# CAKE & COCKHORSE

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Annual Edition 2024 | Volume 26 | ISSN 0008-0535

**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.

Typeset by Meriel Lewis | Printed by Banbury Litho banburylitho.co.uk

# CONTENTS

# CONTRIBUTORS


| | |
|---|---|
| **Nick Allen** is a local historian who has published many articles and books about Adderbury and Banbury | nick@adderbury.plus.com |
| **Matthew Armitage** is the Director of Tooley's Boatyard | info@tooleysboatyard.co.uk |
| **Shawn Doyle** is the President of Half-Shire Historical Society | spdinpul@hotmail.com |
| **Tim Guile** is a teacher and author with a particular interest in Catholic recusancy | timguile@yahoo.co.uk |
| **Brian Goodey** is Emeritus Professor of Urban Landscape Design at Oxford Brookes University | brian.goodey@btinternet.com |
| **Deborah Hayter** is a local historian with a particular interest in landscape history | hayterdeborahg@gmail.com |
| **George Hughes** is a retired Chartered Engineer and a keen amateur historian | davidgeorge.hughes@outlook.com |
| **NOSA** North Oxfordshire Socialist Alliance is a group of people who care about equality and fairness | banburysocialists@gmail.com |
| **Barrie Trinder** has written extensively on industrial, social and urban history | barrie@trinderhistory.co.uk |
| **Stephen Wass** works as a freelance commercial archaeologist specialising in historic gardens | old.mettle@btinternet.com |
| **Pamela Wilson** is a member of the Council for British Archaeology | pamslwilson@gmail.com |




**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 |

# EDITORIAL

Members will be aware of the sad news of the death of Lord Saye, at the age of 103; he will be much missed and a short appreciation of him as President of the Society is included in this issue.

Emigration to the United States of America from Oxfordshire remains a topic of fascination, and none more so than when those who made the journey wrote back extolling their new circumstances or reminiscing about their early lives and fortune. Successfully matching the records of those who left with those who arrived is difficult but Barrie Trinder and Shawn Doyle have demonstrated the value of persistence, ably assisted by members of the Half-Shire Historical Society in Richland, Oswego County, NY. More than that, a piece of Aynho history, the lace pillow and bobbins taken over by Ann Terry in 1832, are now in the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC and are part of the American story.

Persistence of a different sort has resulted in the identification of all the watermills on the Sor Brook, even where the vestiges of the buildings are almost hidden. Nick Allen has been working on the trail for several years and has brought together a comprehensive body of evidence using maps and old photos as well as documentation. It is important that these sites are noted before all signs of some of the most ruinous mills disappear into the undergrowth. Much the same message is being broadcast in the review of *Water and Steam Mills of Northamptonshire* by Hugh Howes.

Some of the other items in this issue deal, in different ways, with questions of law and order. The 1549 Oxfordshire uprising and the disastrous consequences for locals who were involved demonstrate the cruelty meted out to rebels at that period; over 200 years later the report on the celebrations over the acquittal of Admiral Keppel noted the fact that there had been no trouble in the town; did they expect it? Demonstrations of different sorts are illustrated on the North Oxfordshire Socialist Banner, emphasising the radical nature of Banburyshire which persisted through time.

Brian Goodey has chosen to analyse the changing nature of Parson's Street in Banbury over the past 73 years, a study which is very pertinent to the work currently being done on shaping the future of Banbury over the next 25 years; it is important that the historical society contributes to this debate. Similarly, Matthew Armitage has been tracing the history of Tooley's boatyard and its people emphasising the importance of the canal to the surrounding communities and thus reinforcing the very noticeable enthusiasm for the canal evinced in the contributions to the 'Banbury 2050' consultation.

As always it is a pleasure to receive the contributions of so many historians of different stripes – the authors have given us highlights of local history and their enquiring minds suggest new and exciting routes for further research. Not least the enigma relating to George Dundass – and no doubt many other saddlers and harness makers in the area. Pamela Wilson and Stephen Wass have brought us up to date with the archaeological discoveries in the area and Deborah Hayter has unearthed a reference to an old custom that few of us were probably aware of. As usual Meriel Lewis has worked her magic in designing an issue with the full panoply of illustrations and indexes and to her and all the others noted I am most grateful, including George Hughes who picks up many a mistake or typo when proof reading the articles.

*Helen Forde (Editor)*

# LORD SAYE AND SELE, PRESIDENT OF BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1958-2024

*Lord Saye and Sele at the 60th BHS AGM in 2018 (Jeremy Gibson)*

Lord Saye had been the genial President of the Banbury Historical Society since 1958, and was renowned for his ability to despatch the business of the annual general meeting in five minutes or so. He timed himself, commenting on his success – or not! His interest in the historical origins of Banbury, with which the family has been connected for centuries, and his pride in the restoration of Broughton Castle was palpable (especially when showing off the newly slated roof); the flow of stories about how the castle had been used for filming was unstoppable. His passion for history remained undimmed, as witnessed by the photo of him holding up a Roman denarius from the excavations at Broughton in the previous issue of *Cake & Cockhorse*.

His generosity in lending the castle to BHS, the museum and other organisations for functions was well known; he also enjoyed meeting people who were themselves enjoying the grounds and one BHS member, firmly told to call him Nat, remembered a conversation with him covering a wide range of subjects –in the space of 15 minutes – including the costs of historic building maintenance, waterfowl, sheep and trees; all dear to his heart. Even after he had 'retired' from running the castle he still walked round to see that all the room stewards were all right, not omitting the Council Chamber at the very top. Another BHS member recalled the agony of deciding how to address a lord, followed by a return correspondence card signed Nat and a subsequent visit to discuss the take-over of his home for a weekend by a folk festival with a man she had originally identified as the gardener; it was, of course, Nat.

As one member aptly put it 'modest, friendly, kind, courteous, curious, witty, knowledgeable – never forgotten.'

*Helen Forde*

# AYNHO TO RICHLAND: A SAGA OF THREE EMIGRANT FAMILIES

*Shawn Doyle and Barrie Trinder*[1]

On 22 September 1833 John George (1800-45) dictated a letter to his parents in Aynho, Northamptonshire, extolling the benefits of life at Richland in Oswego County, NY, where he had settled a year previously. In January 1834 the letter was published by the Revd. Francis Litchfield (1792-1876), incumbent of Farthinghoe and editor of the *Northampton Herald*. It was reproduced in 1971 in *Cake & Cockhorse*, and in 1984 in Nicholas Cooper's *Aynho: A Northamptonshire Village*.[2] By a series of chances[3] it became evident that it was a key to understanding the migration to the United States of three families from Aynho, whose history had been investigated by the Half-Shire Historical Society at Richland.[4]

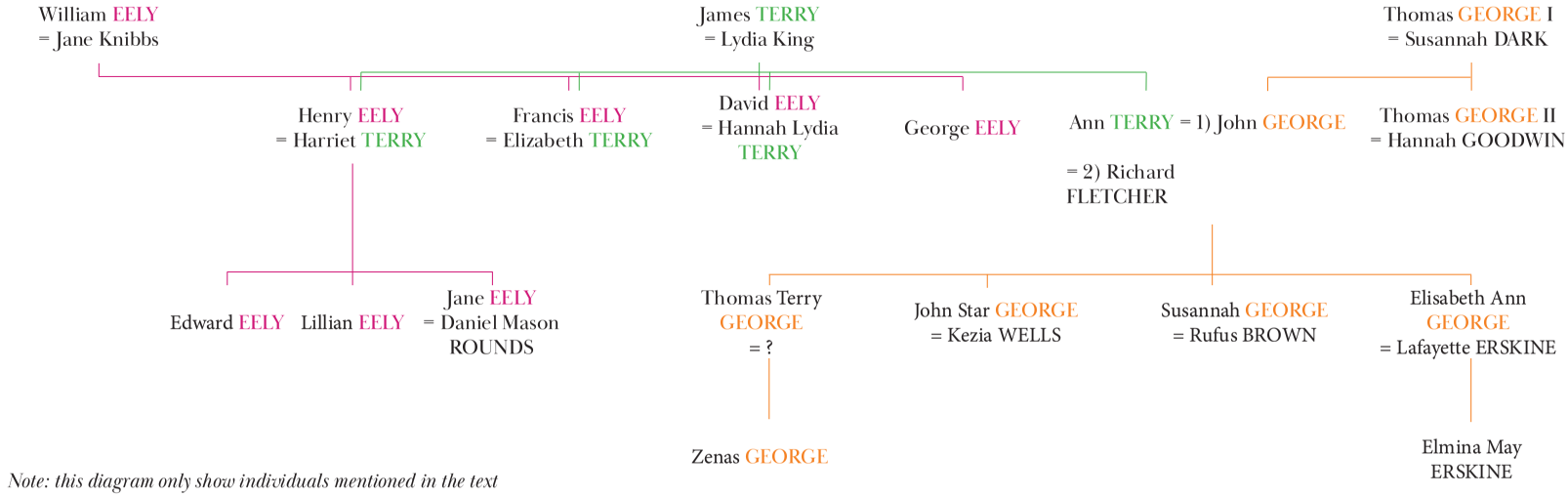

*The Headquarters of the Half-Shire Historical Society at Richland, NY*

## The English context

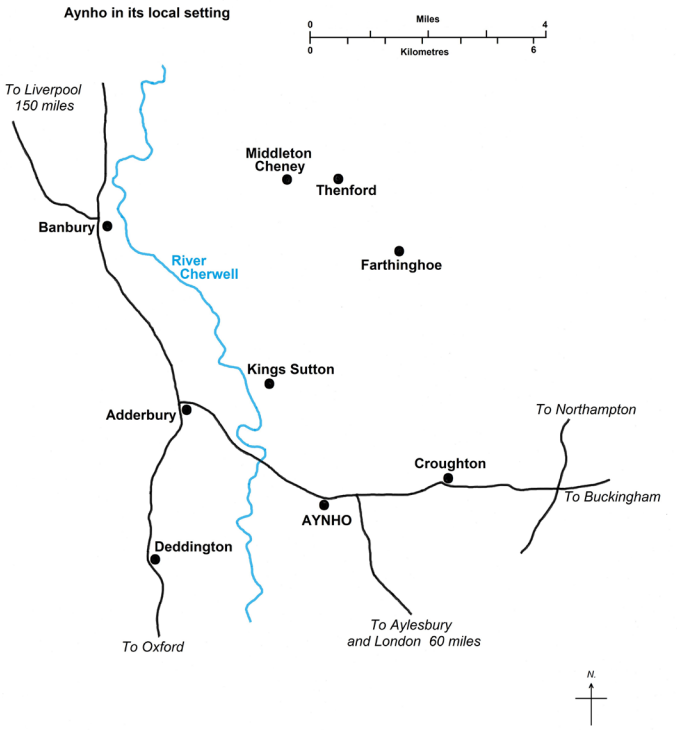
Emigration was a powerful influence on the social history of 'Banburyshire' in the nineteenth century. It reached a peak in the 1820s and 30s when almost every parish in the district encountered difficulties in maintaining its poor. Some migrants were assisted with their expenses by subscriptions raised by clergy and gentry, and the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 authorised Guardians to support migrants from parish funds. In 1831, 50 people aided by subscriptions left for North America from Deddington, west of Aynho, and in 1836-47 the authorities spent £230 assisting emigrants under the terms of the 1834 Act. At Croughton, two miles east of Aynho, the parish vestry ordered that £100 should be borrowed to pay to send paupers to America.

1. Shawn Doyle is President of the Half-Shire Historical Society. Barrie Trinder is Vice President of the Banbury Historical Society.
2. *Northampton Herald*, 1 March 1834; *Cake & Cockhorse* (vol 4, 1971), 177; N Cooper, *Aynho: A Northamptonshire Village* (Banbury Historical Society, 1984), 209-10.
3. In 2022 Barrie Trinder referred to the letter when writing *Georgian Banbury* and realised that Richland NY was only 36 miles from Syracuse, home of his friend Maryellen Hemstreet. She showed a copy to Shawn Doyle and arranged for him to meet Barrie Trinder in July 2023. This article is the result.
4. Sources include a paper on the descendants of John Terry prepared by the Half-Shire Historical Society and a memoir (EGE Mem) written c 1898 by Elizabeth Erskine, daughter of John George, currently in the possession of her descendant Tim Wilder of Watkins Glen, NY.

## Three Aynho families who emigrated to Richland
## EELY family
## GEORGE family
## TERRY family




*Note: this diagram only show individuals mentioned in the text*




*Aynho in its local setting (Geoff Gwatkin)*

Francis Litchfield wrote in 1832 that 'the passage across the Atlantic seems to be regarded only as a trip, from the constant intercourse which is being kept up by emigrants, and the frequency with which small capitalists go over to explore the country and return to fetch their families'. He estimated that about 150 people had left for America from the neighbouring parish of Middleton Cheney in the previous three years and recorded the recent departure of 51 people bound for the Ohio territory. On publishing George's letter Litchfield commented that landlords of parishes 'distressed by redundant population' should encourage farm labourers to emigrate.[5]

*Cottages in Little Lane, Aynho*

The 'neat and exemplarily kept' village of Aynho crowns the summit of the hill by which the road from Banbury to Aylesbury and Buckingham (and ultimately to London) climbs out of the Cherwell Valley. The great house, Aynhoe Park, incorporates work by Thomas Archer (1668-1743) and Sir John Soane (1753-1837) and the church of St Michael retains its Georgian interior. Aynho might be regarded as a characteristic closed village dominated for more than three centuries by the family of

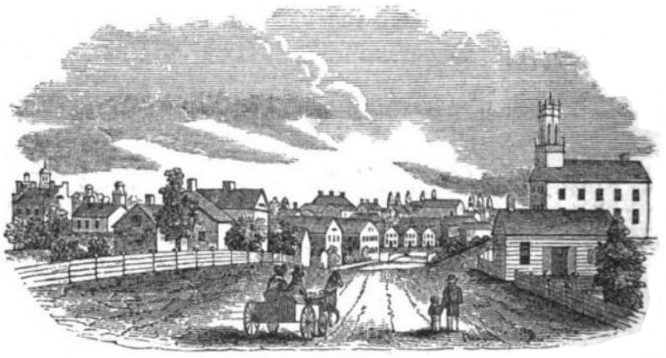
5. B Trinder, 'The Distant Scene: Banbury and the United States in the mid-nineteenth century', *C&CH* (1978) vol 7/6, p 163; *Northampton Herald* 10 March 1832; 1 March 1834; G Smedley-Stevenson, ed, *Early Victorian Squarson: the diaries of William Cotton Risley, vicar of Deddington 1835-1848* (Banbury Historical Society, 2007), p 176-77; P Hayter, 'Assisted Emigration to Canada', *C&CH* (2009) vol 17/8, p 255-76.


*Richland in its American context (Geoff Gwatkin)*

Richard Cartwright (1564-1637) who purchased most of the parish at Michaelmas 1615 but there were some freeholdings, and the population, 623 in 1801 and 719 in 1821, was large for a parish of about 2,500 acres. Poor rates increased during the wars with France and in 1807 the principal farmers agreed with William Ralph Cartwright (1771-1847) not to employ incomers who might claim settlement in the parish. Migrants began to leave the village in 1829. Cartwright reported in 1833 that up to 100 had departed and that the benefit to the parish had been 'great and immediate'. A further 37 sailed in the spring of 1836, some of them accompanied to Liverpool by church wardens. Mass migration from the village diminished after 1847 but in the previous 18 years 243 people had left for America. John George's letter throws light on a substantial movement of people.[6]

Most evidence about migrants relates to those who prospered in their new homes. Amongst those who left the Banbury region, William Walker, keeper of Banbury gaol until 1832, had a farm on Long Island and a home in New York City by 1865. In 1877 George Reynolds (1826-97), once of North Newington, had 9000 sheep on his ranch in Texas and left 39,975 acres to his children. In 1867 Henry Vincent (1813-78), Chartist, temperance advocate, popular lecturer and candidate for Banbury in the general election of 1841, was preparing to lecture at Waterloo, Iowa, when George French, once a shoemaker in Banbury who had supported him in 1841, walked into his room. French had a farm with 160 acres of good land and was living with his wife and seven children 'in cosy comfort'. Like other commentators on the United States Vincent recommended intending migrants to

6. N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Northamptonshire* (Penguin, 1961) p 87-90; N Cooper, *Aynho*, p 177-92, 201, 209-12; P Hayter, 'Assisted Emigration to Canada', *C&CH* (2009) vol 17/8, p 255-76..



*View of Pulaski.*

*The Salt Road in Pulaski looking north in 1842, with the Methodist chapel where John George helped to dig the cellar on the left. The congregation originated about 1814 and built the chapel from 1832. A new chapel north of the Salmon River was opened in 1860 after which this building was removed to a property east of Pulaski where it still serves as a barn on an Amish farm. (J W Barber, Historical Collections of the State of New York, Clark Austin, 1951)*

head for 'the West', by which he meant Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa, and in the 1870s the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad used local newspapers to remind Banburians that its services put Iowa and Nebraska within fifteen days travel of Liverpool. It is tempting to see migration to the United States as a constant movement westward attracted by free land, fellow members of a sect or precious metals. Investigation of those mentioned in John George's letter suggests that some families formed strong and lasting attachments to the areas of their first settlement.[7]

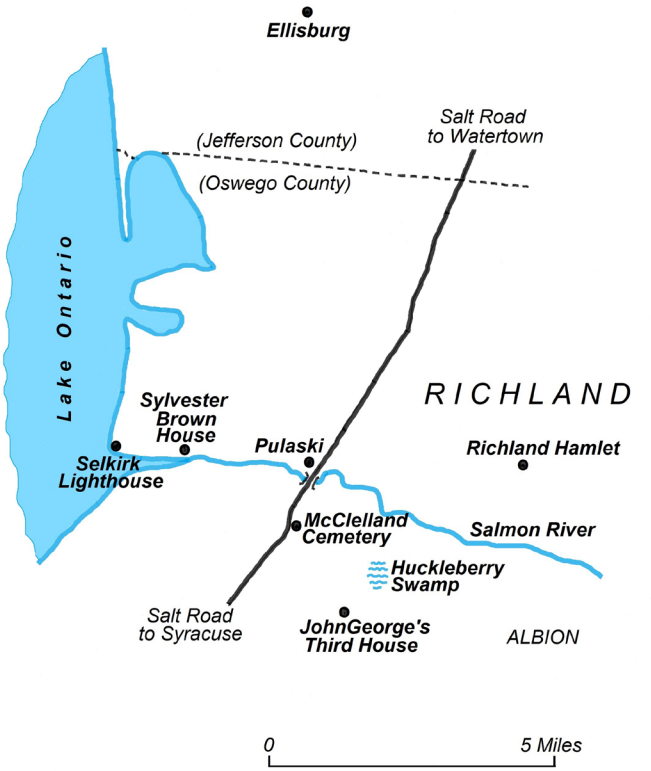
## Richland: the American context

The area around Richland where John and Ann George settled lies in Oswego County east of Lake Ontario; former territory of the Iroquois, it was annexed to the state of New York in 1788, and subsequently made available for public purchase. The Salt Road from Syracuse to Watertown, NY (now US 11) passes through the area. Oswego County, formally established in 1816, is a half-shire county in which Oswego City and Pulaski were designated co-county seats. Richland, a township of 38,464 acres was settled about 1801 and formally constituted as a township in 1807. The hamlet of Richland lies within its eastern part.

Pulaski, one of several places in the US named after General Casimir Pulaski (1745-79) a Pole who fought with the colonists in the American War of Independence, is a village within the township of Richland that began as a single log cabin in 1804. Richland is situated on the Salmon River that flows 44 miles from the Tug Hill Plateau into Lake Ontario and powered numerous mills. In 1830 the New York census recorded 2733 people in Richland, 5292 in Ellisburg, and 669 in Albion.

