

# CAKE & COCKHORSE



BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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# BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Details about the Society's activities and  
publications can be found on the inside back cover

**Our cover illustration** is from a portrait of Alfred Beesley in the annotated edition of his history in Banbury public library. It was found too late for inclusion in the last issue.

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Michael Pickering's description of schooling in Edwardian Adderbury is a vivid contribution to social history. It should be read in the context of the section on Adderbury schools in Volume IX of the Victoria History of the County of Oxford which traces their history from the foundation of the first endowed school, of course for boys only, in 1589. Not till the 19th century was education for girls an issue, apart from home teaching, though in 1831 there were apparently already dame schools for girls; however "some also thought that education of any kind would spoil the girls for domestic service".

This depressing picture of the class and MCP structure of society set us wondering what schooling if any was available to the boys (though obviously not girls) of Adderbury before 1589. So, 1982 being the 600th anniversary year of the founding of Winchester College by William of Wykeham, we looked at the register of entries into that school for the first fifty years recorded - 1393 to 1442 - to see if any entrants came from Banburyshire, or more specifically from Adderbury. The results are surprising, even allowing for the fact that Wykeham's sister foundation at Oxford, New College, owned manors in north Oxfordshire as part of its endowment.

Not counting doubtful cases, in those fifty years forty-two entrants came from parishes in greater Banburyshire, of whom thirty-one were from inner Banburyshire. Adderbury headed the list with eight, followed by Banbury with six; Swalcliffe four; Bloxham three; Bodicote, Swerford, Hook Norton and Balscott two each; one each from Broughton and Deddington. Only one of those entrants, a Wykeham of Swalcliffe, had a name recognizable as gentry in the Edwardian sense. Richard Andrew of Adderbury went on to become a fellow of New College, Dean of York, first

warden of All Souls College, Oxford, and the King's secretary.

One wonders what has taken the place of the church and its scholarly foundations as a ladder for the poor – "pauperes et indigentes" in Wykeham's words – to climb to pre-eminence. The church itself and its foundations have for long abdicated that function.

### **Annual Dinner**

The annual dinner was held on October 23 at Woadmill Farm, Broughton. George Fothergill spoke amusingly and fluently; the Bloxham School minstrels – Martin Roberts, Garry Cole, Gerald Parrington and Roger Stein – entertained us admirably; the caterers kept our innards well supplied. We are grateful to all of them.

### **Jack Fearon**

It is with great sadness that we record the death in October of Jack Fearon, at the age of 66.

Jack and his family were closely involved with the Society from its earliest days. Jack himself was a committee member and was Chairman in 1960-61 and again from 1962 until 1965. He will have been more familiar to most members as our Archaeological Adviser, a post he took over from Val. Bromley in 1962 and held until only last year. In the '60s he, with his sons Roger and Colin, took the initiative in several small digs, on the sites of the White Horse, the Castle Mound, at Pike Farm near Broughton, Manor Farm, Deddington, and the Roman villa at Wigginton. A different sort of archaeology was described in his article on 'Primitive Sun-Dials or Mass Clocks' which he had observed and brilliantly photographed on the walls of a number of local churches.

Jack's interest in his home village of Bodicote was reflected first in a surprising and amusingly illustrated article on 'Steam Navigation' on the Sor Brook in the mid-nineteenth century. Of course his major work was his edition of the Bodicote Parish Accounts, 1700-1822, our records volume twelve, issued in 1975. This fascinating and entertaining book gives an inside picture of the minutiae of village life in the eighteenth century.

But it is not particularly as an archaeologist and editor that we shall remember Jack, but rather as a cheerful companion, always ready to help with the chores of Society activities, shifting chairs, giving lifts, lending a hand in an unobtrusive way. His latter years were saddened by the untimely death of Roger, whose obituary was Jack's last contribution to "Cake and Cockhorse". In the '60s things were different – one friend said to me, on hearing of his death, how she always thought of Jack as a very 'jolly' man – and for myself I shall prefer to recall him, and Roger, pints in hand, in the old White Lion Bar with Jim Thewlis presiding.

Our deep sympathy goes to his family, Jean, Colin and Rosemary.

J.S.W.G.

