan boots with spurs. The woman's blonde hair is modestly covered with a black veil; her collar and cuffs are adorned with lace, and discreet gold bangles can be seen on her wrists.

Inscriptions below the figures identify them as Richard Wykeham and his wife Anne Holbrock. Richard's inscription states that he was 'the sonne of Hvmphry Wykeham and Mary his wife who both lye bvried neare this place...' (although, if they had a memorial in the church, it no longer survives). The viewer is told that Richard had reached the age of 82 years, that he and Anne had been married for 50 years but had no children, and that Richard had therefore adopted his nephew Humphrey, son of his younger brother Edward Wykeham, as his heir. The nephew Humphrey (d. 1650), and his wife Martha (d. 1663), are also commemorated on this monument in a double inscription on the back panel. This notes that Martha was the daughter of Rowley Ward, Serjeant at Law, and that they had two sons and three daughters, whose names are given.

The Wykeham coat of arms from Richard's monument (Colin Hill)

2. https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol10/225-260 (accessed 9 January 2023).
3. The National Archives (TNA) PROB 11/171/97.
4. https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter (accessed 9 January 2023).

A marshalling of arms associated with the Wykehams of Swalcliffe, painted on the back panel of the monument (left) (Colin Hill)



Key to the coats of arms.

The inscriptions provide basic biographical details of the monument's immediate subjects, but the full story of the Wykehams' ancestry and status is to be found on the monument's superstructure which is heavily decorated with heraldic devices. Fifteen small shields and a large central boss adorn the canopy, and a full marshalling of arms is shown on the back panel. The Wykeham coat of arms – 'argent, two chevrons sable between three roses gules' (two black chevrons between three red roses, on a white background, see preceding page) – appears either on its own or in conjunction with the arms of seven gentry families with whom past generations of Wykehams had formed marriage alliances. The arms of Holbrock (Richard's wife) and Ward (his heir's wife) appear several times, and the arms of Richard's mother (Underhill), grandmother (Poulton) and great-grandmother (Hanbury) are also shown. The most distant ancestors represented are the families of Waterville and Le Sore, Richard's seven-times-great and six-times-great grandmothers respectively, who married into the Wykeham family in the 1270s and 1291. Thus, the heraldry on this monument looks back 350 years to the Watervilles and projects forward into the coming generation represented by the next heir's marriage to Martha Ward.[5]

During their long history in Swalcliffe, the Wykehams remained solidly within the gentry class. They do not seem to have held public office, or to have become involved in political alliances that might have changed their social rank, either for better or worse; nor did they ever achieve fabulous wealth. Nevertheless, their sons were regarded as suitable husbands for the daughters of gentry families of similarly ancient pedigree in the region of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.

There was, however, an episode in the Wykehams' history that leads the author to believe that Richard's monument was not solely a celebration of the family's longevity and social connections, and that its size, style and heraldic decoration were almost certainly also intended to make a statement whose focus was closer to home.

5. Harold Waring Atkinson 'Blazon of arms of Wykeham with Quarterings' *The Families of Atkinson of* Roxby *(Lincs.) and families connected with them.* (Northwood, Middlesex, 1933) p 170-171;Thomas Robson *The British Herald, or Cabinet of Armorial Bearings of the Nobility & Gentry of Great Britain & Ireland* (1830) vol 2.

Upper part of the Wykeham monument, profusely decorated with heraldic devices representing the Wykehams' ancestral connections (Colin Hill)

In 1570, when Richard was seventeen years old, his father, Humphrey Wykeham, had become involved in a genealogical dispute with the considerably more aristocratic Sir Richard Fiennes, 6th Lord Saye & Sele, the owner of nearby Broughton Castle. The argument concerned the Swalcliffe Wykehams' long-held belief that they shared a common ancestor with William of Wykeham (1320/1324-1404), Bishop of Winchester and founder of New College, Oxford (1379) and Winchester College (1382). Humphrey asserted that this relationship entitled at least one of his four sons to attend Winchester College with the privileges awarded to 'Founder's Kin',[6] and he had petitioned the Wardens to that effect. Fiennes, who was directly descended from Bishop William's great nephew and heir, vigorously contested Humphrey's claims.[7]

The question was examined by the Duke of Norfolk and the Richmond Herald, who seemed sympathetic to Humphrey's arguments, but larger political events intervened before a decision was finalised:

> '... by reason of Sir Richard's stronge opposition, ye Duke for a tyme delayed to geve his fynalle sentence in the cause, & then by reason of the Duke's trobles & death the cause remayned undetermined.'[8]

The Duke of Norfolk's 'trobles & death' noted above arose from his involvement in a plot to put Mary Queen of Scots on the throne, for which he was arrested in 1571 and executed for treason in 1572. Humphrey's concerns were no match for matters of state.

6. '... Founder's kin may be admitted at any age; they need not leave till twenty-five, and they are not disqualified by the possession of property unless it exceeds twenty marks (£13 6s. 8d.) in yearly value. If a *consanguineus* has less than 100s a year, the College is obliged to supply him with clothes, shoes, and other necessaries, and if he is backward, he is to be put in charge of a chaplain, a lay-clerk, or one of the elder scholars, who is to be paid 6s. 8d. a year for private instruction.' T.F. Kirby *Annals of Winchester College from its foundation in the year 1382 to the present Time*' London & Winchester (1892) p 93.
7. '*Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica* (1835) vol 2, p 225-245, 368-387; 'Descent of the Family of Wickham of Swalcliffe, Co. Oxon, and Their Kindred to the Founder of New College'p 368-387; *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica* (1836) vol 3, p 178-239, 345-376.
8. *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica* vol 2 (1835), p 227.

Humphrey revived his petition in 1572, whereupon it was referred to a commission including the Somerset Herald, appointed by Lord Burghley. This commission again seemed minded to support Humphrey's case, but the college wardens refused to accept the ruling. Humphrey appealed to the Bishop of Winchester, who refused to intervene. In the midst of this attempt, Sir Richard Fiennes died and his son and heir, being under age, became a ward of court. Again, none of the officials who might have given a ruling on the issue wanted to get involved. The matter rumbled on until 1580, when the College Wardens offered a compromise:

> '... that 4 severall schollers of his bloode and issue male successively, one after other, should upon request be admitted into the said Colledges as ordinary schollers, but not as ye founder's kinsmen.'[9]

This was not acceptable to Humphrey – he refused the offer and relinquished his suit. Although his claims ultimately came to nothing, many of Humphrey's arguments, including his right to use the same coat of arms as Bishop William of Wykeham and his colleges, appear to have been accepted.[10]

The matter was re-opened once more shortly before Richard Wykeham's death in 1635, on behalf of another family member, with the support of Richard's brother, Edward Wykeham. Again, the Wykehams presented their pedigree and arguments, and again their claim of kinship with the College founder was denied, and they eventually gave up.

The many documents generated by the case survived and became a matter of curiosity and amusement to genealogists and antiquarians in the 1830s. *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica* devoted substantial portions of two volumes (1835 and 1836) to a full presentation of 'the Wykeham controversy', including all pleas, counter-pleas, pedigrees of both sides, and commentaries by the examining commissions[11]. In 1858 Charles Wykeham Martin, a descendant of the Swalcliffe Wykehams, visited the matter once more in the pages of *The Topographer and Genealogist* in support of his family's claims to kinship with William of Wykeham.[12]

On the basis of the published archive material, the author believes that the original dispute between Humphrey Wykeham and Sir Richard Fiennes had very little to do with whether or not Humphrey's sons were entitled to attend Winchester College with the same privileges as Sir Richard's. When Humphrey revived his petition in 1572, he recalled the outcome of the earlier (1570) attempt:

> '... the Complt [i.e. Humphrey Wykeham] was by the Heroaldes allowed to bear the Founder's and Colledg Armes, & deemed to be of kin to him. But iudgment was stayed by Sir Richard's surmyse that the Complt would thereby clayme his lande'.[13]

Sir Richard Fiennes had feared that, if the Swalcliffe Wykehams were acknowledged to be related to Bishop William, from whom Fiennes and his forebears had inherited the Broughton estate, their next move might be to claim entitlement to a share of that estate.

Humphrey protested that:

> '... nether doth the Complt clayme as lyneall heire any of Mr Fenys inheritance: nor are his children soe many or soe unfitt, soe that they only should pester ye Colledg.'[14]

9. *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica* vol 2 (1835), p 228.
10. *Ibid* p 226-8.
11. *Ibid* p 225-245; 368-387; and *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica* vol 3 (1836) p 178-239; 345-376.
12. Charles Wykeham Martin 'Was William of Wykeham of the Family of Swalcliffe?' *The Topographer and Genealogist* vol III (1858) p 49-74.
13. *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica* vol 2 (1835), p 243.
14. *Ibid* p 245.

The Swalcliffe Wykehams must have felt bitterly insulted by the Fiennes' denial of their claims of kinship with Bishop William. The Wykehams' standing as an ancient gentry family, their right to the coat of arms that they felt was theirs, their motives regarding their sons' education, even their sons' fitness for that education, had been publicly and repeatedly questioned. Richard Fiennes had accused them of having ideas above their station, as well as designs on his inheritance. The author is convinced that the richly coloured and gilded magnificence of Richard Wykeham's monument, with its abundant heraldry, must have been intended to re-emphasise his family's ancient origins and illustrious connections. In the wake of their decades-long dispute with the Fiennes family, Richard's memorial display could perhaps restore the dignity of the elder Humphrey and his descendants.

On the opposite side of the church, between the two easternmost windows of the south aisle, a second large monument was installed about ten years after Richard Wykeham's, dedicated to John and Elizabeth Duncomb.

The Duncombs' monument is also of painted stone, about 3.2m high, 1.90m wide and 0.25m deep, attached to the wall 2.05m above the floor. The figures here are front-facing demi-effigies of a man and a woman, framed by a double arch with a pendant centre and flanked by black marble columns supporting an architectural canopy decorated with coats of arms and heraldic crests. Both figures are well dressed in dark clothes with white collars and cuffs. The woman wears a dark bonnet and veil; she holds a prayer book in her right hand and rests her left hand on a skull. The man's right hand lies tenderly over the woman's, while his left hand holds a pair of gloves; he is bare-headed and has a white beard and moustache and white hair.

A long Latin inscription below the figures tells the viewer that the Duncombs, like the Wykehams, had been happily married for about 50 years. The inscription shows that they had three daughters: the first died in infancy, but the other two survived to adulthood and made good marriages to men in the legal profession. The names and positions of the sons-in-law are proudly given.[15]

John Duncomb was clearly a man of substance, but his name is not prominent in Swalcliffe history. In fact, the name 'Duncomb' appears only three times in the parish register, two of those entries being the burials of Elizabeth in March 1645/6 and John in March 1646/7. The third is an earlier burial: 'Elizabeth, the daughter of Mr ... Duncome', buried on 19 December 1597.[16] She must have been the couple's first baby, whose death is noted on their monument.

Monument to John Duncomb (d. 1646) and his wife Elizabeth (d. 1645) (Imogen Paine)

15. Duncomb monument inscription translated by Professor Gregory O Hutchinson, Regius Professor of Greek, Faculty of Classics, University of Oxford.
16. Oxfordshire History Centre: PAR262/1/R1.

Coats of arms on the Duncomb monument: centre: Duncomb; left: Hawten; right: Duncomb and Hawten combined (Colin Hill)

Duncomb and Hawten arms on the Duncombs' monument (left). Hawten arms on John Hawten's monument (right) (Colin Hill)

The heraldry on that monument is the key to understanding the family's association with Swalcliffe. While the Duncomb arms appear in the most prominent position, the coat of arms above the female figure, featuring a running unicorn between three asses' heads, is identical to the arms on the adjacent monument of John Hawten 'of the Lee, Gentleman', who died in 1598. He had held the manor of Swalcliffe Lea, and came from a gentry family whose names appear in the parish records of Swalcliffe, Epwell, Shutford and Banbury.[17] John Hawten's monument lists all of his 'aleven children by name in order'. His second child was a daughter named Elizabeth, baptised in Swalcliffe on 16 February 1571/2, and it was she who married John Duncomb in about 1595.

When the Duncombs' first baby daughter, also named Elizabeth, died in December 1597, she was buried in her mother's home parish. It is therefore understandable that when the elder Elizabeth Duncomb died, nearly 50 years later, her family chose to bury her in the

17. https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol10/225-260 (accessed 9 January 2023).

same church as her infant daughter and her father. The inscription tells us that:

> '... Elizabeth, her age already burdensome, departed peacefully from this life 20 March 1645. Her husband found it hard to survive her even for a few short months. On the 16th of the following November, he accompanied her to a better life; he was then restored to God and Elizabeth.' [18]

The figures of John and Elizabeth Duncomb (Colin Hill)

In his will, written five months after his wife's death, John Duncomb stated:

> '... my will is that (my body) bee decently interred in the parrish church of Swackley in the County of Oxon as neere as may bee to my deere wife Elizabeth lately deceased ...' [19]

Sentiment may have governed the choice of burial place, but the monument's design and size was influenced by Duncomb's wish to display his family's social status and taste and to make his own mark in Swalcliffe church. John Duncomb had clearly admired the Wykeham monument and wanted something similarly impressive. After specifying his burial in Swalcliffe, his will further instructs his executrix:

> '... to erect a monument in the same place within one yeare after my decease for my selfe and my wife such another as that of Mr Wickhame in that church and not inferiour to it ...' [20]

It is tempting to see this as an indication of some degree of social rivalry. John Duncomb was a gentleman of similar social status to the Wykehams, belonging to a many-branched gentry family with extensive land holdings in Buckinghamshire.[21] Unlike Richard Wykeham, however, he was a younger son. He seems not to have inherited land which could give him an income; instead, he had had to find business interests elsewhere. In this he was evidently successful – he left Buckinghamshire, settled in Deddington, and grew to be a very wealthy man. Duncomb's will includes cash bequests totalling at least £1,638 (nearly £170,000 today), including £100 (over £10,000) to each of his four grandsons and £150 (over £15,000) to each of his four granddaughters, plus another £500 (over £50,000) to his surviving daughter Elizabeth so that, if she had more children after his death, they could receive similar sums. There are indications that his business interests may have included finance and money-lending – appended to his will is a 'Schedule of debts owing unto mee Iohn Duncombe of Dedington' amounting to nearly £4,000 (£400,000). The list of more than 20 debtors includes several prominent Banburyshire names, such as Danvers, Vivers, Croker and Hawtin.[22]

John Duncomb's monument is similar in size and form to Richard Wykeham's, but there are differences. The Duncombs' heritage, like the Wykehams', included many illustrious

18. Duncomb monument inscription.
19. TNA PROB 11/199/101.
20. TNA PROB 11/199/101.
21. Roger Duncombe 2000 *Duncombe: a History with pedigrees of nine branches of the ancient family.* (2nd edition, 2000. East Grinstead, Sussex) p 79-88.
22. TNA PROB 11/199/101.

connections, but Duncomb's monument displays only the arms of his and his wife's families. While Richard Wykeham's monument emphasises the ancestral connections of his family, John Duncomb's seems to be an individual expression of success. His ties to Swalcliffe appear to have been social and emotional, stemming from his marriage to Elizabeth Hawten. Like the Wykeham monument, Duncomb's is an expression of wealth and social position but, in his case, the expression is remarkably personal. John Duncomb and his wife chose to be buried not in Buckinghamshire among his Duncomb ancestors, or in Deddington, among their prosperous neighbours, but in the village of Swalcliffe, close to his wife's father and their long dead first child.

The monument was duly installed under the direction of his daughter and executrix, Elizabeth Turner. The inscription tells us:

> 'She alone survived her parents. She was the heir in her father's will; she arranged for this marble gravestone to be set up to the memory of her dearest parents, in accordance with the requirement in her father's will. She did this in grief, with the utmost devotion and affection.' [23]

The final twist to John Duncomb's story is found in his burial entry in the Swalcliffe parish register, which reveals a discrepancy between the dates and location of John Duncomb's death and burial that warranted a special note: '1646/7 5 March John Duncomb Gentleman, of Dadington died Nov. 16 at Berington'.[24]

Berington, now known as Burrington, lies on the edge of the Mendip Hills in Somerset. It was the birthplace of Duncomb's son-in-law, William Turner – perhaps John was visiting one of William's relations when he died in November 1646. Because his will stipulated that he should be buried in Swalcliffe, his body had to be brought back, involving a journey of over 75 miles. The roads must have been very difficult at that time of year; it is likely that Duncomb's body was kept in the Berington church crypt until conditions improved the following March. It almost certainly fell to the son-in-law to organise transport, and it must have been quite a performance. When Turner wrote his own will in 1665, he was possibly remembering the complexities surrounding his father-in-law's burial when he directed that:

> '... My Body I desire may be interrd without any Solemnity More than the office for the buriall of the dead according to the forme prescribed by the Church of England in any place which it shall please God to ditermine my tyme as my deare wife and Executore herein named shall think most convenient.' [25]

Richard Wykeham and John Duncomb were about 15 years apart in age, born into similar gentry families in adjacent counties and connected to Swalcliffe by family ties. They must have been acquaintances, perhaps even friends; they and their wives and families must have worshipped together in Swalcliffe church on more than one occasion. While Richard Wykeham's monument emphasises the deep ancestry of his family, and was cited as the inspiration for John Duncomb's memorial, the latter seems more of an individual expression of success and personal sentiment.

23. Duncomb monument inscription.
24. Oxfordshire History Centre: PAR262/1/R1.
25. TNA PROB 11/334/108.

Postscript

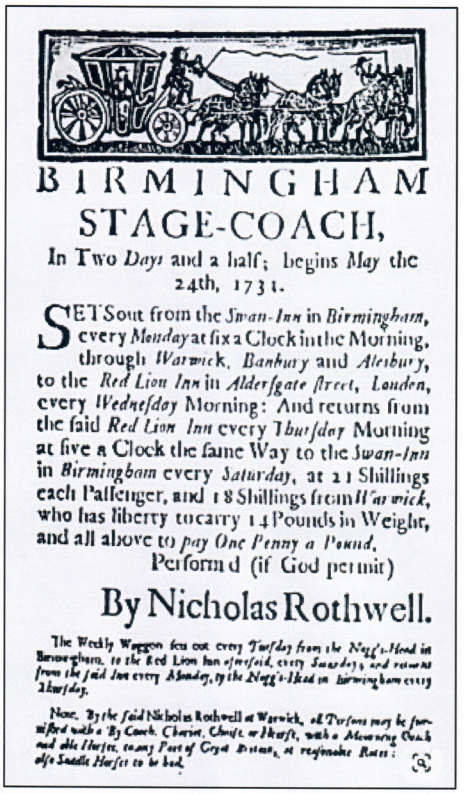
The monuments were cleaned and conserved in the summer of 2022 as part of Swalcliffe PCC's Heritage Improvement Project. The work was carried out by Imogen Paine, Conservator, BSc Hons, of Imogen Paine Ltd and was part funded by a generous grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation.

According to Church law, monuments remain the property of the family whose members they commemorate. Before conservation work could be undertaken the Heritage Improvement team had to seek permission from the 'heirs in law' to the Wykeham and Duncomb families. The Duncomb line descended through their daughters and became very complicated due to breaks in the direct line; it could not be traced with confidence beyond 1992. The Wykeham descent was much more straightforward, passing from father to son from about the 1270s to 1800, and then onward to the present day with two instances of female inheritance and one of cousin-to-cousin inheritance. The Heritage Improvement team is enormously grateful to Mrs Baillie-Hamilton, who represents the eleventh generation after Richard Wykeham, and possibly the twenty-third generation in the Swalcliffe Wykeham descent, who very kindly granted permission to carry out conservation work on the Wykeham monument.

The conservator, Imogen Paine, at work on the Wykeham monument in August, 2022 (Colin Hill)

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY NEAR BANBURY

George Hughes



BIRMINGHAM
STAGE-COACH,
In Two *Days* and a half; begins *May* the 24th, 1731.

SET Out from the *Swan-Inn* in *Birmingham*, every *Monday* at fix a Clock in the Morning, through *Warwick*, *Banbury* and *Aleſbury*, to the *Red Lion Inn* in *Aldersgate ſtreet*, *London*, every *Wedneſday* Morning: And returns from the ſaid *Red Lion Inn* every *Thurſday* Morning at five a Clock the ſame Way to the *Swan-Inn* in *Birmingham* every *Saturday*, at 21 Shillings each Paſſenger, and 18 Shillings from *Warwick*, who has liberty to carry 14 Pounds in Weight, and all above to *pay One Penny a Pound*.

Perform'd (if God permit)

By Nicholas Rothwell.

The Weekly Waggon ſets out every *Tueſday* from the *Nagg's-Head* in *Birmingham*, to the Red Lion Inn *aforeſaid*, every *Saturday*, and returns from the ſaid Inn every *Monday*, to the *Nagg's-Head* in *Birmingham* every *Thurſday*.

Note, By the ſaid Nicholas Rothwell at *Warwick*, all Perſons may be furniſhed with a *Dy Coach*, *Chaiſe*, *Chaiſe* or *Hearſe*, with a *Mourning Coach* and able *Horſes*, to any Part of *Great Britain*, at reaſonable Rates: alſo Saddle Horſes to be had.