The area was thickly wooded in the 1830s. One emigrant from Aynho, who had arrived in the United States in 1831, displayed at his golden wedding in 1886 the axe which he brought from England with which he felled his first tree in America and reflected that 'their new country was almost a wilderness when he first saw it'. About five per cent of Richland is water, and the township includes swamps in which mosquitos were abundant.

7. B Trinder, *Victorian Banbury* (Phillimore, 1982), p 147; *The Beehive*, 20 Feb 1868.




*Richland in its local setting (Geoff Gwatkin)*

Elizabeth Erskine (George) recalled living near the Huckleberry Swamp in Albion where there were frogs, pollywogs (tadpoles) and green snakes, and where she and other children 'ate cringle root and wintergreens; chewed spruce and tamarack gum' made from the hardened sap emitted by those trees. The untamed nature of the area is indicated by the $10 rewards for killing wolves offered at the first town meeting at Albion in 1825. John George failed to mention in his letter the snowfall, which now averages 150 inches annually in Richland, and the winter temperatures, which sink to -3°F (-19°C).[8]

The soils around Richland are glacial sands and gravels, acidic and poorly drained, but they provided grazing for dairy cows and settlers were able to raise crops of grain. Some kept flocks of geese, and fish abounded in the Salmon River. Thomas George II fetched his mother's possessions in an ox cart from Pulaski after her second marriage showing that oxen were used as draught animals. Families augmented their income from the woodlands, and some farms included sawmills where timber was prepared to be taken by boat to distant urban markets. In 1860 38 sawmills were recorded in Albion alone. Some wood was cut into staves to make tubs used locally for butter or flour, or for the salt produced in Syracuse.

Water appears to have been raised by well sweeps, commonplace in northern and eastern Europe but rare in England. Most settlers built or rented log houses which, if they remained in the same place, they later replaced with frame houses. The thin soils around Ellisburg overlie granite which was used as a building stone.

8. EGE Mem. *Pulaski Democrat* 10 June 1886.

The records of the three families reveal some aspects of their journeys across the Atlantic. Henry Eely left Aynho on 19 April 1834 and spent a week 'coming down England', journeying without the aid of railways to Liverpool or possibly London. His voyage to Quebec lasted six weeks, and he spent two weeks crossing the St Lawrence River and travelling overland to Richland where he arrived on 21 June 1834. Others may have crossed to New York. Francis Eely ate his rations on board ship from a pewter plate and kept his clothes in an elmwood box, both of which he retained in 1886, along with a silk handkerchief, a parting gift from his sister. John George's father, Thomas George I, arrived in Richland in 1839 with a sea chest in which were some sea biscuits, unconsumed on the voyage, which his grandchildren found unappetising.[9]

*This log house in the Genesee Country Village & Museum further west in New York was built in 1809 by Nicholas Hetchler and preserved from decay by extensions that were built around it. It is very similar to the house that John George built at Richland. There is a well sweep in the foreground. (Genesee Country Village & Museum)*

## The George family

Thomas George I took his son's advice and arrived in Richland in 1839 with his wife, Susannah (née Dark), wearing the characteristic attire of a gamekeeper; short knee breeches, long stockings and gaiters. He was not living in Aynho in 1790 but may have been given a gamekeeper's post there subsequently, though he had no kin living locally. John George supposedly came from another part of Northamptonshire before his marriage in 1828. Susannah appears to have died before her husband moved to live with his younger son at Albany after a stay of about two years. He was still in Albany in 1845.[10]

Thomas George II also followed the advice of his younger brother and travelled to America in the mid-1830s where he married Hannah Goodwin, a 'gentlewoman' when she was already pregnant with their first daughter. He was better educated than his brother and wrote in an elegant hand. He settled at Bethlehem, eight miles south of Albany tending a market garden. After John George died in February 1845, he helped his sister-in-law at Richland and accommodated her with two of her children at his home. The house soon seemed over-crowded, and she moved elsewhere in the city. Thomas moved when the property he rented was sold.

John George himself was born in 1800, probably in Northamptonshire, and married Ann Terry at Aynho in 1828, when he wore a pale yellowish-brown coat with a scarlet plush vest and she a white dress with a scarlet cloak. A tall, slim man, with black hair, he was remembered as full of fun, fond of practical jokes and as an accomplished ventriloquist. While he could read, he could not write, and the letter of 1833 was doubtless penned by his

9. *Jefferson County Journal*, 1884; EGE Mem.
10. N Cooper, *Aynho*, p 301.

*The church of St Michal, Aynho, rebuilt in 1725 by Edward Wing, which remains much as it was when John George married Ann Terry in 1828*

wife. When healthy he exercised many practical skills. He and his wife travelled to America in 1832 and in October 1834 purchased 22 acres on lot 149 in Richland, where the family lived in a log house. The site is now part of the commercial strip in Pulaski. They sold the plot in 1839 and moved to a property a few miles east, a frame building that was part of a sawmill farm by a brook in which the children caught trout and chub and played with sand on the banks. The area, once farmland, has now reverted to woodland. In 1843 he made an unwise deal moving to a larger holding further south which enabled his children to attend a nearby school. He agreed to take the payment for the sawmill farm in buggies and wagons made by the purchaser which never materialised. The family's new home was a log house with a frame wing near the Albion Huckleberry Swamp but the following year the family built a new frame house. John George's health deteriorated about this time. He had had a running sore for several years after falling over a cart and caught a cold while helping local Methodists to excavate a basement beneath their chapel. The cough grew worse. He began to spit blood, spent most of the winter of 1844-45 with his feet on the stove and his elbows on his knees, and died on 17 February 1845.[11]

Ann George (1800-79), John's wife, was the eldest of the 14 children of James and Lydia (née King) Terry and provides the link between the Georges and the two other families from Aynho who settled around Richland. Among her possessions were her paternal grandmother's wedding ring and a locket made in Banbury containing hair from the grandmother's dead daughter. She never went to school but attended classes in reading and writing held by the Cartwright daughters at St Michael's church, Aynho and subsequently acted as her husband's 'amanuensis and accountant'. Aynho lay on the edge of the area of Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, and Oxfordshire where thousands of women worked at home or in 'schools' making pillow lace. In 1861 the industry gave employment to 8221 people in Northamptonshire alone. Ann Terry was set to learn the craft at about the age of ten. She took to America, and passed to her family, the canvas pillow stuffed with straw and hay that she used, together with some bobbins, a tiny pair of scissors and an unfinished strip of lace.

At the age of 17 she went into domestic service in houses in Oxford and London. She was 28 when she married and 32 when she travelled to America. She attended church services and was both conscientious and superstitious, frequently attending funerals when, like most other women, she tried to touch the cheeks of the deceased.[12]

The death of her husband left Ann homeless and almost penniless. She moved in 1845 to stay with her brother-in-law, Thomas George II, in Albany, a sophisticated city where 'she was more at home than she had ever been on a frontier farm'. She left her son John

11. This and subsequent paragraphs are based on EGE Mem.
12. B Trinder, 'Proto-industries of nineteenth century Oxfordshire', K Tiller & G Darkes, eds, *An Historical Atlas of Oxfordshire* (Oxfordshire Record Society, 2010), p 120-21.

and daughter Susannah with Sylvester Brown at his boat yard at Selkirk near the mouth of the Salmon River, while she and her other children embarked on a canal boat loaded with lumber for New York City. It was towed by the steamboat *Clinton* along Lake Ontario to Oswego. Elizabeth remembered that she slept in a berth on board. At Oswego they joined the *Rosebud* of Richland, on which they ate their first meal on a canal boat. The journey to Albany along the Oswego and Erie canals took a week during which Elizabeth and her siblings delighted in the sights that they observed, enjoying 'one long excursion'.

*The lace pillow taken by Ann George from Aynho to America and donated to the National Museum of American History by her descendants in 1990. (by kind permission of the Division of Home and Community Life, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution)*

Ann moved out when Thomas's house seemed overcrowded and over the next three years she had several jobs in the state capital, usually caring for invalids. In June 1848 she returned to Richland, embarking at Albany on a boat for Syracuse and continuing by stagecoach. She initially found work at Pulaski, later lodging at the home of her sister Elizabeth and her husband from where she went to work for Richard Giles, 'an Englishman with a big fat Welsh wife'. There she met Richard Fletcher, a Monmouthshire-born bachelor of forty. Ann's daughter saw him sitting with his arm round her mother and they were soon married. Fletcher acquired land south of Giles's and built a log house that became Ann's home and, for a time, that of her children who came to regard him as their father. Ann remained in the Richland area until her death on 10 May 1879.


*The grave of Ann Fletcher (née Terry, later George, 1800-79) in the McClelland Cemetery. (Maryellen Hemstreet)*

Richard Fletcher, (1807-1892), had emigrated to America in 1847, and, after his marriage provided an apparently happy home for the four children of John and Ann George. He died in 1892 at the home in South Richland of his stepdaughter Elizabeth Erskine who had nursed him during his final years. He was widely known as 'Uncle Fletcher'.[13]

## John George's children[14]

John George's two sons mentioned in the letter of 1833 both became carpenters and then ministers. The elder, Thomas Terry George (1830-1919) was born at Aynho. Following his father's death in 1845 he accompanied his mother to Albany where

13. *Pulaski Democrat*, 3 December 1892.
14. This section is based on EGE Mem.

he sold produce at his uncle's market stall on Pearl Street. At the age of fifteen he was 'rather a sickly boy ... no one thought he would grow up' and was put to learn coach lace weaving.[15] After his mother married Richard Fletcher, he joined her at Richland and helped to build the family home. He travelled by canal boat from Albany to Oswego, transported his luggage across Lake Ontario to Selkirk, and then walked to Sylvester Brown's where he met his brother John, whom he did not immediately recognise. At the age of 19 he began to learn woodworking at the shop of George Woodruff in Pulaski and by 1852 was making his living as a carpenter. In 1857 he married and went to serve as a minister in Michigan. He briefly returned to Richland in 1862 with his son Zenas (1860-1907) before serving with the Wisconsin Heavy Artillery in the Civil War. He died at Grand Rapids, Michigan at the age of 88 in 1919.

*Memorials of members of the George family at the McClelland Cemetery. It is believed that the unmarked grave of James George lies to the left of the line of stones (Maryellen Hemstreet)*

The younger son, John Starr George (1833-75), was born at Albion on 30 January 1833. He had an engaging personality and when his mother went to Albany after John George died was left with Sylvester Brown, a wealthy farmer. John rejoined his mother after her marriage to Richard Fletcher for whom he built a frame house in 1859. In the early 1850s he had made his living as a carpenter, but by 1858 was teaching. He trained as a Methodist Episcopal minister attending the Falley Seminary in Fulton where he was licensed to exhort in March 1861 and to preach in the following spring. He married Kezia (née Wells, 1839-99) from Granby in 1863. He looked frail but 'did a man's work to the end'. As an itinerant Methodist minister, he served in several circuits and died at his last pastorate, Scriba, in 1875. The Half-Shire Historical Society holds the 200-year-old Wells family Bible which includes entries for Kezia, John and their children. Kezia died at Fulton on 14 April 1899.

Susannah, elder daughter of John and Ann George was born at Albion in 1834, and when her mother went to Albany was left along with her brother John with Sylvester Brown and his wife. She moved to work for the family of Mr G C Baker at Pulaski and after her mother's marriage to Richard Fletcher frequently visited their new house. On 12 September 1858 she was married to Rufus C Brown (1834-1900), a minister, and they settled in the Methodist Episcopal parsonage at Granby, 25 miles SW of Richland, where she died in July 1866.

The Georges' younger daughter, Elizabeth Ann (1836-1901), wrote the memoir on which much of this article is based and her life can be traced in more detail than those of her siblings. She was born at Albion on 27 April 1836 and after her father's death went with her mother to Albany. After they moved from the home of Thomas George II to that of his brother-in-law, she spent a happy Christmas hanging up a stocking for first time and finding it filled with a book and some candy. She was sent on errands across the city and saw the Albany Penitentiary in course of erection. She travelled on an excursion on which three steamboats took children from the city's Protestant Sunday schools to Hudson, but they were unable to disembark and returned to Albany after a tiring day, an 'exertion' rather than an 'excursion', but unforgettable. She returned with her mother to Richland

15. See https://core.ac.uk/reader/188078010 (accessed 19/02/2024).

in 1848, travelling by canal boat to Syracuse and then by stage along the Salt Road, in the course of conversion to a plank road. She stayed initially with Francis and Elizabeth Eely but spent six weeks of that summer with Henry and Harriet Eely at Ellisburg where she and her cousins, spread and raked hay, hunted for berries, robbed bumble bee nests and bathed in a creek. She reflected that 'they were good to me indeed, the fatherless, homeless girl'.

*Elizabeth Ann Erskine (née George, 1836-1901) c 1898 (Tim Wilder)*

After her mother re-married, Elizabeth worked as a live-in domestic servant at several local homes but kept in touch with her family. At the age of 16 in 1852 she described herself as tall and angular, with black hair and eyes and projecting teeth. She attended various schools and in 1854 was baptised by 'sprinkling'. She enjoyed her first party and became accustomed to the attention of 'beaux'. From Thanksgiving Day in 1856 she stayed for a time with Susannah and John at Fulton; there she attended the Academy, which appears to have qualified her for teaching in the Granby area from the summer of 1857, which was when she bought her first silk dress and had her first proposal of marriage (which she turned down). The following winter she became the fiancée of a minister, and was preparing for life as a minister's wife, but she broke off the engagement and on 13 April 1861 she married Lafayette Erskine (1836-1927), a cabinet maker whose family supposedly arrived in America on the *Mayflower*. In the winter of 1861-62 he furnished their house at Holmesville with a bureau, a washstand, and a bedstead that he made from cherry wood. Lafayette enlisted in Company B of the 110th New York Volunteers in August 1862 and went South in the fall but returned in uniform five days after the birth of their daughter Elmina May on 4 April 1863, presumably at the end of his contracted period as a volunteer. He enlarged his holding but suffered two accidents while working, cutting off the fingers of his left hand on a planing machine in February 1864, and severing three toes in April 1869.

The couple moved several times but settled in a house on the Salt Road where they had a horse and 11 cows, sending milk to a factory in summer and making butter with it in the fall and spring. He supplemented the income from the farm by selling sewing machines. They made several further moves but in January 1891 settled at Richland where she wrote articles for the *Pulaski Democrat* and tended her stepfather in his later years. She died in 1901 and was remembered as 'a woman of many beautiful traits'. Lafayette Erskine re-married and died in 1927 at Syracuse.[16]

## Ann George's siblings

Ann George (1800-79), John's wife, was the eldest of the 14 children of James and Lydia Terry from Aynho. James Terry (1778-1864) was a native of Northamptonshire and in

16. *Pulaski Democrat*, 23 January 1901.

1798 married Lydia King (1775-1850) at Soulbury, across the Buckinghamshire border. He was a gamekeeper on the Cartwright estate at Aynho. Their living children seem to have emigrated with their parents in 1830 and three daughters, all born in Aynho, married Aynho-born sons of William and Jane (née Knibbs) Eely. The Terrys settled initially in the Richland area.

Harriet Terry (1808-85) married Henry Eely (1808-84) in 1827 at Aynho where she gave birth to two children before crossing the Atlantic in 1834. John George mentions in his letter that their family were doing well. After three years in Richland the couple settled in Ellisburg where Henry made his living as a stone mason. Elizabeth Ann George spent a happy six weeks there in 1848. Both Henry and Harriet died at Ellisburg. Their son Edward (1828-1918) remained in Ellisburg and their daughter Lilian (1831-1910) died in Albion. Their daughter Jane (1834-75) married Daniel Mason Rounds (1825-1904). Both lived and died in Ellisburg but several of their children sought their fortunes elsewhere. In 1884 one daughter was living in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 1285 miles west of Ellisburg.[17]

Elizabeth Terry (1814-92) was born in Aynho and married her schoolmate Francis Eely (1813-1905) on June 1, 1836 after both had crossed to America. (Francis had embarked in 1831 with his older brother). The couple spent some time in Ellisburg until about 1838 when they bought a farm with a large sand hill in Richland which adjoined that of John George. They provided a home for Ann George when she returned in 1848 after her sojourn in Albany.

Hannah Lydia Terry (1817-1893) was married in America in 1840 to David Eely (1818-99) and initially lived in Oswego County but about 1843 moved to Allegan, Michigan. The couple settled there and had eleven children. Hannah's brother, Thomas Terry (1819-88) probably followed the couple to Allegan after his first wife died near Syracuse in 1848 and apparently remained there for the rest of his life. George Terry (1810-1861), another brother, migrated to America with his parents and in 1844 was married at Kinderhook, Michigan, 100 miles south-east of Allegan. His parents followed him to Kinderhook where his mother died in 1850 and his father in 1864.

## Conclusions

More than 25 members of the George, Terry and Eely families emigrated from Aynho to Richland in the 1830s and their subsequent history reveals much about the opportunities and difficulties encountered by pioneer settlers in upstate New York in the mid-nineteenth century. 30 years later Ann George and three of her children were still living in the area as were two of her sisters, and other relations of the next generation. Three of her siblings and her aged parents had moved to Michigan, but other members of the family retained a strong attachment for the Richland area.

Education for many was spasmodic but better, particularly for women, than was available in England. Elizabeth Erskine certainly gained the skills to write an enthralling memoir. She highlights the importance of the institution at Fulton, recognised by New York state as the Fulton Female Academy in 1836. One of its professors, Edward E E Brandon had been a neighbour of Sylvester Brown, and both men were abolitionists. For John George II teaching was a step on the way into the ministry. Elizabeth recalled that she and her siblings were 'bookworms' but that the only books in John George's house were two prayer books, two hymn books, *Pilgrims Progress*, and *The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins*, a fantasy by Robert Paltock, published in 1750.

17. *Jefferson County Journal* 1884.

The level of religious observance among the families was high. Elizabeth Ann Erskine's journal records several conversions. Her two brothers became ministers and her sister a minister's wife, a fate that she narrowly avoided. Only Anglican worship would have been permitted in Aynho, where the incumbents from 1830 to 1926 were Cartwrights, but the Georges, Eelys and Terrys joined either the Methodist Episcopal Church or the Disciples of Christ, a Baptist denomination founded in the United States by Alexander Campbell (1788-1866). Francis Eely was a Disciple and Henry Eely was one of those responsible for building the Disciples' chapel in Ellisburg. The Disciples were not a large denomination in England, but they established a congregation in Banbury in 1839 to whom Alexander Campbell lectured in 1847.[18]

Thomas Butler Gunn (1826-1904), the Banbury-born artist and writer who spent the years 1849-63 in the United States, highlighted the dangers of life in pioneering settlements without medical facilities, and particularly the hazards of childbirth. Accidents during farming and woodcutting were ever-present dangers and one wonders how Lafayette Erskine's losses of fingers and toes were managed, apparently successfully. John George's father's sprained shoulder and his daughter's broken arm were treated with the tar extract British Oil.[19]

In England families like the Georges, the Eelys and the Terrys had been despised as paupers, but in the United States they showed resilience in overcoming the hazards of life on frontier farms, and in gaining the kind of education that they would have been denied in their native country. Elizabeth Ann Erskine (née George) displays an ability to keep calm in the face of difficulties yet to enjoy herself when opportunities arose during the years after her father's death. As a teenager she delighted in the simple pleasures that can be experienced in the countryside in summertime and gained obvious enjoyment from her first silk dress and from the attention of young men.