## SCHISMS AND DIVISIONS: THE ORIGINS OF DISSENTING CONGREGATIONS IN BANBURY 1772-1860

On Wednesday 25 March 1857 Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher, made his first visit to Banbury and spoke to a huge congregation in the Baptist Chapel in Bridge Street. As he travelled in a carriage from the station to the chapel he asked the resident minister what denominations were represented in Banbury. He was told that almost all were to be found in the town, and that it had been remarked that if a man lost his religion, he might find it at Banbury.<sup>1</sup> Dissent has always flourished in Banbury, and its history becomes more complex as further sources are uncovered. Some fifteen years ago we published in Cate and Cockhorse an account of the origins of the Baptist congregations in the town, giving in some detail information which had been collected for the article on Nonconformity in the Victoria County History, which itself appeared in 1972. In some respects these accounts were amplified by a short note which was published in 1975.<sup>2</sup> Recently more sources have come to light, which necessitate a thorough reappraisal of the whole subject, and enable some new conclusions to be drawn.

This article is concerned chiefly with the old Dissenting denominations, the Independents and the Baptists. The Quakers and Presbyterians (who had become Unitarians by the early nineteenth century) had their origins in the seventeenth century and were little affected by contacts with other denominations. The Wesleyans, whose origins in Banbury go back to John Wesley's first preaching in the town in 1784, and the Primitive Methodists, likewise stand a little apart from the much-braided mainstream of local Dissent. All of the remaining Protestant churches and sects established in the town before the arrival of the Salvation Army in 1880 have a common origin.

The basic sources for the study of the Baptists and Independents have hitherto been the first Church Book of the present Banbury United Reformed Church which dates from 1794, the Account Book of the same church for the period 1822-47, and the early baptismal registers of the congregation, a transcript of a history of the church written by the Revd. Ingram Cobbin about 1806 and copied into the Church Book for 1869-79, and a speech given by the Revd. Joseph Parker at the stone-laying of the South Bar Congregational Church in 1856, which obviously drew on the memories of the older members of the church.<sup>3</sup> Some information can also be gained from registration certificates for dissenting places of worship in the Diocese of Oxford in the Bodleian Library, from the small number of surviving early records of the Banbury Baptist Church, and from those of the various village congregations in the vicinity. The most important new evidence is A Brief Account of the Origin and Progress of the Cause of Christ at the New Chapel, Church Lane, Banbury which is appended to the congregation's baptismal register in the Public Record Office.<sup>4</sup> It was

written by the Revd. Josiah Richards about 1810, and amplifies considerably the account by Cobbin. A considerable amount of new material has also been found in denominational magazines, and in the Banbury newspapers, a particularly useful source being a speech made by Joseph Osborne at the stone-laying of the Ebenezer Baptist Chapel in 1876.<sup>5</sup> Fresh information on the Disciples of Christ has come to light through the chance discovery of files of *The Christian Messenger* and *The British Millenarian Harbinger*.<sup>6</sup>

The Independent Church meeting in Church Passage,<sup>7</sup> Banbury, had its origins, like many eighteenth century Dissenting societies, in private meetings of people who regarded religion seriously, and finding church or chapel services inadequate to their needs, gathered to read the Gospels, the Psalms or published sermons. It now appears that these meetings began, not in the late 1780s, as Parker's account suggested, but in the early 1770s. In 1772 or 1773 'a few serious people in the Town began to meet on a Thursday evening, at a private house, first in the street generally called Oxford Bar Street, and then in Bull-bar (West Bar) Street, in order to worship the Lord by prayer, singing and reading the scriptures, and occasionally one of the company read a Sermon'. After some time they began to assemble on Sunday evenings at a house in Church Lane, the home of Thomas Ainge, a Baptist shoemaker.<sup>8</sup> Like many eighteenth century Dissenters they travelled considerable distances to places of worship which they found congenial. Most of the group went out of the town to morning and afternoon services at nearby village chapels of their particular denominations.

The meeting became too large for Ainge's house and a regular place of worship was set up, according to Richards, in a meal or corn chamber in Church Lane. Parker said that meetings began in 1787 in the cock loft of the Star Inn, Church Lane, a description which may be compatible with the earlier evidence. These may have been the meetings registered in October 1782 as taking place in a house adjoining the Three Swans Inn.<sup>9</sup> Soon afterwards ministers in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion began to make regular visits to the congregation, among them a Mr. Bryson, a Mr. Green who later settled at Middleton Cheney, a Mr. Stumphausen, a Mr. Carter and one Thomas Hull who died of a decline at Banbury and was buried on 31 March 1790.<sup>10</sup>

Selina, Countess of Huntingdon (1707-1791) was the wife of Theophilus 9th Earl of Huntingdon who died in 1746. She was for a time an adherent of John Wesley but theologically she was inclined to Calvinism, and in the early 1770s she and her followers broke decisively with Wesley. Like Wesley she was gradually excluded from the Church of England due to her enthusiasm for founding new churches, but her Connexion continued to use the Church of England liturgy. She sponsored various itinerant preachers, established churches in several towns, and in 1768 set up the ministerial training college at Trevecca, which moved to Cheshunt in 1792.