Advertisement for Birmingham to London Stage-coach[2]

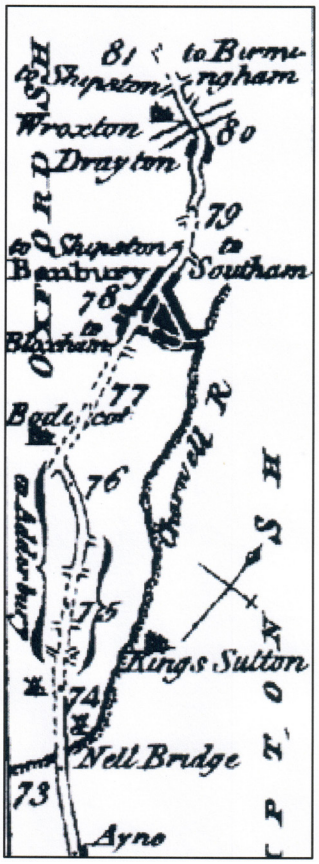
The advent of travel by stage coach in the early 18th century offered opportunities for robbery on a scale previously unprecedented; hapless passengers were at the mercy of highwaymen who often operated with brutality and force. Banbury was situated on the major route between Birmingham and London and attracted considerable traffic from entrepreneurs, such as Nicholas Rothwell who, in 1731, put up posters locally and placed newspaper advertisements to announce his new Birmingham to London stagecoach service. The journey from the Swan Inn in New Street, Birmingham to the Red Lion Inn in Aldersgate Street, London, 119 miles, would take just two and a half days following the introduction of the 'flying coaches',[1] which passed through Warwick and Banbury then on to Aylesbury with a final sprint to the metropolis. Rothwell's quoted timescale was a serious reduction from the 4-day journey that it had taken back in 1659 when coach travel was in its infancy. Hence its popularity for travellers – and for highwaymen.[3]

Some 12 years later, about 5 o'clock in the morning on Saturday 18 June 1743, the Birmingham stagecoach was robbed by highwaymen a couple of miles outside Banbury. Reports of the event were only covered by *The Ipswich Journal*;[4] more local papers, such as *Jackson's Oxford Journal* were not published until 10 years later.

The report stated that the two perpetrators of the crime were quickly apprehended, having been found drunk and asleep in a cornfield near Bodicote. They were taken under guard to Oxford where they were arraigned before Rev. Dr Thomas Pardoe,[5] who committed them to the Castle Gaol to await trial. The report goes on to highlight in gruesome detail how one of the highwaymen tried to escape by flinging himself from his horse. Unfortunately, he forgot that his legs had been chained together under his horse, leading him to be dragged along the ground for thirty yards or so causing such serious injuries that it was thought he would not live long enough to be hanged.[6]

1. http://mappingbirmingham.blogspot.com/2012/10/london-to-birmingham-stage-coach.html (accessed 26 February 2022).
2. Nicholas Rothwell's advertisement for the Birmingham stagecoach; posted by Jenni A. Dixon http://mappingbirmingham.blogspot.com/2012/10/london-to-birmingham-stage-coach.html Paper Remnants 2 (accessed 26 February 2022).
3. Highwaymen were robbers who stole from the travelling public by horseback rather than a footpad who robbed on foot; mounted highwaymen were widely considered to be socially superior to footpads.
4. *Ipswich Journal*, 25 June 1743.
5. Thomas Pardoe (1688-1763), principal of Jesus College.
6. *Ipswich Journal*, 25 June 1743.

The map[7] shows the 7 mile stretch of the Birmingham to London stagecoach between Wroxton and Drayton, milepost 80, via Banbury to Nell Bridge, which crosses the river Cherwell, at milepost 73. According to the account the stagecoach was robbed about 2 miles from Banbury, close to 5 o'clock in the morning, near milepost 76, just shy of Bodicote. So, on 18 June 1743, after the dust had settled and the ruffled passengers had recovered, the two highwaymen, both guilty of robbery on the king's highway were locked up in Oxford Castle Gaol awaiting trial and their grisly fate. You would expect them to be treated equally and face the full force of the law as it was in the mid-1700s, fast and brutal. The penalty for robbery with violence was hanging, and most highwaymen ended their life on the gallows, and, if they were so unlucky, were hung in a gibbet for public display and to feed the local bird population.



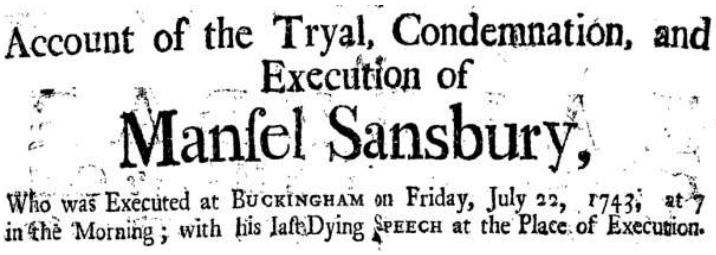
Bowles's Post Chase Companion

However, this was not the case here and the idiom of 'it's who or what you know' appears to have ruled the day. The first man is described in the report[8] as the 'noted Sansbury who has infested our roads and long behaved in a daring manner'. His end was swift and lacking in compassion as described in a contemporary broadsheet prepared and distributed for all to read.[9]

> 'An account of the Tryal, condemnation, and Execution of Mansell Sansbury who was executed at Buckingham on Friday, July 22, 1743 at 7 in the morning, with his last dying speech at the place of execution.
> July 21, 1743. On Thursday the assizes ended at Buckingham when the noted Sansbury (who for many years had infested that and the neighbouring counties as a highwayman in a most audacious manner) was capitally convicted. At his trial there were many suspected fellows, who it was thought intended to have rescued him, but being signified to them that if they did not immediately disperse, he would be executed forthwith they thought fit to withdraw. However, upon a complaint from the gaoler[10] to Lord Chief Baron Sir Thomas Parker[11] that there was a great danger of a rescue his Lordship ordered Sansbury to be hanged the next morning by 7 o'clock, which was accordingly done on Friday July 22, 1743.'

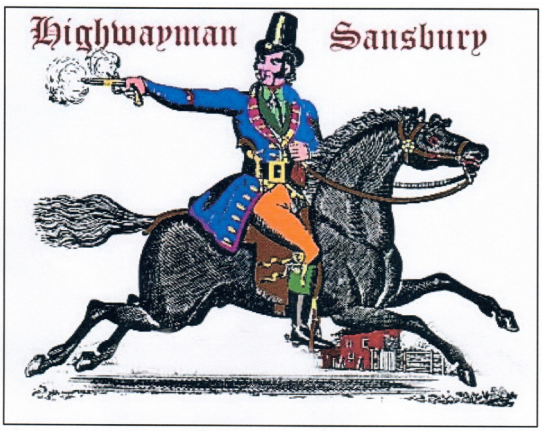
Mansell Sansbury (1716-1743) came from a very respectable family in Banbury. He was the son of Samuel Sansbury, who had been an alderman, JP and four times mayor. His grandfather, Amos Sansbury, had left money to set up a burial ground for Baptists in Hook Norton. Mansell himself was noted as a grocer, hop merchant and dealer in shags; in his will, dated 20 March 1742, he left all his property to his wife Margaret.[12]

7. Carrington Bowles, *Bowles's post-chaise companion; or Travellers' directory through England and Wales* (1782) vol 1, plate 8.
8. *Ipswich Journal*, 25 June 1743.
9. *An account of the Tryal, condemnation, and Execution of Mansell Sansbury* (Leicester?, 1743), https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3267234).
10. Francis Woodcock, county gaoler and keeper of the prison at Aylesbury.
11. Sir Thomas Parker (1695-1784) barrister and judge, Privy Counsellor and Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer.
12. Oxfordshire History Centre, PEC 52/2/18.


Account of the Tryal, Condemnation, and Execution of
Manſel Sansbury,
Who was Executed at Buckingham on Friday, July 22, 1743; at 7 in the Morning; with his laſt Dying Speech at the Place of Execution.

His criminal career had included shooting and robbing Samuel Goodwin near Leicester of £17, robbing a grazier near Banbury of £35, robbing a Scotchman near Coventry of his bags of linen together with £17, robbing a man at Killingworth of 7d, robbing a clergyman about half a mile from Banbury of £15, (who 'leaped' his horse over a hedge or gate in an attempt to escape, earning him a severe beating from Mansell) and robbing a grazier near Lutterworth of £34 which he had received for cattle on fair day. He and his gang, about 12 in number, had also robbed several coaches around Daventry and other parts of Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire and he himself robbed a coach near Coventry, despite the presence of the mayor of Coventry whom he asked 'to ride off, while he paid the ladies a visit at the coach'.[13]

His last words and confession at the place of execution included a striking picture of his own life:



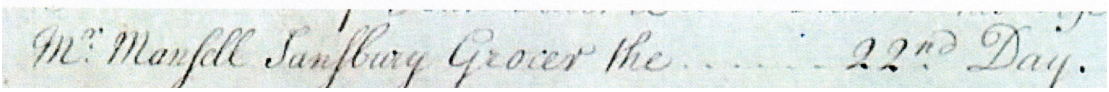
Sketch of Highwayman Sansbury[14]

> 'I have been an unbridled villain.... think, ye bystander of the wretchedness of my condition I who was happily seated but a short time ago am now on the brink of eternal misery. My father it is well known was the chief magistrate of a considerable town, and endeavoured all he could to inculcate his virtues into me his darling son and made me a common council man as the first step to succeed him in the honourable office he then bore and set me up handsomely, where I became a considerable dealer, not only in the retail way but in wholesale also. But my wicked mind was never easy with gaining money at this slow rate. I was for filling my pockets 2 or 3 times a day at the expense of honest people that I used to rob without distinction. Nay, I have even robbed the poor labourer of his and taken from the very beggars. O had I followed the council of my dear parents, and my dearer wife I had then died in peace and not brought about their grey hairs with shame and sorrow to the grave. But my hour is come nay my last moment approaches, to the Lord have mercy upon me, upon a hardened wretch, a vile and wicked sinner, that never thought on thy sufferings upon the cross before sweet Jesus extend thy pity on my shipwrecked soul. Save me O Lord, O Lord'.

13. *An account of the Tryal, condemnation, and Execution of Mansell Sansbury* (Leicester?, 1743), https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3267234).
14. Grimsdale Chronicles https://www.buckinghamoldgaol.org.uk/ (accessed on 19 February 2022).

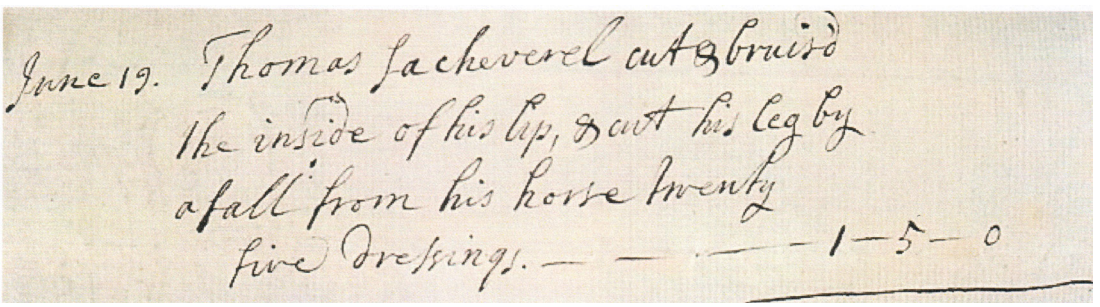
The broadsheet continues with an account of his wife attempting to see her husband for the last time – 'hearing of his being condemned on Thursday got a man and horse to carry her to Buckingham on Friday morning. When she was riding along the road saw his apparition and said to the man he is here and jumped off the horse behind the man towards her husband as she thought, with open arms to embrace him, but the apparition immediately disappeared. Mrs Sansbury walked a great way for want of conveniency to mount the horse again and met a person with the news of his execution, which she thought to be at a time of her seeing his apparition...'

Although the details of his execution are not given in the broadsheet, she probably had his body cut down from the hanging tree[15] and transported 17 miles back to Banbury, some 5 hours away by horse. A copy of St Mary's parish records below shows that Mr Mansell Sansbury, grocer was buried on the 22 July 1743, the same day as his execution.[16]


Mr. Mansell Sansbury Grocer the ..... 22nd Day.

St Marys Banbury, burial records[17]

To allow a convicted highwayman to be buried in consecrated ground, just a few hours after his execution, would need a few strings to be pulled but no record of how this was achieved survives. His wife Margaret did not remain on her own for long; she married Samuel Gardner, grazier and widower of Banbury on 1 January 1745 at St Mary's church and benefited by his will of 1765.[18] Margaret lived on for nearly another 30 years, dying aged 81, in 1794.


June 19. Thomas Sacheverel cut & bruis'd
the inside of his lip, & cut his leg by
a fall from his horse Twenty
five Dressings. — — — — 1—5—0

Extract of the bill from John Woodd, surgeon to Oxford gaol, for the application of dressings.[19]

Mansell Sansbury's accomplice and companion, another daring highwayman, was a man named Thomas Sacheverell. His injuries, sustained during his attempted escape, were attended to by the Oxford gaol's resident surgeon, John Woodd though they don't seem quite as extreme as reported above.

Sacheverell had first come to the notice of the authorities a few years earlier in early May

15. The Buckingham hanging tree was on the corner of Moreton Road and Western Avenue, opposite Addington Road; the stump of the tree was there until 1968 when it was removed by the owners of the property.
16. *Burial Register of Banbury, Oxon* part 3, 1732-1812 (Banbury Historical Society Record Series, 18), p 26.
17. OHC PAR21/1/R1/4.
18. OHC PEC 13/118.
19. OHC, QS1743T.

1739, when he was the companion of Norris Hutton, a ship's carpenter during the armed robbery of a coach that took place near the Bowling Green Inn on Putney Common.[20] Hutton was quickly overcome, carried before a justice and committed to the New Gaol (probably Newgate Prison) to await his fate. Thomas Sacheverell on the other hand was pursued by several people, including the ostler and others from the inn, who chased him in vain, as he outran all his pursuers and escaped. The newspaper records that he was a 'drawer', someone employed to take full tubs (probably of fish) to a haulage area and return the empties, who had been known to live at a tavern in Kings Street, Westminster in London.[21]

Quarter Session records for Oxford show that Thomas Sacheverell was held at that gaol for an extended period from June 1743 until 1745. In July 1743 he was noted as being a 'condemned' prisoner[22] but local efforts to mitigate the sentence appear to have worked. His wife, Jane Sacheverell, submitted a petition for mercy on 26 July 1743 but this was initially refused.[23] That recommendation, by Sir Lawrence Carter,[24] Baron of the Exchequer, made the assumption that because arms, 'very extraordinary in their contrivance', were seized from the arrested men, that they might have gone on to commit murder. However the following day his mother, together with 26 citizens of the town of Bampton, Oxon (including the vicar and churchwardens and the members of the jury who had convicted him) submitted a further petition on his behalf asking for his pardon on condition of transportation to America.[25]

It is obvious that they knew, or had been advised, how to put the case forward; Sacheverell had received the same justice as Mansell Sansbury – had been tried, found guilty at Oxford Assizes and sentenced to hang; however, in October 1743 he was recorded as 'condemned to be hanged and since pardoned by his Majesty upon condition of being transported for life'.[26] Strangely, the *Derby Mercury*,[27] reported the previous August that Sacheverell, 'commonly called Doctor Sacheverell', had been executed at Oxford. Slightly more accurately, though still in advance of Sacheverell's departure the *Stamford Mercury*[28] stated the following spring that 'the noted Thomas Sacheverell, condemn'd the last Assizes for a robbery on the highway, transported for life', despite the fact that Sacheverell was still in Oxford Gaol 'remaining according to his former order ...'.[29] The final record for him in 1745 is a bill of £7 5s 6d for his sojourn in gaol[30] together with the cost of 3 guineas for the letter regarding his pardon to the Secretary of State, presumably the second petition which appears to be have drawn up professionally. The U.S. and Canada, Passenger and Immigration Lists[31] record his passage across the Atlantic in 1745 but no further mention of his life in America survives.

(Thanks to Rachel Hancock for assistance in tracking down the references in the Oxfordshire History Centre).

20. *Kentish Weekly Post or Canterbury Journal*, 9 May 1739.
21. *Ibid.*
22. OHC,QS1743T.
23. TNA SP 36/62/59 1 August 1743.
24. Sir Lawrence Carter (1668-1744/5) http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1715-1754/member/cater-lawrence-1688-1745 (accessed 21 January 2023).
25. TNA SP 36/62/61 2 August 1743.
26. OHC QS 1743M.
27. *Derby Mercury*, 4 August 1743.
28. *Stamford Mercury*, 15 March 1744.
29. OHC QS 1744 Epiphany, Easter, Trinity, Michaelmas, 1745 Epiphany and Easter.
30. OHC QS 1745E.
31. Peter Wilson Coldham, *Bonded Passengers to America* (Baltimore Genealogical Publishing Co., 1983) vol 6 Oxford Circuit 1663-1775, p 95.

THE FOXHUNTERS, FARMERS AND PARSONS AND THEIR FIRST COUNCIL HOUSES

Jane Spilsby

'The best and cheapest houses in any rural district in the country.' This was the verdict of 'one who has had opportunities of seeing many of the housing schemes in progress in different parts'.[1] I don't know who paid this astonishing compliment; I like to think it was one of the Local Government Board's Housing Commissioners, sent to North Oxfordshire in August 1920 to check on the rural district council's progress under Addison's[2] council house building programme. This is the story of how those houses were built.

Many readers of *Cake & Cockhorse* will know North Oxfordshire's quiet beauty. Its hummocky hills are set among vast fields of green and gold, interspersed with villages and grand estates. Banbury's fertile, rural hinterland is a place of calm prosperity. Since the Civil War, nothing of any significance has happened here.

Farming has always been the chief activity. In the 19th century, grain, hay, straw, malt and beer went to London and Birmingham via Banbury's canal and railway. Until the 1920s, carriers' carts provided the only link with Banbury market and great droves of cattle and sheep made their way from farms and villages to the Market Place, as they had done for centuries.

Farm workers, however, were not always content and comfortable. By 1914 Oxfordshire was suffering the full impact of the agricultural depression which had begun in the 1870s. With cheaper imported grain and meat and a run of poor harvests, the county slipped from being one of the richest to one of the poorest; farm workers' wages were the lowest in England and for many these were times of insecurity and isolation.

The villages were, and still are, undoubtedly pretty. Many cottages survive from the 17th century. Wroxton (July 2017)

1. *Banbury Guardian*, 26 August 1920.
2. Christopher, later Lord Addison (1869-1951).

Rev. Blythman, Chairman of BRDC 1902-1917, was Rector of Shenington, 1869-1926
Photograph courtesy of the Oxfordshire History Centre

Readers will know too that the local building stone – Middle Lias marlstone, containing iron and known as Hornton stone – gives this district its distinct appeal and, particularly in summer, an air of prosperity. But, a pretty thatched cottage in Hornton stone could hide cold and damp walls, a leaking roof, severe overcrowding and a complete lack of plumbing and sanitation. Until the 1950s most of the North Oxfordshire villages did not have a piped and safe water supply. Villagers used wells, the one or two public taps in each village, springs and shared earth closets.

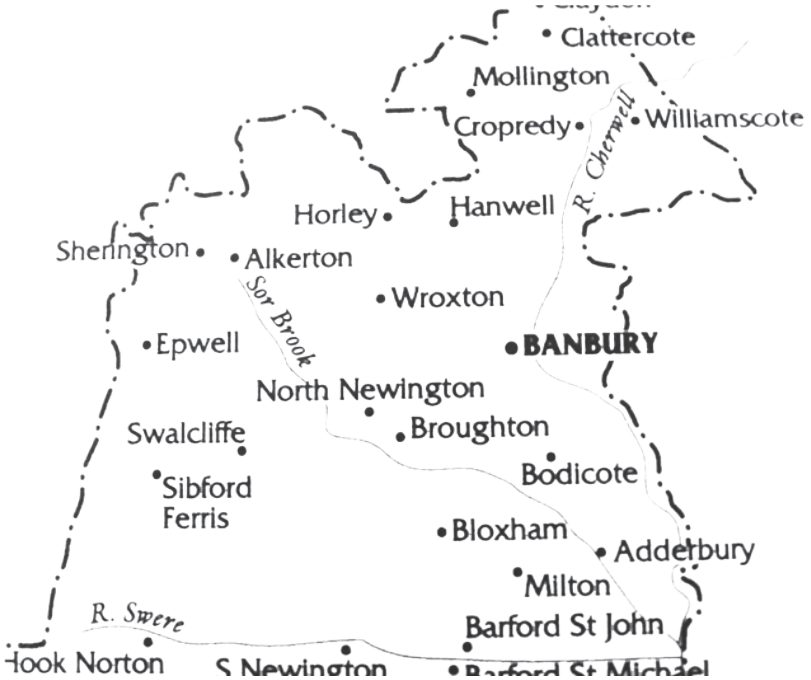
The Agricultural Economics Research Institute of the University of Oxford made a thought-provoking film in 1944, *24 Square Miles*, directed by Kay Mander.[3] It examines farming and village life in this area during WWII. Life here during WWI was surely very similar, if a little harsher. The film highlights how time-consuming and physically demanding it was to collect water for domestic use.

Banbury Rural District Council (BRDC) was formed as a result of the Local Government Act of 1894 and comprised most of what was previously the Banbury rural sanitary district and covered the rural area north, west and south of Banbury. The Council was made up of 33 representatives from 31 parishes. In 1911 the population of BRDC's area was 11,457. BRDC was dissolved and became part of Cherwell District Council in 1974.

Early 20th century council members – the 'foxhunters, farmers and parsons' – were well-connected.[4] Rev. Arthur Blythman, (1841-1927), was the Chairman from 1902 to 1917. Rector of Shenington, a Balliol man, magistrate and lifelong friend of the Earl of Jersey, Blythman was described in the local newspapers as a man who 'unremittingly gave every possible attention, in every detail to every section of the community, whatever their political or religious creed.'