Richland's population peaked at 4128 in 1860, and then declined not to exceed 4000 again until 1950. The population of Ellisburg peaked in 1860, at 5614, fell steadily to 3026 in 1930 and totalled only 3474 in 2010. Albion's population increased from 669 in 1830 to peak at 2569 in 1880, later than the other townships, but it declined afterwards. Oswego County could not offer the prospects of wealth that were promised further west, which makes it remarkable that the ties of the George, Eely and Terry families to Richland, Albion and Ellisburg were so strong. Meanwhile Aynho bore the marks of the migration of the 1830s and 40s, its population falling from 719 in 1820 to 562 in 1881 and to no more than 405 in 1901. Ted Humphris, born in that year, portrays his birthplace as a deferential but contented community, where poverty for most families was never far distant. Some at least of those regarded by William Ralph Cartwright and Francis Litchfield as 'surplus' or 'redundant' population in earlier decades were, by the end of the century, living comfortably in America.[20]

18. *The Christian Messenger*, new series vol 3 (1847), p 383, 570-72.
19. B Trinder, ed, *Victorian Banburyshire: Three Memoirs* (Banbury Historical Society, 2013), p 224, 231. Gunn's original diaries are in the Missouri History Museum and are available online.
20. T Humphris & D Palmer, *Apricot Village* (Pelham, 1987), p 5-20.

## Appendix: John George's Letter.

Richland, Sept 22, 1833.
Dear Father and Mother,
We received your letter August 24th and was glad to hear you were all in good health, as, Thank God, it leaves us. We like this country very well. We have purchased two cows for thirty-five dollars. We never was so well off before as we are now. We intend to have a farm as soon as you come. We are now living two miles from Pulaski, by the side road towards Oswego, and it is very pleasant indeed. Our house is built with trees about a foot thick, laid one on top of another, and let in at the corners, chopt smooth on the inside, it is about 20 feet long, 18 feet wide, 2 storey high, the gable ends are boarded up, the roof is made secure with boards, for board is cheap in this country. We have board for the floor. Our chimney is made with brick and stopt which makes it as comfortable as it is in England. I can get plenty of work at ditching and well sinking, and cellar sinking, so bring your tools with you and small drills, and your stocking axes. Augers, broad-axes, saws, sickles and scythes as are cheap here. Wheat one dollar a bushel, rye 5 shillings, oats 2 shillings, barley 5 shillings, superfine flour 3 dollars a cwt.; potatoes 2 shillings a bushel, apples one shilling, pork ten cents a pound, butter ten cents a pound, whiskey three shillings a gallon, rum, brandy, and wine one dollar a gallon. Wages is high in this country, and I get my living where I work. Bring plenty of garden seeds, a few field beans and vetches with you. Dear mother, bring plenty of sewing cotton and thread needles and pins. Father bring your measuring tape and one for me. Please to bring a pocketknife of Thomas's make, Banbury. Dear brother Thomas, if you was here you would make a fortune. I wish we had all come to this country when we was first married. I wish you had come when we did, if you had we should have had a farm by now. Thomas does reckon of his grandpop's coming. John is seven months old. Give my best respects to all my neighbours, enemys and friends. Father [i.e. father-in-law, James Terry] has sold his farm, he finds that he can get land cheaper which he intends to have another soon. They are all well at present. Jane is with them. Henry Elly (i.e. Eely) and his family is all well, so I must conclude with my kind love to you all.
John and Ann George.

## Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Tim Wilder of Watkins Glen, NY for making available Elizabeth Erskine's journal. The genealogical information owes much to Becky Kennedy and Sharon Turo of the Half-Shire Historical Society. Our thanks are also due to Helena Wright, formerly of the Smithsonian Museum, and to current members of the museum staff Hanna BredenbeckCorp and Melanie Blanchard for help with Ann George's lace cushion. In England the text has been read by Nick Cooper, Helen Forde, Deborah Hayter and Sue Upton and we are grateful for their comments. Finally, we must thank Maryellen Hemstreet who made it all possible.

# THE PEOPLE OF BANBURY DOCKYARD

*Matthew Armitage*

On the 12th of May 1769,[1] at the Three Tuns Inn in Banbury, the General Assembly of the Company of Proprietors of the Oxford Canal Navigation met – James Brindley was hired and the Oxford Canal was commissioned to connect the Warwickshire coalfields to the river Thames at Oxford. The *Oxford Journal* reported that 'The necessary Measures were unanimously resolved upon to carry that great Work into Execution with all possible Dispatch'. The Oxford Canal reached Banbury in 1778, and the boatyard was built at the same time. It was a thriving centre for horse drawn wooden boats, intended to repair and maintain existing boats and to keep them working and trade flowing down canals and waterways, as well as to build new boats. Ever since it has been known as the Dockyard, prefaced by the name of the person who operated it at the time.

**Tooley's Boatyard owners**

| Period of occupation | Name and profession |
|---|---|
| Late 18th century | Mr Evans |
| c 1793-1830 | Thomas Cotton, boatbuilder |
| 1831 | Mr Castle |
| 1834-1863 | Benjamin Roberts, boatbuilder |
| 1868-1899 | William Chard, boatbuilder |
| 1897 | Possible owner, Mr Neal |
| c 1901-1940 | George Tooley sr, boatbuilder |
| 1940-1987 | Herbert Tooley, George jr and Peter Downer |
| 1987-1988 | Peter Downer |
| 1990-1998 | Barrie Morse, Morse Marine |
| 2002-2019 | Matthew Armitage |
| 2019- | Tooley's Boatyard Trust |

G C J Hartland's article in *Cake and Cockhorse*[2] mentions a man named Evans as possibly the first owner of the dockyard but no further reference to him has been found. More is known of Thomas Cotton who appears to have taken over the dockyard shortly after Evans. From his marriage certificate we know that he married Sarah King in St Mary's, Banbury in 1793 when his occupation was shown as a boatbuilder. By 1805 he had built 11 boats over 5 years,[3] and the business flourished; an apprentice boat builder, Joseph Glaze from the Blue Coat School, was taken on in 1809. In 1817[4] two new boats were advertised in the *Oxford Journal* as being sold from Mr T Cotton's Dock – the first reference to the actual dock. However, by 1830 he was bankrupt and had to 'surrender himself to the commissioners.'[5] By March the same year the items of Mr Cotton's dry dock business were being auctioned by Humphris

1. *Oxford Journal* 13 May 1769.
2. *Cake & Cockhorse* (1969) vol 4/4, p 55.
3. G Freeston, private papers, including *Tables for ascertaining the Weight of the Cargoes Boats and Barges navigating on The Grand Junction Canal made under the direction of the Committee of Proprietors.* London, 1805. Quoted in *C&CH* (1994) vol 12/9, p 237.
4. *OJ*, 25 January 1817.
5. *OJ*, 6 February 1830, 19 June 1830.

& Son[6] and subsequent notices asked him to surrender the business. So, at this point it is clear that he was no longer operating the dock.

*Benjamin Roberts, c 1862 (MT Coles' Studio, Oxford, by kind permission of David Roberts)*

In 1831 Mr Castle sold the dockyard and an interesting selection of items;[7] possibly he had bought the business for a quick profit. He was followed by Mr Benjamin Roberts, listed as a boatbuilder in the parish register when two of his daughters were christened in 1834. *Rushers Directory* lists him as a boat builder between 1837 to 1863. He lived in 11 Back Lane at the time of the censuses in 1841 and 1851 (where he and three of his sons, Benjamin junior, Alfred and Rhodes, were all noted as boatbuilders); Back Lane later became Factory Street, and from this time Factory Street was very much associated with the dockyard by the operators who lived in it; did a house come with the dockyard? In 1841[8] Benjamin senior built a wooden launch called *Firefly* which was the 'first steamer to ever run on the Oxford Canal', the steam engine being made by Mr Warriner. Not all the publicity was positive however – in 1856 Ruben Roberts, (another of Benjamin's sons) was reported as being in dispute over the removal of a tree over the canal,[9] and the following year Benjamin Roberts, junior, was had up for being drunk and disorderly.[10] The 1861 census lists Benjamin senior as living in Back Lane, now called Factory Street, as a boat builder and employing 5 people.

In the 1861 census William Chard's son William is listed as a boatbuilder's apprentice – his father was to be the subsequent owner of the dock. The trail goes cold for 7 years until *Rusher's Directory* picks up the scent again in 1868[11] noting William Chard senior as associated with the dry dock and listing him as a boat builder until 1899. He lived in No. 2 Market Place, but also owned a row of cottages in Factory Street. A handful of newspaper articles also mentioned Chard's Dockyard; in 1869 there is a description of an eel being caught in the dock,[12] another describes a boat being seized by the court as it left the dock,[13] and in 1870[14] the fire at the yard was given prominence. That article goes into great detail about the bungling attempts from the Volunteer Fire Brigade to put the fire out. The hero of the day was put down as Mr Plester, the blacksmith. William Chard appears in the 1871

6. *OJ*, 9 October 1830.
7. *OJ*, 6 March 1830.
8. *Oxford University and City Herald*, 13 March 1841.
9. *Banbury Advertiser*, 30 October 1856.
10. *OJ*, 26 September 1857.
11. *An Alphabetical Digest of Rusher's Banbury Directory to Trades and Occupations 1832-1906* ed Jeremy Gibson (BHS 34, 2014), p 25.
12. *Banbury Guardian*, 12 August, 1869.
13. *Bicester Herald*, 19 June 1869.
14. *Oxford Times*, 19 November 1870.

*George senior and Herbert Tooley*
*(by kind permission of Tooley's boatyard)*

census as a corn dealer and boatbuilder, employing 11 men and a boy.

The next person to be associated with the dockyard appears to be Mr Neal, but this is only because of two newspaper articles relating to one incident and no other references for Mr Neal's dockyard have been found. The articles describe another fire at the dockyard, this time in 1897,[15] and how the fire brigade had put the fire out. This fire was the only reference associated with Neal and the drydock and he may not have been an operator as he is not mentioned in *Rusher's Directory.*

**Tooley family**

Emanuel Tooley = Mary Ann Auger

4 daughters  2 sons  George senior = Lilian Biddle

George H = Margaret Richards  Herbert

The exact date when George Tooley sr (1869-1940) took over the dockyard is unknown; there are stories of a Mr Tooley and his two sons working in the drydock in the last few years of the nineteenth century, presumably Emanuel (1828-1917) with his two sons, George senior and William (1858-1929). *Rusher's Directory* does not mention the family at the beginning of the 1900s nor are they noted in the 1901 census. However, Mary Tooley, Emmanuel's wife, was living in No. 11 Factory Street, a house associated with the dock, suggesting that they already had a connection with the dock at this time. Probably they were also living there but the men were off on a boat at the time of the census.

According to the *Banbury Guardian* and *Banbury Advertiser* the Tooleys registered *Providence* as a change boat in 1901;[16] this was a boat which people could hire out while their own boat was in the dock. From 1907 until 1929, George sr looked after and docked the working fleet of boats belonging to the Oxford and Portland cement companies, based in Kidlington. They had six boats and the Tooleys are known to have built two of them. In 1916 he made a court appearance to retain some of his staff during the war, and the *Banbury Advertiser* and the *Banbury Guardian* reported that he had applied successfully for a temporary exemption for one of his workers, Ernest Albert Carvell.[17] He testified that the yard was busy and

15. *BG*, 25 November 1897.
16. *BA*, 10 October 1901.
17. *BA*, 28 September 1916.

that he normally employed three people, one of whom was now serving in France and another at the munitions works; he needed Ernest to stay and help him to complete the works.


*Tom Rolt on Cressy*
*(by kind permission of the Canal & Rivers Trust)*

Herbert, George senior's younger son (1913-1987) and George junior (1904-1993) had been working at the boatyard since the 1920s. They worked under their father's close supervision developing the skills needed to build, repair, and maintain boats. In 1934, due to a slump in the boat trade, there was not enough work to keep both of them occupied, so Herbert continued at the dock while George went to find alternative employment at the aluminium factory, but he helped in the dock after his shifts. By 1939 they were renowned for their expertise and artistic ability, which is why Tom Rolt chose to have his now legendary narrowboat, *Cressy*, fitted out at the dockyard.

In 1940, George senior died aged 71 and Herbert took over the business with help from his brother George. Due to the war effort, the traffic on the canals increased and boats needed to be repaired and maintained. The dockyards and skills were in demand and their contribution to keeping the canals as an effective part of Britain's war effort was critical. The family home had been 11 Factory Street Banbury for many years, but by the 1960s the town was undergoing regeneration and the property was compulsorily purchased and then demolished. Herbert first rented a boat at the yard but later bought a caravan next to the dock, in which small space he lived for the next 25 years.

In the 1980s Peter Downer helped Herbert with jobs in the boatyard, but an unwritten agreement was struck up and Peter rented the drydock while Herbert used the workshops. In May 1987 Herbert died at the age of 73,[18] and British Waterways agreed to let Peter Downer use the dock and yard on a temporary basis until 1988. Barrie Morse, a new leaseholder, ran Morse Marine between 1990 and 1998 from the dockyard and Peter Downer continued to hire the dock occasionally during this time.

The dockyard was closed when the Castle Quay shopping centre was developed around it at the turn of the century but in 2002 the lease for Tooley's Boatyard came up and the chance to operate an industrial archaeological site which is also a working boatyard. This was right up my street and I have been operating it since 2002 as a fully working boatyard business – repairing and maintaining boats. Further development threatened the business in 2017 but the solution to avoid closure came from local businesses which came together and decided that a trust should be set up with its aim to protect the working boatyard business. Due to the fame of the Tooley family the dockyard has retained their name and ever since it has been called Tooley's Boatyard.

18. 'Herbert Tooley' obituary, *Waterways World*, August 1987.

# WATERMILLS ON THE SOR BROOK

*Nick Allen*

Many of the Oxfordshire mills identified on the Sor Brook are mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086, suggesting they are of Saxon origin. The Saxons well understood how to harness water-power to mill grain as did the Romans before them. However there is very little archaeological evidence, in this country, of the Romans using water-power although a few sites have been found near Bath and Hadrian's Wall. Remnants of 135 watermills are left, out of a total of 186, some of which, are admittedly just marks in the ground, sometimes backed-up with shadows of the water-system that powered them. 10 are sited on the Sor Brook, nine being of Saxon origin.

Some initial work on identifying the water mills was undertaken by John Carter and written up in a report entitled 'Watermills in North Oxfordshire – Some notes of a Recent Survey'.[1] He wrote that the area of the survey was initially in the immediate neighbourhood of Banbury, and '[that] it had gradually [been] extended outwards as more mills were recorded'. He listed 14 mills scattered around the Banburyshire area, five of which were on the Sor Brook. In his conclusion he suggested that his report should be regarded as interim and that he hoped to complete the survey of all the mills in this area. This paper takes that report further.

Water supplies the power that drives the water-wheel and water from the mill stream, or leat, powers the water-wheel in one of three ways. The simplest and the earliest way, used by both the Romans and Saxons, was the under-shot (u/s) method whereby the water passes under the water-wheel pushing the paddles upward. The weakness of this method is that it is entirely dependent on the quantity of water available. In high summer when there is little rain there would be little or no water in the Sor brook (which is never deep at the best of times) so the mill would cease working. The mill at Shenington, the closest to the source, would frequently have to cease operating as the water was very shallow at that point at any time of year. It did, indeed, close down in the 19th century because it was working very intermittently. The next-door mill at Wroxton has a similar story.

The second method is breast-shot (b/s); here the water was channelled or arrived at breast height so striking the paddles with more force. This system required either suitable topography or some expensive water engineering. The third way, by far the most reliable and efficient, was the over-shot (o/s) system. This required the mill to be located near a natural or artificially constructed waterfall which would have been very costly to construct but much more reliable and powerful. Balscott started life as an u/s powered mill; much later it in its life it was converted to an o/s mill.

Both the mills serving the Broughton estate were powered by hydraulic rams in the 19th century – a late 18th century device imported from France. Essentially it was a simple pump used to raise the level of water to create more pressure thus making it possible for mills to work all year round. The 1949 large scale Ordnance Survey map of this area shows both rams as still in place.

What were these mills originally used for? Bread and beer were the main staples of both Saxons and Normans at all levels of society. Bread was made from corn ground into flour

1. John Carter 'Watermills in North Oxfordshire – Some notes on a Recent Survey' *Cake & Cockhorse* (1968) vol 3/12, p 215.

and beer was made from barley malt which required much water. Many millers were also maltsters, for example the miller at Balscott, and many millers also brewed beer.

The watermill owned by the village manor was an integral part of the manorial system: the revenue thus generated was an important element in the lord's income – as witnessed in Domesday Book; each manorial entry showed the number of mills belonging to that manor and the revenue generated. The Domesday entry for two of Adderbury's three mills reads:

*Ibi. II. molini de. XXXII sol 7 VI. den.*
There (are) two mills (worth annually)
32 solidi (shillings) and 6 denarii (pennies).

There is some doubt about the source of the Sor Brook; in older maps it rises in the North Oxfordshire Heights, a little over a mile and a half north of Shenington and neighbouring Alkerton, acting as a boundary between these two villages. The source is just inside the county boundary north east of Sugarswell Farm at a height of 175 metres and then flows in a general south easterly direction across North Oxfordshire. This small brook is the feeder to the moat surrounding Broughton Castle; the surplus water that drains off the moat, via a spillway, flows back into the Sor brook. However modern OS maps show the Sor Brook as rising north of Hornton (actually on the same ridge of hills and only about a mile from the correct source). Wilfred Foreman was caught out with this error made by the OS as a glance at his gazetteer will show.[2] Some years ago I pointed out this error to the OS (supported by a great deal of documentation from medieval times); they accepted that the Sor Brook does indeed rise north of Alkerton and also stated that they would amend future maps – to date they haven't!

The brook then flows south east to the parish of Bodicote dropping south to Adderbury. Here the brook acted as the boundary to three parishes – Adderbury's eastern boundary with Bloxham; then, up until 1971 when they merged, it formed the boundary between the two ancient parishes of East and West Adderbury. It then continues almost due east to join the River Cherwell (roughly 15 miles distance) alongside the River Swere, at the county boundary with Northamptonshire. The height of the brook here is 70 metres - a hefty fall of 105 metres. The brook's path, from start to finish, acts as a boundary between the hundreds of Bloxham, Adderbury and Banbury ; it also forms the boundaries to nine of the parishes. Nine of the 10 watermills under discussion are in the dual Bloxham/Adderbury Hundred, the 10th, Wykham Mill, being sited in Banbury Hundred.

The parishes of Alkerton and Shenington rest on a bed of Marlstone rock formed many millions of years ago during the Jurassic period. The glaciers, circa 12,000 years ago, covered what is now North Oxfordshire, and formed the valleys that the Sor Brook and other water courses now follow, with alluvial mud and stones covering a thick bed of clay.

Sor, as a river name, may possibly be of Celtic origin; but some place-name authorities consider that Sor is cognate with the continental river name Saar, deriving from the Latin 'ser' to flow – there are River Soars in Leicestershire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire. It is also possible that the name may have been derived from the Sor family which was local to Shenington. Or, that they took their name from the brook – the family were under-tenants of the earls of Gloucester who were overlords of the manor of Shenington in the 12th century. Shenington was an enclave of Gloucestershire until 1844 when it was incorporated into Oxfordshire. The Gloucester manor, at the time, was parcelled out into five small estates and the Sor family farmed one of them next to the brook near Alkerton up until at least the middle of the 14th century.

2. W Foreman, *Oxfordshire Mills* (Phillimore, 1983).


*Thomas Jefferys map of Oxfordshire, 1768 (Courtesy of John Leighfield)*

## Mills

Starting from the source of the brook, the Saxon names listed in italics, are those recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086. The map references refer to the OS map sheet SP 145, 1 inch to the mile, 1953. I have used the spelling of the names printed on this map as did Foreman – e. g. what was previously Balscott is now spelt Balscote on the latest OS map.

**SHENINGTON MILL** (SP 379418, *Senendone*). Shenington at the time of the Domesday survey was part of Gloucestershire, the manor held by the king. Later, in 1844, the parish of Shenington became subsumed into Oxfordshire.