The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion became in effect a small separate denomination, but the bonds which held together its member churches were loose, and many of them ultimately became Congregationalist.

Thomas Ainge's accommodation proved insufficient for the Banbury society, and it was decided to build a chapel. A portion of land was obtained facing on to Church Passage at the rear of the High Street property of Joseph Gardner, Senr. (d.1830), ironmonger, father of the inventor of the Banbury Turnip Cutter, and a member of the Baptist church at Middleton Cheney. The principal subscribers were Daniel Taylor, a Mr. Osborne, probably the locksmith William Osborne, Thomas Arnold a tallow chandler and grocer, and Richard Lambert, a butcher. The chapel was domed, while its near neighbour, the parish church of St. Mary was barely above its foundations in 1792, and had no tower until 1822. Two of the sides of the chapel were galleried, and it could accommodate 500. It was opened on 21 October 1792 by the Revd. Dr. Ford, one of the Countess of Huntingdon's executors, and was always called the 'New Chapel' perhaps to distinguish it from the Presbyterian Old Meeting in the Horsefair.<sup>11</sup>

The congregation which met in the New Chapel included people of widely differing beliefs. Some preferred services according to the practice of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, in which the Anglican liturgy was combined with a Calvinist theology. Some were Baptists, believing in adult baptism, while the baptismal register, dating from 1794, shows that some were perfectly happy with the sprinkling of infants.<sup>12</sup> There was clearly a group of antinomians within the congregation, 'persons who tell us that a true believer in Christ is not under the Law, nor any longer bound to obey its precepts',<sup>13</sup> and as elsewhere such beliefs sometimes led to scandalous conduct. The first minister the Revd. Mr. West belonged to the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. He was a man 'of respectable pulpit talents' but his 'very irregular and unworthy conduct' disgusted many of the congregation, who determined thereafter to seek a minister from the Independent Connexion.<sup>14</sup> The Revd. Charles Buck, author of a theological dictionary, came to Banbury for about a year, and helped to draft the church covenant in 1794, but could not tolerate the antinomians within the congregation, and was unhappy about the status of the trust which held the chapel. On 12 April 1797 the Revd. James Higgs, a pupil of the Revd. W. Bull of Newport Pagnell, was ordained minister, in the presence of other ministers from London, Oxford and various village chapels.<sup>14</sup> The congregation continued to accommodate members with varied beliefs.

Higgs's wife gave birth to three children in three years, and he apparently felt the need for a more remunerative pastorate, and left Banbury for Dorchester (Dorset) about the end of 1802.<sup>15</sup> He was almost immediately succeeded by the Revd. Ingram Cobbin from South Molton, Devon. Cobbin was later an assistant secretary to the British and Foreign Bible Society, and author of many works of biblical scholarship, including

a well-known commentary. He attracted considerable congregations, but some members thought him 'less prudent, steady and spiritual than his predecessors'. He himself was alarmed by the High Calvinists among the society, for, according to his obituarist, 'antinomianism then fearfully prevailed. He had to endure a great affliction, and was thankful to remove to a more peaceful scene'. He left Banbury towards the end of 1806.<sup>16</sup>

Early in 1807 John Church, a semi-literate London mechanic who had done some preaching, moved to Banbury on the advice of a friend, with the hope of taking over the pastorate of the New Chapel. His expectations were fulfilled, and he was ordained on 15 September 1807. He was a Baptist, but it was noted in the report of his ordination that the mixed communion of the church was to be maintained. He was also a follower of the converted coal-heaver, William Huntington, S.S., and thus introduced a new style of worship if not a new sect into Banbury.<sup>17</sup>

William Huntington (1745-1813) was one of the most colourful characters of the Evangelical Revival. He was born at Cranbrook in Kent, and followed various occupations while fleeing a paternity order. He married a religious woman, and in 1773 was converted, after which he began to preach while making his living chiefly as a coal-heaver at Thames Ditton. In 1782-83 he built the Providence Chapel in Titchfield Street, London, and lived the rest of his life as a Dissenting minister, patronised on account of his eccentricities by many of the fashionable. His income in the first decade of the nineteenth century was said to exceed £2,000 p.a. He appended to his name the initials S. S., short for Sinner Saved. His style was said to be colloquial and often extremely coarse, and his doctrine was Calvinist, almost antinomian. He was outstanding amongst those whom Robert Southey called the rebel chieftains, who successfully established little kingdoms of their own, independent of the discipline of such connexions as those of John Wesley and the Countess of Huntingdon.<sup>18</sup>

According to the recollections of members, John Church was: 'a man possessed of good speaking talents, a commanding voice and ready utterance, and often spoke some striking things respecting the Saviour. But he was perfectly illiterate, scarcely able to scrawl his name legibly, - and of course very unacquainted both with Men and things; - and far from being a pious man, was often very light and trifling in his conversation'.