Chief foxhunter among them, James Crawford-Wood of Alkerton House, was a columnist with *The Field*. Colonel North of Wroxton Abbey, Lord North' s family seat, spent years

3. Kay Mander, '*24 Square Miles*' a film by Basic Films, released in 1946. http://player.bfi.org.uk/film/watch-twenty-four-square-miles-1946/ Footage of the district council's first council houses appears at 19:21. This government film is a public record presented by the BFI National Archive on behalf of The National Archives.
4. A phrase used by Arthur Gregory of London SW1 in a letter to the *Banbury Advertiser*, 13 March 1919. 'The foxhunters, farmers and parsons have monopolised the councils far too long, and it is time the co-operator, smallholder and the officials of the Agricultural and Workers' Unions took their place and do what they can in the interest of progress.'



Banbury Rural District Council's area of authority from 1894

away on active service and returned to his council duties in 1919. The council's offices were in Horse Fair in Banbury. Council meetings were always on Thursdays, market day.

Party politics and policy statements do not feature in council minutes or newspaper reports of BRDC's meetings. However, improving living conditions in their district appears to have been the councillors' general aim and they were interested in practicalities. Their first two decades were spent grappling with drains, sewers, cesspools, flooding, pumps, springs and wells.

The council's first Clerk was Edward Lamley Fisher (1868-1951). He was appointed in 1895. Solicitor, Registrar and Clerk to the Poor Law Board of Guardians and he is credited in the local newspapers for his knowledge, humour and urbane manner.

While poor housing conditions in urban areas was receiving more and more political and philanthropic attention, rural areas saw little improvement. At Government level politicians of both parties were accused of 'neglecting absolutely the agricultural question and were intoxicated with industrial success'.[5] The housing of agricultural labourers and rural poverty was, however, a matter of long-standing concern to the reforming Liberal Government of 1906-1914.

The 'Land Question' was a key, complex and controversial aspect of early 20th century politics. It was a subject of much debate at local level. Through Lord Saye and Sele of Broughton Castle, a Liberal, there was a local connection with the National Land and Home League, a non-party organisation formed in 1910 that wanted to improve rural life. He organised and chaired a number of the League's meetings held in Oxfordshire to discuss rural development policies.

5. JW Hills, MP for Durham, at his talk in Banbury in April 1919 on 'The Rural Worker: His Work, Housing and Wages'. *BA*, 9 April 1919.

In 1909 Prime Minister Lloyd George brought in what became known as the 'People's Budget' which introduced unprecedented taxes on the lands and incomes of Britain's wealthy to fund welfare reforms. It included the introduction of complete land valuation and a 20% tax on increases in value when land changed hands. After much politicking and two general elections, the budget passed in 1911. Ultimately and during the period of reconstruction from 1917 onwards, central government was able to put serious money into social housing for the first time.

Lloyd George's Land Enquiry was set up in May 1912. Part of its remit was to establish what were the stumbling blocks in improving conditions for farmworkers. It had little difficulty in establishing that rural housing conditions were appalling. Wages were lower than in urban areas, rents were relatively high and landlords were often unable or unwilling to improve living conditions. Its report of 1913 put forward a number of solutions ranging from a reformed Land Tax, subsidies for Councils to build cottages and the wider encouragement of smallholdings. The Great War was to intervene before a coherent set of reforms could be put in to practice.

The *Housing Acts* were already in place and applied to rural areas: the 1875 *Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Act* allowed councils to clear slums and draw up improvements of their own and the 1900 *Housing of the Working Classes Act* extended the 1890 Act of the same name to places outside London, allowing councils to build houses. Importantly, the 1910 *Housing and Town Planning Act* combined with Lloyd George's People's Budget made it easier for councils to borrow money cheaply.

Between 1910 and 1914 some 1300 cottages were built by councils in English villages. Not many councils however, made use of their new powers to build and let out their own houses, though there are some interesting examples of cottages built for rural workers by councils through the strenuous efforts of local reformers. These include, for example, in Ixworth in Suffolk and Penshurst in Kent.[6]

BRDC, however, had only a growing awareness of its poor housing. By 1913 Henry Gander, the Council's Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor since 1900, was doing house to house inspections in every village, with particulars of over 1000 houses in his 'housing book.' The Medical Officer for Health, Dr Edwin Morton (1861-1931), reported regularly on sanitation and housing; outbreaks of diphtheria and scarlet fever were not uncommon and the council issued some closure orders on old cottages.

The 'foxhunters, farmers and parsons' of BRDC were well-meaning and perhaps unaccustomed to outside opinion. It took a government inspection of the condition of the district for the council to adopt its housing powers. A fresh pair of eyes on the housing conditions, in the form of a housing inspection and a report from the Local Government Board, was what led the council to decide to build.

In April 1913 the Clerk, Mr Edward Lamley Fisher, received a letter from the Local Government Board asking the council why it had not built anything yet. Without a satisfactory answer, the Board wrote again in January 1914: 'An Inspector was to make an inspection of the District with the purpose of obtaining information respecting the housing accommodation. He should commence his inspection on Tuesday 27th inst., and would call at Mr Fisher's office'. OFSTED-like, the Inspector expected Dr Morton and Mr Gander to meet him there.[7]

Mr Gander reported on the Inspector's visit to the Council's next meeting. He had shown

6. John Boughton published on *Municipal Dreams* 10 November 2015 and Pioneer Cottages, Penshurst: 'three pairs of pretty dwellings' UPDATE *Municipal Dreams* (website) published on Municipal Dreams 20 February 2019.
7. *BA* 22 January 1914.

BRDC's office, built in 1900 and now a nursery, is in Horse Fair, Banbury, opposite Banbury Cross (August 2017)

his housing book to the Inspector and hoped that the Inspector had seen that he was doing the work as it should be done. Councillor John E. Page remarked: 'I suppose the Local Government Board have not very much for these Inspectors to do, so they send them round for exercise?'[8]

But, on 30 April 1914, Courtenay Clifton – the Local Government Board Inspector who had overseen the achievements of BRDC's municipal counterparts at King's Road in Banbury in 1912-13[9] – sent his report to Lamley Fisher. It put an end to BRDC's dithering. In the Board's view, there was an urgent demand for more houses in Cropredy, Hornton and Wardington. A house in Hornton had been closed by the council as unfit for human habitation three years ago but re-occupied in its same condition because the tenants were unable to find other accommodation in the parish. The Board urged the District Council to provide accommodation themselves, under Part III of the *Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890*, and stated that 'it should be possible at these places to devise schemes that would be nearly, if not quite, self-supporting.' Further, the Board knew about cases of overcrowding in Barford St John, Barford St Michael, Bloxham, Milton and West Adderbury and expected the Council to take immediate action. There was disrepair: damp walls and floors in Bloxham, East Adderbury, Shutford, Epwell and North Newington. Councillor Joseph Pettipher remarked: 'in all probability we will have to face the music in one or two of the villages before very long'.[10] Almost every parish was named in the Board's report. The council spent the summer debating where houses were most needed and how to pay for them. Parishes overburdened with the cost of sewerage schemes were reluctant to agree that 'the cost of any new houses not met by the rents be charged to the parish concerned'.

By the time war had broken out, the Local Government Board had written to BRDC another three times asking for progress. Rev. Blythman had been to several sites but negotiations on land prices proved tricky. The council decided to wait until June 1915 which they felt would be 'a more propitious time.'

8. *BA* 5 February 1914.
9. Jane Kilsby and edited by John Boughton, 'Early Council Housing in Banbury: King's Road and the Cow Fair Roarer' Early Council Housing in Banbury, Part I: King's Road and the Cow Fair Roarer. *Municipal Dreams* (website) published on *Municipal Dreams*, 6 December 2016 and Early Council Housing in Banbury, Part II: King's Road and the Cow Fair Roarer *Municipal Dreams* published on *Municipal Dreams* (website) 13 December 2016.
10. *BA* 19 April, 1914.

The memorial in Alkerton *is a simple piece of Hornton stone. The population of the village in 1911 was 102. Councillor Crawford-Wood lost both of his sons in the First World War (July 2017)*

The Local Government Board began working on reconstruction as early as August 1917. Lord Christopher Addison, MP (1869-1951) was Lloyd George's Minister for Reconstruction. Then, as Minister for Health in 1918 it fell to him to put into practice an extensive programme of state-led house building. Addison aimed to put an end to the country's poor housing stock and provide decent homes for those returning from the War. The *Housing and Town Planning Act of 1919*, known as the Addison Act, gave local councils powers to build unlimited numbers of new houses at low, controlled rents with any losses on their building costs met by government subsidies. Loans raised by councils did not have to cover the whole cost of housing schemes; this was the start of publicly-funded housing on a large scale across the country.

In North Oxfordshire, local opinion anticipated Lloyd George's cry for homes for heroes: in June 1918 Clement Gibbard (1896-1956), late of the Oxford & Bucks Light Infantry, wrote to the *Banbury Guardian*: 'I suggest, to commemorate victory in this awful war, every village should place a brand-new cottage for every man who has been out to fight for liberty, so that the health and comfort of the rural community would be happier and healthier in the future than it has been in the past. In comparison to the number of people per acre there is as much illness in the rural districts as there is in large towns. The Irish recruits have been promised land if they will join up, then why should not we England lads get a victory sanitary cottage for helping to save the Empire?'[11]

11. *BG* 20 June 1918.

The Local Government Board's Housing Commissioner wanted a new survey of every District detailing for each parish i) the present estimated shortage of houses, ii) the actual state of overcrowding and iii) the number of houses that should be condemned if there were no other houses available for accommodating the persons displaced. BRDC was ready for this and duly complied. By July 1918 the Housing Committee was able to confirm that, 'on the assumption that financial facilities will be afforded by the Government, that a scheme be prepared for submission to the Local Government Board at an early date.'

There was no more procrastination or debate: the council knew they were on a tight timetable. Poor housing conditions in the district before the war had become critical; a pent-up demand for farmworkers cottages and for returning soldiers and their families had become a necessity. The day after the Armistice, the Chairman, by then Joseph Pettipher, went out with Sanitary Inspector, Henry Gander, making use of his motor-bicycle and petrol: 'to ascertain what land is suitable for building purposes, reporting to the Clerk from time to time in order that he may be in a position to put himself into communication with the owners of such land and the terms on which such land can be acquired.'

It may not be quite true that you can walk from Oxford to Cambridge without leaving land owned by the colleges, but the Oxford colleges owned a lot of land in North Oxfordshire.[12] The colleges, including New College, Oriel and Magdalen, co-operated and a number of housing sites, such as in Milcombe, were purchased directly from them. Building was underway very quickly.

The houses in South Newington under construction in 1920. Built by Wheeler Bros. of Reading, two of the builders appear to be in uniform (with the kind permission of Laurence Carey)

House building by councils was one of the numerous aspects of society changed forever by the Great War. We have seen how the council members at BRDC, described as the 'foxhunters, farmers and parsons,' made a decision to improve the condition of housing in their area before the outbreak of war. They were unable to achieve any building before 1914

12. Guy Shrubsole, 'What do the Oxford Colleges own?' 25 September 2016 in *Who Owns England?* www.whoownsengland.org (accessed 3 March 2023).

but by the end of the war and spurred on by the Addison Act, they had initiated a remarkable burst of activity. BRDC built and let 170 houses for the benefit of local farmworkers and returning soldiers by 1922; it had a rent roll of almost £3,000 and outstanding loans from the Local Government Board of £178,000.

Let's now look in detail at who designed and built BRDC's first, stylish and comfortable council houses and wonder whether these are indeed the 'best and cheapest houses in any rural district in the country'?

In early 1919 a letter signed by 25 discharged soldiers and the vicar in Cropredy urged the Council to speed up the housing scheme in Cropredy. Three pairs of semi-detached houses were built in Chapel Close in 1921 (June 2017)

Courtington Lane, Bloxham (June 2017)

The council had clear ideas about the type of houses they wanted to build. They wanted to see stone, not bricks, and local Hornton stone at that. They wanted the houses to be in or very close to each village, with large gardens with attractive views over the countryside. South facing high ground was their preference.

Sanitary Inspector, Henry Gander put himself forward as architect. He had done some training in an architect's office before the War and had valuable local knowledge. The Housing Committee was pleased to make him their architect on a salary of £150 per year on condition that he appoint his son – still in the army - full time to help with all his duties: Surveyor, Sanitary Inspector and now Architect. The Committee's appointment, however, was very quickly revoked. Councillor Crawford-Wood said: 'the public are disgusted with this piling up of dual and triplicate offices on one man when other men require jobs.'

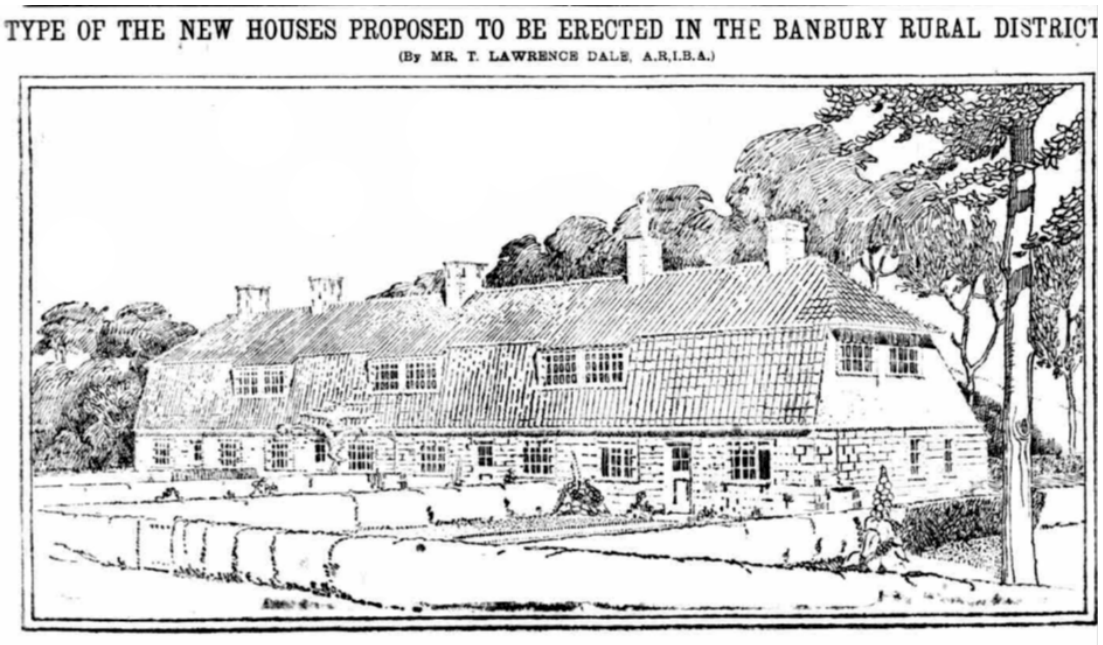
The Government's Housing Inspector agreed with this decision. His advice was to take on a qualified architect; any additional salary that would have been paid to Henry Gander would not be covered by the Local Government Board loan. As Councillor Dr Frederic Thorne put it, we will 'have to get an architect with a grand brass plate in front of his house.' And so they did.

The council decided to appoint an 'architect who has served in H.M. Forces and whose work has been interfered with so doing'. They approached the Architect's War Committee – set up by RIBA to find work for architects returning from the War – and received 'the names of four gentlemen recently demobilised to carry out the architect's work'.[13]

13. *BA* 13 February 1919.

Thomas Lawrence Dale of Richmond produced his drawings and testimonials at interview. Very impressed, the Council appointed him with the proviso that he could start at once and would open an office in Banbury. The Council agreed to pay him the RIBA-recommended fees (£2,500) and reimbursed him his first-class rail fare from London. Dale opened an office at 6 Horse Fair and took on an assistant at £6 a week.[14]

Thomas Lawrence Dale (1884-1959) was born in London. He trained at The Architectural Association School of Architecture, the AA. He qualified in 1906 and became an Associate of RIBA the following year. In 1914 he had his own practice in Bedford Row. A Captain with the Army Cyclists Corps, he was mentioned in despatches. Before the War his commissions included houses in Hampstead Garden Suburb and Horn Park in Dorset, now Grade II listed.


TYPE OF THE NEW HOUSES PROPOSED TO BE ERECTED IN THE BANBURY RURAL DISTRICT

(By MR. T. LAWRENCE DALE, A.R.I.B.A.)

A drawing by T. Lawrence-Dale of a terrace of four houses appeared in The Banbury Guardian in 1919. A terrace of four houses was built for BRDC in Bloxham in 1920 by Harry Meckhonik (1894-1969) of London.

Lawrence Dale's name in the render of one of the houses in The Firs, Wroxton

14. *BA* 20 February 1919.

The ten houses in Upper Wardington were the first to be completed. They were let by Christmas 1920 (June 2017). The Housing Committee had made a tour of these houses in August 1920

The summer of 1919 was a whirl of activity. The Housing Committee met fortnightly with an earlier start time of 10.30 am. Mr Dale's plans were approved by the Local Government Board, BRDC appointed a Housing Clerk and land deals were done across the district.

The council had an initial loan of £122,270 for the building work and the land. Terms of repayment were variable; a 60-year repayment period at 6% interest was typical. The Council needed temporary loans from its own banker, however, pending the raising of permanent loans, indicating the pace and extent of their activity. Rents needed the Ministry's approval; in 1920 the rent for a parlour type house was 7s 6d a week, non-parlour houses were 6s a week. Lord Addison, MP and Minister of Health wrote to the Council in July expressing his appreciation of their progress.

Lawrence Dale designed at least two distinct types of houses for BRDC: the 'A1 south' type and the 'Cropredy' type. The A1 south type has 'a parlour, large living room, kitchen range grate, cement-floored scullery, a washhouse with a boiler and space for a bath and a shed for fuel and potatoes.' There were rainwater tanks with a capacity of 200 gallons outside at the back of each house. The Cropredy type has a larger entrance hall and steel window frames. A 'cottage' non-parlour style was also used, for example, in Adderbury. Some of the developments contain a mix of styles, at Hook Norton, Drayton and Milcombe, for example.

Three pairs of semi-detached houses of the 'A1 south' type were built in South Newington. BRDC bought the land from Magdalen College Oxford for £175 in 1919. The building contract included the provision of a septic tank (June 2017)

The 'Cropredy' type houses in Barford St Michael have flank walls of brick. A well was sunk here by the contractor, another local builder A. Hopcraft & Sons of Deddington (June 2017)

Cottage-style semi-detached house in The Crescent, East Adderbury. 200 men from Adderbury and Milton went to the War (June 2017)

A pair of semi-detached houses in Milton, with very large front gardens, built by the Harpenden Building Co. (June 2017)

The houses in Mollington are in the centre of the village and on higher ground (July 2017)

These houses were let specifically to returning soldiers and their families.[15] Lawrence Dale grouped houses together as much as possible 'on the assumption that neighbours should also be friends'.[16]

Some of the cottages have names carved in a stone lintel above the front door. Thisbe and Pyramus Cottages are in Wroxton and the six in Cropredy were all named to commemorate the Battle of Cropredy Bridge, 1644. Charles, Cleveland, Cavalier, Culverin, Kentish and Waller Cottages are in Chapel Close. Every house had a garden of not less than a quarter of an acre, double the Ministry of Health's requirement for new rural houses. Council-built housing was a brand-new concept in these villages: there was a concern that a lot

15. Nicholas Allen, *Adderbury – A Thousand Years of History*, (1995) p 57.
16. *BG*, 26 August 1920.

of people thought that they would not be allowed to build pig-styes. On 18 November 1920 the *Banbury Advertiser* reported that the Chairman was adamant that where there was a large garden there should be a stye. He hoped the Press would note that there were no conditions of any kind whatever which prevented tenants putting up pig-styes. The *Banbury Guardian* of 26 August 1920 was very complimentary:

> 'The old idea of building a modern cottage was to put up four straight walls with a sort of box roof, the whole being severely plain, and, if economical, was exceedingly ugly. The council set out to resist the promulgation of these atrocities and the Housing Committee through their architect, Mr Dale, have produced cottages which do not detract from the picturesqueness of the villages, as was dreaded would happen when new buildings were called for ... the fronts, sides, and in some instances the backs, are of stone up to the roof, which is the mansard type, that is it breaks the front and back lines and is continued down over the first floor, but at a greatly reduced angle so that it does not curtail the space inside.'

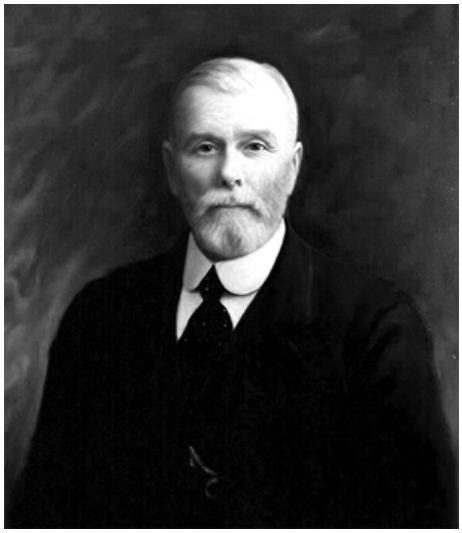
Walton Close, Bodicote. This site was one of very few that had a water supply before the houses were built (June 2017)

All Lawrence Dale's houses have mansard, 'cat slide' type roofs. The houses in Horley have Hornton stone on all sides (June 2017)

The Tadmarton houses are on the hill in the distance, as in the film 24 Square Miles. *Mrs Summers, a widow who had lost two sons in the war, was the first tenant of No. 6 (July 2017)*

A shorter version of Kay Mander's 1944 film *24 Square Miles Re-visited* was distributed by Trilith Films in 1992. It highlights the interior of the houses in Tadmarton with a scene at about 9:22 illustrating that in 1944 the houses had built-in sinks but no taps and indoor toilets were only a bucket. As BRDC knew only too well, good houses are only as good as their location and their water supply.[17]

Henry Boot (1851-1931) steps into our story in 1920. Joiner and builder from Sheffield, he set up his company in 1886 and achieved rapid expansion. The company was the first building company to be listed on the London Stock Exchange. In the same year, 1919, Boot's eldest son, Charles (1874-1945), took the lead. With a keen interest in house building, his company's prospectus of 1919 refers to the 'immense field for commercial enterprise opened up by this enormous volume of construction'.[18]



Henry Boot, 1851-1931 (with kind permission of Henry Boot PLC)

Building contracts under the Addison Act started with an average size of 40 dwellings and, for contracting purposes, most local authorities split any planned large estates into small lots and this suited the building firms operating at the end of the war. As more councils began to build – there were 4,400 ministry-approved council housing schemes by 1922 – they needed economy of scale and speed. With inflation and a scarcity of labour and materials many smaller firms struggled to get finance. The work was there but they needed capital to get their schemes off the ground. BRDC had some experience of this; there were no difficulties with quality but some tender advertisements had a poor response.