In 1086 Shenington's mill[3] was recorded as producing a modest annual revenue of 3s: it was sited about two miles from the source of the Sor Brook just south of its junction with the Shenington Brook – it would have been an u/s mill. The brook, near the mill site, is only a few feet wide and very shallow for much of the year so the water supply was boosted by additional water taken from the Shenington Brook. There is, now, very little physical evidence left of this mill; the buildings have long since been demolished leaving a few humps and bumps making it just about possible to detect the layout of the mill and water system.

In the 16th century the mill was in the hands of Oriel College, Oxford as, indeed, was much of the parish of Shenington. The college leased their holdings to the Grimes family. Later documents record the mill being leased, in 1730, to Thomas Gibbs of Epwell who subsequently passed it on to his daughter Ann Hawkings; in 1751 she passed it on to the Revd. James Parker, rector of Great Rollright.

By 1855 the mill was working two pairs of stones[4] but without a regular and a sufficient level of flowing water to keep it operational it wasn't viable and ceased working by 1875.

3. Robert Caldicott, 'Shenington Mill' *Cake & Cockhorse*, (2016) vol 20/3, p 70.
4. *Victoria County History of the County of Oxford* (OUP, 1969) vol IX p 146.

The large scale OS map, of 1882, didn't even show the mill site – just the old water system - a casualty of geography and modern technology.

**ALKERTON MILL5** (location, or type of mill, are unknown). Information about this mill is very scarce; the *Victoria County History* mentions, in one brief line,[6] that it was the subject of a transfer in 1624 from one of the two manorial lords to the other; the next note says that the mill then disappeared in 1778. Foreman seems to have been somewhat confused about this mill as he lists it in his gazetteer as number 6 on the Sor Brook, with a map reference that is actually that of the Shenington Mill. He then describes Alkerton Mill as 'Domestic, ponds lost, there were three pairs of stones' but with no location – so where did that information come from? He, later, put a note in his gazetteer about Shenington 'Shenington Mill (with no number) 'Possibly confused with Alkerton, and further confusion over possible second site'.

As we have seen Shenington Mill is actually very well documented, as one would expect of a mill in the hands of an Oxford college. It is shown, in its correct location, on the map in Foreman's gazetteer; also it is marked on every local map that records the watermills on the Sor Brook. Some background to Alkerton parish would perhaps put the problem into context. In the Domesday survey Alkerton was made-up of two, small, manors - one of 3½ hides and the other of 6 hides – a total of 9½ hides – equivalent to about 1,140 acres of agricultural land; therefore neither of these small manors could justify having a mill of its own. Shenington, on the other hand was reported in the survey, as being one single manor of 10 hides (about 1,200 acres) with a mill – also it was in royal hands!

Nevertheless this mill on the west side of a narrow, shallow brook, struggled to keep operational even with additional water taken from Shenington's little brook – eventually it had to give up milling as it was not a viable business. Presumably the manors of Shenington and Alkerton, before and after the Domesday survey shared the mill for several hundred years.

**BALSCOTT MILL** (SP 391408, *Berescot*). The Domesday entry for Balscott does not record a mill but there is a document recording that a miller held land in Balscott in the early 13th century;[7] however there is no indication that there was a mill at that time. Balscott and Wroxton manors were jointly owned by Wroxton Priory so, no doubt, one mill would have done duty for both manors.

The first date noted for a mill at Balscott is 1504 when it was recorded as 'Ballam Mill' in the

*Balscott Mill*

5. Peter Allen, *Alkerton Mill* (undated and unpublished).
6. *Victoria County History of the County of Oxford* (OUP, 1969) vol IX, p 48.
7. TNA Close Rolls, 1227-31, 404.

*Balscott mill wheels (permission applied for reproduction from Savills)*

possession of Wroxton Priory (an early 13th century Augustian foundation) granted by Thomas Siddell, chaplain to Wroxton Manor. By 1536 **Balscott Mill** was worth 40s, with a tenant, John Sergeant[8] – Wroxton Mill, on the other hand, was worth only 26s.8d.

After the dissolution of the priory, in 1536, ownership of its associated manors and mills came into the hands of Thomas Pope, (1507-1559) treasurer to the Court of Augmentations set up by Thomas Cromwell (1485-1540), chief minister to Henry VIII. The Court was responsible for the processing of the dissolution of the monastic houses and lands and arranging the sales of same. Thomas Pope was, of course, in a superb position of being able to choose to buy whatever property he wished and, no doubt, at a very favourable price. Later, in 1554, Pope founded Trinity College, Oxford endowing his new college with the manors of Wroxton and Balscott and their associated mills. The college leased both Wroxton (mentioned below) and Balscott manors and mills to Thomas Coventry who instituted improvements during the mid-nineteenth century but the agricultural depression of the late-nineteenth century plus the lack of a constant supply of water, even with its expensively engineered overshot water-system, meant that by 1914 the mill was no longer viable and by the 1920s was in private hands.

The whole of this mill was built to a high standard – no expense was spared. The stone-built mill buildings are in first class order, the major buildings are on three floors and the original machinery is still in situ (although it needs re-assembling). The mill was an overshot mill driven by a 12ft x 5ft cast iron wheel made by Lampitts of Banbury which is still in place and in good condition, albeit with most of the buckets (paddles) long gone. The water system is also still in place but thoroughly clogged-up as might be expected. The sheep-wash near the mill wheel is intact; also all the associated out-houses including a bakery, brewery and brick-built stables are in good order. The power take-off from a crown wheel (which drove the hoist and saw bench) also, unusually, powered a fan driving air through a duct under the yard into the cellar of the house to keep the dairy cool; this, too, is still in place.

**WROXTON MILL** (SP 398405, *Werochestan*). There is very little left to see except traces of the water system that powered it. In 1086 it was valued at 8s – indicating a not particularly productive mill. Balscott and Wroxton mills were both granted to Wroxton Priory in 1263 (founded in 1261). A date stone with 1275 carved into it was inserted into the present day building now standing on the site of the mill, possibly indicating a reconstruction date. After the dissolution its story shadowed that of Balscott. The buildings were sold off in 1931 for private use.

**HAZELFORD MILL** (SP 405390, not specified in the Domesday survey) and later a fulling and papermill, was probably one of two mills mentioned in the survey as belonging to Broughton (Brohtune) manor.[9]

8. *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (Record Commision) vol ii, p 198.
9. *Domesday survey* – Ibi. *II. Molini de. xvi. Solid* (2 mills at 16s.).

In 1444 the mill and one acre of land was held by Thomas Hazelford for a rental of 13s.4d (one mark) to the Wykeham family. On Thomas Jeffery's map of 1767 the mill is shown as Upper Fulling Mill (that is the processing of already woven woollen cloth) although by 1792 it had already been converted to producing paper being leased to George King. The lease was passed on to William Sellars who worked the mill up to his death, after which his wife, Rebeca Sellars, carried on until the mill ceased working soon after 1851. She then went on to run the third mill belonging to the manor at North Newington, still producing paper.

An estate plan of 1856 shows, what in effect was a tiny hamlet, at Hazelford[10] with the mill, its outbuildings and workers' cottages. Now it is all but deserted – the site is covered with lots of trees and a few stones above ground with some of the water system still visible – on a summers day it has a magical atmosphere about it – one can almost hear the noise of happy children's voices as they play in the water. Although the mill had ceased working the mill house was still lived in by John Simms, a miller, and his family in 1869. By 1881 George Morby, a dyer, lived there – perhaps he worked at the Lower Fulling Mill, the other estate mill, further down-stream.

The first edition of the OS 1 inch map of this area (1831) shows the mill firmly as Hazelford Papermill. The remnants of a ford can still be seen but there are no tracks leading to it now – the 1881 OS map showed that several tracks lead to the mill site from different directions; no doubt these tracks were very old as an Anglo-Saxon charter, dated 956, mentions the existence of a ford called *Haesel Ford* – also the brook, at this point, was the boundary between the parishes of Tadmarton and Broughton. Today traces of a ford can still be seen and there is even a hazel tree overhanging the brook – perhaps the son of the son and so on!

**LOWER FULLING MILL & DYE WORKS**, (SP 408384, *Brohtune*) On the 1882 OS map the mill is shown as a fulling and dye works. Much of the main stone building survives as do the farm buildings shown on the same map; part of the old main building is used as a farmhouse. The mill race is still intact and flowing. This mill by 1444 was already used for the processing of woollen cloth.

The production of cloth, by the 17th century, was a major industry in the Banbury area. Banbury plush was to become an international commodity by the 19th century. Local folklore has the mill dying cloth for the uniforms of the soldiers recruited by the Fiennes family to fight on the Parliamentary side at the start of the Civil War. By 1827 this mill was fully equipped to dye cloth and, to judge from its tax returns, was doing very well. It had all the necessary infrastructure, a shearing house, drying racks for woad and storage buildings. An estate farm, north of the Castle, was reputed to have supplied woad, grown locally, to the fulling mill; this farm was near the third estate mill, which no doubt was used in the processing of the dye.

In 1852, John Hutchings, the miller, claimed that the brilliant colours produced were due to the excellent quality of the water. He was one of the dyers of the cloth produced by the Banbury plush industry used for royal liveries and uniforms for the metropolitan police and for the hangings at the new Palace of Westminster. The plush industry died a slow death by the end of the 19th century so the mill was converted to producing paper – it ceased operating entirely by the turn of the 20th century.

**WYKHAM MILL** (Wickham) (SP 436376, *Wicha*). The spelling of this mill varies – some maps have it with a 'y' and some documents with an 'i'; the parish of Wykham is part of the hundred of Banbury.

10. Margaret Taylor, 'Hazelford - A Deserted Village', *C&CH* (2000), vol 15/1, p 2.

*Wickham Mill*

In 1086 the mill, then part of the vast land holdings of the bishops of Lincoln, was held by Robert (Walkelin?) and was worth, annually, 30s; it was still valued at 30s in 1218. In 1303 Walter, son of Henry the miller, granted the mill and some nearby land to the Hospital of St John the Baptist of Banbury, then sited on the east side of South Bar in Banbury.

By 1549 the mill was in the hands of the Crown probably as the result of the dissolution of the monasteries; the next reference to it came in 1617 when John Gill claimed to have purchased it together with some land; he sold it on to Thomas Hawkins of Warwick – it is thought that the estate was broken up soon after this. The name Wykham Mill first appears in 1680 in a will of Josiah Gordson, a miller, it was also specifically named by Joseph Walter, miller, in his will of 1700.[11] About this time the mill and Wyckham Mill Farm was owned by the wealthy, influential Chamberlayne family – this may well have been the same family who, owned Lower Grove Mill at Bodicote.

Later millers were John Coles (1833) and Philip Bradshaw (1839-76) from Bedfordshire and another Philip Bradshaw (who was probably the first Philip's son) in 1899-1907; and yet another Bradshaw took over when Philip II died, doing business as Bradshaw & Son in 1911. The present building is a three storey, brick-built mill, water-powered with a double width breast-wheel which powered four pairs of stones until 1963 but after that worked by a petrol-driven engine driving a generator which just powered dressers and grinders for cattle fodder until 1968; it is now part of a light-industrial site.

**UPPER GROVE MILL** (SP 453372, *Blochesham*). This mill appears on the 1767 Thomas Jeffery's map of the Banbury area as Grove Mill; however it is not shown at all on the 1833 OS map of the same area. Nevertheless it is considered to be one of the two mills, on the Sor Brook, belonging to the royal estate of Bloxham (*Blochesham*) mentioned in the Domesday survey; both mills are mentioned in the census of 1851.

By the first half of the 13th century Upper Grove mill was in the hands of the St Amand family, an old aristocratic Norman family who owned land in the Bloxham Hundred. Eleanor St Amand sold the mill to Sir Thomas Wykeham of Broughton Castle around 1431/32; it was then known as Clare Mill. Sir Thomas's granddaughter, Margaret, married Willam Fiennes, 2nd Lord Saye and Sele and in 1455/56 when Margaret's father died, presumably, they inherited the mill. The Fiennes leased the mill to various millers, and by the late 16th century the mill was known as Bloxham Grove Mill (probably from the nearby farm of that name). At various times in their histories both upper and lower Grove Mills were just referred to as Grove Mill; they were frequently leased and then sub-leased thus making their histories more than a little confusing.

11. Oxfordshire History Centre (pec. 55/3/18).

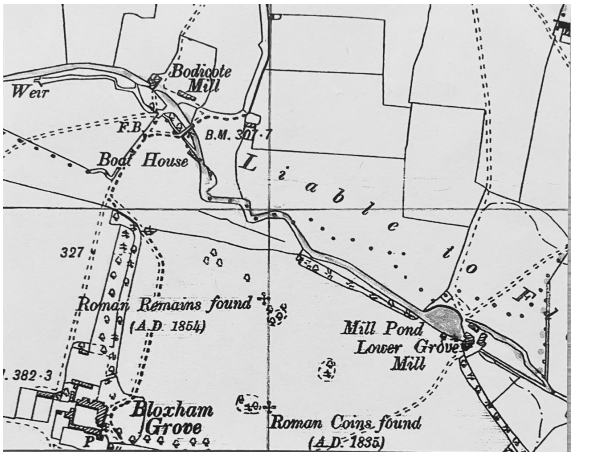
The present brick buildings of Upper Grove Mill were constructed about 1880, most likely by the Cherry family who were the mill owners in 1887; it was known then as **Cherry's Mill** – the buildings are still fairly complete. A second-hand turbine was installed in 1856 allowing the mill to continue being worked until 1939 when it was closed down. After that it became a grain store up until 1968. Also, in that year John Carter reported that the wooden, overshot wheel that had originally driven three pairs of stones, was still in situ and the miller was still a Cherry. The complex is now a private dwelling.

*Upper Grove Mill*

What is interesting is that the OS 1/2500 map of 1881 of this area records Roman remains found very near this mill in 1835 and again in 1852. This would have been the ideal site for a Roman villa on good agricultural land and near water – might there have been a watermill even then? The third Bloxham mill, mentioned in the Domesday survey, is thought to have been the one at Milcombe, a hamlet to Bloxham – this will not be considered in this paper.

**BODICOTE MILL** (SP 458372, Bodicote)

At the time of the Domesday survey Bodicote was part of what became the Winchester Manor of Adderbury. This manor was recorded as having two mills – Bodicote Mill and Adderbury Mill (Adderbury had two more mills – both these were worked off the River Cherwell and are not considered in this paper).




*Bodicote Mill OS map 1898 1/2500*

Bodicote Mill, owned by the bishopric of Winchester was held, in the 14th century, by Hugh the Miller who was amongst the highest local contributors to the lay subsidy tax of 1327, indicating how successful he was. He died of the plague around 1348-49 – no one then worked the mill until 1353; the Black Death had probably wiped-out between 40% - 60% of the population. Edward Councer of Bloxham held the mill in the 16th century; he is also mentioned as leasing Grove mill (which, upper or lower?). William Dauntsey of London owned this mill in 1675.

The *Victoria County History* records[12] that Bodicote had two mills in 1854 (one corn and one malt) but by 1869 only one is mentioned. Looking at the large scale map it is difficult to see where another mill could have been sited as the two Grove Mills and Bodicote mill were all

12. The VCH's quoted source for this information was *Billing's Directory for Oxfordshire* for 1854.

within a few hundred yards of each other; all working off the same water from one small brook. Neither the 1833, 1" to the mile OS map of the Banbury area nor the Bodicote sheet of the OS 1881 1/2500 scale map show two mills at Bodicote. Very possibly there was some, understandable, confusion with Lower Grove Mill which is very close to Bodicote whilst being geographically in the parish of Bloxham. Bodicote, historically, parted company, in 1855, with Adderbury (the year after Billing's directory was published) becoming a civil parish in its own right.

The bulk of the existing brick mill buildings and stable-block were re-built, probably, about 1880 perhaps at the same time as the next-door Upper Grove Mill. The back of the mill is constructed of stone; the buildings are in excellent condition and are now in domestic use. John Carter reported that some of the machinery was still in situ in 1968. The miller here was John Austin, as at Lower Grove.

**LOWER GROVE MILL** (SP 453368 *Blochesham*) As mentioned above these two mills with Grove in their name – *confusion, confusion!*

In 1602/3 Sir Richard Fiennes sold **Upper Grove Mill** to Sir Thomas Chamberlin (?-1643, 1st Baronet and sherriff of Oxfordshire 1643) so Chamberlin was in possession of two of Bloxham's watermills – but which two mills? Later his grandson, also Sir Thomas Chamberlin, held a mill in Bloxham in 1681 which was, almost certainly, Lower Grove Mill; this later came into the hands of the wealthy Dashwood family of Kirtlington Park who leased it to Robert Marriot; the mill, for a time, was known as Marriot's Mill and marked on maps dated 1767 and 1797 as such. It is now known as Sorbrook Mill.

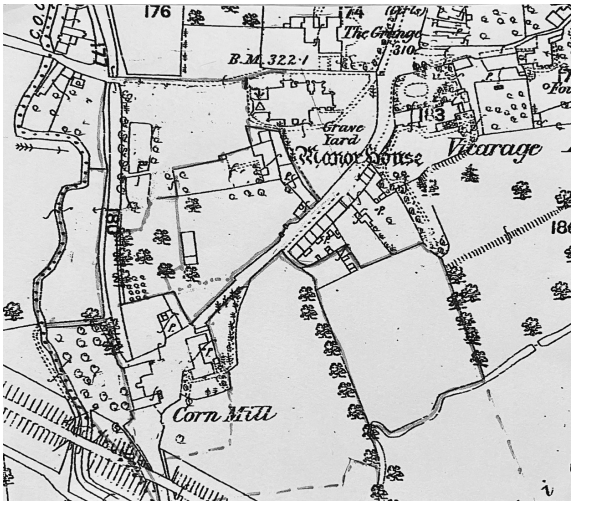
The present brick building was constructed around 1870 by John Austin who also worked the next door Bodicote mill – owned by the Austin family, well known wealthy brewers in the area. The mill was originally a three storey building with a breast-wheel which drove two pairs of stones. This wheel was removed about 1900 and a small second-hand turbine, manufactured in 1858, was installed to drive the mill. It also drove an electric generator to supply power to nearby Cotefield House. The mill had ceased working by 1903.

The original mill building was subsequently reduced to two storeys by Mr Hoskins who also had the mill pond filled in to make the present garden. Presumably the large oblong pond a few yards from the house was the source of the soil for the infill of the mill-pond. The complex was converted to domestic use in the late 1950s and the small stone bridge was demolished, to be replaced by the present modern concrete structure. The mill's recent owners, in the 1990s, managed to get the mill and its surrounds subsumed into the administration of Bodicote parish council which made a great deal of sense as this mill has always, geographically, been isolated from Bloxham.

*Lower Grove Mill*

ADDERBURY MILL (SP 470351, *Edburgberie*)

Two of the four mills mentioned in the Domesday survey of Adderbury are considered by historians to have belonged to the Winchester Manor (acquired by a bishop of Winchester very early in the 11th century) both of which were sited on the Sor Brook, one at Adderbury and the other at Bodicote; the other two mills, sited on the River Cherwell, do not concern this account.




*Adderbury OS map, 1890*

The **WINCHESTER MILL** – the present Adderbury Mill was originally sited immediately west of the present Duchess Bridge on the Oxford Road (SP 475354), known at the time of the Enclosure Act (1768), as Gillett's Mill. Recent photographs show substantial archaeological evidence above the water level. By the second half of the 18th century the dowager, Duchess of Argyll who lived at Adderbury House[13] and owned much of the ancient parish of Adderbury East, gave orders circa 1764 that the mill should be moved further up river – there was a perfectly good mill stream available at the bottom of Mill Lane with a much more usable and reliable source of water - the duchess's land agent would have been well aware of it.[14] This mill leat had been used to power an earlier mill, now known to have been there in the 16th century – the subject of a separate paper.