He spent about a year and a half at Banbury before some 'base and irregular' moral lapse caused his departure. His successor was another Londoner of similar beliefs called Garrett, a man of short temper, who stayed only about nine months.

During Garrett's ministry in 1809 the William Huntingdonians began to separate from the liturgical party, the adherents of the Countess of Huntingdon, who remained in control of the chapel, and applied to the Connexion for a minister in the autumn of 1809. In November of that year the Revd. Josiah J. Richards was sent from Bath. Congregations



increased and by June 1810 there was usually 'a very respectable collection of people' at the chapel on Sunday afternoons.<sup>20</sup> The William Huntingdonians were still meeting separately, and the registration as a dissenting place of worship of the house of Matthew Henderson in Calthorpe Street in October 1810 may have been for their use.<sup>21</sup> Henderson had been a sergeant in the 3rd Regiment of Foot Guards, and had been in Banbury at least since 1795 when he married Elizabeth Savage. He was admitted a member of the New Chapel in 1802, and retained his connection with the congregation until after 1816.<sup>22</sup> In 1810 the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion was listed, along with the Church of England, the Wesleyans, the Quakers and the Presbyterians, as one of the five denominations in Banbury.<sup>23</sup>

The accounts of the religious experiences of members of the church at this period show that they came from a variety of backgrounds and held very different beliefs. Some had been influenced by Evangelical clergy within the Church of England. Thomas Arnold, who gave £100 towards the Church Passage chapel, was first enlightened under William Romaine, Rector of St. Anne's, Blackfriars. John Hall had been influenced by the vicar of Kineton and the curate of Greatworth, as well as the Baptist pastor at Middleton Cheney. Sarah Moseley and Joseph Curtis had been acquainted with 'some of Mr. Wesley's people', but did not find satisfaction until they attended the Independent Church. James Wyatt's first religious conviction came under a minister called Bryson who was visiting the Presbyterian Old Meeting about 1783. Thomas Ainge, at whose house the earliest meetings of the society were held, was admitted in 1797 to occasional communion only, 'as being a Baptist', and several other Baptists enjoyed similar status, at least one of them being acknowledged as a member of the Hook Norton Baptist congregation. William Beale, admitted in 1803, had first attended the New Chapel three years previously, and 'perceived the difference between what he heard at the church and here... he desired to attend upon the Gospel... but being a great bigot to the church it was a considerable time before the prejudice subsided'. Mary Pargeter, admitted in 1804, had attended among the Arminian (i.e. Wesleyan) Methodists for some time, but after hearing at the chapel she was persuaded of the inability of her own merits to do anything towards her own salvation' and joined the society.<sup>24</sup> For the first two decades of the New Chapel's history, it accommodated people of very different beliefs, who, if they did from time to time give vent to odium theologicum, nevertheless continued to share the same building with reasonable amicability. Over the next two decades there was a gradual purification of the various doctrines, as different factions split off to form their own permanent meetings.

Josiah Richard left Banbury in the early part of 1812, and by June of that year Ralph Wardle, described as 'the Independent Minister of Banbury', was representing the New Chapel at the opening of the Baptist Church in Bloxham. Earlier in the year Wardle had been ordained a

minister in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion at Sion Chapel in London.<sup>25</sup> By repute, 1812 was the year in which the links between the New Chapel and the Countess's connexion were broken,<sup>26</sup> and there are certainly indications of schism at this time. In July 1813 Wardle's own house was registered as a Dissenting place of worship, and in August 1813 another building, a warehouse owned by the plush manufacturer Richard Thorne, was registered. One of the witnesses to the latter application was Richard Boswell, a shoemaker with premises next to Cobbs Bank in the High Street who was a deacon at the New Chapel in the 1820s. He was the first shoemaker in Banbury to close his shop on Sundays, and it was at his suggestion that the shoemakers abandoned their ancient feast. Thorne was a Londoner, a wealthy dyer and coal merchant as well as a plush manufacturer, who had an infant son baptised in 1814.<sup>27</sup> In September 1813 a 'chapel fitted up for the Friends of the Gospel separated from the chapel in Church Passage' was opened for worship, with the Revd. J. Sanderson as minister, but by the beginning of 1814 Sanderson was officiating in the New Chapel, and remained in Banbury at least until the end of 1815.<sup>28</sup> The events of 1812-14 were confused, but the likeliest explanation seems to be that the Independents for a time moved away from the New Chapel, leaving it in the hands of the Calvinists, but that they soon afterwards returned.