Crucially, £300,000 raised as capital through their flotation gave Henry Boot & Sons the edge. The company was able to take advantage of the option to submit prices for groups of villages.

In April 1920 the Housing Commissioner received a proposal from Henry Boot that the company take on all of BRDC's remaining sites and those of adjoining districts, including Towcester RDC. Boot's offer was accepted. Charles Boot hosted a meeting at his London office in July attended by the Housing Commissioner, Lawrence Dale and Lamley Fisher to thrash out details of the contract, including an agreement that the council would pay for building materials as and when they were delivered on site.

BANBURY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

HOUSING SCHEME.

TO BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS.

THE COUNCIL will shortly be in a position to INVITE TENDERS for the erection of Cottages as undermentioned:—

CROPREDY and neighbouring villages—22 Cottages
WROXTON and neighbouring villages—26 Cottages

Tenders may be submitted for the whole of for any one or more villages.

Builders desiring further particulars should communicate with the Architect, T. Lawrence Dale, A.R.I.B.A., Horse Fair., Banbury.

The Council do not bind themselves to accept the lowest or any tender.

E. LAMLEY FISHER,
Clerk to the Council.

Banbury,
10th *Nov.*, 1919.

17. https://hook-norton.org.uk/history/views-of-hook-norton/film-and-television/ (accessed 26 February 2023).
18. Sheila Marriner, 'Cash and Concrete: Liquidity Problems in the Mass Production of 'Homes for Heroes' included in *Business in the Age of Depression and War* ed. Davenport, R.P.T., 1990.

Houses under construction in Horley. 1920. Percy Alcock, Henry Boot's site agent, is on the far left. One of the first lettings was to a Mr Green who had lived in an old cottage on this site (with kind permission of P.R. Alcock & Sons)

Henry Boot & Sons Ltd. in the render of a house at The Firs in Wroxton (July 2017)

Boot & Sons built 128 of the 170 houses. Operating concurrently on 16 sites, the value of their contract was £126,934. Their work included the larger sites e.g. at Hook Norton (26 houses), Tadmarton (14), East Adderbury (22). Local carpenter, Percy Alcock, quickly became Boots' foreman and then site agent for all 16 sites.

With so much going on, transport became an issue. Henry Gander was already using a council-owned motor-bicycle and the council bought a Ford light van and a motor-bicycle and side-car for Boots' foremen on condition that they would be auctioned at the end of the contract.

By August 1922, all 170 houses (106 parlour type and 64 non-parlour) were complete and let. Notices were put up in the villages asking anyone who was interested in a tenancy to get in touch with the Clerk to the Council, Lamley Fisher. The council tried to offer the houses to local people from the same villages, with preference given to people who had served in the War.

Distinctive 'snail-creep' pointing by stonemason John Cronk (employed by Boot & Sons) on the front of one of the houses in Shutford Road, North Newington. This is said to be very high quality 'snail-creep,' an unusual technique in buildings faced with Hornton stone. There are BRDC 1921 plaques on many of the houses (July 2017)

And what did they all do next?

The 'foxhunters, farmers and parsons' continued to build council houses. Their later additions made use of the Ministry of Health's standard house designs. Their successors, in tweeds, are portrayed towards the end of the film *24 Square Miles*.

Henry Gander retired through ill health in November 1921. BRDC was so appreciative of his loyalty that they kept him on as a Consulting Surveyor at £75 per year. What's sauce for the goose? He died in 1925.

Edward Lamley Fisher, MBE, BRDC's first Clerk, retired after 55 years of service. As Superintendent Registrar he had officiated at over 3,000 marriages. In January 1945 at a party to celebrate his 50th anniversary at the council, his colleagues recalled the 'extremely interesting and happy days just after the last great war ... working with Mr Fisher on matters appertaining to the selection of sites for council houses.'

There are 3 pairs of semi-detached houses in The Close, Great Bourton. BRDC acquired this site under a compulsory purchase order. A shortage of tiles led to a delay in completion (June 2017)

Lawrence Dale had a successful career; he became Oxford Diocesan Surveyor in the 1930s, designing and renovating parish churches including his Bloomsbury-style renovations at St Etheldreda's church in Horley. He died in 1959.

Charles Boot died in 1945 but not before Henry Boot & Sons had built more houses between

Ceiling decoration (left) and dossal in bas-relief of the entombment of Christ by Edmund Ware (1883-1960), in a style reminiscent of Eric Gill, at the north aisle altar, both at St Etheldreda's in Horley. Part of the refurbishment of the church overseen by T Lawrence Dale 1947-1950 (July 2017)

the wars, public and private, in the UK than any other company. They built 20,000 council houses before 1930. With offices in Paris, Athens and Barcelona, the company diversified very successfully into building hospitals and bridges. They built Pinewood Studios in 1935. Henry Boot PLC today specialises in commercial buildings and plant hire.

Laid off at the end of the Boot contract, site agent Percy Alcock formed his own company in 1922 with John Cronk, the stonemason. PR Alcock & Sons continues today from their Banbury yard, carrying out high quality restoration and joinery works on period houses and churches and for the National Trust. John Cronk was badly injured in a motor bicycle accident in the late 1920s and was unable to continue with his work and as a partner with Alcock.

Part of the workshop PR Alcock & Sons Ltd. in Castle Street, Banbury (July 2017)

Wykham Lane, Broughton. The 1920s gardens were wide enough to accommodate new bungalows built in the 1950s (June 2017)

South Newington (June 2017)

Thisbe and Pyramus Cottage, The Firs, Wroxton (June 2017)

The Old Council Houses, Horley. A well was provided on site by BRDC for these houses (June 2017)

The houses themselves stand in settled peace. Most of them have been sold under the Right to Buy and change hands infrequently, the parlour types at a minimum of £470,000 (2017 prices).

Sanctuary Housing Group manages those available for rent, for Cherwell District Council. There are interesting examples of the use of the huge plots but most of the gardens remain intact. Some of the houses are in Conservation Areas.

So, are these the 'best and cheapest houses in any rural district in the country?' They are probably not the cheapest. The 1920 Fabian Tract on Housing put the average cost of a parlour-type house, at January 1920, at £803 per house, excluding the cost of the land, road-making and sewerage.[19] BRDC had a 'rule of thumb' – house and land price – of £1,000 for each architect-designed cottage.

19. CM Lloyd, 'Housing' Fabian Tract No. 193, 1920. https://digital.library.lse.ac.uk/objects/lse:yih744yot/read/single#page/1/mode/1up (accessed 3 March 2023).

The council's accounts were done separately for each site: the Sibford Gower site of six parlour-type houses, for instance, cost a total of £4,945 15s 1d – that's £824 5s 10d per house – very close to the Fabian average. Whether BRDC's costs were included in the Fabian's calculation is unclear. Value for money? Certainly.

The best? I can do no more than continue to quote from the *Banbury Guardian*'s description in August 1920, when the first houses were nearing completion:

> 'the use of the word cottage seems hardly correct ... the new houses might be called bijou villas.'

Contemporary quotations from the press, unless otherwise credited, are taken from the *Banbury Advertiser* and *Banbury Guardian* between 1911 and 1925 held by the British Newspaper Archive http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/

My thanks to the Oxfordshire History Centre of Oxfordshire County Council for making available the BRDC council minutes from 1921. (https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/oxfordshire-history-centre). All photos, unless otherwise credited, were taken by the author.

This article is based on a blogpost originally published on *Municipal Dreams* (website) in September 2017 and edited by John Boughton.

'THE NEW ATLANTIS': THE COPES OF HANWELL HOUSE[1] AND THEIR MARVELOUS GARDEN.

Stephen Wass

Writing in 1675, Robert Plot (1640-96) in his well-known volume, *The Natural History of Oxfordshire*, made a most remarkable statement regarding:

> '... that great Virtuoso, the Right Worshipful Sir Anthony Cope of Hanwell... whose House I thought seemed to be the real New Atlantis which my Lord Viscount Verulam had only in Fancy.'[2]

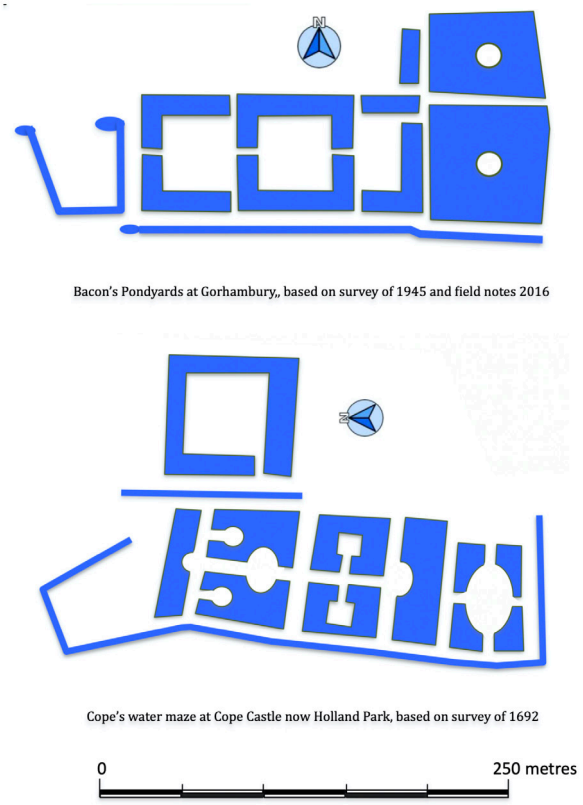
Any mention of Atlantis sends academic publishers scurrying for cover and draws out all manner of strangeness; however, there is a very serious point to Plot's assertion. *The New Atlantis* he is referring to is not Plato's original account of the Socratic parable of a fabled island but rather a more recent fantasy penned by Sir Francis Bacon (1541-1626). Bacon's uncompleted novel was published posthumously in 1626.[3] It contained a vision of a community dedicated to making advances in their understanding of natural philosophy that today we would call science.

The 'New Atlantis' was centered round an institution known as the 'House of Salomon'. The description of the 'house' began with caves that were used for a range of 'coagulations, indurations, refrigerations, and conservations' as well as accommodation for hermits. There were also great towers, 'for the view', as well as lakes and pools and, 'streams and cataracts, which serve us for many motions, and likewise engines for multiplying and enforcing of winds, to set also ongoing diverse motions'. Artificial wells and fountains were constructed, 'in imitation of the natural sources' and are used for preparing infusions. Also present were, 'great and spacious houses where we imitate and demonstrate meteors; as snow, hail, rain, some artificial rains of bodies and not of water, thunders, lightnings; also generations of bodies in air; as frogs, flies, and divers others'.

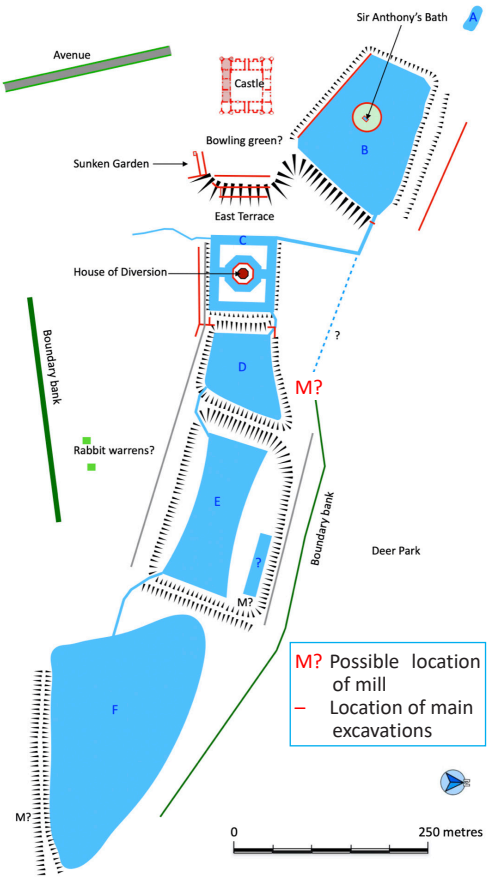
Bathing was clearly desirable as, 'We have also fair and large baths, of several mixtures, for the cure of diseases, and the restoring of man's body from arefaction: and others for the confirming of it in strength of sinewes, vital parts, and the very juice and substance of the body'.[4] Bacon's contention was that in order to progress human understanding in the field of science two things were necessary: a community of like-minded people who could support each other's thinking and a location that contained all the necessary infrastructure for promoting experimentation. In short you needed the right people in the right place to create something that we might recognize as a prototype of a science and technology based university. That Plot was claiming that such a set-up did indeed exist in reality at Hanwell in the late 17th century is more than extraordinary. This article will examine this claim in the light of recent historical and archaeological research and attempt to reach a conclusion as to the extent that Plot's comment was justified.

Sir Francis Bacon, highly regarded courtier, lawyer, essayist and philosopher, had more than a nodding acquaintance with the Copes of Hanwell. Through shared patronage of the Cecils, Bacon and Sir Walter Cope (1553-1614), the younger brother of Sir Anthony Cope

1. Although today commonly known as Hanwell Castle, references from the period refer to it as 'house'.
2. Robert Plot, *The Natural History of Oxfordshire* (London, Second Edition 1705), p 74. As a day to day working copy a facsimile edition was used, Paul Minnet (Scolar Press, 1972).
3. Francis Bacon, *The New Atlantis* (London 1627). Edition used in this study is Susan Bruce (ed.) *Three Early Modern Utopias, Utopia, New Atlantis and The Island of Pines* (Oxford, 2008).
4. Bacon, *The New Atlantis*, p 178.



The Pondyards and Water Maze



Hanwell, reconstructed plan of gardens

(c.1550-1614), the first baronet, both hoped to achieve high office as part of the country's legal establishment. In 1612, after a 30-year career in the law, Sir Walter was appointed to the lucrative post of master of the Court of Wards. He promised that he would 'execute his office sincerely with clean hands'.[5] Bacon, a rival for the post, was so confident of gaining it that he had purchased new cloaks for his men prompting the quip reported by Dr Rawley, Bacon's chaplain, that, 'Sir Walter was master of the wards and Sir Francis Bacon of the Livery'.[6] More than that, and more to the point for this study, they had a shared interest in gardens. Bacon in his much republished essay '*Of Gardens*' set out what he considered the desiderata for the garden of a prince.[7] At the family seat of Gorhambury near St Albans he laid out, during the second decade of the seventeenth century, an impressive water garden known as the Pondyards. Here he attempted to put some of his principles into practice, something of a challenge given his aversion to pools that, 'mar all, and make the garden unwholesome, and full of flies and frogs'. Fountains met with his approval providing, 'that the water be never by rest discolored, green or red or the like; or gather any mossiness or putrefaction. Besides that, it is to be cleansed every day by the hand.'[8]

5. Lord Chamberlain, letter to George Carleton, (November 1612), http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/domestic/jas1/1611-18/p 154-160, (accessed 17 January 2021).
6. E. A. Abbott, *Francis Bacon: An account of his life and works* (London, 1885), p 185.
7. Francis Bacon, 'On Gardens' in *Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. Spedding, Ellis and Heath, vol. 12, p 25. Bacon's short essay has been reprinted many times, the text used here is from an online version: https://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/artdok/617/1/Davis_Fontes18.pdf, however the page number used in the footnotes that follows is taken from the 1625 London edition of Bacon's *Essays* (accessed 3 March 2023).
8. Oriel College Archive, TF 1 E1/6, Buttery Book, 1648-49.

At much the same time Sir Walter Cope was engaged in squandering the family fortunes on the development of a new London property known as Cope Castle, the remains of which Elizabeth Allen describes as an, ‘‘imbroglio of Dutch gables and Italianate ornament” surviving in today’s Holland Park.[9] He created an even more complex ‘Water Maze’, today buried below Kensington. The layout of this extraordinarily intricate arrangement of ponds and peninsulas was captured in an estate map of 1694.[10] Sir Walter had many interests including his ‘cabinet of curiosities’, an eclectic proto-scientific collection that included, “costumes, weapons, and tools from around the globe, a round horn said to have grown from an Englishwoman’s forehead, a unicorn tail, a mirror ‘which both reflects and multiplies objects’ and Chinese objects including an ‘artful little box’, ‘earthen pitchers’ and porcelain.” [11] Sir Walter’s cabinet seems to have been rather well known as it features in a comic poem, *On a Fart in the Parliament House* from the well-known anthology *Pills to Purge Melancholy*:

> ‘Quoth Sir Walter Cope, ’twas so readily let,
> I would it were sweet enough for my cabinet.’[12]

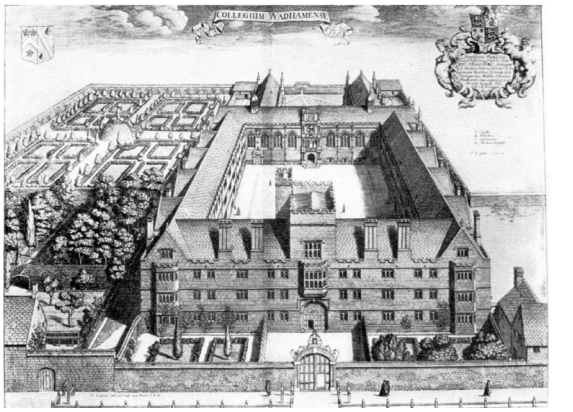
The relevance of all this to Hanwell lies in the conjunction of garden making and early scientific interest. The archaeological evidence suggests that while brother Walter was indulging himself in London Sir Anthony was undertaking a similarly ambitious piece of garden making back home. Although not as elaborate as the Pondyards or the Water Maze the water gardens at Hanwell were on a much larger scale. Beginning with a large rectangular lake at the head of a valley (indicated B on the plan opposite), just north of the house, and with a further series of four huge ponds stretched out in the direction of Banbury. (C, D, E and F) The scale of the engineering here is extraordinary, the largest of the dams retaining the ponds stand up to 8 metres high and the whole complex extends some 720 metres (787 yards) east to west and covers an area of 8 hectares (20 acres). Significantly the second pool (C) was set up with a central square island within which was a smaller octagonal island, a location of crucial importance to this story.[13]

Both brothers died in 1614, Walter dying shortly after his brother Anthony in debt to the huge sum of around £26,000. The Lord Chamberlain at the time noted he was, ‘heart-broken at the death of his brother, and the threatened loss of his place’ on account of, ‘his want of dignity’.[14] As well as passing on a difficult financial situation to future generations of Copes the brothers also left a legacy of garden making and collecting that may well have influenced a young Sir Anthony Cope (1632-75), the future 4th baronet and friend to Robert Plot.

Having survived the vicissitudes of the Civil War, largely down to the adroit manoeuvring of his mother, Elizabeth,[15] Sir Anthony, great grandson to the first baronet, went up to Oxford late in 1648. He was entered at Oriel College as a gentleman and, as befitting his status, the college buttery book for 1648-49 shows him to have been by far the biggest spender amongst the undergraduates.[16] We have no certain details of his studies at Oxford but it seems likely that it was here that he developed his life-time passion for matters ‘scientific’.

9. Elizabeth Allen, ‘Cope, Sir Walter (1553?-1614)’, *ODNB*.
10. Illustrated in Sally Miller, *The Pleasure Grounds of Holland House* (London, 2014), p 27. A 1734 copy is held at Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Local Studies and Archives.
11. Thomas Platter, *The Journals of Two Travellers in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (London, 1995), p 34.
12. Anonymous, ‘*On a Fart in the Parliament House*’, in *Wit and Mirth: or Pills to Purge Melancholy* (London, 1719), p 333.
13. For a detailed account of the early seventeenth-century garden at Hanwell see Stephen Wass , *Seventeenth-Century Water Gardens and the Birth of Modern Scientific Thought in Oxford: The Case of Hanwell Castle* (Oxford 2022) p 120-30.
14. Lord Chamberlain, letter to George Carleton, (August, 1614), http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/domestic/jas1/1611-18/p 250-252,(accessed 17 January 2021).
15. Elizabeth Fane, daughter of Francis Fane 1st earl of Westmorland.
16. Oriel College Archive, TF 1 E1/6, Buttery Book, 1648-49.