*Adderbury Mill, 1769*

The old mill was moved to its present location, at the bottom of what was to become Mill Lane circa 1764 – a workman building the new mill, most likely, scratched the date 1764 beside one of the windows facing north. This mill and complex of stone mill buildings were built to a lavish standard, as were the miller's house and stables across the lane. Towards the end of the 19th century it ceased working as the mill stream had silted up and was clogged by weeds. John Wallin, the last of the millers, had a dry-mill installed in Chapel Lane (powered by a steam engine).

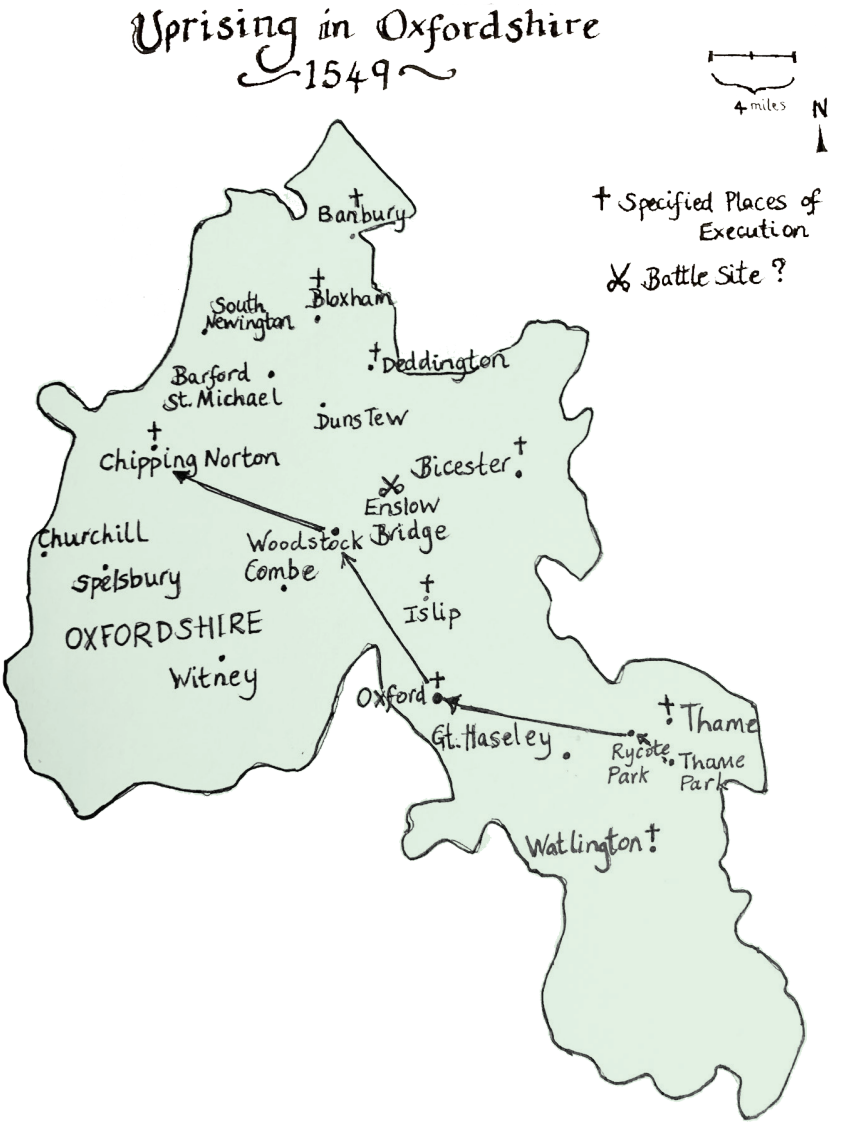
By the 1930s the mill was in private hands with the water diverted to power a turbine to produce electricity as well as to drive a pump moving sewage to the filter beds to the south of the mill. The mill building was reputed to have been the very first property in the village to have been lit by electricity. In 1963 the site was reported as dilapidated but has since been lavishly restored and all the buildings on this site are now in very good order and in domestic use. None of the mill machinery exists; there are, however, a few fragments of mill stone in the garden of the mill house and the mill itself. Having visited the sites of all ten mills on the Sor Brook I think that the setting of this mill complex is quite the most enchanting of all of them.

13. Jennifer Sherwood and Nikolaus Pevsner *The Buildings of England: Oxfordshire* (Penguin Books, 1974) p 416.
14. See Nick Allen 'The story of two watermills on Mill Lane, Adderbury' *C&CH* (2023), vol 25, p 61.

# THE 1549 OXFORDSHIRE 'COMMOTIONS AND UPROARS' UNDER EDWARD VI

*Tim J Guile*

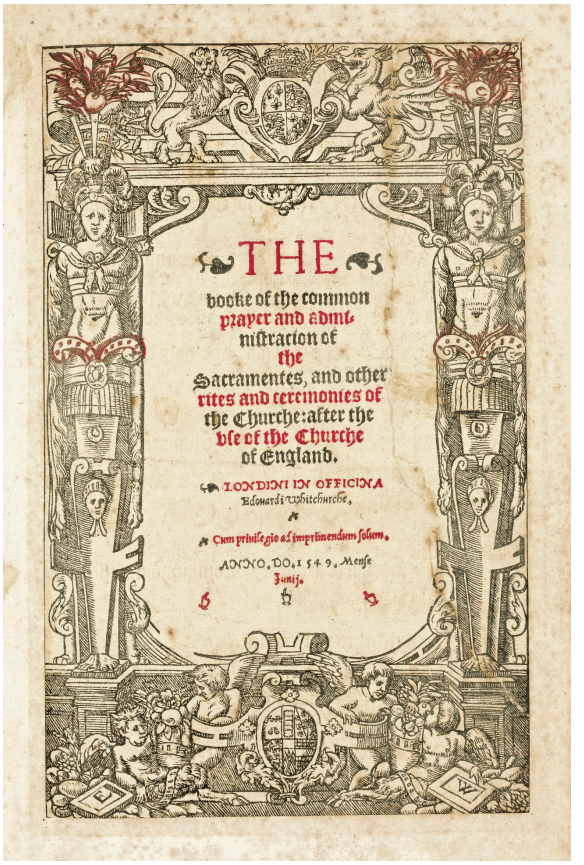
'In the most parts of the realm sundry lewd persons have attempted to assemble themselves and, first seeking redress of enclosures, have in some places by seditious priests and other evil people set forth to seek restitution of the old bloody laws.'[1]




*Main places associated with the 1549 Oxfordshire rising.*
*Based on a map by F G Davis, in a paper presented to the George and Katherine Dyson Society, South Newington Village Hall, 25 November 2003*

The summer of 1549 was a time of turmoil in much of southern England, in parts of the Midlands and in East Anglia, which the government of King Edward VI struggled to control. Kett's Rebellion in Norfolk was a largely agrarian revolt with a few religious demands; poor harvests and poverty amongst the rural peasantry largely fuelled the discontent. Already by 1548, there had been directives from the bishops and the King's Commissioners to simplify church practices and at the same time each parish had to contribute to the defence of the realm as a kind of tax. All these regulations had a draining effect on both church finances, the faith the people practiced and the social structures of local society.[2] 1549 was a pivotal moment in the history of the English church.

In the southwest, the Prayer Book Rebellion, following the introduction of the new Book of Common Prayer the same year, led to the siege of Exeter. The uprisings in the west could be said to be the last gasp of Catholic resistance in the south to the changes in the church brought about by Protestant reformers in London. Eamon Duffy states that, 'the rebels sought a restoration not only of the old Mass, but of the full ceremonial range of medieval Catholicism. They singled out the sacramentals of holy bread and water, the Lenten ceremonies of ashes and palms, the parish procession on Sundays, but also included, 'all other auncient olde Ceremonyes used heretofore, by our mother the holy Churche'.[4]


THE
booke of the common
prayer and admi-
nistracion of
the
Sacramentes, and other
rites and ceremonies of
the Churche: after the
vse of the Churche
of England.
LONDINI IN OFFICINA
Edouardi Whitchurche.
Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum.
ANNO. DO. 1549. Mense
Junij.

*The Book of Common Prayer, 1549, was compiled by Archbishop Cranmer from several sources, including the Sarum Rite of Mass, the Latin liturgy developed in Salisbury in the thirteenth century, and widely used in England. Secondary influences included a reformed Roman Breviary of the Spanish Cardinal Quiñones, and a book on doctrine and liturgy by Hermann von Wied, Archbishop of Cologne. This prayer book was in use only for three years, until the extensive revision of 1552*[3]

Two years before, the Chantries Act had allowed the seizing of all chantries, their plate and any land associated with them. Hospitals and their associated schools, such as the Hospital of St John and the Grammar School, Banbury, were closed, adversely affecting people in different ways. While the closure of the monasteries affected rural areas overall, the closure of chantries affected urban people more. Henry Joyes, vicar of Chipping

1. Letter from the Lord Protector, Somerset to the Marquis of Dorset and the Earl of Huntingdon, 11 June 1549 cited in https://oxoniensia.org/volumes/1957/woodman.pdf , p 79 (accessed 12.11.23).
2. E Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath*, (Yale University Press, London, 2001), p 124.
3. http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1549/BCP_1549.htm 'The Book of Common Prayer 1549' (accessed 14.11.23).
4. E Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (Yale University Press, London 1992), p 466.

*Little Rollright*

*Barford St John*

Norton, appears to have joined the rising because the effect of the Chantries Act had left him to minister alone to 800 parishioners. Many local people had donated money and goods to the chantries which said masses for their dead ancestors and many resented their seizure and closure by the Crown. This must have led to worsening relations between government and the governed who had no say in what was happening to their way of life. Even church ales, a major source of church income and a good source of entertainment for the villages, were banned.

In addition, the enclosure of common land by landowners, especially in the north of Oxfordshire, had serious effects. This 'ingrossing' as it was known, often left peasants with fewer opportunities for housing or employment. It had happened earlier in the century for example when the Abbot of Eynsham converted 200 acres of land at Little Rollright to pasture. Twenty or more tenants were dispossessed. The same thing happened when the Prior of Bicester Priory enclosed land at Wretchwick near Bicester. It was said that the people 'withdrew sadly, wandering about and seeking their bread elsewhere.'[5] The Priory of St Frideswide in Oxford did the same thing at Binsey nearby where it was reported that many people were left destitute. Local resentment at enclosures was likely to have played a part, particularly at Great Haseley, where Thomas Bouldry had been the lessee of the demesne farm, and where the recently enclosed deer park of Sir John Williams (1503-1559) at Rycote House was attacked by a mob who subsequently broke into his house and drank his wine and beer. There had been some minor enclosure riots or disturbances in Buckinghamshire the previous year, though the authorities' response was lenient. Landowners such as the Fermor family of Somerton Manor also tried to enclose some of their land and convert it to more profitable sheep farming.

This was the background with which the people of Oxfordshire would have been all too familiar. Unlike the rising in Devon and Cornwall, it does not seem that any gentry became involved, and most of those whose names were to be associated with the rising were either farmers, artisans, or parish priests. The Oxfordshire rising's quick suppression meant that the rebels' specific demands have gone unrecorded, though they were probably similar to those of the Cornish rising, namely reinstatement of the *Six Articles* and the Latin liturgy with the redress of additional local grievances.

5. https://www.history.ac.uk/research/victoria-county-history/county-histories-progress/oxfordshire Vol. II 188-9 quoted by F G Davis in *The 1549 Rising in Oxfordshire*, a paper presented to the George and Katherine Dyson Society at South Newington Village Hall 25th November 2003 (accessed 12.11.23).

## Timeline of events affecting Oxfordshire 1549

**25 February** St John's Hospital School, Banbury closed under the Chantries Act

**6 June** Richard Otys became Vicar of South Newington

**12 July** Earl of Somerset began to talk about a religious rising led by priests

**18 July** Rebels were defeated at Enslow Hill/ Chipping Norton

**19 July** William Bowlar was sentenced to be executed at Watlington, Thomas Bolwdry was sentenced to death at Oxford

**4 August** Edmund Bluemantle, Officer at Arms, was paid 66s. 8d for carrying the King's pardon into Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire. No copy of a similar pardon for Oxfordshire rebels has survived[6]

**7 August** Some Oxfordshire rebels were reportedly executed by this date. Continental Protestant reformer, John ab Ulmis (1525/9-1580) wrote, from Oxford 'The Oxfordshire papists are at last reduced to order, many of them having been apprehended, and some gibbeted and their heads fastened to the walls'[7]

**16 August** Four rebels including James Webbe, vicar of Barford St John, were arraigned at the Guildhall in London and condemned for high treason

*Uncovered wall painting in South Newington church*

**22 August** Rebels were executed in London. James Webbe was sent to Aylesbury to be hanged, drawn and quartered

**27 August** Robert Kett (c 1492-1549) and the East Anglia rebels were routed by 2nd Earl of Warwick, John Dudley

Despite the fact that vigorous and lively debates on the direction in which the English church was heading were held in Oxford, the rebellion began in the small towns of Oxfordshire: Bicester, Bloxham, Chipping Norton, Combe, Deddington, Duns Tew, Great Haseley, Islip, Thame and Watlington. Most people lived rural lives in largely self-sufficient communities where religion was bound up with everyday life and the passage of the seasons. Academic argument was not likely to be the concern of many people; of much more importance was the condition of their parish church and what they were allowed to do in it. Edward VI's Injunctions of July 1547 had required the removal of all images of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints, the whitewashing of wall paintings – such as those at South Newington – and the destruction of stained-glass windows depicting saints. Only two candles could remain on the altar. Rood screens and their crucifix and statues of Mary and St John were to be torn down. Few survived but a late fifteenth century rood screen at St James' church Somerton, was retained probably because of the intervention of the local Fermor family

6. Cited in A Vere Woodman, 'The Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Rising of 1549', *Oxoniensia*, XXII, 1957), p 81.
7. idem.

who were known to be sympathetic to the old faith. Older Latin texts disappeared. The new church under Edward VI was to have a distinctly Protestant direction although many of the local parishes probably ignored the injunctions or followed them only partially.

It is probable that James Webbe, the vicar of Barford St John, was the captain of the rising in Oxfordshire, based mainly on the fact that, unlike other rebels, he was later tried in London. Other ringleaders included a wealthy farmer, Thomas Bouldry or Bowldry of Great Haseley, and Henry Joyes, of Chipping Norton. The first clear evidence of an official response to the Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire rising is a letter from Somerset, Lord Protector, 10 July 1549, to the Marquis of Dorset and the Earl of Huntingdon in which he refers to persons 'nuely assembled' in Buckinghamshire.[8] On the 12 July he wrote to Lord Russell 'We had determined to send downe to you the Lord Graye with a band of horsemen and some hagbuters footmen. But that upon occasion of a sturr her in Bucks and Oxfordshire by sundry priests (kepe it to yourself) for these matyers of religion, we have been forced to kepe him a while and yet we trust that within a few days shall he chaystice them, and then shall we send him unto you'.[9]

The rising gained momentum and on the 18 July Lord Somerset was still delaying the dispatch of the 'almaiynes '[German soldiers] needed by Russell, 'partlye for the disorder of these parties'; however later in the same letter he wrote 'Ye shall be furnished of ayde of a skylfull man on horseback, the lord Graie, who by advertysement even nowe we perceyve to have chased the rebells of Bucks, Oxfordshire, and these parties to their houses, and taken cc of them and a dosen of the ring leders delyverid unto him whereof parte at least shall suffer paynes of death to the example of all malefactors'.[10] After a brief delay, forces to oppose them were indeed dispatched under the formidable soldier William Grey, 13th Baron Grey de Wilton. Accompanying him were 1500 mainly German and Swiss mercenary soldiers, en route to suppressing the West Country disturbances. The young Edward VI noted the outcome in his journal the same day: 'To Oxfordshire the Lord Grey of Wilton was sent with one thousand five hundred horsemen and footmen; whose coming with th'assembling of the gentlemen of the countrie, did so abash the rebels, that more than hauf of them rann ther wayes, and other that tarried were some slain, some taken and some hanged'.[11]

The army moved from the Midlands into Oxfordshire and later on to Bristol, Somerset and Cornwall.[12] The place at which Grey's force confronted the rebels is often thought to have been Enslow Hill, near Bletchingdon, although an encampment near Chipping Norton has also been suggested. In the immediate aftermath of the troops' arrival, there were signs that the Privy Council was beginning to regret employing German *landsknechts* in Oxfordshire, as it was reported that people were threatening to leave not one foreigner alive in England.

The orders given on 19 July by Lord Grey to his lieutenants make it clear there were a large number of summary executions immediately following the confrontation at Enslow Hill, but of the two hundred or so taken captive only around a dozen ringleaders, a mixture of priests and yeomen, were ordered to be executed for treason in various towns. 'First it is thought good by the said Lord Grey that these traitorous persons, whose names be underwritten, shall suffer execution in these several towns underwritten immediately, or else on the next market day following, according as the other like offenders have in other

8. https://archive.org/details/troubles00connectepocorich/page/24/mode/2up (accessed 12.11.23).
9. https://archive.org/details/troubles00connectepocorich/page/26/mode/2up (accessed 12.11.23).
10. https://oxoniensia.org/volumes/1957/woodman.pdf, 80 (accessed 12.11.23).
11. *Literary remains of King Edward VI* (Roxburghe Club, 1857) vol II, p 228.
12. M A Stoyle, *A Murderous Midsummer: The Western Rising of 1549*, (Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut 2022) p 182.

places suffered, and after execution done, the heads of every of them in the same towns to be set up in the highest place for the more terror of the said evil people. It is also ordered by the said Lord Gray 'that the said gentlemen shall be present with their aid to cause execution to be done accordingly.'[13] The names of the prisoners ordered to suffer and the names of the towns appointed to punish them were issued. 'George Raves, John White of Combe to be hanged at Banbury. Richard Tomson, vicar of Donstewe. Henrie Mathew, parish priest of Dedington, to be hanged at Dedington, John Brookyns, a craftsman, to be hanged at Yslypp. William Boolar of Watlington, to be hanged at Watlington. Two of the mo't seditious which are not yet apprehended to suffer at Tame. Two others of the most seditious to be hanged at Oxforthe, Richard Whyttington of Dedington, weaver, to be hanged at Bysseter. The vicar of Cheping Norton [Joyes] to be hanged upon the 'teeple there. John Wade, parish priest of Bloxham, to be hanged on the steeple there, Bowldry of Haseley to be hanged at Oxford.'[14] James Webbe was to be hanged, drawn and quartered at Aylesbury on 22 August, However, not all those appointed to die were executed, including John Wade, who was still living at Bloxham in 1553. Several of the Buckinghamshire men were also spared, with the pardons issued to Thomas Kyghtley, George and Thomas Willatt, John Warde and Edward Barton; there may have been more but this is the only information remaining on the Buckinghamshire insurgents.

*St Mary's church and steeple, Bloxham*

Despite the pardons extended to some ringleaders, the rising in general seems to have been put down with the same pitiless force and brutality that characterised the response to the Prayer Book Rebellion, where large-scale massacres were alleged. Lord Grey needed little encouragement to act with severity and many more executions took place than the dozen specified in his order of 19 July. Writing some years later under the pro-Catholic regime of Queen Mary, the poet William Forrest, who had been a monk at Thame (where at least two of the executions were carried out) described a time in which:

> Downe went the Crosse in every countraye,
> Goddys servauntes used withe muche crudelytee,
> Dysmembred (like beastes) in th'open highe waye,
> Their inwardys pluckte oute and hartis wheare they laye.[15]

13. https://oxoniensia.org/volumes/1957/woodman.pdf, 80 (accessed 12.11.23).
14. https://oxoniensia.org/volumes/1957/woodman.pdf, 81 (accessed 12.11.23).
15. https://archive.org/details/historyofgrisild00forrich/page/81/mode/2up (accessed 12.11.23).

The countrywide disturbances of 1549 were to play a part in the downfall of Somerset later that year, as he was blamed by other Privy Council members for the discontent and criticised for his response, which varied wildly between the liberally tolerant and the draconian. In October 1549, he was forced out of power and imprisoned in the Tower of London by John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, and a group of privy councillors. He was later released and reconciled with Warwick (by then Duke of Northumberland), but in 1551 Northumberland accused him of treason, and he was executed in January 1552. Somerset appears to have had a good deal of sympathy with protestors against enclosure, if not with the religiously inspired rebels, and many of those who threw down enclosures had been misled by his earlier pronouncements into believing that they were acting with the King's blessing. He remained a figure of hate for religious conservatives, and his final removal from power in January 1550 was greeted with joyous demonstrations in Oxford.

In January 1550, an order was enshrined in an Act for the 'defacing of images and the bringing in of books of Service in the Church.' All the old mass books were ordered to be destroyed as soon as possible. These things were to be utterly abolished, extinguished and forbidden. All statues were similarly ordered to be destroyed by 1 June. Local officials would be fined or threatened with imprisonment if these objects were not surrendered. The Council had decided that there was to be no further compromise with the Catholic past that had now gone. On the 27th January 1550, the leaders of the southwestern rebellion, Humphrey Arundell, John Wynslade, John Bury and Thomas Holmes were executed at Tyburn. It could not be denied that the rebels had died for the old beliefs and practices. Lord Russell was rewarded by being given land and property and becoming the Earl of Bedford. He was given Woburn in Bedfordshire and Thorney in Cambridgeshire as well as Bedford House in Exeter.

This was a turning point and a watershed in English church history. Nevertheless, Catholic practices continued in Oxfordshire at a local level especially after Mary I came to the throne in July 1553 when it became possible, once again, to practice the Catholic faith. However, the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558 on the death of her sister, meant that the old faith was once again discouraged and gradually, following a series of laws, became almost impossible to practice. Catholicism however, survived in parts of north Oxfordshire, almost entirely due to the protection offered by the recusant Fermor family of Somerton and later Tusmore Park.

16. E Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (Yale University Press, London 1992), 469.

# HANWELL EXCAVATIONS IN 2023

*Stephen Wass*

Last year saw work continuing in our study of the important site of the 17th century garden and park attached to Hanwell Castle. Excavations on the remains of Sir Anthony Cope's 'House of Diversion' were completed and the trenches back-filled to help preserve and landscape the ruins; however new areas have also been opened up to extend our knowledge of the layout of the gardens.

*Work underway on the cobbled surface on the south side of the garden*

A curious feature consisting of a cobbled hard standing was excavated next to a small stream close to the south side of the garden. This also revealed a massive shaped slab of fossil rich ironstone that may have formed part of Sir Anthony's geological collection. If this could be proved it would make it one of the oldest examples of a fossil prepared for display in the country if not the world. Another important discovery has been the footing and drains associated with a large stone staircase descending from the castle towards the 'House of Diversion'. The extensive foundations suggest rather a grand affair and work is continuing to reveal the full extent of this feature and further details of its construction.

We have also launched a major investigation to determine the site of Sir Anthony's 'marvellous mill' that, according to Robert Plot, was ' ... 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'.

1. Robert Plot *Natural History of Oxfordshire* (1675), p 269-270.

*Excavation of the remains of the grand staircase and associated drain*

Apart from examining early maps and using modern resources, such as lidar,[2] and undertaking detailed survey work on the ground we have also began a further round of metal detecting in the valley to attempt to identify the kind of concentration of metallic debris that may indicate the site of the mill. This will be supported by a programme of test-pitting at appropriate locations and will continue throughout 2024.

A new departure has been to collaborate with garden historian Ann Benson who is studying another Cope family property at Bramshill House in Hampshire. Of particular interest is a room with paneling that has been painted with a wide range of botanic illustrations that may have come originally from Hanwell.

As always, we are hugely grateful to our team of volunteers, both local and from further afield who come to us to experience a unique archaeological site.

2. Light detection and ranging method of non-invasive archaeology.

# PARSON'S STREET, BANBURY: A LIFETIME OF CHANGE 1950-2023

*Brian Goodey*

Changes in the function of Banbury's market town streets have featured in the writing of local history, notably in Barrie Trinder's work[1] and in Brian Little's reports on retail and business change.[2] Both were involved in a BHS project on the evolution of Parson's Street, the evidence from which remains to be consolidated. Later Brian Little and the author had suggested a detailed study of shop fronts and business plates to record the very substantial changes in the town centre in the early 21st century. What follows is a sample of change from the 1950 record in *Kelly's Directory of Banbury* to evidence of a street walk in November 2023.[3]

Parson's Street is not, of course, Banbury's High Street, where there have been building and use changes aplenty in the period, but an historic street, now pedestrianised; it has plenty of historic markers, and a strong Old Town business booster group to maintain its use and significance. There have been many use changes in 70 years, but most of the units identified in Kelly may be identified today. In what follows I have paired reported 1950 and perceived 2023 functions. It is a mini-record of historic town centre change that could be expanded, and compared with market town streets elsewhere. A similar survey undertaken in nearby Bicester in 2023 came up with similar results.[4]

## 1950

It was less than five years since the end of WW II. People were often both bereaved and displaced and piecing together 1930s memories of daily life and social links. A new wartime generation had grown up with rationing that was not completely removed until 1954. The war had advanced farm mechanisation but horses in the streets were commonplace. Craft industries had often failed to revive, there was little money available for eating out or celebration, and whilst driving was a widespread skill, car ownership was for the more affluent.

'Going to town' was a tradition, early closing was Tuesdays in Banbury, the stalled market was in its place on Thursdays and the stock market divided by species into the town's streets. The foundations of town business, services, professions and daily suppliers were in the centre of town, though some were repeated in the surrounding villages of 'Banburyshire', a popular market region concept defined by bus routes and nearby market town competition.

## 2023

Of the 'Professional & Trades' listed for Banbury in Kelly many, often craft activities, no longer survive in 2023 online listings – basket makers, bill posters, blacksmiths

1. B Trinder, *Georgian Banbury* (Banbury Historical Society, New series 2023, 1) discusses the form and functions of Parsons Street in chapters on 'Professions and Trades' and 'Manufactures'. Pursued further in B. Trinder *Victorian Banbury* (Philimore/Banbury Historical Society, 2005).
2. B Trinder ed. *Banbury Remembered: Looking Back 1995-2019* by Brian Little (Banbury Historical Society, vol 37). A number of Little's newspaper columns include oral evidence on post-WWII changes in retail activity.
3. *Kelly's Directory of Banbury and Neighbourhood*, 1950: field data for 2023 obtained from ground floor Parson's Street frontages, upper floor signs noted but not included here. Private residences in 2023 probably underrepresented.
4. Robert Hessian '*Shops in Bicester and their Development to the Present Day*', talk to Oxfordshire Local History Association Study Day. 'A History of Shops and Shopping in Oxfordshire', Bicester 18 November 2023. Hessian, the Chair of Bicester Local History Society, reported similar results from his shop front survey of Bicester's historic retail centre.


*Parson's Street c 1950 (post card 4244 by Salmon ' Water Colour' series)*


*Parson's Street 2023 from the same point*

boot and shoe makers, breeches makers, brewers, coopers, corn and flour merchants, engineer-wireless, ladder makers, leather merchants, mattress maker, pork butcher, rope manufacturer, saddlers & harness makers, smiths, blacksmiths and farriers, tar distillers, taxidermist, typewriter dealers, umbrella makers, wool staplers and yeast merchants. Many of these activities involved both a workshop and a customer desk revealing the town centre as a local place of creation and economic activity.

A few in the Kelly list have survived in Banburyshire, but out of the town centre; couriers, clock makers, farriers, harness makers and saddlers are all in the area. Very few of these 1950 traditional activities survive today nearer the town centre – gunsmiths, iron founders, and toy makers. The professional services in finance, law and medicine survive in 2023 but many of the daily household provisions, self-help and gardening requirements are now included in the offer of peripheral retailers. In 1950 only the American popular diversity of Woolworths hinted at the looming threat to the town centre specialist shop.

## 1950-2023

Opposite is a version of the Kelly entries for Parson's Street in 1950 with the function of the unit(s) in similar locations in 2023. Property numbering has become less important in recent years. There have been insertions and new frontages, and the list only applies to ground floor uses, save for private residences with bells at street level.

A generous comparison between the two lists shows private residential, usually in flats or apartments on upper floors, has survived and probably expanded. No vacant units appear in 1950, but then they are unlikely to do so in a Directory.

Five activities appear in both lists, although their form, function and client lists may be very different – boot repair, fancy goods, herbalist, ladies' hairdressers, and a newsagent survive by broad description.

## A Future for History

It is now a very different walk from the 1950s, with a cosmopolitan and leisure feel that welcomes the visitor and people watcher. The current shop front offer emphasises services that are difficult to engage online such as personal grooming and eating out; there are few of the old necessities here. Writing in a world of post-Covid change we should be concerned for the street's future vitality.[5] The next decade, let alone the next seventy years, are likely to see less active shop front interest, and more secured frontages for residential properties.

Central streets have long been the stage set for daily urban life and for regional shopping visits. On line shopping, out of town retail with parking, and stand-alone multiples with parking have hollowed out redundant market town centres. A world of nail bars and hairdressers does not represent Banbury as an historic town ... but what does?

Without the purposeful insertion of visible history, Banbury will lose its Unique Selling Proposition (USP) of cakes, cross and the rest and will, inevitably sink below the visibility of most tourist offers. A Parson's Street that offers quality, surprise, interest and involvement at every step is what is needed. Visitors and residents alike want to invest in a street where novelty, creativity and opportunity beckon from every door. For nearly ten years Parson's Street has been a persistent feature of 'The Banbury Old Town' promotional map and web site. The current site (banburyoldtown.com) begins to reflect both events and attractions that respond to changing demand, as do the increasing range of Town Council promoted events spread from the adjacent Market Place.

In future we might hope to see more permanent attractions emphasising the popular interpretation of local history. The centre of Parson's Street is the right place for a Visitor Centre that combines exhibits highlighting the town's USPs, with an active craft workshop re-living history, information, and a retail outlet. Such an attraction might have a ten-year life before economy, innovation and political energy shape new, or no, demands on the historic infrastructure of a former market town centre. How will Banbury's history be interpreted in the future?

5. B Goodey, 'Going to Town in the 1980s: Towards a More Human Experience of Commercial Space', *Built Environment* vol 5 (1979), p 27-36; B Goodey, 'Going to Town in the 21st Century: Banbury's Typicality as a Market Town' (*Academia edu*, 2007).'In-Person Experiences in British Market Towns After Covid' *(Academia edu*, 2019). Broader current issues effectively summarised by N Wrigley & D Lambiri eds. *British High Streets: from Crisis to Recovery* (Economic & Social Research Council, 2015).

| Parson's Street 1950 | | Parson's Street 2023 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Private residences | 13+ | Private residences | 10+ |
| Antiques | 1 | | |
| | | Art Gallery | 1 |
| | | Art Supplies | 1 |
| Flying Horse Hotel | 1 | (The Old) Auctioneer Inn [previously Flying Horse] | 1 |
| | | Auctioneers | 1 |
| | | Baker | 1 |
| Banbury Guardian | 1 | | |
| | | Barbers | 1 |
| Bookseller | 1 | | |
| Bootmaker | 1 | | |
| Boot repairer | 1 | | |
| | | Bridal Wear | 1 |
| Butcher | 2 | | |
| Cafe | 2 | Cafe | 2 |
| | | Carpets | 1 |
| Cakeshop | 1 | | |
| | | Charity shops | 2 |
| Chemist | 1 | | |
| Outfitter and Ladies outfitter | 2 | Clothing | 1 |
| Confectioner | 1 | Confectionery | 1 |
| Cycles | 1 | | |
| Draper | 3 | | |
| | | Electrical white goods | 1 |
| | | Entertainment Arcade | 1 |
| | | Estate Agent | 1 |
| Fancy goods | 2 | | |
| Fireplaces | 1 | | |
| Fish restaurant | 1 | | |
| Fishmonger | 1 | | |
| Footwear | 1 | | |
| | | Framer | 1 |
| Fruiterers | | | |
| Furnisher | 3 | | |
| Grocer | 1 | Groceries – Asian | 2 |
| Ladies Hairdresser | 2 | Hair Salon | 4 |
| Herbalist | 1 | Herbalist | 1 |
| | | Ice Cream Parlour | 1 |
| Insurance Office | 1 | | |
| Ironmonger | | | |
| | | Jeweller | 1 |
| Ladies Outfitter | 2 | | |
| | | Licensed Music Venue | 1 |
| | | Nail Bars | 4 |
| Newsagent | 1 | Newsagent | 1 |
| Photographer | 1 | | |
| | | Reptile pets | 1 |
| Reindeer Hotel | 1 | (Ye Old) Reindeer Inn | 1 |
| | | Restaurants – Italian and Asian | 9 |
| School of Motoring | 1 | | |
| Sewing machine service | 1 | Sewing machine requisites | 1 |
| | | Shoe repair | 1 |
| Sign Writer | 1 | | |
| Sports outfitter | 1 | | |
| Tailor | 2 | | |
| | | Variety store | 1 |
| | | Vacancies | 10 |
| Watch repairs | 1 | | |
| Wine merchant | 1 | | |
| Wireless dealer | 1 | | |

# LOCAL CAMPAIGN GROUP'S BANNER REMEMBERS OUR REGION'S RADICAL PAST

*NOSA members*


A striking banner created by a local campaign group, the North Oxfordshire Socialist Alliance (NOSA), has been turning heads at historical events around the country and beyond; even making the front page of *The Washington Post*. The banner, designed by Ed Hall,[1] was created to remember various historical battles for workers' rights and human rights that have happened on our doorstep.


1. Ed Hall is a banner maker, specialising in trade union and exhibition banners http://www.edhallbanners.co.uk

The front of the banner holds an image of landmarks in North Oxfordshire and flags of countries and community groups and activists which are struggling against the inequalities of modern life. The reverse of the banner consists of six panels that celebrate and commemorate past struggles, losses and wins in our region's history:

### The Banbury Mutiny, 1649

It's May 1649, Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army has literally removed the head of the monarchy. England is now a Republic. Troops billeted at Banbury grow ever disillusioned over parliament's reluctance to settle arrears of pay. They are given a choice – leave and be discharged from the army with parliament's blessing or join the planned invasion of Ireland. The troops at Banbury choose neither, they are now in open rebellion. Cromwell's wrath is final. They are betrayed and defeated in a surprise attack at Burford.


### The Swing Riots in Banbury and Tadmarton, 1830

Agriculture workers facing low wages, high unemployment and increased mechanisation of farming processes began fighting back by destroying the threshing machines that were replacing them. This action spread throughout the country with riot action in Neithrop, Banbury and the village of Tadmarton. This action is credited with driving through the Reform Act of 1832 which allowed a greater number of the population the right to the vote.


### The Otmoor Riots, 1830

The local people did not want landowners to ride roughshod over their rights and drain the land following enclosures and the planting of hedges. This came to a head on 6 September 1830 when about 1000 men walked the seven-mile circumference of Otmoor destroying hedges in broad daylight. The Riot Act was read to them in the hope they would disperse but they did not. 66 were arrested and 41 taken to Oxford Gaol. A crowd from Oxford Fair gathered and threw stones and bricks and they escaped.

### The Ascott Martyrs 1873


In the mid-19th century Oxfordshire was one of the poorest counties in the UK. Wages for farm workers were very low, which eventually led to the formation of the Agricultural Workers' Union, and strikes for better pay and conditions. For supporting their striking farm worker husbands, 16 women from Ascott-under-Wychwood were imprisoned for up to 10 days with hard labour for picketing during a strike in 1873. This traumatic event led to riots and a reprieve from Queen Victoria. Their legacy today is that picketing was made legal in 1874 and local religious leaders were no longer appointed as magistrates.

### The Bliss Mill Strike, Chipping Norton, 1913


A wave of strikes associated with intense industrial battles occurred in Britain between 1910 and 1914. One of these was a 6-month strike by 237 women and men at the Bliss Tweed Mill, the town's largest employer. A change of management due to the retirement of the Bliss family, a slump in the woollen trade, the introduction of new technology and an increase in the rate of inflation threatened the livelihoods of the majority of townspeople. Although it didn't achieve the aim of restoring work to all, the strike was one example of the creative element, initiative and fighting spirit which has carried on down the decades to the present time.

### Council Houses, Banbury, 1913


Local Councillor Herbert Payne saw the dreadful squalor in the town and placed pressure on the Council to create the regions first social housing. 40 good quality homes were built in Kings Road, some of the first in the Country built outside metropolitan areas, setting a precedent for other market towns struggling to meet their housing needs. Remarkably, this initiative by one of the local Independent Labour Councillors, received support from Conservative and Liberal Members; a rare example of cross-party support for progressive policy.

*All explanatory notes were written by NOSA members and appear on a set of postcards reproduced by the group. Sets are available for sale from NOSA members.*

# ARCHAEOLOGY ROUNDUP 2023

*Pamela Wilson*

Unlike in previous years when archaeological works around Banbury made national headlines – Broughton Castle Roman villa, the large Iron Age/Roman Blackgrounds settlement at Chipping Warden for example – the past year has seen reports of much diligent and smaller-scale excavation in the Banbury area.

The earliest evidence of local activity dating to the Mesolithic period (pre-4000 BC approximately) was reported at Wroxton[1] (2 flint flakes and Roman pottery), at the extension of Hardwick Hall cemetery in Banbury[2] (flint blades and charred hazelnuts shells, plus Iron Age/Roman trackway and pottery), and at Middleton Stoney[3] (assemblage of flint artefacts). Slightly later Neolithic activity (4300-2000 BC approximately) was reported east of Southam Road, Banbury[4] (pits containing characteristic Grooved Ware and Peterborough Ware pottery, plus later Bronze Age roundhouses and evidence of Hardwick deserted medieval village), and at Wykham Park Farm,[5,6] where a multiperiod settlement was evident ranging from enclosures, field boundaries and pits adjacent to the known causewayed enclosure, with cremation and inhumation burials from periods up to Roman times. Neolithic pottery has also been found in a ditch at Tappers Farm, Bodicote.[7]

Later finds from the Bronze Age (BA) (2000-800 BC) and particularly Iron Age (IA) (800BC – 400AD) have been frequently reported. They include an IA site at Radstone Fields, Brackley,[8] part of an extensive settlement site previously excavated over a wide area with pits and roundhouses ; several sites in and around Banbury, e.g. an agricultural site at Berry Hill Road, Adderbury[9] with stock enclosures and ring gullies;a large IA enclosure ditch with trackways and pits at Banbury Rise to the west of the town;[10] and late IA/ early Roman remains at Broken Furrow on the Warwick Road[11] which included a large enclosure, ditches, clay-lined pits and postholes. To the west of Banbury at Sibford Ferris middle IA stock enclosures and paddocks have been excavated[12] and at nearby Swalcliffe Lea a longstanding programme of excavation by the North Oxfordshire Archaeology Group has noted a complex site with IA or Roman rectangular enclosures, roundhouses and farmsteads close to Madmarston hillfort.[13,14,] Miscellaneous findings elsewhere include an ancient IA droveway identified at Warmington,[15] and a not dissimilar trackway close to Chesterton,[16] a Roman cereal-processing site at Great Tew[17] and an Anglo-Saxon funerary

1. Wroxton, Wroxton Quarry, *South Midlands Archaeology*, (2022) vol 52, p 87.
2. Banbury, Hardwick Hill Cemetery Expansion, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 89.
3. Middleton Stoney, Dewars Farm Quarry Extension, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 92.
4. G Wakeham and T Wells, "Neolithic Occupation, a Later Bronze Age Enclosure and Other Remains East of Southam Road, Banbury", *Oxoniensia* (2023) vol 88, p 109-162.
5. A Simmonds et al "Prehistoric Landscape and Late Iron Age Agriculture South of Banbury: Excavations at Wykham Park Farm and Bloxham Road", *OXO* (2023) vol 88, p 73-107.
6. Banbury, Easington, Wykham Park Farm, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 89.
7. Bodicote, Land at Tappers Farm, Oxford Road, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 80.
8. Brackley, Radstone Fields, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 60.
9. Berry Hill Road, Adderbury, *OXO* (2023) vol 88, p 347.
10. Banbury Rise, *OXO* (2023) vol 88, p 348.
11. Banbury, Broken Furrow, Warwick Road, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 80.
12. Sibford Ferris, Woodway Road, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 95.
13. North OXON Archaeology Group 2021, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 88-89.
14. Swalcliffe, Upper Lea, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 78.
15. Warmington, Elton Estate, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 77.
16. Burnehyll Woodland, Bicester, *OXO* (2023) vol 88, p 349.
17. Quarry Farm, Great Tew, *OXO* (2023) vol 88, p 348.

site at Balmoral Avenue, Banbury with nine disarticulated inhumations and one more formal burial, face down with a spear.[18]

Moving forward many centuries, the tomb effigy of an unknown lawyer has been described in Deddington church, probably dating to about 1330 and possibly that of Ralph de Bereford.[19] Final restoration work has been completed on the historic 15th century beacon tower in Burton Dassett Hills Country Park.[20] A very successful weekend of archaeology and living history at Hanwell was organised by Dr Stephen Wass[21] in September 2023; the Sealed Knot were on hand to display aspects of military and civilian life in the 17th century. And another re-enactment took place during the summer of the Civil War battle (some say skirmish) of Middleton Cheney. Again, celebrations and the Sealed Knot were in evidence.