Also at Oxford at the time, as Master of Wadham College was John Wilkins (1614-72) who had a family connection to the Copes: His grandfather on his mother's side was the puritan John Dod, who as a minister had been supported by previous generations of Copes.[17] John Aubrey said of Wilkins, 'He was the principal reviver of experimental philosophy (in the spirit of Lord Bacon) at Oxford, where he had weekly an experimental philosophical club, which began 1649, and was the cradle of the Royal Society.'[18] Penelope Gouk recorded the activities of other groups such as:



Wadham College and gardens from David Loggan's Oxford Illustrata of 1675

> 'the small chemistry group that used Thomas Willis's rooms at Christ Church and Ralph Bathurst's at Trinity during 1648-49, the group that held regular meetings at William Petty's lodgings in 107 High Street (Buckley Hall) between 1649 and 1651, the much larger group that met weekly at John Wilkins's lodgings in Wadham College between 1651 and 1659 and, on a somewhat smaller scale, the group that met sporadically at Robert Boyle's lodgings at 88 High Street (Deep Hall) between about 1657 and 1668.'[19]

Sir Anthony would have had plenty of opportunities to socialise with many of the luminaries of early scientific thinking at Oxford and be part of that group who Henry Oldenburg, first secretary to the Royal Society, dubbed, 'the Oxonian Sparkles' and Gouk termed more prosaically 'scholars and practitioners'. Perhaps more significantly in terms of steering his future interests he would have had access to the gardens at Wadham where all manner of wonders could be observed. John Evelyn reported in these terms in 1654:

> 'We all dined at that most obliging and universally-curious Dr. Wilkins's, at Wadham. He was the first who showed me the transparent apiaries, which he had built like castles and palaces, and so ordered them one upon another, as to take the honey without destroying the bees. These were adorned with a variety of dials, little statues, vanes, etc. [...] He had also contrived a hollow statue, which gave a voice and uttered words by a long, concealed pipe that went to its mouth, while one speaks through it at a good distance. He had, above in his lodgings and gallery, variety of shadows, dials, perspectives, and many other artificial, mathematical, and magical curiosities, a waywiser, a thermometer, a monstrous magnet, conic, and other sections, a balance on a demi-circle; most of them of his own, and that prodigious young scholar Mr. Christopher Wren, who presented me with a piece of white marble, which he had stained with a lively red, very deep, as beautiful as if it had been natural.'[20]

George Ashwell (1612-94), Sir Anthony's future chaplain and Rector of Hanwell was less taken with these wonders:

17 Samuel Clarke, *The Lives of Two and Twenty English Divines* (London, 1660), p 200.
18 *John Aubrey Brief Lives*, ed. Kate Bennett, vol. 1 (Oxford, 2015), p 293.
19. Penelope Gouk, 'Performance practice: music, medicine and natural philosophy in Interregnum Oxford', *British Journal for the History of Science*, vol. 29 (1996), p 265.
20. John Evelyn, *Diary: Introduction and De Vita Propria*, ed. ES De Beer, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1955).

> 'Of Mr. Ashwell abused by Dr. Wilkins - When the Dr. was warden of Wadham Colledge he had the statue of Flora in his Garden; into which he had contrived a pipe, thro' which to speak. At that time Oliver Cromwell had sent to the University if any would go to preach the Gospel in Virginia, they should have good incouragement. One Mr. Ashwell was walking towards the statue, when Dr. Wilkins sat conveniently to whisper and said, Ashwell goe preach the Gospel in Virginia. The voice amazed him, and at the next return, it repeated the same words. At another return it said, Ashwell, for the 3rd and last time, goe preach the Gospel in Virginia. He going off amazed, the Dr. wheeled about and meet him: asked him what ayled him to look so affrighted: He said if ever man heard a voice from heaven I did; the Dr. said you have always derided such fancyes; but he persisted in it, til the Dr. unridled all to him, that he might have a quiet in his mind and suffer no harm by a delusion.'[21]

One wonders how he felt about Sir Anthony's subsequent ventures in the field of garden marvels.

The 1650s were turbulent times for both Oxford and the wider nation as parliament and the Commonwealth rose and fell. Sir Anthony married Mary Gerard[22] his cousin, daughter of the 3rd Baron Gerard of Gerard's Bromley, Staffordshire and Mary Fane, sister to his mother Elizabeth, on 7 October 1651.[23] His mother listed the unfortunate outcomes of Lady Mary's confinements:

> 'My sonne Ant' Copes eldest sonne was borne at Aston in Yorkshire upon Wednesday ye 16 March 1652 about 4 a clock in ye morning, he was baptised John and dyed ye monday seuenight after.
> his second son was borne at Aston on Thursday ye bout a fortnight after.
> his 3d sonne was borne at Tangley on Wedensday ye 13th of Decem. 1654 betweene 7 & 8 in ye morning, he was baptised Henry on Satterday ye 16. ye witnesses were Lord Vicount Faulkland, Sr Edmond Brag & myself. [Marginal Note] He dyed ye 8 of June 1662
> his first daughter was borne at Tangly ye last of April 1656 & was baptised Mary, ye witnesses were ye Lord Gerard, ye Countesse of Westmoreland & ye Lady Kilmurrey.'[24]

Sir Anthony seemed to spend his time travelling between family properties including Hanwell, and Bruern and Tangley, both in the west of Oxfordshire. A 'throwaway' comment by Plot hints at intriguing pursuits by the young Sir Anthony who maintained, 'a Learned Society of *Virtuosi*, that, During the late Usurpation lived obscurely at *Tangley*'.[25] This is another extraordinary statement by Plot that demands further research.

From 1658 onwards Sir Anthony was back at Hanwell where he played host to two remarkable guests, both of them important in considering the people who may have contributed to Plot's identification of Hanwell as a 'New Atlantis'. The first was the cleric and Royalist agent Richard Allestree (1619?-81). Much admired at Christ Church as having saved the college plate from the advances of predatory Parliamentarians he fought at the battle of Edgehill in October 1642 and was later captured and temporarily held at Broughton Castle. He taught at Oxford until 1648 when he was disqualified because of his refusal to

21. *Extracts from the papers of Thomas Woodcock (ob. 1695)*, ed. GC Moore Smith (London, 1907), p 81. As a former fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, Woodcock may have had this story from Anthony Tuckney (1599-1670) or perhaps more likely from the physician George Bate (1608-68).
22. Daughter of Dutton Gerard, 3rd Baron Gerrard (c.1634-1714) and Lady Mary Fane.
23. Northamptonshire Record Office, Parish register for Barnwell St Andrew with All Saints 1558-1727, 28P/1.
24. *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica* (1874) New Series, vol. 1, p 240-41.
25. Plot, *Natural History*, p 92.

submit to a parliamentarian visitation and was present at the ill-fated battle of Worcester in 1651. He spent some time lodging with fellow Oxford clerics Samuel Fell and John Dolben before moving in with Sir Anthony.[26]

> 'Sir Anthony Cope, a loyal young gentleman of considerable quality and fortune in the county of Oxford, prevailed upon him to live in his family; which he did for several years, having liberty to go or stay as his occasions required, whereby he was enabled to step aside without notice upon messages from the King's friends; which service he managed with great courage and dexterity.'[27]

Richard Allestree, 1684
(Engraving by David Loggan)

The surviving volumes of Allestree's library that are shelved above the small cloister at Christ Church College, Oxford testify to his many scientific interests; the extent to which he was able to pursue these interests during his time at Hanwell may have been rather restricted by his role as a secret agent. He appears to have been collecting funds from local Royalist sympathisers and smuggling the cash over the Channel to the court in exile and returning with letters of instruction and support from the future King Charles II. Beesley referring to 'King James the Second's Papers', indicates something of the risks that all parties were running:

> 'The proceedings which were carried on from Hanwell were conducted with the strictest privacy. Indeed, such was Cromwell's vigilance, that both Allestree and Sir Anthony Cope had good reason to exercise the utmost caution, lest the movements of the former should be traced. It is however certain that Allestree performed several difficult journeys to the King while in his exile.'[28]

Allestree would almost certainly have maintained a very low profile whilst Sir Anthony's other guest, one Thomas Baltzar of Lubeck (1631? -1663) took entirely the opposite tack. Baltzar was a violin player at a time when the violin was thought of as modern instrument whose playing techniques were under-going decisive changes.[29] He gave his first concert in London in 1656 and by 1658, according to Anthony Wood, he was:

> 'entertained by Sir Anthony Cope of Hanwell House, Banbury, Bart., with whom he continued about two years; and in that time we had his company several times in Oxon.'[30]

The first documented performance in Oxford was on Saturday 24 July 1658 and Wood was there:

> 'Thomas Balsar or Baltzar, a Lubecker borne, and the most famous artist for the violin that the world has yet produced, was now in Oxon: and this day A[nthony] W[ood] was with him and Mr Edward Low, lately organist of

26. Biographical details of Allestree taken from the brother hagiographic, John Fell, *The Life of Allestree* (London, reprint 1848).
27. *Ibid*, p 11.
28. Alfred Beesley, *The History of Banbury* (London, 1841), p 473.
29. See Mary Cyr, 'Violin Playing in Late Seventeenth-Century England: Baltzar, Matteis, and Purcell', *Performance Practice Review*, vol. 8, no. 1 (1995), p 54.
30. Quoted in Holman, *Thomas Baltzar*, p 8. Holman in turn is quoting John D. Shute, 'Anthony a Wood and his Manuscript Wood D 19(4) at the Bodleian' (International Institute of Advanced Studies Ph.D. thesis, Clayton, Missouri, 1979).

> Ch[rist] church, at the meeting house of William Ellis. A. W. did then and there, to his very great astonishment, heare him play on the violin. He then saw him run up his fingers to the end of the finger board of the violin and run them back insensibly, and all with alacrity and in very good tune, which he nor any in England saw the like before. A. W. entertain'd him and Mr Low with what the house could then afford, and afterwards he invited them to the tavern; but they being engag'd to goe to other company, he could no more heare him play or see him play at that time. Afterwards he came to one of the weekly meetings at Mr Ellis's house and he played to the wonder of all the auditory: and exercising his fingers and instrument several wayes to the utmost of his power, Wilson thereupon, the public professor, (the greatest judg of musick that ever was) did, after his humour some way, stoop downe to Baltzar's feet, to see whether he had a huff on, that is to say to see whether he was a devill or not, because he acted beyond the parts of man.'[31]

What is significant about these concerts in Oxford is that it was clear that these entertainments, later staged by Wilkins at Wadham, were social occasions that, at a time when musical performance was very much seen as relating closely to the pursuit of natural philosophy, attracted many of members of the various experimental clubs. Baltzar almost certainly composed during his sojourn at Hanwell; a selection of his music is amongst the manuscripts in Christ Church Music Library and was recorded in 2008.[32] Upon the restoration of Charles II Baltzar was appointed, in September 1660, to the King's Private Music. Less than two years later he was dead. Initially Wood recorded this as being the result of 'the French pox [Syphilis] and other distempers' although he later changed his mind and noted that:

> 'This person being much admired by all lovers of musick, his company was therefore desired; and company, especially musicall company, delighting in drinking, made him drink more than ordinary which brought him to his grave.'[33]

This is undoubtably an unfortunate instance of what in modern parlance could be termed a case of 'sex and drugs and rock and roll'. These brief biographies give some insight into the kind of individuals who were in residence at Hanwell late in the 1650s. Following the Restoration in 1660 it appears that Sir Anthony was free to turn his attention to the business of adding a variety of enhancements to the gardens at Hanwell to turn it into something that today we might identify as approaching a science based 'theme park' thus complementing a cast of potential 'New Atlanteans' with a setting suitable for scientific investigation and exploration.

The framework of the garden was, as we have seen, probably laid out early in the century and we can begin to reconstruct elements of it, on paper at least, by reviewing the archaeological investigations that have taken place in tandem with the references to Hanwell in Plot's Natural History. An account that throws some light onto the relationship between Plot and Cope is the tale of the Shutford fossil. Writing of a type of stone he termed, '*Bucardites* or *Stones* like *Bull's Hearts*', Plot tells the following story:

> 'Of these I had one sent me by my worthy Friend Robert Perrot Esq; from North-Leigh, ten Inches round and near ten Pounds in Weight, which is the biggest of the kind that I have yet saw, except one that I found at Shutford, going up a little Hill East-ward of the *Town*, about 20 Pounds in Weight,

31. NK Kiessling (ed.), *The Life of Anthony Wood in his Own Words* (Oxford, 2009), p 59.
32. Peter Wood, *Baltzar: Complete Works for Unaccompanied Violin*, Msr Classics ASIN: B000XULO70 (2008).
33. Kiessling, p 96.

> though broken half away, curiously reticulated with a White spar-colour'd Stone which being much too heavy for my Horse-portage, was afterward upon my direction, fetch'd away by the Ingenious Sir *Anthony Cope*.'[34]

Clearly they shared an interest in curious stones, an interest confirmed by Plot's further account of Sir Anthony's pebble that:

> 'was shown me by that great Virtuoso, the Right Worshipful Sir Anthony Cope of Hanwell, [...] The Pebble, I remember, was about the Breadth off one's Hand, off a flat Form, and yet not much less than an Inch in Thickness, so clear and pellucid, that no Chrystal, that I ever saw yet, excelled it; so that had not its Master, the cautious Artist, took care to leave on it part of its outward Coat, few would have believed it had ever been a Pebble.'[35]

Sir Anthony had presumably gathered and processed the specimen and added it to his collection along with other stones admired after his death,

> 'which when polished, would be as beautiful as East-India stones: that Sir ANTHONY COPE had some such stones, which he took up at Bishops-Stortford, which being cut and polished seemed in the beauty, hardness and polish even to exceed the India Stones'.[36]

Plot had also had the pleasure of admiring some cutlery, presumably during course of dinner:

> 'with the best Jasper and Achat [Agate] I have seen such as these, found about Hampstead, curiously wrought into Handles of Knives by that eminent Artist Sir Anthony Cope; to which few *Achats* might be compared, perhaps none preferred, either in the Polish, or variety of Colours.'[37]

Out in the garden the practical expression of Sir Anthony's interest in polished stone was shown by the installation of an unusual water mill:

> 'At *Hanwell* in the Park, there is also a *Mill* erected by the ingenious Sir *Anthony Cope*, of wonderful contrivance, where-with that great *Virtuoso* did not only grind the *Corn* for his House, but with the same motion turned a very large *Engine* for cutting the hardest Stone, after the manner of *Lapidaries*; and another for boaring of *Guns*: and there, as in the *Mill* at Tusmore, either severally or all together, at pleasure.'[38]

A remarkable feature in any garden but here perhaps we see Sir Anthony giving concrete form to his enthusiasm for matters technological. Other gadgets mentioned by Plot include a fishing net, a water clock and a device for viewing anamorphic pictures whilst in the park he also noted a distinctive variety of small-leaved elm and engaged in a fruitless hunt for fresh-water pearls. However, his most telling reference comes with his description of Sir Anthony's 'House of Diversion' and its marvels:

> 'There are some other *Water-works* at the same Sir Anthony Cope's in a House of *Diversion* built in a small *Island* on one of the Fish-ponds, Eastward of his House, where a *Ball* is tost by a *Column of Water* and artificial *Showers*

34. Plot, *Natural History*, p 128.
35. *Ibid*, p 73.
36. Thomas Birch, The *History of the Royal Society of London for Improving of Natural Knowledge from Its First Rise, in which the Most Considerable of Those Papers Communicated to the Society, which Have Hitherto Not Been Published, are Inserted as a Supplement to the Philosophical Transactions*, vol. 4 (London, 1757), p 88.
37. Plot, *Natural History*, p 74.
38. *Ibid*, p 269-70.

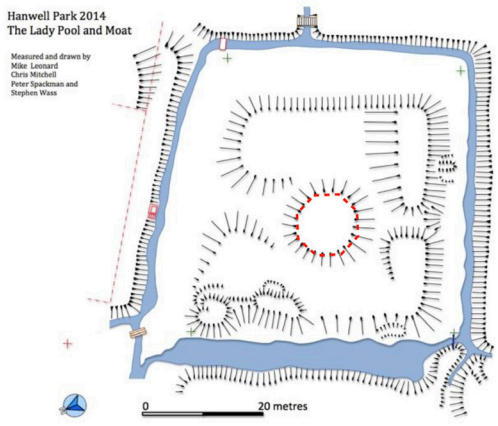
descend at pleasure; within which they can yet so place a *Candle*, that though one would think it must needs be overwhelmed with *Water*, it shall not be extinguish'd &c.'[39]

The 'House of Diversion' can, from Plot's account, be envisaged as an enclosed space within which Sir Anthony's waterworks were displayed but it seems likely that it would also have functioned in a similar way to the many banqueting halls or houses incorporated into gardens of the period. Here one might expect to appreciate good conversation whilst admiring perhaps objects of natural curiosity and enjoying a range of food and drink served from a buffet, and it is here that archaeology comes into its own to refine the picture.

Excavations have been underway at Hanwell since 2013 with several different sites across the park being examined, the first of these being a curious feature set on the island in the upper lake known locally as 'Sir Anthony's Bath'. This was an interesting addition to the garden that echoed the references to bathing in *The New Atlantis*. In February 2017 a small trench was opened up across the northern edge of a low circular mound at the centre of the second main fishpond below the existing lake. Quite quickly the remains of a buried stone wall were uncovered and over the course of the next seven years this site developed into a major excavation of a structure that has now been identified as that of Plot's 'House of Diversion'. Data from the dig has enabled a reconstruction of this building and its immediate surroundings to be made. Although demolished, probably shortly after Sir Anthony's death in 1675, debris deposited in a moat surrounding the site has enabled us to attempt a reconstruction of this important structure with some confidence. A combination of broken roof tiles, fragments of wall plaster, broken window glass and shaped stones together with the remains of an octagonal perimeter wall to the island on which the whole structure was founded have led us to suggest a well-lit octagonal timber framed building with a pyramidical tile roof enclosing a complex stone fountain.

Of particular interest was the recovery of an assemblage of around 60 17th century garden urns and flower pots that were positioned around the perimeter of the island. The archaeology showed how these had all been pushed or thrown off the perimeter into the moat; an act that seems to be one of wanton vandalism. One of these pots was inscribed with the date 1664 indicating Sir Anthony's post-Restoration investment in the garden.

Sir Anthony's Bath



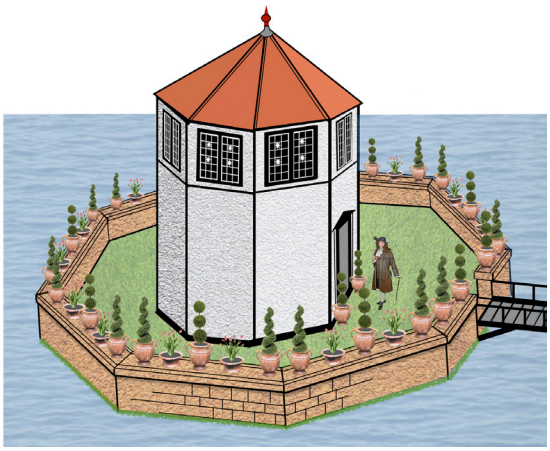
Earthwork survey of water parterre, the site of the House of Diversion

39. Plot, *Natural History*, p 240.

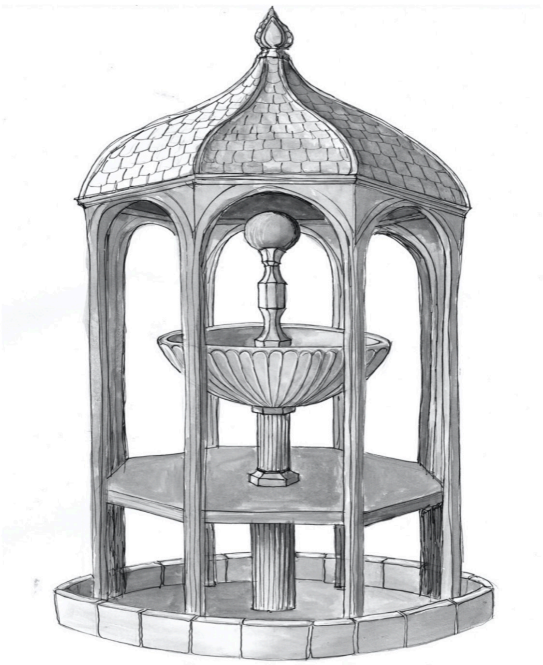
North wall of the octagonal island as excavated

Such items are extremely rare and a collection on this scale is completely unprecedented and demanding of several years of follow up research. Evidence was also recovered of clay pipes, wine bottles and wineglasses and domestic pottery that illustrates the use of the site as a place for gathering, relaxation, refreshment and presumably conversation.