Historic Building recording has taken place of the Upper Farmyard at Thenford which dates to the late 17th century,[22] and also of Forceleap Farm at Newbottle, built by the Cartwright family in 1820.[23] Meanwhile at nearby Aynhoe Park House a watching brief examined Sir John Soane's remodelling works of the late 19th century, with repositioning of the main entrance,[24] while a similar brief at All Saints Church, Mixbury, observed excavation of the 19th century French drains around the church and found 3 inhumations in the soakaway.[25] Finally, recording has been undertaken on Building 2010 at Upper Heyford Airbase, crew quarters which formed part of the "Quick Reaction Alert Area", built in 1979 during the Cold War.[26]

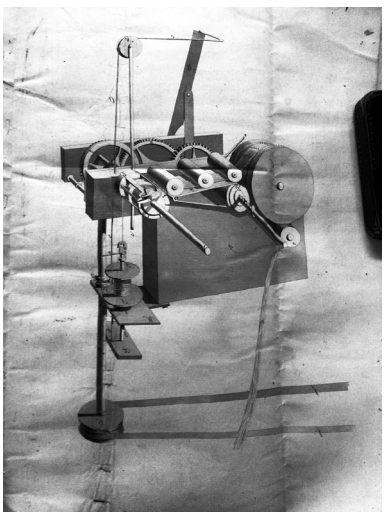
On the national scene, the controversy over the proposed Stonehenge tunnel still rages and is under further appeal. Professor Alice Roberts has presented a new series of '*Digging for Britain*' in which she featured the oldest shoe ever found in Britain – a Bronze Age leather shoe nearly 4000 years old found in the Thames estuary. She also reported on new scientific analytical methods for dating which have revealed that a substantial part of the famous Chedworth Roman villa was actually built in the early 6th century after the Romans left – shock, horror! This means that the age of *all* so-called Roman villas may need to be re-examined.

And finally, those of an archaeological bent who are looking to make arrangements for their funeral may be interested to note that a new 'Mid-England Barrow', a replica Neolithic chambered tomb with niches for cremation ashes situated just north of Banbury, is now available for reservations; prices start at a mere £500 (www.mid-englandbarrow.co.uk).

18. Balmoral Avenue, Banbury, *OXO* (2023) vol 88, p 348.
19. N Saul, "The Mysterious Lawyer: The Tomb Effigy of an Unidentified Man of Law at Deddington", *OXO* (2023) vol 88, p 35-47.
20. K Smith, "Restoration Completed", *Banbury Guardian* 4 Jan 2024.
21. S Wass, *17th Century Water Gardens and the Birth of Modern Scientific Thought in Oxford: the Case of Hanwell Castle* (Windgather Press, Oxbow Books, 2022).
22. Thenford, Upper Farmyard, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 60.
23. Newbottle, Forceleap Farm, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 59.
24. Aynho, Aynhoe Park, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 71.
25. Mixbury, All Saints Church, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 84.
26. Upper Heyford, Upper Heyford Airbase, Building 2010, *SMA* (2022) vol 52, p 97.

# WHO WAS GEORGE DUNDASS?

*A mahogany braiding machine at G & J Zair, whip makers, constructed to the design of George Dundass*



*Jersey spinning patent application, 1781(The National Archives, C210/22)*

The following facts are known about George Dundass;[1] he was born on 12 September, 1732 in Banbury, the son of William, a saddler, and Sarah; he clearly lived in Banbury as an adult as he acted as overseer of the poor for the parish of St Mary's in 1765, as churchwarden in 1773 and as a tax valuation officer in 1782. He was still in business in Banbury in 1784 when he was mentioned in *Bailey's British Directory* as dealing in saddlery and harness,[2] but by 1787 he had moved to Chertsey in Surrey where he lived until his death in 1825. He married Anne King of Broughton in 1769, though she died two years later, probably in childbirth as her daughter Elizabeth was buried shortly afterwards. He married his second wife, Hannah (Wyatt) in 1790 at St Dunstan's in the East, London. She died in 1836, aged 90.

He was a saddler and whip maker with an enquiring mind; in 1761 he applied for a patent for braiding the external covering of whips;[3] the process, which involved a petition to the king, affidavits and reports, was expensive; the official fees and stamp duty could cost £70 and gratuities anything between £10 and £30.[4] Was he protecting his own whip making business against industrial competition? Whatever the reason the original machine was regarded as superior to an alternative in cast iron,[5] was made from mahogany and was still being used in 1948.[6]

Twenty years later he applied for another patent, this time for a machine for spinning jersey.[7] Had he moved into the spinning business, which was growing rapidly at the time? Or was he interested in jersey to be used for horses' girths? The weaving industry in Banbury had become specialised in the 18th century, concentrating on horse cloths, harnesses, trappings and girths, as well as the more famous plush. Substantial manufacturers, such as Cobb & Co., had been established at the very beginning of the century, taking advantage of the central location of Banbury and the increasing volume of horse traffic. Dundass could well have included girths and other horse clothing in his harness business but the question still remains as to how he funded the development of his ideas and the applications for patents.

Any suggestions would be welcomed by the editor, with thanks to Martin Cummins who first raised the issue.

*Helen Forde*

1. His name is sometimes spelt with only one 's' but I have adopted the spelling in the Baptism Register.
2. *Bailey's British Directory*; or, merchant's and trader's useful companion, for the year 1784 (William Bailey, Warrington) 1784.
3. The National Archives SP 37/1/53 f 102-5.
4. Christine Macleod *Inventing the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 1988) p 76.
5. Information from Martin Cummins.
6. Herbert Lloyd-Johnes *Country Life*, vol 104, issue 2693 p 423.
7. TNA C 210/22.

# LETTING BY THE CANDLE[1]

*The Swan Inn, Wigginton 2012*

'Wigginton 5th Novr 1819
At a meeting held at the Swan this day for the purpose of Letting by the Candle that piece or parcel of land situate at the top of Redway in the above parish belonging to the Surveyors of the above Parish for the term of four years from this present Michaelmas. Said land to be farmed under the following conditions Viz – Eight loads of good Manure to be laid on in the time, or otherwise fifteen quarters of Lime, the Tenant to crop it as he pleases but he is to sow twelve pounds of broad clover in the last crop of corn – Rent to be paid half yearly, viz the 6th day of April and the 11th day of October, the rent to be paid to the Surveyors of the Highways
The above Land was Lett to Wm Gilkes at Two pounds thirteen shilling per annum William Gilkes hereby agrees to the above Conditions
The mark of Wm Gilkes X
Witness Hatten Richard Powell Richd Hall W P Norton'

I was hoping that this document would describe the process called 'Letting by the Candle', but of course at the time it was assumed that everyone knew what it meant. It was a kind of auction, when a candle was lit and the would-be tenants of the field stated their bids: the last bid made when the candle went out got the tenancy. What we don't know is whether the bids got higher as the candle neared its end, or possibly got lower?

*Deborah Hayter*

1. Wigginton Parish collection at the Oxfordshire History Centre, (PAR 290/7/N/1).

# ACQUITTAL OF ADMIRAL KEPPEL BANBURY CELEBRATES!

'Banbury, Oxfordshire, February 18.
Last Saturday Evening the joyful News of the honourable Acquittal of Admiral Keppel was received here when the Bells were immediately rung and at Intervals continued ringing till Monday Evening, when his adversary was carried in Effigy round the Town, mounted on a Jack-Ass, preceded by fifty Persons, with Guns, Drums, Trumpets Fifes, Torches &c, and attended by near 500 of the Populace, When the Procession arrived in the Market-Place, where was a Bonfire made of two Tons of Coals, Sir H - , after several Times shot, and a wooden Sword broken over his Head, was committed to the Flames, amidst the Acclamations of near 1000 People assembled on the Occasion. The town in general was illuminated, a grand Ball was given to the Ladies, at the *Three Tuns* and the Evening concluded without any rioting or Damage being done'.

*Jackson's Oxford Journal* Saturday 20 February 1779

The context of this boisterous celebration was the acquittal of Admiral Augustus Keppel (1725-1786) who, at the request of his second in command, Sir Hugh Palliser, had been court-martialled for his failure in an engagement with the French off Ushant the previous year. Banbury was not the only town to celebrate – newspapers from all over the country reported variously the ringing of bells for the entire day (in Northampton a complete peal of 5040 changes was rung, in Bungay the bells rang all day), fireworks, bonfires, illuminations (in Bath the ladies subscribed 2 guineas to fund the illumination of the public rooms), firing of guns (in Newcastle the ships in the river displayed their colours and fired guns) and almost everywhere effigies of Sir Hugh Palliser were displayed, mutilated in various ways, before they were hung from gibbets and burnt. Dinners, food and drink featured in several of the reports and at Edensor 'great quantities of ale were given to the Populace' The Banbury experience was particularly detailed and it was one of only a few towns which threw a ball for the ladies, though how much room there was in the *Three Tuns* remains speculative.

The episode demonstrates the degree of national involvement in the outcome of this notorious trial and as Nicholas Rogers has suggested, much of it was political; the Whigs, who were in opposition, had encouraged anti-government feeling and critically, had used the press to drum up a surprising amount of support and interest, resulting in multiple reports of the court martial and its outcome throughout the country.

*Helen Forde*

1. *Derby Mercury*, 12 February 1779.
2. Nicholas Rogers *Crowds, culture and politics in Georgian Britain* (Oxford University Press, 1998).

# WILLIAM WILKES – A MAN OF MYSTERY

William Wilkes died in 1573 and was buried on 6 October at All Saints' church in Middleton Cheney. The parish register simply records that 'William Wilks was buried October 6' without any further clue to his identity. The register records the four surviving children of himself and his wife Frances (d 1564), who were all born and baptised in Middleton Cheney: their son Robert (1560-1577) and three daughters Anne (1558-1619), Frances (1563-1630) and Margaret (1564-1639).[1]

Who was William Wilkes? Was he a simple workman, tradesman, a yeoman farmer of Middleton Cheney or someone more substantial? The *Victoria County History*[2] records that William was the eldest son of Sir Francis Wilkes (1504-1555) of Hodnell, Warwickshire and his wife Ann, née Kytley (1510-1560), and younger brother of Thomas Wilkes (c 1524-1559), a merchant of the Staple of Calais. The lordship of Hodnell, having been through the hands of Sir Marmaduke Constable (1540) and Sir John Seyntlowe (1542) and John Coope[3] [sic] (1547) had eventually been sold to Thomas Wilkes in 1554. As Thomas Wilkes and his wife Joan, née Levenson (d 1570) were childless, William Wilkes's son Robert became his heir in 1559. However, Robert died three years after matriculating at Hart Hall College, Oxford[4] leaving his three sisters as co-heirs to his estate.

Thomas Wilke's will[5] is an extensive document and interestingly places a condition on his brother that he shall surrender up to Thomas' executors all his lease interests in the rectory and tithes of Middleton Cheney. He also requested that William should obtain the advowson of the rectory and parish church. The action placed upon William Wilkes was much more onerous than that probably first envisaged, leading to a court case[6] in 1635, some 60 years after his death with a whole new cast of characters in play to finally resolve the issue.

The plaintiffs in that case were Sir John Dryden, Margaret Gibbs and William Kingsmill, taking on Thomas Yates (Rector of All Saints)[7] and the Bishop of Peterborough, Francis Dee. The issue was the ownership of the tithes and advowson for the parish church. The identity of the plaintiffs takes some explanation but is made very clear by the marriages of Willam Wilkes' three daughters:[8]

1. Anne Wilkes married twice: firstly, Anthony Dryden (1551-1575) and secondly, Sir William Kingsmill (c 1557-1618) of Sydmonton, Hampshire. The plaintiff was their son, William.
2. Frances Wilkes married Sir Erasmus Dryden (1553-1632), brother of Anthony Dryden, son of John Dryden (1524-1584) of Canons Ashby and Elizabeth Cope (1529-1584), the daughter of Sir John Cope (1504-1557). The plaintiff was Sir John Dryden (c 1580-c 1658), eldest surviving son of Frances Dryden, née Wilkes.
3. Margaret Wilkes married twice: firstly, Sir Francis Dymock, and secondly, Thomas Gibbs Esq. (d 1631). The plaintiff was Thomas Gibbs, their second son.

1. Parish Registers for Middleton Cheney – Ancestry film strips 7/173 and 10/173.
2. British History Online - https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol6/p 114-116 (accessed 27 Feb 24).
3. This was Sir John Cope (1504-1557), wealthy lawyer of Banbury.
4. Hart Hall, Oxford matriculated in 1574 – *Oxford University Alumni* 1500-1714 (W). Ancestry film strip 83/148.
5. TNA PROB 11/42A/318 dated 6 February 1559.
6. *English Reports of the King's Bench Division* Vol.79. Michaelmas Term 1635, Roll 1433 Ante page 583, case 4.
7. *Memorial Inscriptions at All Saints' Church and Baptist Chapel*, Northamptonshire Family History booklet 7 (2010) p 7.
8. Linda Doyle 'Chapel Ascote Deserted Village' *Cake & Cockhorse* (1997) vol 13/9 p 273.

*The Wilkes Arms on a panel at Canons Ashby:*
*gules, on a chevron Argent three whelks between three demi-lions rampant Or*
*(© National Trust Images)*

The two eldest sisters Anne and Frances Dryden, (née Wilkes) have their memories unknowingly kept alive by their family coat of arms which is painted on the paneling in the Winter Parlour of Canons Ashby[9] as a record of the families which have married into the Dryden dynasty. The arms on the oak panels (ref. 4B & 6B) are currently listed by the National Trust in their literature as 'unknown'. William Hunt, research assistant at the College of Arms, consulted in conjunction with the National Trust, eventually established that no one has registered the arms depicted on these two panels. However, it is likely that the Wilkes family were included, since two of William's daughters married Drydens. Analysis of the 'unknown' panels suggests that they may be a 'canting' of the family name 'Wilkes – Whelks'; canting arms are heraldic bearings that represent the bearer's name or, less often, some attribute or function, in a visual pun or rebus.

As William's son Robert, who became the heir apparent to Wilkes family arms in 1559, died unmarried, aged 17, thus bringing his line to an end, William needed to have arms, unregistered though they are, for the Drydens to include in the Winter Parlour for his daughters Anne and Frances.

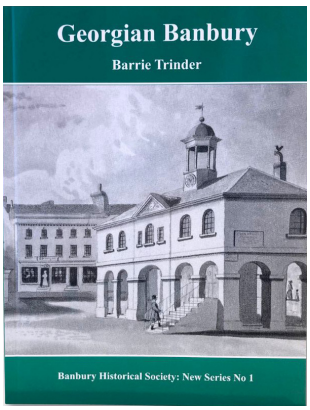
Note: The Canting of 'Whelks' to 'Wilkes', are to symbolise the three daughters of William who married well. Also, it looks as though the lion rampant Or has been taken from the Dryden arms of Canons Ashby. At the moment these are the thoughts of the writer and all suggestions would be welcomed by the Editor.

*George Hughes*

9. Peter McCallum and Michael Trapp 'New Perspectives on the Winter Parlour at Canons Ashby' *C&CH* (2019) vol 21/2 p 34.

# BOOK REVIEWS

Barrie Trinder, *Georgian Banbury* (Banbury Historical Society, new series no. 1 (2023), viii + 156 pp. ISBN 978-0-90012937-7, £15




Barrie Trinder has written a great deal about Victorian Banbury, but his new book pushes back in time to the period 1714-1830. In doing so he can pay homage to his late supervisor, Alan Everitt, who argued that Banbury was 'an example of a particular type of English town, modest in extent, with relatively few inhabitants, but profoundly influential ... as a force in the broader economic and social history of England' (p. 2). The book is written from Barrie's deep knowledge of both primary and secondary sources and is designed to provide an accessible guide to Banbury's past.

The book has 11 thematic chapters and several indexes, which makes it easy to access. It also has demographic data from the Cambridge Group in an appendix, several maps, and a comprehensive bibliography. The main chapters follow the themes we would anticipate, beginning in chapter 2 with the transformation of rural society through enclosure and the division between open and closed villages in Banbury's hinterland. Chapter 3 is an examination of Banbury's urban status beginning with St Mary's church and including the ruins of the castle. The town suffered extensive damage in the Civil Wars and it had subsequently to be restored. This took place in timber framing rather than brick which only really arrived after about 1725. It was later in the 18th century before the town was rebuilt in brick. In part this reflected lack of demand since the population increased hardly at all before the 1780s. Banbury has relatively little middle-class housing.

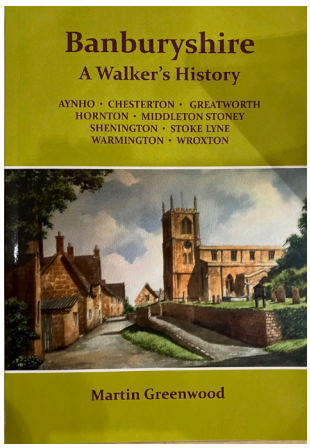
What did Banburians do? Chapter 4 examines professions and trades. Banbury is distant from any coalfield and became important for professional people, judging by the inventories surviving from the eighteenth century. Barrie looks at banks, markets and traditional industries such as corn milling, malting, brewing and tanning. Craftsmen and women were kept busy and there were plenty of shops selling local produce and goods from further afield. Several annual fairs were held in the town. Manufacturers included textiles and engineering. Barrie uses probate inventories with his usual skill to give a wide-ranging idea of the wealth of activity ongoing in the town. Chapter 6 takes us on to roads and waterways, and particularly to those impacted by legislation in the form of turnpikes and waterways, notably the opening of the Oxford canal. After that comes government including the influence of Wroxton Abbey with its Sanderson Miller Garden and its home to the earls of Guilford whose country seat this was. Lord North, the politician usually blamed for losing the colonies was brought up in the abbey and was MP for Banbury as well as a leading politician. 'The primacy of the Norths in Banbury politics', writes Barrie (p 80), 'was retained by energetic attention to detail'. North succeeded his father as 2nd Earl of Guilford in 1792 and is buried in the church at Wroxton. Locally, Banbury had a workhouse and a court, churches and chapels. Entertainment took place in the Assembly Rooms and theatres, while the lower orders enjoyed prize fighting and racing. Change? Not too much but the demolition of the parish church of St Mary started the ball rolling and the new building was opened in 1797. Improvement elsewhere in the town was under way by the 1820s while the following decade witnessed reform of the municipal corporation and the coming of the New Poor Law. The gaol and policing system remained

unsatisfactory. Finally, Barrie asks what sort of a town was Banbury, and he concludes that it was 'the economic hub of its region' (p 122).

Barrie has certainly started the series in an excellent manner but there is surely much more to be said? Banbury was a prosperous town but not from industrialisation but from a diversity of retailers and crafts, a type of town which remains under researched but for which Barrie's book provides a template. I conclude with just one criticism which is that because Barrie's remit was the period 1714-1830 the book feels at times artificially restricted. Barrie knows so much about Banbury that his closing date of 1830 feels too constraining.

*John Beckett*

Martin Greenwood *Banburyshire: A Walker's History* (2023 Robert Boyd Publications), 160pp. ISBN 978-1-90873845-5, £12.95




Martin Greenwood will be well known to residents of his native Banburyshire, having published a number of books that dwell on the geography and local history of the area. He communicates an infectious fascination with details like the names of pub licensees and apricot trees, and grander themes like enclosures, transport, schooling, employment and emigration.[1]

The present volume shares a familiar format with some of the earlier titles, colour illustrations on front and back covers, 150-odd pages, numerous free-hand maps and black-and-white illustrations mostly drawn from the Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire History Centre Photographic Archives. The nine chapters cover nine villages (in alphabetical, but in other respects random, order): Aynho, Chesterton, Greatworth, Hornton, Middleton Stoney, Shenington, Stoke Lyne, Warmington, and Wroxton. The book would suit a person, living in 'The Shire', who enjoys exploring and could manage an hour or two wandering around a small village before driving home for tea. The detail on any one village would be insufficient for a resident of that village, but enough perhaps to simulate interest in a visitor or newcomer.

Greenwood follows a system. For each village he searches out the number of religious dissenters in the 18th century, the local Friendly Society in the 19th century, population, trades and occupations in the period 1800 - 1930, and the names of the known carriers operating between the village and Banbury at that time. He then wanders round the village starting at the church, noting significant houses together with appropriate anecdotes.

Both author and publisher should have given the text a thorough (critical) scrutiny before going to press; they would have noticed a number of repetitions, mistakes, oddities, incomplete sentences and non-sequiturs. Though frequent, these blemishes do not make the book impossible, or even difficult, to read. Perhaps the author was rushing to catch the Christmas market, and indeed the book would make a welcome Christmas present for the right person.

*Ian West*

1. *Pilgrim's Progress Revisited: The Nonconformists of Banburyshire 1662 – 2012* (Wychwood Press, 2013), *The Promised Land: The Story of Emigration from Oxfordshire and Neighbouring Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire 1815-1914* (Robert Boyd, 2020) and *Villages of Banburyshire covering Lark Rise and Candleford Green (Wychwood Press, 2006).*

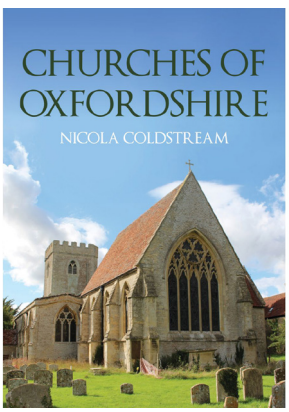
*From Country House Catholicism to City Church: the registers of the* Oxford *Catholic Mission 1700-1875* edited by Tony Hadland (Boydell Press, Oxfordshire Record Society, Woodbridge 2023) 240 pp, 15 b&w illustrations ISBN 978-09025097-7-1, £35.00

This scholarly work, complete with illustrations, charts the emergence of Oxfordshire Catholicism from the shadows of the 16th century, when merely practising the Catholic faith was frowned upon, to the sunny uplands of the 19th century when Catholics were once again free to worship as they wished. The book is in two parts: a detailed introduction running to 75 pages and a translated, transcribed and tabulated record of the Oxford Mission covering the period 1700-1875. The Introduction sets the scene and clearly explains the background to the prohibition of Catholic sacraments; it tells the story of how, after the Reformation, Catholicism was centred on the country house and how lay Catholics clustered around these centres for many years. Later, the Catholic Emancipation Act (1829) changed the religious landscape completely.

This well researched book analyses the existing records, some of them transcribed from Latin, and the author gives us a snapshot of how Catholics lived in Oxfordshire and a window into their lives through the centuries. The Oratory's archive consists of registers from Waterperry House, the chapel of St Clement's, Oxford, and the church of St Aloysius Gonzaga, Oxford which is now the Oxford Oratory. The registers have been made accessible to researchers, having been translated from the original Latin in many cases and tabulated into an easily searchable format. The book will be of interest to Catholic family historians and scholars of Catholic local history.

*Tim J Guile*

Nicola Coldstream *Churches of Oxfordshire*, (Amberley Publishing, Stroud, 2023), 95pp, over 100 illus. in colour ISBN 978-1-39810768-7, £15.99




This is a beautifully produced book with excellent photographs, all in colour. It describes a selection of Oxfordshire's churches, pointing out the special features of the buildings and their contents which might make them worth a visit. But I found myself wondering who this book was for? A seriously interested church visitor would already have Pevsner[1] the Buildings of England series which includes every single church, not just a selection, and goes into considerable detail about the architectural development of the building and its furnishings. Pevsner also has a comprehensive glossary, a vital item missing from Coldstream's book: if you didn't already know where to look for the spandrels and the sedilia, and didn't know the difference between ashlar and rubble stone, or perpendicular and decorated, there is no help here.

Anyone interested in church visiting would be likely to have Simon Jenkins' *England's Thousand Best Churches*[2] as well, with his selection of this county's churches – not quite the same choices, but with much overlap. And there are already three books on the county's churches: Richard Wheeler's *Oxfordshire's Best Churches*,[3] Jennifer Sherwood's *Guide to the*

1. Jennifer Sherwood and Nicholas Pevsner *Oxfordshire, Pevsner Architectural Guides: Buildings of England* (Yale University Press, 1974).
2. Simon Jenkins *England's Thousand Best Churches* (Penguin, 2002).
3. Richard Wheeler *Oxfordshire's Best Churches* (Fircone, 2015).

*Churches of Oxfordshire*,[4] with drawings by John Piper, and Richard Lethbridge's *Oxfordshire Churches*.[5] I suspect that this latest book wins in terms of colour photographs, as printing in colour is so much cheaper now than it used to be.

The book's blurb advertises it as being of interest to 'local historians, residents and visitors to the county', and yes, there is a bit of basic local history here and there, as Coldstream has researched the names of important local families, founders and benefactors over the centuries; and if you live in Oxfordshire it might inspire you to look again at some local churches, but visitors to the county? I'm not sure that this book is comprehensive enough. But it looks handsome and it does give a good write-up to forty-two churches.

*Deborah Hayter*

*A Guide to the Industrial Heritage of Northamptonshire*, third edition, by Peter Perkins, Ron Whittaker & Adrian Denton (Northamptonshire Industrial Archaeology Group, 2022). 104 pp. ISBN 978-0-9576647-5-3, £9.00

*Water and Steam Mills of Northamptonshire*, by Hugh Howes (Northamptonshire Industrial Archaeology Group, 2022). 104 pp. ISBN 978-0-95766474-6, £20.00

Banbury's eastern border is with Northamptonshire and much of the town's hinterland is in that county. Any publications dealing with Northamptonshire must therefore be of concern to historians of Banbury and its region.

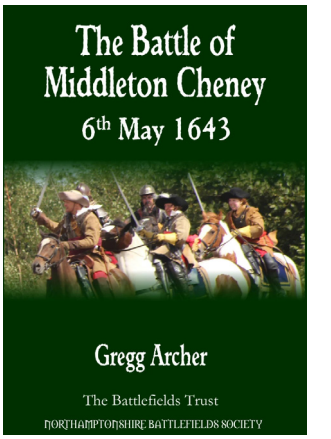
The pamphlet by Perkins, Whittaker and Denton is the third edition of a gazetteer first published in 2001 which even then represented an old-fashioned approach to industrial archaeology. An overall survey of the discipline in Northamptonshire should reflect rather more of the detailed scholarship of recent decades, including David Blagrove on canals, Eric Tonks on ironstone quarries and railways, the English Heritage publications on the boot and shoe industry, and other publications by the Northamptonshire Industrial Archaeology Group. The introduction remains superficial – it is simply not enough to say that 'During the 18thC and early 19thC a number of turnpike roads were established' – in the 2020s the reader will wish to know 'how many?' and 'precisely when?'. The textile section fails to mention lacemaking that in 1861 employed 8221 people, mainly women and girls, in the county. In the Banbury region the survey gives good coverage to the canal and railway installations at Aynho and takes due notice of Twyford Mill in King's Sutton, but no sites are listed in Chacombe, Farthinghoe, Middleton Cheney, Wardington or Warkworth.

The book by Howes is of more consequence. It builds on past research to identify the outstanding remaining mills in Northamptonshire including those at Twyford and Croughton. It also provides a comprehensive gazetteer of all known mill sites, including those at Charlton, Chipping Warden, Edgcote, Huscote, King's Sutton, Sulgrave and Thenford, of which there are few remains. It includes a fascinating account of the modern flour milling industry in which Northamptonshire plays a prominent role with large plants at Bugbrooke, Corby, Finedon and Little Irchester. Of particular importance to the history of Banbury is the well-documented account of the flour milling machinery made by Bernhard Samuelson & Co at the Britannia Ironworks from 1881. It has long been recognised that the company manufactured milling machinery, but this is the first publication to date the beginning of production and to assess its importance within the milling industry.

*Barrie Trinder*

4. Jennifer Sherwood *Guide to the Churches of Oxfordshire* (Robert Dugdale, 1989).
5. Richard Lethbridge's *Oxfordshire Churches* (Stonesfield Press, 2000).

*The Battle of Middleton Cheney 6 May 1643* by Gregg Archer, (The Northamptonshire Battlefields Society, 2023) ISBN 979-8-84968717-9, £7.50




The engagement, which occurred on the outskirts of Middleton Cheney on 6 May 1643, has previously only appeared as a footnote in the annals of the civil war in the Midlands. In this slim volume Gregg Archer, of the Mercia Region of the Battlefield Trust presents a detailed account of his research into what actually happened on the outskirts of Banbury that day and makes the case for it to be viewed as more significant than previously thought. A summary of the causes of the wars set the context and introduce the key players and how, after the battle of Edgehill, the area around Banbury and its surrounding villages came to be such a central battleground.

Archer charts the events leading up to an opportunistic attempt to take Banbury, and its castle by Parliamentary forces and enraged local citizens from Northampton. His research is meticulous and detailed, drawing on a wide range of primary sources including eye witness accounts. He has balanced the sometimes dubious reliability of contemporary accounts, cross checking details and balancing for possible bias. This is all presented in a clear and coherent narrative, well supported with visual material including statistical tables, maps and photos of key locations.

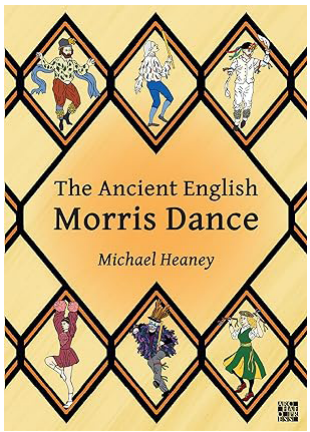
It is clear from his account that the action was short, amounting to approximately half an hour, and that the Parliamentary forces had misjudged the opportunity, in particular the strength and scale of the cavalry forces they faced. The two sides gave conflicting accounts of the numbers killed and injured. However, given the brevity of the encounter, and that no more than 500 or so were engaged on each side, the 47 registered as buried in Middleton Cheney, and the 5 or 6 in Banbury seem to give a realistic indication.

In terms of placing this engagement in the overall balance of the conflict as a whole Archer is clear that it had little impact on further events. While technically a battle, defined as an encounter where both sides form up before engaging, it formed no part in any coherent plan and was predominantly reactive and opportunistic in character. This well researched, well told tale will certainly appeal to those interested in the stories of their communities, and those of the civil war itself.

*Verna Wass*

*The Ancient English Morris Dance* by Michael Heaney, (Archaeopress, Oxford, 2023) ISBN 978-180327386-0, £29.99

This comprehensive history of Morris dancing is of local interest as Banbury lies close to the heartland of that style of dancing known as Cotswold Morris, with groups of performers formerly based in Brackley, Badby, Ilmington and particularly close to home at Bloxham, King's Sutton and Souldern to say nothing of that Morris stronghold of Adderbury where there are currently three active teams of dancers. As a cultural phenomenon Morris dancing has been widely misrepresented and many may still cling to the 20th century myth that Morris was somehow an extraordinary survival of an ancient pagan fertility ritual. Heaney's book does much to dispel this myth and establish the fact that Morris dancing today is a widespread and evolving practice.




Following in the footsteps of John Forrest's major study, '*The History of Morris Dancing 1458 - 1750* (Clarke & Co., Cambridge, 1999) and Keith Chandler's more locally focused *Ribbons, Bells and Squeaking Fiddles*, with accompanying gazetteer (The Folklore Society, London, 1993) Heaney's study adopts the same forensic approach to source materials to bring the story right up to date. Origin is always a vexed question and Heaney outlines the earliest English references from the late Middle Ages and considers a number of dance forms that may have contributed to the development of a distinctly English Morris that featured during the fifteenth century in courtly entertainments and urban celebrations, as staged by city guilds. Moving on to the 16th and 17th centuries he charts the decline of Morris dancing as a fashionable entertainment in towns but documents its increasing use as a church based fund-raiser, through the medium of church ales and the opposition mounted to it by puritan critic - largely it has to be said on the grounds of attendant drunkenness and disorder.

He attempts to throw some light on the difficult 18th century period when Morris moved out increasingly into the countryside and provinces and diversified into a variety of distinctive local practices before returning to public view in the 19th century. Newspaper coverage and most significantly the later activities of early folklorists and collectors of traditional music, dance and song ensured greater visibility. Heaney is particularly strong on the more recent history of the Morris with detailed accounts of the early revival, the rise of the Morris Ring and 'men only' dancing and the challenges in the 1970s, and beyond, posed by the rise of new teams of women Morris dancers. He gives a concise and accurate account of the revival and development of Adderbury Morris and concludes with a survey of the latest trends including the debate on 'black face' Morris and Morris as performance art, all of it reminding us that there is probably now more Morris dancing going on worldwide than at another time in its history!

This is not a light read, rather a proper academic study with full references and bibliography; however, it is an important story, well told, relating to local traditions and culture.

*Stephen Wass*

# ANNUAL REVIEW

BHS has had a successful year with well-attended lectures, high quality publications and popular summer visits. At the end of 2023 we had 159 members and 22 corporate members, 9 overseas, and we are grateful to our diligent membership secretary Margaret Little.

Our yearly activities included a comprehensive lecture series, expertly curated by Deborah Hayter, and featured predominantly local subjects (Blackgrounds excavation at Chipping Warden, revising Pevsner's Oxfordshire, life as a GP in 1960s Banbury, the battle of Middleton Cheney 1643, Marjorie Crosby Slomezynska of Banbury, how enclosure shaped Oxfordshire's landscape) and a more general topic, pre-Reformation parish church images. We also held a lively historical artefacts quiz evening. Lectures are available for in-person attendance and online — although the latter miss out on a pre-lecture glass of wine!

Our end-of-season summer activities, organised by Rosemary Leadbeater, included a guided tour of Shakespeare's schoolroom and Stratford-upon-Avon Guildhall where we practised writing with a quill pen and ink, a visit to Bloxham Museum and St. Mary's church and churchyard, and a fascinating walking tour of St. Thomas's parish in Oxford, site of many of the lodging houses featured in a recent lecture. In addition to these, BHS had a presence at the Banbury Canal Festival in October, where our stall was manned by volunteers and we gained a number of new members, and a stall at Oxfordshire Past in Abingdon, organised annually by the Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society. Our AGM was held at Wormleighton Church, chaired by our Vice President Barrie Trinder; a change to the BHS constitution allowing a reduced subscription rate to partners living at the same address was approved. We then heard a most interesting lecture on work at the church by archaeologist member Stephen Wass.

On the publications front we welcomed the beautifully presented yearly edition of *Cake and Cockhorse* and congratulate its editor, Helen Forde. Barrie Trinder's much anticipated *Georgian Banbury* was published later in the year to great acclaim.

Ian West manages our website which has been praised as one of the best among local history societies. We are grateful for book donations to the BHS library, which has been professionally catalogued by Sue Jaiteh and her stalwart team, and is now open to members and members of the public most Thursday and Saturday afternoons. Our Secretary Simon Townsend is the talented Director of Banbury Museum & Gallery, keeping us supported while organising wonderful exhibitions at the Museum, many world-class. Our Treasurer Chris Bates has been battling health problems throughout 2023 but now sees light at the end of the tunnel, and we are grateful for the 2023 accounts, approved by our Auditor Howard Knight.

We have a full programme planned for the forthcoming year and we look forward to seeing you all then.

*Pamela Wilson*

# ACCOUNTS

**Banbury Historical Society**
**Registered Educational Charity 260581**
**Income & Expenditure Account for year ending 31 December 2023**

| | 2023 | *2022* |
|---|---|---|
| INCOME | £ | *£* |
| Subscriptions | 3,943 | *4,592* |
| Gift Aid tax refund | 0 | *496* |
| Sale of publications | 1,642 | *1,095* |
| Visitors' fees and other income | 284 | *115* |
| Legacy from former member Jeremy Gibson | 1000 | *0* |
| Records Volume Grants | 1500 | *0* |
| Total Income | 8,369 | *6,298* |
| | | |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| Cake & Cockhorse | 1,724 | *1,900* |
| Meetings | 820 | *1,265* |
| Postage and other administration costs | 829 | *1,095* |
| Archiving *Cake & Cockhorse* | 0 | *0* |
| Bookshelves/Other Library Expenditure | 0 | *199* |
| Records Volume | 2,802 | *0* |
| **Total Expenditure** | **6,175** | ***4,459*** |
| | | |
| SURPLUS (Deficit) for the year | 2,194 | *1,839* |
| | | |
| **Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2023** | | |
| Balance of funds at 1 January 2023 | 9,006 | *7,167* |
| Surplus (deficit) for the year | 2,194 | *1,839* |
| Sundry Creditors – BALH Sub in Advance | 0 | *0* |
| Balance of funds at 31 December 2023 | 11,200 | *9,006* |
| **Represented by:** | | |
| ASSETS | | |
| NatWest Bank Current Account | 3,734 | *3,589* |
| NatWest Bank Reserve Account | 5,074 | *5,013* |
| Cash | 29 | *28* |
| Sundry Debtors – Museum sales & sums due | 2,698 | *811* |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 11,535 | *9,441* |
| LIABILITIES – Subscriptions in advance | (335) | *(435)* |
| **NET ASSETS at 31 December 2022** | 11,200 | *9,006* |

*Chris Bates, Treasurer*

I have reviewed and examined the books and records of the Banbury Historical Society and confirm that the accounts prepared by the Treasurer represent a fair and accurate summary of the financial transactions completed in the year ended 31 December 2023.

*Howard Knight FCMA, CGMA* 31 January 2024

# INDEX OF PERSONAL NAMES

# INDEX OF PLACES

## Mills