Given what we now know about some of the personnel engaged with Sir Anthony at Hanwell and something of the layout of the park and garden we can now return to Plot's description of the Hanwell household as the 'New Atlantis'. A consideration of the gardens, suggests a variety of ways in which they may have both embodied and promoted ways of scientific thinking. It seems absurdly reductionist to suggest that the straight paths and



Reconstructed view of the House of Diversion



Reconstructed view of fountain inside the House of Diversion, drawing by Louise Reagan

enclosed spaces of the formal garden promote logical thinking whilst the meandering paths of a woodland garden inspire all that is poetic, yet such assumptions colour both interpretations of historic gardens and support a range of modern texts, both popular and academic, on engineering spaces to promote creativity. There is no doubt that thinkers of all persuasions have sought out gardens as places where a measure of solitude coupled with gentle stimulation can be used in support of serious thought as well as idle speculation. Undoubtedly the most famous instance of a garden based scientific discovery is the tale associated with Newton's apple. Despite this event frequently being relegated to the status of fable an account by William Stukeley, Newton's biographer, seems quite unequivocal:

> 'On 15 April 1726 I paid a visit to Sir Isaac at his lodgings in Orbels buildings in Kensington, dined with him and spent the whole day with him alone. . .. After dinner, the weather being warm, we went into the garden and drank tea, under the shade of some apple trees, only he and myself. Amidst other discourse, he told me, he was just in the same situation, as when formerly, the notion of gravitation came into his mind. It was occasion'd by the fall of an apple, as he sat in a contemplative mood.'[40]

The varied terrain at Hanwell within such a large park would have meant that there were many opportunities for both solitary and social exploration of a range of environments. The layout of the house, built around a square courtyard, is a useful starting point. There were clear advantages to be had from arranging accommodation around a central courtyard, benefits shared by late medieval colleges and hospitals. As well as conferring feelings of security and solidarity, there is also what Matthew Johnson calls the expression of, 'the notion of the community of the courtyard'.[41] Opportunities to walk and talk would have been promoted by the many terraced walkways at Hanwell where there was ample room to exchange learned discourse or witty banter with the distant prospect of the house encouraging a sense of perspective on whatever issues were being debated. An area known as the sunken garden could have offered the chance for more intimate conversations whilst a series of descending terraces and stairways east of the castle no doubt provided an element of stimulation and excitement as the view of the lower part of the valley opened out on the approach to the House of Diversion. The strong west to

Reconstructed pots on display in our pop-up museum, Hanwell open weekend September 2021

Garden urn P10 showing 'pancake' effect of impact

40. William Stukeley (1687-1765), quoted in, *Memoirs of Sir Isaac Newton's Life*, ed. A. Hastings White (London, 1936), p 19-21.
41. Matthew H Johnson, 'Meanings of Polite Architecture', *Historical Archaeology*, vol 26 no 3 p 49.

east linear design of the garden was maintained by the positioning of the water parterre at the foot of the east terrace and demonstrated a powerful sense of order. The height of the eastern terrace overlooking the water parterre obviated the need for that distinctive presence in early modern gardens: the viewing mount. The topography alone provided the view. There is evidence that the house had an enclosed gallery, sub-divided by the first Sir Anthony in 1605 prior to visit of Robert Cecil, the earl of Salisbury, that would also have commanded a view of the valley.[42] The geometric surrounds to the House of Diversion, the octagon within the square, as well as its contents, expressed both measured proportion and wonder. We know something of the inside of the House of Diversion with its balanced balls and descending showers that would doubtless have provoked reaction and discussion. We do not know if Sir Anthony kept any of his collectibles here and the finds from the surrounding moat speak primarily of the social activities of eating, drinking and smoking rather than of any experimental undertakings. Somewhere in the park the mill and its great engine indicated calculation and industry as well as offering opportunities for practical engagement or 'tinkering'. Longer walks would have made it possible to explore the lower reaches of the valley and new perspectives obtained from the deer park to the south with its views of the Cherwell valley and the distant town of Banbury. This is, of course, speculative but it chimes well with other accounts of the benefits of gardens to intellectual undertakings. Plot's multiple references to aspects of the grounds at Hanwell and the additional features revealed by archaeology all support the conclusion that this was indeed an environment rich in challenge and stimulation, a true embodiment of the concept of the 'New Atlantis'. Unfortunately, there remains a huge hole at the heart of this argument.

For the 'New Atlantis' to function in true Baconian fashion we have at Hanwell a suitable location but we also need like-minded individuals to populate the scene. Although, as noted above, a few key people were present in the late 1650s, from 1660 to 1675, the year of Sir Anthony's untimely death, we do not have a single record of anybody visiting Hanwell let alone undertaking some kind of scientific programme to make use of the place and this in an era when most interested parties were obsessive letter writers and diarists. As far as the historic record shows the period of 15 years from the departure of Sir Anthony's celebrated house guests to Plot's naming of Hanwell as the 'New Atlantis' is a blank. Could Plot perhaps have simply been flattering Sir Anthony in a rather extravagant way with his attribution? Were there on-going elements of secrecy within Sir Anthony's household that have masked traces of scientific activities? Has the relevant documentation simply been lost and is awaiting discovery? Any historical investigation inevitably generates more questions and so research will continue to validate the claim that Hanwell House was home to early scientific endeavours and hence a true 'New Atlantis'.

42. Anthony Cope letter to Earl of Salisbury (August, 1605), http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-cecil-papers/vol17/pp374-409 (accessed 11 January 2021).

THE STORY OF THE TWO WATERMILLS ON MILL LANE, ADDERBURY

Nick Allen

This story concerns the discovery of an unrecorded, in any local history source, 16th century watermill at the bottom of Mill Lane, Adderbury.

Some preamble is required to explain the context. Wilf Foreman, in his definitive book on mills[1] included an outline map of Oxfordshire marked with the rivers and streams. All the mills that he identified are marked, starting at the top with a mill on the Cherwell (No. 1) and finishing at the bottom with the mill at Shiplake on the Thames (No. 186). Foreman's book is essentially a record of all the water and windmills that he had discovered in Oxfordshire; listing their location, antiquity, type of mill and condition, with a smidgen of history.

Of the 186 identified watermill sites listed there are remnants of 135 mills left, some of which, admittedly are just marks in the ground sometimes backed-up by shadows of the water system that powered them. Only one fully working mill is left; that is Venn Mill near Faringdon. (Foreman included those mills that had been 'captured' by Oxfordshire in the 1974 boundary changes.) Combe Mill, on the river Evenlode, on the Blenheim estate, has been restored as a working mill museum, but it does not produce flour. Foreman's book does show a very high concentration of watermills in North Oxfordshire of which ten were sited on the Sor Brook; nine are identified as Saxon and one post that period.

The two documents central to this story were, apparently, not known to the compilers of the relevant volume of the Victoria County History[2] as they are not cited. The first document, dated 1662, records considerable land purchases by Anne Wilmot, dowager countess of Rochester; it is held in the National Records of Scotland.[3] The second document is a plan of land holdings in East Adderbury dated 1735 – drawn for John Campbell, 2nd Duke of Argyll and Greenwich.[4]

Bloxham Hundred at the time of the Domesday survey was a dual hundred consisting of Bloxham and Adderbury and included eleven parishes. The Sor Brook rises in the far north-west corner, just north of Alkerton (one of its parishes), and according to the plan of the hundred shown in the VCH (see above) eight of these parishes were bounded by the brook – this is documented in detail in the VCH yet local OS maps show that the Sor Brook rises north and west of Hornton; this brook, however, is mentioned in the VCH as traditionally having no name.[5]

The VCH records that a generous portion of the hundred of Adderbury was in the gift of the bishopric of Winchester; it had four Domesday watermills; two on the river Cherwell and two on the Sor Brook. It is possible that Wilfred Foreman was not aware that the

1. Wilfrid Foreman, *Oxfordshire Mills* (Phillimore, 1983).
2. A History of the *County of Oxford*, *volume IX*, *Bloxham Hundred* ed. Mary D Lobel and Alan Crossley (Oxford University Press 1969).
3. *Plan & Discription of the Manner of Eaddurby 'Ate' Adderbury in the parish of Adderbury in the Hundred of Bloxham in ye County of Oxon: belonging to ye Bishop of Winchester & now in the Tenour of the Right Honourable Ann Countis of Rochester.* Surveyed by John Jeninnings,1662. National Records of Scotland, RHP 9763.
4. *A Plan of the East Side of Adderbury being The Inclosure that belongeth to his Grace to the above said JOHN CAMPBELL Duke of ARGILE and GREENWICH With the Common Field good part thereof belonging to the above said Duke And likewise part of COAT FIELD* (dated 1735). Oxfordshire History Centre, ORO SL/30/3/M/1 1735.
5. For the sad story of how I tried to encourage the OS office at Southampton to correct this error which came to nought – see report in *C&CH*, vol 20/6 p 196.

Hundred of Adderbury then consisted of the two Adderburys, East and West, Milton, Barford St John and Bodicote, therefore the mill he records, in his gazetteer, as in Bodicote, was technically in Adderbury.

By 1381 the Winchester royal manor had been divided into two parts by bishop William of Wykeham; one part to his newly founded college at Oxford was a rectoral manor and the other, retained by the bishopric, was leased to tenants – it consisted of Adderbury House, its estate and mill.

Anthony Bustard (c.1496-1568) lived at the Manor House on Mill Lane; it appears that he had built, at his own expense, possibly in the latter half of the 16th century, another mill at the foot of Mill Lane which was long before the Domesday mill was moved to that location in 1764. Sometime between 1558 and 1579 three Adderbury men brought an action in Chancery,[6] alleging that Bustard had purchased land from the Bishop of Winchester and built a mill on it which he called Lord's Mill 'he now demanded suit of mill' from the Winchester tenants who 'always did maulte at home'.[7]

Oddly enough the VCH does not follow up this statement – however, a close study of the 1662 plan of land purchases shows at the bottom – rather like a cartouche – a carefully drawn church and manor house and a north south road leading to water which is the mill leat and a long low building can be seen, clearly, straddling the stream; also, several parcels of land surrounding the mill building are labelled mill ham and mill close.

A close study of the 1735 plan of East Adderbury bottom right, south of the bend of the Sor Brook, is the Domesday mill labelled 'Buildings of mills' (also marked with a red arrow). Moving west up-river to the top left corner (see red arrow) a low building can just be seen, sited across what would seem to be a mill stream.

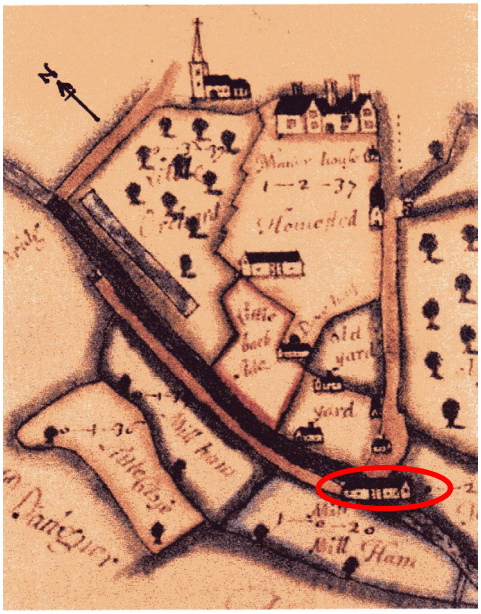
With this in mind the statement in the VCH about the three men taking their case to the Chancery Court re Bustard building a mill – when there was already a mill that had been in use since the Domesday survey does make sense. If those researchers had had sight of either one of these plans, they would undoubtedly have come to the same conclusion, that this court case did refer to a mill built sometime in the in the late sixteenth century.

Henry Wilmot, 1st Earl of Rochester (1612-1658) (engraving after 17th century original)

What led to the dowager countess of Rochester's frenzy of spending? Her husband, Henry Wilmot[8] a cavalry officer in the service of the king, had been gifted Adderbury house and estate in 1633 by his father, viscount Wilmot of Athlone; he had originally purchased the lease to use it as a shooting-box. Possibly it was a wedding present when he married his first wife, Frances Hopton, who died, probably in childbirth, in 1644; Wilmot, in the same year, married as his second wife, Anne Lee, widow of Sir Francis Lee, a Parliamentary officer of Ditchley Park.

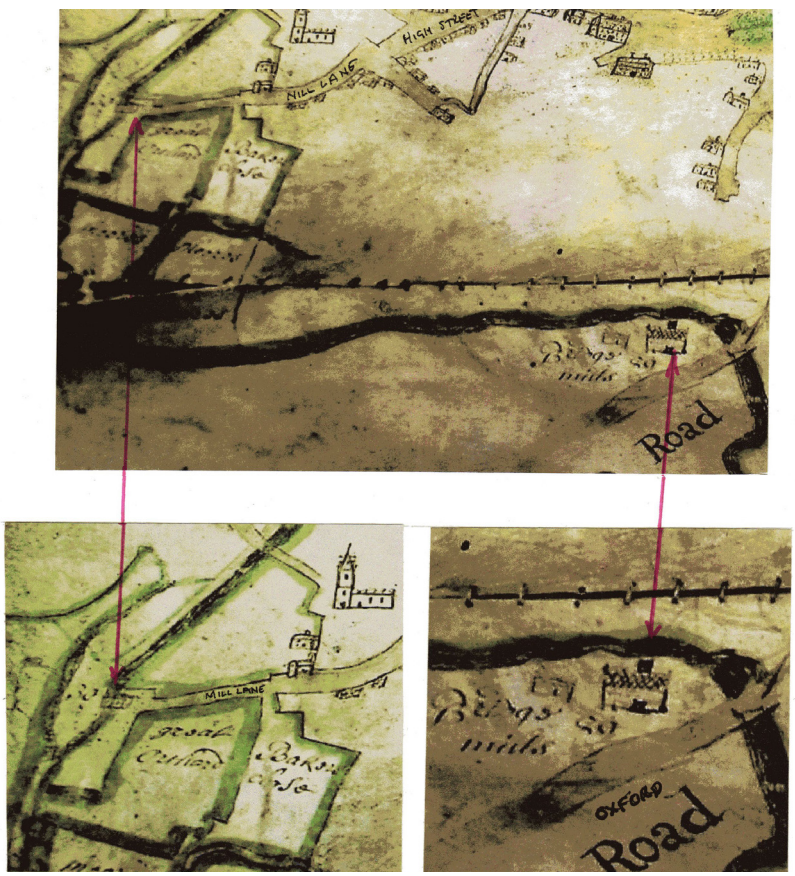
Wilmot by then was a Royalist general of horse; he was rarely at Adderbury as he was away fighting leaving Anne to run the house and estate. On the way he collected a barony, Lord Wilmot of Adderbury, for his services in the war. He inherited his father's title Viscount Wilmot

6. TNA C 3/35/29.
7. Suit of mill – in this case to pay for the malting, traditionally it was done free after the days milling of grain.
8. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Henry Wilmot, (OUP 2003-4).



1622 Plan of land purchases

An early 20th C photograph of the 16th C mill in front of the 18th C mill (ringed in red on 1622 plan)



A section of the 1735 plan of the Duke of Argyll's landholdings in East Adderbury (top)
Enlargements of the 16th C mill (left) and Domesday mill (right)

John Campbell, 2nd Duke of Argyll and Greenwich (William Aikman)

of Athlone; in November 1644 he was accused of trying to come to an unauthorized peace accommodation with the Parliamentarians, was court martialled and sent into exile to the continent by Charles I. He was elevated, by the exiled Charles II, to the earldom of Rochester but never really enjoyed his titles for he died in 1657 whilst still in exile. Meanwhile in 1645 the Parliamentary commissioners descended on Adderbury house and sequestered it in Parliament's name. The dowager countess did not gain re-possession of the house and estate until the Restoration in 1662. By then she had lost her husband, son and grandson.

No doubt the house needed much refurbishment after 17 years of occupation by Parliamentary placemen hence her expenditure of reputedly £2,000 on the house, garden and park. Warden Michael Woodward[9] of New College, Oxford recorded that in 1662 she had spent a further £2,000, purchasing about four hundred acres (of prime agricultural land in the Cotefield area, north of the parish). No reason is offered why the lady with no male heirs and at that time in her life, should indulge in buying so much land. She died in 1696 and Adderbury House and estate passed to her nephew the Earl of Lichfield. Lichfield was not enamoured with living in Adderbury; he sold on the lease of the house and estate to John Campbell, 2nd duke of Argyll who, very recently, had remarried and purchased the lease, ostensibly for the use of the house and estate as a hunting lodge.

The East Adderbury Domesday mill was demolished and rebuilt in 1764 in its present location at the foot of Mill Lane very close to the 16th century mill, on the orders of Jane, dowager Duchess of Argyll (Adderbury House[10]). Its purpose was mainly to make way for her new planned and causewayed road, crossing the floodplain and leading to a new bridge in the direction of Deddington and on to Oxford; the bridge became known as the Duchess Bridge (it still is). The Domesday mill, at that time, was suffering from a frequent lack of water; the duke's land agent would surely have known that there was more water available from the Mill Lane leat. This work was paid for by the duchess's family as she died soon after giving her orders. The old road to Oxford went past the front of her home crossing the already mentioned floodplain, which was frequently under water.

9. In warden Woodward's time (1658-75) this land, Manor Farm, came into the hands of New College, Oxford so he would have known how much the countess had spent.
10. Janet Spencer, *The Study of Large Houses Adderbury Oxfordshire*; BA thesis Lady Spencer Churchill College Wheatley, Oxon 1965.

ARCHAEOLOGY ROUNDUP 2022

Pamela Wilson

In 2022 the Banbury area did not yield archaeological excitements akin to the previous year – no new headline-grabbing excavations, TV appearances on 'Digging for Britain' or visits by the colourful Alice Roberts. Steady work has however continued on the HS2 route, mostly in Buckinghamshire in consultation with the Bucks County Archaeology Service.[1] Closer to home, the uncovering in 2021 of the major Iron Age / Roman settlement on the HS2 route at Chipping Warden[2] has led to much further analysis of a site occupied over 1,000 years, generating a lecture to BHS by the site manager James West (see lecture report on BHS website). And work by BHS member Stephen Wass has continued on the 17th century water gardens at Hanwell Castle and the development of a milieu for critical scientific thought.[3]

Time Team – now a subscription-only service – revisited the huge Roman villa at Broughton Castle first featured over a year ago.[4] They described an extensive engineered landscape of ponds and terraced water meadows, downslope from an open-aspect 3-winged sophisticated villa with mosaic floors, hypocaust, bath house, colonnades and decorative painted plasterwork. Most coins found were from the 3rd century – indeed our esteemed President Lord Saye and Sele was pictured clutching a silver denarius! In late 2022 Time Team visited the site once more to re-examine the stone sarcophagus first discovered uphill from the villa in 1963 during ploughing when John Taylor's tractor shattered its lid. The bones it contained had a high lead content from the coffin lining, probably contributing to their preservation. They are those of a 30–40-year-old woman and are currently under analysis, after which they will be re-interred.

Lord Saye and Sele with the silver dinarius (Time Team)

In more modern times the area around Banbury has seen a number of Civil War battles. Considerable work has been carried out recently to investigate the site of the Battle of Worcester,[5] where Parliamentary forces under Oliver Cromwell defeated Charles Stuart (later Charles II); this investigation was something of a first as optical stimulated luminescence (OSL) was used to examine a sealed underground layer of alluvium which yielded battlefield artefacts, buried too deep for metal detection. In a more local

1. Buckinghamshire Council: Archaeology Service 2020, *South Midlands Archaeology*, 2021, p 38.
2. J Bryce, *Banbury Guardian* 13/1/22: 'Archaeologists find 'significant' Roman trading settlement.'
3. S Wass, *Seventeenth-Century Water Gardens and the Birth of Modern Scientific Thought in Oxford* (Windgather Press, 2022).
4. R Edwards, *BG* 21/4/22: 'Time Team dig reveals more of huge Roman villa'.
5. D Hurst and R Bradley, "The Battle of Worcester: in search of an English Civil War Battlefield". *British Archaeology*, 188, 2023, p 38-43.

Civil War event in 1643, a group of Royalists under the Earl of Northampton routed Parliamentarians attempting to capture Banbury; the 46 soldiers were buried on the 7th May 1643, in the churchyard of All Saints' Middleton Cheney the following day.[6] Plans are afoot to commemorate the event in 2023.

Around Banbury smaller projects have revealed findings through the ages, from Mesolithic flints at Dewar's Farm, Ardley,[7] Neolithic burial at Eynsham,[8] ring ditches at Finmere Quarry,[9] and Bronze Age enclosures near Upper Heyford.[10] An interesting crescent of Iron Age features has emerged around the north of Banbury: field systems and burials under new housing at Drayton Lodge, NW Banbury[11] a Middle Iron Age settlement at Chalker Way,[12] NE Banbury, leading out to a multiphase, Iron Age settlement around the Overthorpe Road,[13] to the east of Banbury. The latter two were found prior to commercial development.

Romans of course were never far from this area, with Roman buildings at Ardley,[14] and a trackway at Woodstock possibly connecting Roman villas and settlements to Akeman Street.[15] Nine Anglo-Saxon burials and associated artefacts have been found at the corner of Aynho Park.[16] Studies from more recent times include finding post-medieval goods and burials while excavating soakaways at the Church of St Peter and St Paul, King's Sutton,[17] recording of the original 18th century building on the site of the old Brackley Cottage Hospital,[18] and photographic recording of original Cold War aircraft shelters at Upper Heyford.[19]

The Institute for Digital Archaeology is a mysterious organisation.[20] It has a website and a shuttered shop front in Banbury Market Square, and purports to supply 'perfect replicas' of well-known archaeological structures such as the Triumphal Arch at Palmyra, Syria – a technique relevant to the Elgin Marbles controversy? Its latest project is to construct a replica of the Sutton Hoo ship. Watch this space!

On the national news front, Svante Pääbo of the Max Planck Institute in Leipzig has just received a Nobel Prize for his work on evolution and the genomes of extinct humans, including the first Neanderthal DNA in 1997; Bournemouth University has developed links with Kyiv to support Ukrainian archaeologists;[21] and the battle of Stonehenge still rages. The National Trust has thrown its lot in with the proposed Government scheme to build a short tunnel through the site and thereby trash the World Heritage Stonehenge funerary landscape (my view). This landscape was beautifully demonstrated by the masterly British Museum exhibition in 2022.

6. https://www.battlefieldstrust.com/resource-centre/civil-war/battleview.asp?BattleFieldId=99 (accessed 26 February 2023).
7. 'Dewar's Farm, Ardley', *Oxoniensia* (2022) vol 87, p 454.
8. Eynsham, Polar Technology, Oasis Business Park, *SMA* (2021) vol 51, p 83.
9. Finmere, Finmere Quarry, *SMA* (2021) vol 51, p 77.
. Upper Heyford, Former Upper Heyford Airbase, *SMA* (2021) vol 51, p 88.
11. Drayton Lodge, Banbury, *OXO* (2022) vol 87, p 452.
12. Archaeology in Northamptonshire 2020, Fieldwork, *SMA* (2021) vol 51, p 60.
13. Kings Sutton, Church of St Peter and St Paul, *SMA* (2021) vol 51, p 67.
14. Dewar's Farm, Ardley, *OXO* (2022) vol 87, p 454.
15. Woodstock, Blenheim Net Zero Project, *SMA* (2021) vol 51, p 89.
16. Aynho, Plots 1-3 Aynho Park Corner, *SMA* (2021) vol 51 p 53.
17. Kings Sutton, Church of St Peter and St Paul, *SMA* (2021) vol 51, p 67.
18. Brackley : Pebble Lane, *SMA* (2021) vol 51, p 52.
19. Upper Heyford, Former Upper Heyford Airbase, *SMA* (2021) vol 51, p 88.
20. Spoilheap, 'The Mysterious Institute for Digital Archaeology', *British Archaeology* (2023) vol 188, p 66.
21. Brisbane, M. "Supporting Archaeology in Ukraine", *British Archaeology* (2023) vol 188, p 11.

A QUAKER LEGACY TO BANBURY

Nick Allen

I read, with interest, Helen Forde's piece on 'Banbury's Answer to Sixteenth Century Plagues and Infections' in *Cake & Cockhorse* (Vol. 23, 2021, p 27). She writes on how Banbury, in that century, was lacking in the provision of public sanitation, sewage and fresh water; finishing her piece with the French tag *Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose*; this struck a chord with me.

I was commissioned, in 2000, by local Quaker elders of the Banbury Preparative Meeting to write a booklet celebrating the 250th anniversary of the building of the Friends Meeting house off Horsefair in 1751. I was offered and gratefully accepted help from a charming, elderly lady well into her eighties, Muriel Langley. Muriel was a devout Quaker as were both her parents. Her father was the Clerk to the Banbury Preparative Meeting before, during and after the last world war. Muriel was an indefatigable historian; she recorded every snippet of Quaker history that came her way. All on pieces of paper, post-card size, all beautifully written with a fountain pen (as befits a lady of her generation), each piece of paper headed and numbered. The paper that caught my eye was headed *The Cadbury Memorial Hall. 1876.* (number 19). I quote directly from it:

> 'James Cadbury [of the famous chocolate family] and his wife came to Banbury and set up as high-class grocers in the Market Place. He then gave this up, and spent his time on temperance work, promoting the study of the bible and improving conditions in the town. He worked hard to try and compel the Town to provide a proper drainage system and a clean water supply. When this failed, he and his friends formed the Banbury Water Company, funded by private subscription. He also installed baths in the Memorial Hall the building in which he was the prime mover'.[1]

Interestingly, the fact that a Banbury Water Company was formed is mentioned in both the VCH, *Banbury Hundred*, vol. X and William Potts, *History of Banbury* but no credit is given as to who formed or funded it. In a piece by W.P. Johnson 'The Stranger's Guide through Banbury', c.1859, he also mentions the parlous state of sanitation in Banbury but still gives no credit to the Quakers for their solution.[2]

Banbury Temperance Hall

The Quakers also gave the land for a municipal swimming pool in 1939 as well as the splendid large house, Woodgreen, which became the Frank Wise School. They paid for a paddling pool and bandstand in the People's Park, and most importantly gave a large sum of money to help purchase the land on which the Northern Aluminium Company built their factory. This was a sticking-point as the local authorities were not prepared to fork out any more money than they had offered in the first place. The Quaker money clinched the deal. The factory employed thousands of people during the war contributing substantially to the war effort and the destruction of the Luftwaffe.

1. The sign can still be seen painted on the side wall of the building that is now the bus station.
2. *C&CH*, vol 18/1, p18.

DANIEL PIDGEON: FOUNDRYMAN, GLOBETROTTER AND AUTHOR

Barrie Trinder

Daniel Pidgeon (1833-1900) was one of Banbury's leading citizens in the 1860s and early 70s. He was a manager and then a partner in Bernhard Samuelson's Britannia Works, and, having technological understanding that complemented Samuelson's entrepreneurial expertise, was responsible for the prosperity and expansion of the foundry. His home was a prominent residence at 19 Horsefair. Pidgeon was well-known for his interest in geology, and shared his knowledge with Thomas Beesley (1818-96), the chemist whose geological collections are now in the University Museum at Oxford and who was President of the Banbury Natural History Society. Pidgeon taught mechanical engineering to evening classes at the British School in Crouch Street.

Pidgeon's career in Banbury was outlined by Archie Potts in this journal in 1969.[1] He was born at Weymouth, educated at Crewkerne Grammar School, and apprenticed as a mechanical engineer at Barrett, Exall & Andrewes at Reading. He then worked for the engineer Thomas Hawksley (1807-93) and for Cochrane & Co at the Woodside Ironworks, Dudley, where he was employed on the firm's contracts for Westminster Bridge, London and the South Eastern Railway's bridge over the River Thames into Charing Cross station. He developed an interest in agricultural engineering and in 1860 was granted a patent for a machine for preparing animal feeds. It was perhaps this interest that led Bernhard Samuelson to offer him a post at Banbury which he took up in 1862. For three years he was a foreman, as recalled by George Herbert,[2] but he was more probably a manager, and in April 1865 entered into a partnership with Samuelson, in which he held 25 per cent of the shares in the company. By the spring of 1871 the company had more than 550 employees, but the following year relationships in the partnership became strained as Samuelson rejected suggestions for further investment by Pidgeon and concentrated his investments in the Cleveland iron industry. The partnership was dissolved in July 1874 'by mutual consent on the retirement of Mr Pidgeon from the business'. He left Banbury and received a payment of £6,547 10s as his share of the firm's assets in April 1875.

Rusher's Directory in 1863 recorded Mr D Pidgeon, West Street, (almost certainly West Bar which often went by this name). In 1868 he was listed as D Pidgeon, Esq, West Street, and from 1867 to 1874 as D Pidgeon, Esq, Horse Fair. The census of 1871 records him at 19 Horse Fair, with his wife, a son aged 11, and four female domestic servants. His occupation was recorded as Agricultural Engineer and Iron Founder.[3]

After leaving Banbury Pidgeon, who had had to undertake not to manufacture agricultural machinery within 100 miles of Banbury, retired from active business and lived in London and later at Leatherhead. However, he retained his interest in agricultural engineering, taking out several patents, and judging competitions at agricultural shows. He was elected a Fellow of the Geological Society and an Associate of the Institution of Civil Engineers. He wrote several books the most important of which was *An Engineer's Holiday*, a record of a round-the-world tour which began on 17 April 1880, first published in 1883.[4] He also

1. A. Potts, 'Daniel Pidgeon and the Britannia Works', *C&CH*, vol 4 (1969), 58-60; *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers*, vol 142 (1900), 395-96; S. Beesley, *My Life* (privately published, 1892) in B Trinder, ed, *Victorian Banburyshire* (Banbury Historical Society, 2013), 89, 95, 97, 101.
2. G. Herbert, *Shoemaker's Window* (2nd edn, ed B Trinder, Banbury Historical Society/Phillimore, 1971), 57.
3. Rusher's *Banbury Lists and Directories*; 1871 census, The National Archives, RG 10/1464.
4. It has been republished several times in recent years, most recently by Wentworth in 2019; ISBN-13 9780469193307.

wrote *Old World Question and New World Answer*, (1884), and *Venice* (1896).[5] The Daniel Pidgeon Fund established in 1902 provides support for scholars not more than 28-years-old undertaking original geological research.

Pidgeon crossed the Atlantic on the *Algeria* to New York, from where he travelled to Washington DC, then to Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania coalfield and Pittsburgh. Throughout the journey he commented knowledgeably on geology, which he did while passing through the Alleghenies; on industrial questions he observed that the standards of management in ironworks in Pittsburgh were as slovenly as those he had seen in the Black Country, although he also commended American practice in bridge-building 'where labour is economized in a manner of which we know nothing in England'; and he reflected on differing class relationships in England and the United States, quoting a conversation with one of his employees who had worked for a time in America. He regretted that in Pittsburgh he found nothing like the mechanics' institutes with which he was familiar in England. He saw oil workings in Pennsylvania then went north to Niagara, voyaging on the Great Lakes, visiting Chicago and travelling as far as Cheyenne, Wyoming before exploring the Rocky Mountains. He visited Denver and several mining settlements before experiencing the Mormon community at Salt Lake City and crossed the Sierra Nevada to San Francisco before boarding a steamer to Yokohama. He toured extensively in Japan, finally calling in at Hong Kong, Singapore, and India, from where the P&O steamer *Sumatra* returned him to Southampton via the Suez Canal.

Pidgeon had a strong concern for efficient industrial organisation, and for principles that he obviously applied in managing the Britannia Works. His geological knowledge was extensive, and he put a high value on technical education, reflecting his teaching in evening classes in Crouch Street. He lived in Banbury for little more than a decade, but he left his mark on the town. He does not refer directly to Banbury in *An Engineer's Holiday*, but the text adds much to our understanding of his time in the town.

5. Also reprinted - ISBN-13 978-5518526709.

JEREMY SUMNER WYCHERLEY GIBSON

22 October 1934 - 28 October 2022

Jeremy Gibson, who died on 28 October 2022, provided dynamism to the Banbury Historical Society for seventy years. He edited a records series of 37 volumes, produced and for some years edited *Cake & Cockhorse*, was a committee member from 1957 until 2015, and served at various times as secretary and chairman. In 1964 he persuaded borough councillors that the Globe Room panels, removed from the Reindeer Inn in 1912 (long assumed to be in the United States but found by the Society to be on sale in London), should be returned to Banbury.

Jeremy was one of the founders of the Society. A lecture series 'New Light on Old Banbury' was delivered in the early autumn of 1957 by the late ERC (Ted) Brinkworth, then resident tutor for south Warwickshire for the University of Birmingham Department of Extra-Mural Studies. From that series sprang a meeting in November in the town's reference library called by Ted Brinkworth, Valentine Bromley, a journalist and amateur archaeologist, and Jeremy, who was working for his family's firm, Henry Stone & Son, printers. At 7.20 pm only about half a dozen individuals had arrived and the trio looked despondent, but by 7.30 there was an audience of respectable size. Jeremy assumed the role of advocate for an historical society, not merely to organise programmes of monthly lectures but also through publications to enhance popular understanding of local history. The Society was formally constituted at subsequent meetings, members began to transcribe parish registers at the Vicarage, and during 1958 Ted Brinkworth's 40-page history *Old Banbury* was published. The first issue of the Society's journal *Cake & Cockhorse* appeared in September 1959 in time to advertise the second programme of winter lectures, and in 1960 the first volume of Banbury's parish registers was published. This remarkable 'take-off' owed much to Jeremy's energy and his organising ability, but it also resulted from his imagination. There were few town-based local historical societies before 1960. Long-established county-based antiquarian bodies tended to move ponderously, and it required imagination to foresee what a new kind of society could achieve.

Jeremy was the son of Frank Gibson, a long-serving army officer, and Violet (née Stone) Gibson whose family had been active in the Banbury's Quaker meeting from the 17th century. On his father's side he was descended from the Rt Rev Charles Sumner (1790-1874), Bishop of Winchester between 1827 and 1869. He was born in Oxford and had pleasant memories as a small child of visits to his mother's friends at Linden House by Banbury Cross. He owed his interest in history in part to an inspirational school master who introduced him to heraldry. He was educated at the Dragon School, Oxford and Stowe after which, like most fit young men of his generation, he was called up for National Service, and spent two years as a clerk at Woolwich barracks. He was grateful to the army for teaching him to type proficiently and used his time in London to gain access to the British Library, Somerset House and the resources of the Society of Genealogists. He spent two further years in London studying at the School of Printing and Graphic Arts (now the London College of Communication) after which he moved to Banbury to work for Henry Stone & Son (Printers) while living with his mother at Bloxham, and, apart from the Historical Society, put much energy into Scottish dancing and mountaineering. In the early 1960s he left the family company and began a career in publishing at Pergamon Press in Oxford, then with Longmans at Harlow, and with Phillimore & Co at Chichester. After his mother died in 1971 [*C&CH* vol 5 (1971), p 18] he returned to Oxfordshire, settling in 1979 at Church Hanborough, although maintaining close links with Banbury.

In subsequent years much of his energy was expended in publishing short guides for family historians, on militia lists, quarter sessions records, the location of wills, coroners' records, protestation returns and even on how to find record offices. At a national level he probably did more than any other individual to stimulate interest in family history. He was a fellow of both the Society of Antiquaries and the Society of Genealogists and was given a lifetime achievement award by the British Association for Local History in 2008.

In 2015, as old age took its toll, he moved to sheltered accommodation at Romsey, Hampshire, near to members of his family, and donated most of his extensive library to the Historical Society. He sometimes travelled to Banbury to hear lectures, and his last contribution to the town's history was the publication in 2019 of *Banbury's People in the Eighteenth Century*, a collection of sources for which future generations of historians will have cause to be grateful.

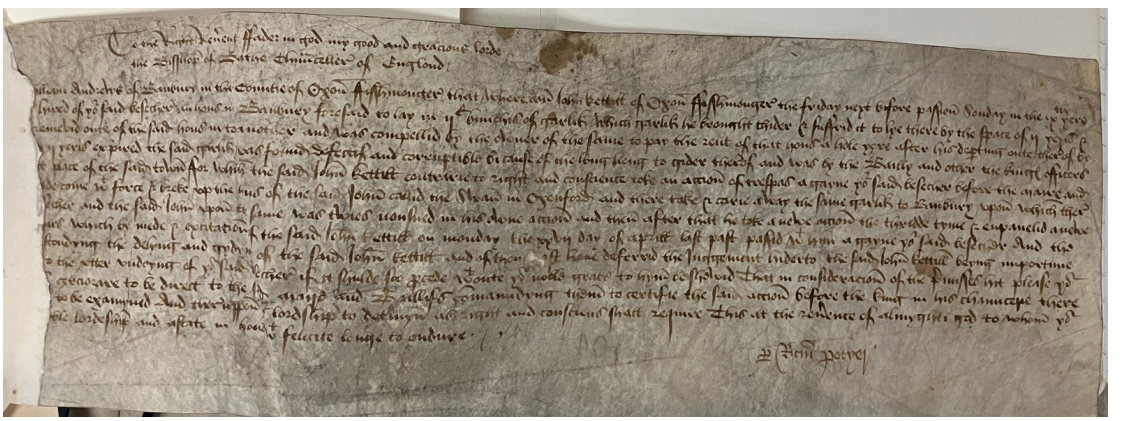
The Banbury Historical Society, along with several family history organisations was represented at Jeremy's funeral at Romsey on 23 November 2022. His family intend to place his ashes in a family grave in the churchyard at of SS Peter & Paul, Church Hanborough. His remaining local history books have been added to the Society's library at Banbury.

Barrie Trinder.

FISHMONGERS FIGHT OVER GARLIC c.1470

Paul Brand and Helen Forde

A Chancery document (C 1/46/104) in The National Archives reveals not only trade and rivalry between Banbury and Oxford fishmongers in the 15th century but also the presence of large amounts of garlic. Even if the quantity was not as large as alleged, 200 bunches, it is still quite striking. At the time it was largely a food for the working classes but it was also alleged to have therapeutic properties, being recommended for use against constipation, toothache, dropsy, animal bites and the plague. William Andrews, a fishmonger of Banbury was appealing the verdict against him in an action of trespass brought by John Kettil, a fishmonger in Oxford relating to the alleged theft of the garlic. The date of the document could be either between 1433-1443, or more likely between 1467-1472, as at both dates Bishops of Bath were also Chancellors; if the reference to the ninth year is to the regnal year of Edward IV, the date of the initial agreement would be 1470 and the date of the bill 2-3 years later. The document is damaged on the left-hand side and in the centre but the implications are fairly clear.



Transcription

To the right Reverent Father in God my Goode and gracious lorde the Bishop of Bathe Chancellor of England ... William Andrews of Banbury in the County of Oxon Fishmonger that where [as] John Kettill of Oxon Fishmonger the friday next before passion Sonday in the ixth yere ... [hired] of your said besecher [a] hous in Banbury foresaid to lay in ii hundred bunchis of garlik which garlik he brought thider and sufferd it to lye thereby the space of ii yeris and ...remevid oute of the said hous in to another and was compelled by the owner of the same to pay the rent of that hous a hole yere after his departing oute thereof by ... ii yeris expired the said garlik was found defectif and corruptible because of the long leng[th] to gider thereof and was by the Bailly and the other the kings officers ... place of the said town For which the said John Kettill contrarie to right and conscience toke an action of trespass agayne your said besechere before the maire and ... [de] come with force and breke up the hous of the said John called the Swan in Oxenford and there take and carie away the same garlik to Banbury upon which ther ... [besecher] and the said John upon the same was [twice] nonsued in his owne action and then

> after that he toke a newe action the thirdde tyme and empanelid a newe ... which by [mede] and excitation of the said John Kettill on monday the xxvii day of aprill last past [passid] with him agayne your said beseecher and the ... [ab] scondyng the delying and [gydyn] of the said John Kettill and of ther [...] oft have deferred the Juggement hiderto the said John Kettill beyng importune ... to the utter undoying of the said [be]sechere if it shulde soo procede without your noble grace to hym be showed that in consideracion of the premisses hit please your ... cerciorare to be direct to the maire and bailiffs commaundying them to certifie the said action before the king in his chauncerie there ... to be examined and thereupon [your] lordship to determyn as right and consciens shall require This at the [rememberence] of almighty god to whom your ... [honor]able lordship and [astate] in hon[] with felicite longe to endure
>
> Per Ricardum Potyer

Interpretation by Professor Paul Brand, a legal historian, suggested the following explanation:

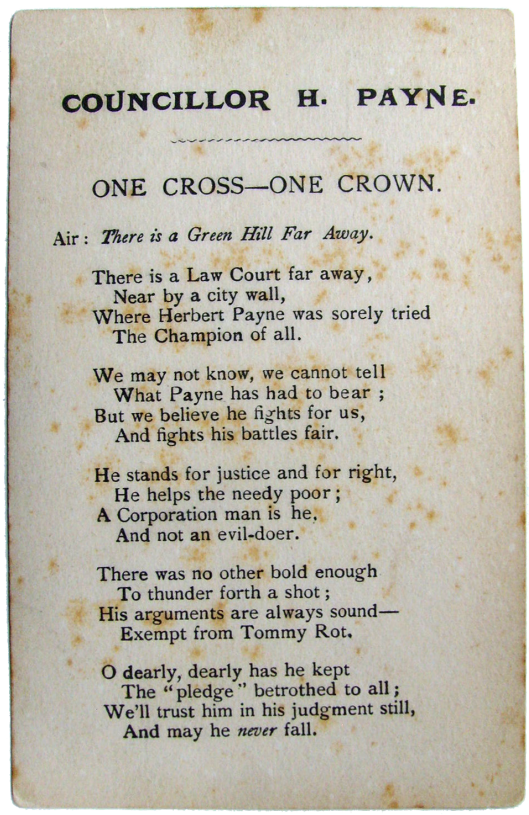
> My reconstruction of what happened would be that the complainant, Andrews', story was that he was the lessee of a house in Banbury and Kettill hired the house (as sub-lessee) shortly before Passion Sunday in 9 Edward IV to store 200 bunches of garlic which were brought there (by Andrews) and left for two years; they were then moved into another house and he was compelled to pay rent for a year after he had vacated it and the garlic had rotted, which had caused him some kind of difficulty with the bailiffs of Banbury (which may have led to the destruction of the garlic). Since Kettill had lost his garlic he now took action to try to recover its value from Andrews and he did so by bringing an action of trespass against Andrews in the city court of Oxford in which he alleged that Andrews had broken into The Swan in Oxford, which belonged to Kettill, and took and carried off the garlic to Banbury (representing Andrews' initial carriage of the garlic from Oxford to Banbury as done without the consent and against the wishes of Kettill). Kettill was twice non-suited in his action but on a third occasion on Monday 27 April last with the aid of a bribed jury obtained a verdict against Andrews in the case. However, no judgment had yet been given on that verdict (for reasons not quite explained) and this gave Andrews a chance to submit this petition for a *certiorari*[1] to be issued by Chancery for the mayor and bailiffs to send a record of the case to Chancery. This would in effect allow Chancery to review the case. There was no common law process for reviewing cases in most town and city courts but Chancery provided a mechanism for doing so. Andrews may have hoped that the Chancellor would use his power to question the two parties and perhaps other witnesses on oath to settle the question of whether the garlic had been taken to Banbury by Kettill's wishes or against his will. He may also have hoped at the very least to delay the final judgment and its execution until Chancery had dealt with the case.

1. *Certiorari* is a court process to seek judicial review of a decision of a lower court.

WORLD WAR I POSTCARD AND POEM

Jane and Steve Kilsby

Herbert Payne (1882-1922) was one of the earliest leaders of the Labour movement in Banbury and was a town councillor for ten years and a passionate advocate for improvement in housing standards. He was originally employed by J Mawle and Sons, ironmongers but subsequently built up his own cutlery and electro-plating business from Bridge Street. According to his obituary in the *Banbury Guardian* 'he had remarkable gifts as a speaker in the open air, possessing a voice full of resonance and power'.[1] He was a conscientious objector during WW I, due to his membership of the Congregational Church, a point he emphasised strongly at his Appeal tribunal in Oxford.[2] He agreed to undertake farm labouring work near Banbury but was subsequently sent to gaol as that was cancelled due to bad weather.



COUNCILLOR H. PAYNE.

ONE CROSS—ONE CROWN.

Air: *There is a Green Hill Far Away.*

There is a Law Court far away,
Near by a city wall,
Where Herbert Payne was sorely tried
The Champion of all.

We may not know, we cannot tell
What Payne has had to bear;
But we believe he fights for us,
And fights his battles fair.

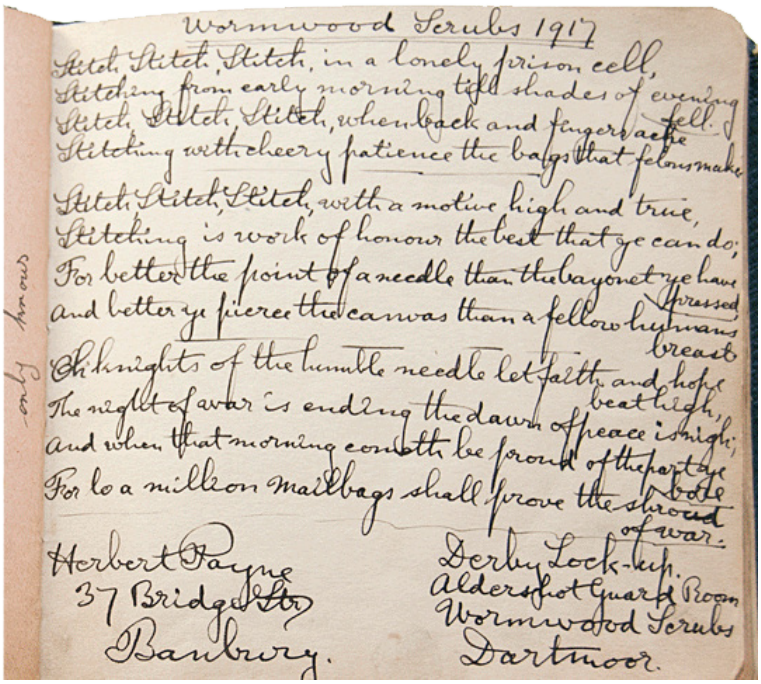
He stands for justice and for right,
He helps the needy poor;
A Corporation man is he,
And not an evil-doer.

There was no other bold enough
To thunder forth a shot;
His arguments are always sound—
Exempt from Tommy Rot.

O dearly, dearly has he kept
The "pledge" betrothed to all;
We'll trust him in his judgment still,
And may he *never* fall.

The postcard, with the anonymous poem, probably relates to his attempts to get working class representation on county tribunals set up to deal with appeals for exemption from military service, like his own. The following poem written by him,[3] makes it clear where he spent his time in gaol; first in the Derby Lock-up, followed by the Aldershot Guard Room, Wormwood Scrubs and ultimately Dartmoor prison which was cleared of other prisoners in 1917 to accommodate Conscientious Objectors.

1. *BG*, 30 March 1922.
2. *BG*, 23 November 1916.
3. https://www.menwhosaidno.org/men/men_files/p/payne_herbert.html (accessed 26 February 2023).


Wormwood Scrubs 1917
Stitch Stitch, Stitch, in a lonely prison cell,
Stitching from early morning till shades of evening fell.
Stitch Stitch Stitch, when back and fingers ache
Stitching with cheery patience the bags that felons make

Stitch Stitch, Stitch, with a motive high and true,
Stitching is work of honour the best that ye can do;
For better the point of a needle than the bayonet ye have pressed
And better ye pierce the canvas than a fellow humans breast

Oh knights of the humble needle let faith and hope beat high,
The night of war is ending the dawn of peace is nigh;
And when that morning cometh be proud of the part ye bore
For lo a million mailbags shall prove the shroud of war.

Herbert Payne
37 Bridge Str
Banbury.

Derby Lock-up
Aldershot Guard Room
Wormwood Scrubs
Dartmoor.

Wormwood Scrubs 1917

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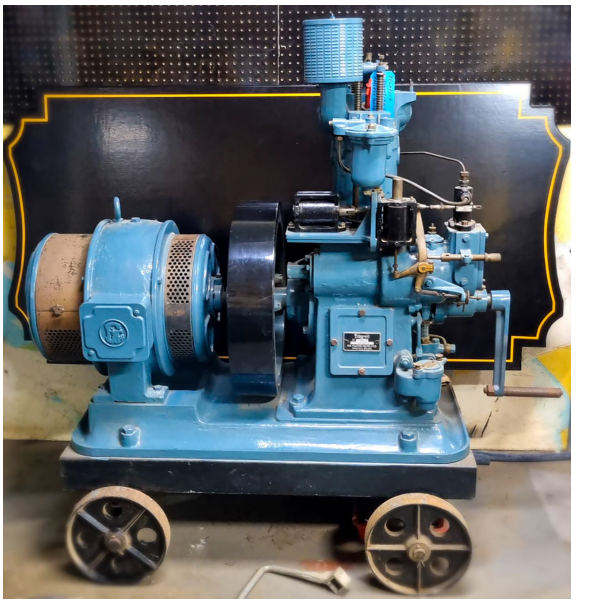
Wormwood Scrubs
Dartmoor

THE PELAPONE

The 'Pelapone' was the Tooley's generating set, dating from around the late 1920s. It has sat in the back room of Tooley's boatyard as part of the history display for the last 20 years, and always gets lots of attention from visitors to the boatyard. Its name is said to be an acronym, which stood for **P**rudence **E**lectric **L**ight **A**nd **P**ower **O**ur **N**ew **E**ngine.



The Pelapone at Tooley's Boatyard

Pete Downer worked at the boatyard in the 1980s and worked with Herbert Tooley, Bert. He remembers that the engine came with a 'ticket that said that it was supplied to Arlescote House near Warmington'. It would have been used for providing power to the house before it had mains electricity. At some stage of its life, presumably when mains power was installed, it became redundant and was disposed of. It was probably then sold for scrap and ended up with Tom Smith, who at that time had a warehouse at the back of Tooley's boatyard.

Pete thinks that 'The Tooleys, in their usual method of scouting anything that was scrapped, acquired it and set it up for power for the yard'. One of the stories which interests visitors is that the Tooleys did not have any electrical lighting at home so, using the Pelapone, they ran a cable from the yard to their house in 11 Factory Street. When mains power was subsequently installed, they reversed the process and used the same cable to provide electricity back to the yard.

Once mains power was installed at the boatyard, the Pelapone was redundant again. The Tooleys stopped using it, and it was left outside in the yard, fortunately covered up. However, at some stage Bert wanted an electric motor to drive one of the lathes in the workshop. The dynamo was taken off and, and with some jiggling about of the wires he cut into it, rewired it, and turned it into a motor which drove the lathes for many years.

But that was not the end of the story: Pete recalls that when he was working at Tooley's 'Bert wanted to move it for some reason, and he swore about it being in the way and he said you can have it! Me being me, said thank you very much, ultimately restored the engine'. Bert was impressed and gave Pete the dynamo for restoration and it was reunited with the engine. Subsequently it was moved up to Claydon, later returning to Tooley's in the early 2000s, and it has been on show, and intriguing visitors, ever since.

The Tooleys and their make-do-and-mend policy, probably due to a need to save money, were ahead of their time in regard of today's standards of our throwaway society.

Matthew Armitage

BOOK REVIEWS

A *Sense of Place; South Northamptonshire District 1974-2021* by Margaret Hawkins (South Northamptonshire Council, 2021) ISBN 978-1-5272-8914-7. Obtainable from The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD

Probably most of us associate official histories with weighty tomes prepared by distinguished national historians after crises and avidly dissected and disputed by national politicians and commentators. In contrast, Margaret Hawkins' book 'A Sense of Place' is a slim, well-prepared and attractive volume describing the whole life cycle of a local authority South Northamptonshire from its creation in 1974 to its dissolution or rather merger with two other authorities to form a new West Northamptonshire Council just as the COVID pandemic was developing. Those of us who live in the area covered by Banbury Historical Society will appreciate the nuances of living in the borderlands between Northants and Oxfordshire – I write this from my office desk looking south 400m into Oxfordshire, and in the knowledge that Oxford lies actually closer than my own county town of Northampton – and I have, as many of us do, an OX not an NN postcode. Yet other parts of South Northants are very close to the county town itself, or protrude into adjacent counties like Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire, or Warwickshire in the opposite direction. Fitting the fabric of daily life into this confused administrative situation is perhaps one thing for the layman, whose loyalties and interests may centre round work or family or indeed digital contacts, but they are very taxing for those who have to represent the interests of residents and devise support structures to cater for their day-to-day needs from the clearance of dustbins to the coherence of planning or environmental policies. The book says rather plaintively 'It is fair to say that few people beyond the county boundary have much idea of where South Northamptonshire is, or what it has to offer'.

Very properly, as an official history, the book opens with a major section on the history of the Council itself, with much mention of the founders, 'movers and shakers' and their successors, and suggests that over the years they ran what was for all its occasional shortcomings an efficient and positive organisation, thrifty in financial management, but effective in promoting selective development, and ensuring that this was usually carried out to a good standard. I was particularly pleased that the author's accolade fell not only on elected members of all political shades, but extended to dedicated officials and service providers – for example describing the unsung heroes of waste and recycling.

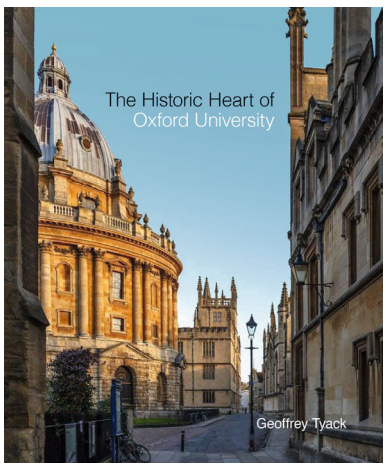
It is always difficult to transition such a history into wider local matters, particularly when there is a need to be selective and to keep the main focus. The book moves on through the provision of services like leisure centres and museums to the wider economy, including jewels in the crown like Silverstone and its associated business park, Sulgrave Manor with its historic connection to the USA, the hospitality sector, and the originally dominant and still important agricultural activity throughout the area. The history of the area's function as a major national traffic link, from Watling Street through M40 to the controversial HS2 is well set out, as is the general conclusion that 'in many ways South Northamptonshire is very attractive to employers'.

The difficulty of demonstrating a 'sense of place' without reproducing a topographical catalogue on the lines of the VCH is met by another long section described as 'Growing Pains', which examines the main sites and opportunities for economic development. A final section describes the initiation of transition to the new West Northamptonshire Council as the next phase of local government, with some clear but not unfair judgments on how this merger became a virtual necessity.

It is easy to quibble, and I might have liked to see more passing references to local social history and to the voluntary sector for example, but the overall result is a terse and useful book. The underlying context is the inherent problems of managing an area which is only loosely attached (even to itself); is too small to go it alone; and yet resents being guided by bigger and more influential players. The history of how its civic leaders have coped with this – including the many positive references to partnership working – and their record of steering without spoiling the district is fascinating, and well-presented here. No doubt the balancing act is destined to continue.

Tim Boswell

The Historic Heart of Oxford University by Geoffrey Tyack (Bodleian, 2021) p 192, illus. £34 ISBN 978-1-85124-528-4



Geoffrey Tyack has produced a lavishly illustrated volume documenting and explaining the buildings at the heart of Oxford University, which will be welcomed both by those who think they know Oxford well, and those who are less familiar with it. The buildings in question are largely confined to the centre of the historic university though there are frequent references to later buildings, such as the 1882 Examination Schools, which formed, and still form a significant role in university life. Many of the buildings have undergone a change of use over the centuries, adapted from their original purpose (the Logic school became first the display area for the Arundel marbles and then the Bodleian shop); these are well documented, demonstrating the progression of the university over the centuries. Detailed descriptions of the architecture are given for the main historic buildings as well as some detail about the later ones, usually additional libraries or laboratories as the scope of the university expanded in the 19th and 20th centuries

The central role of St Mary's church in the earliest life of the university and the transfer of that role to new, purpose-built accommodation to the north is well described, illuminating the rather different way in which the fledgling university was managed and how it regularly outgrew its needs. Many of the early buildings (e.g. the Divinity School and Proscholium) – and some of the later ones (Old Ashmolean) – were designed and built by master craftsmen but, after the Civil War, the need for a ceremonial building where degrees were conferred prompted a new direction and the appointment of an architect. Oxford university benefitted greatly from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century architects – Sir Christopher Wren (the Sheldonian), Nicholas Hawksmoor (Clarendon Building), George Clarke (architectural adviser) and James Gibbs (Radcliffe Camera). Many of the buildings were designed for multiple use, such as the Sheldonian which had the necessary space for degree ceremonies but also a printing press in the basement and an interior which could host a range of entertainments. Seventeenth century Oxford was brimming with interest in the physical sciences and the original Ashmolean Museum filed in a gap to the west of the Sheldonian to provide a centre for research, to act as chemistry theatre and to house the collections of Elias Ashmole.

Despite the provision of facilities for printing in the Sheldonian, Nicholas Hawksmoor

was appointed in the early eighteenth century to design a new building to house both the Bible Press (a lucrative contract) and the Learned Press, developed in the preceding century and a substantial contributor to the cost of the building, due to the sales of the popular Clarendon's *History* and the annual Almanack. However, the move can hardly have been called a success as the number of books printed declined steeply until the production of academic texts became much bigger business in the nineteenth century. But as Tyack remarks, the building 'still serves as a monumentally impressive approach to the heart of the university'.

The idea of buildings to fill the space between St Mary's church and the Bodleian library excited many designs and sketches, particularly by Nicholas Hawksmoor, and it was, ultimately his design for the extension of the Bodleian, which was built with money bequeathed by John Radcliffe who specified the exact site. The design was inspired by the commemorative buildings in and around Rome, and although Hawksmoor had died by the time the foundation stone was laid in 1737, his successor, James Gibbs, retained the idea of a rotunda. Like the Clarendon building, the Radcliffe Library (as it was then called), was not a great success as its purpose was uncertain without any formal link to the Bodleian but after 1860 it was taken over by the latter and converted into extra reading spaces and book storage.

Despite several of the specialist libraries moving to other parts of Oxford at the end of the nineteenth and during the twentieth century the Bodleian was running out of space and by 1931 the decision had been taken to build the New Bodleian on the north side of Broad Street; in turn this was overtaken by the 2015 remodelling – Tyack terms it 'drastic' – of the building and renaming it the Weston Library in honour of the major donor – just like many of the other buildings described.

This is a well-researched and captivating book, illustrated with sumptuous photographs of the buildings described as well as contemporary drawings and prints. Clearly there are some important buildings which have been missed out, (such as the former Rhodes House Library), and other modern buildings, such as those in the newly named Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, might have merited space. But the choice is almost too large and Geoffrey Tyack has succeeded in weaving the history of the many of the individual buildings into a tapestry of Oxford history.

Helen Forde

17th Century Water Gardens and the Birth of Modern Scientific Thought in Oxford: The Case of Hanwell Castle by Stephen Wass, Windgather Press, (Oxbow Books, 2022), 200 pp, illus. ISBN 978-1-91442-716-9

This excellent, well-structured and illustrated book weaves together the results of a decade's archaeological investigation and historical research into the Cope family of Hanwell Castle, north Oxfordshire and transformation in thinking at Oxford University. The results open a veritable cabinet of 17th century curiosities, a water garden of surprises, all linked to eminent and likeminded companions and the role of gardens in the development of scientific thinking. It is a story of the creation of a water garden, dedicated to the wonders of technology, linked to progressive learning, advance of scientific knowledge and technical applications in and around Oxford during the late 17th century. This fascinating tapestry, set against an atmosphere of secrecy and distrust engendered by the English

Civil Wars (1642-1651) and Commonwealth (1649-1660), weaves together the activities of Sir Anthony Cope (1632-75), who studied at Oriel College, Oxford.

Robert Plot (1640-96) in *The Natural History of Oxfordshire* wrote 'that great virtuoso' Sir Anthony Cope of Hanwell ... the most eminent Artist and Naturalist while he lived, if not of England, most certainly of this county, whose house I thought seemed to be the real 'New Atlantis', a reference to Sir Francis Bacon's *The New Atlantis*, 1626 which was the model for a Utopian natural philosophy/science focused on a community of like-minded people with an interest in experimental method and supportive environment to carry out investigations.

The amazing programme of archaeological excavation in search of Hanwell's 'lost' water gardens is chronicled in detail, uncovering unusual garden features. Plot was treated to a display of the garden waterworks at Hanwell, 'in a House of Diversion' built on a small island on one of the fish-ponds, eastwards of [Cope's] house, where a ball is tost by a column of water and artificial showers descend at pleasure; within which they can yet place a candle, that though one would think it must needs be overwhelmed with water, it shall not be extinguished'. Excavation has uncovered Cope's 17th century gardens, composed of several ponds sitting in a valley to the north and east of the castle. However, due to the terrain defined by the valley, Hanwell's gardens lacked the more elaborate and complex compositions at some other properties for example, Sir Francis Bacon's Gorhambury (Herts), or at Sir Walter Cope's London house, later known as Holland Park. The largest pond with a small manmade island had a huge dam with a cascade dropping into a lower pond with a water parterre and manmade octagonal island on which was sited the 'House of Diversion'. On the southern side of the valley, below the castle, terraced walling and stairs were reminiscent of Italian gardens.

Archaeological evidence shows the 'House Diversion' to have been a tall, octagonal timber framed tower, with a rendered exterior and pyramidical tiled roof, set centrally on the island surrounded by perimeter wall and capped with well-finished coping stones, garnished by terracotta pots. The floor was probably stone slabbed on which sat a stone bowl fountain. Evidence for pipe work and an umbrella shaped spray supports Plot's 'artificial showers' of water. Examples of glasses, wine bottles, clay pipes and a tin-glazed earthenware plate suggest a banqueting house for eating, drinking, and smoking. Most significantly a unique and unparalleled, in post-medieval archaeology, collection of 60-70 terracotta garden urns/pots were excavated of four main forms, one inscribed with the date 1664. The collection was destroyed in a single episode of vandalism shortly after Sir Anthony's death in 1675, pushed, or thrown off the perimeter wall, but deeply buried in silt and mud.

Consequent family disputes led to mismanagement and his science-based garden playground fell into disuse and was demolished. Tragically Sir Anthony's widow, Mary Cope, was confined to the castle for nearly 40 years as a lunatic and the family moved to Bramshill in Hampshire. In the 20th century the property came into the hands of the Berkeley family and today it is the home of Hanwell Community Observatory; the science goes on.

Graham Winton

Farmers, Farriers and Flowers. Reports from the Eydon Historical Research Group (Eydon Historical Research Group, 2022), vol 12. ISBN 978 0 9957824 2 6. Available from 30a High Street, Eydon, Northants NN113PP, or via the website, for £6 + p&p

This engaging book is a fine example of the strength of some of our local history research groups and reveals something of the historical riches that most villages in the region can boast of. The 87 pages of this paperback volume include, as the title suggests, a diverse range of topics. David Kench combines historic mapping with old photographs to disentangle the tale of a lost lych gate . Kench also contributes a numbers based account of the fortunes of agricultural labourers in the village from 1851 to 1941. Lyn Evans takes a topographical approach to throw light on a sonnet penned on the gardens at Eydon Hall in the mid-nineteenth century, a fascinating bit of analysis, and also contributes thoughts on a late eighteenth-century 'cartwheel' half-penny. Military history is celebrated in Caroline Bedford's account of George Valentine Harding, a farrier during the First World War, based on his own writings and follows this up with a brief history of the Mens' Club at Eydon, founded in 1878. The volume could perhaps have been made even more useful with greater consistency regarding endnotes and referencing but, all in all, a fascinating pot-pourri of village history with much of interest and importance to local studies.

Stephen Wass

QUIZ

A £25 book token will be offered to the first correct entry opened on 1 June 2023. Solutions should be sent to the Assistant Editor davidgeorge.hughes@outlook.com

1	What is the name of one of Banbury's oldest public houses in Parsons Street?
2	When was the current Banbury Cross erected?
3	Vice-Admiral Lancelot Holland, born in Middleton Cheney, died in 1941 on board which famous ship?
4	Who launched the *Banbury Guardian* on 5th April 1838?
5	Who, born in Marston St Lawrence in 1722, became an acknowledged poet of her age?
6	What was the official name given to Banbury's Munitions factory on the Overthorpe Road in WWI?
7	Who was the first mayor of Banbury in 1607?
8	Who left his grandson an Iron Crow (today a crow bar), used in the Gunpowder Plot at the House of Lords, in his will of 1631?
9	Which highwayman was arrested for robbery in Cropredy and executed in Banbury in 1731?
10	Who was Banbury's M.P. at the opening of the Cavalier Parliament on 8th May 1661?
11	Which celebrated Banbury solicitor, born in 1769, was the son of a flax dresser listed in the 1762 Militia Listing for Middleton Cheney and later coal merchant of Banbury?
12	Who funded the building of the Horton General Hospital in the Oxford Road in 1869?
13	Who was murdered by Parr, an Irish shag weaver, who was executed and then gibbeted in Banbury in March 1747?
14	When was Banbury Castle built and by whom?
15	What was the Banbury School famous for in the 16th century?
16	What appeared in Banbury in 1631 and was thought later, by some to be a portent for the troubles of the Civil War?
17	What did James II do in Banbury in 1687?
18	What society used Banbury as the starting point for their 100-mile race back home in 1879?
19	Whose factory, near Banbury was destroyed by fire in 1913?
20	When did the Banbury Cattle market close?
21	William Castle died in Banbury in 1841. By what name was he better known?
22	Who built the first public swimming baths opened in Banbury in 1855?
23	Who opened Christ Church in south Banbury in 1853 and was known as 'Soapy Sam'?
24	Who was the Chartist candidate for Banbury in the election of 1841?
25	Who invented the Banbury Turnip Cutter?

INDEX

Personal Names

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