During 1815 the Calvinistic Baptists fitted up their own chapel in South Bar on the property of Richard Austin, the brewer. In January, Isaac Lewin, Watkins Detheridge and Matthew Henderson registered a room on the premises of Elizabeth Smith, landlady of *The Case is Altered*. Henderson's house had been used as a meeting place in 1810. Lewin was a miller who had been in Banbury at least since 1795 when his marriage was witnessed by Richard Lambert, one of the leading subscribers to the New Chapel. Detheridge lived at 'The Fleece' in Butchers' Row, which was the property of Richard Austin. In May 1815 the three men registered 'a meeting house belonging to Joseph and Sarah Heming'. Joseph Heming was a Gloucestershire man, a carpenter who worked for Richard Austin and lived on The Green where George Herbert recalled that a workshop was converted into a chapel by Richard Austin, and associated it with the locksmith William Osborne, who lived on the adjacent premises and was probably a member of the congregation. The meeting house was commonly called 'the schoolroom on the Green', and in the late 1830s was a venue for Chartist and Temperance meetings. About 1841 it passed to Edward Stanley who operated livery stables there.<sup>29</sup>

After this secession of Calvinistic Baptists, other Baptists remained within the congregation at the New Chapel. In 1816, following the short pastorate of one Samuel Hatch, the church was reconstituted, and the congregation divided into 'members', 'members of other churches' and 'hearers only'. Eleven members were excluded, among them two of the original subscribers to the building in Church Passage.<sup>30</sup> Early in 1818 Thomas Searle began what was to be the longest ministry in the history of

the chapel up to that time. He was no stranger to Banbury, having been since 1811 master of the Banbury Academy, which met on Presbyterian premises, adjacent to the Old Meeting.<sup>31</sup> In 1820 a building in his occupation in King's Sutton was registered for worship. In 1825 he gave up the Academy to Samuel Hill, and performed his last baptism at the New Chapel. He registered a house in Neithrop as a place of worship, but his departure seems to have been amicable, since he retired to King's Sutton, which was given as his address when he attended the ordination of his successor in 1827, and he continued to supply the pulpit of the New Chapel in subsequent years when the resident minister was not available.<sup>32</sup>

In 1818 a Baptist chapel was opened in Bodicote, the registration certificate being signed by several members of the New Chapel in Banbury. Richard Austin the brewer owned considerable property in Bodicote, and was closely associated with the congregation. The church had several ministers in its early years, until about 1824 Robert Radford became its pastor. He lived in Banbury in a house in North Bar, next door to Isaac Lewin, which was probably the property of Richard Austin, and by 1826 he was living at the house now numbered 52 The Green which certainly belonged to Austin. During Radford's time the congregation divided, part still meeting at Bodicote and part in Banbury. Shortly afterwards Joseph Gardner fitted up for the latter group a chapel in West Bar at which Radford became the regular minister, Isaac Lewin being amongst the signatories of the registration certificate.<sup>33</sup>

By the early 1830s the pastor of the Bodicote chapel was the Revd. J. Bloodworth, who apparently attracted large congregations. In 1833 Richard Austin 'took it into his mind to open another building in connection with the one at Bodicote'. He acquired land on the eastern side of South Bar and erected a chapel which was registered in February 1834, and opened in the following month when Bloodworth was recognised as its minister.<sup>34</sup> The following year he was succeeded by the Revd. John Clarke, who remained until 1841 when he was succeeded by John Galpin, who in turn was followed by David Lodge.<sup>35</sup> The most numerously attended service on Sunday 30 March 1851, the day of the Ecclesiastical Census, attracted 109 people.<sup>36</sup> Richard Austin had died in 1840, and was succeeded by his son Barnes, a man of dissolute habits who was in serious financial difficulties by 1850-51. In July 1851 David Lodge registered a room in a private dwelling as a place of worship. By January 1852 the church was in the charge of one George Smith, but the congregation ceased to meet before the end of the year. The building was used occasionally by Wesleyan Reformers in 1852-53 before it was offered for sale for conversion into houses.<sup>37</sup> It is now used as offices and the name 'Austin House' recalls the brewer who erected it as a chapel.

Following the departure of Thomas Searle from the New Chapel, the next minister was Nun Morgan Harry who was ordained on 25 April 1827. Like James Higgs, 30 years previously, he was a former pupil of



No.34b West Bar, Banbury, demolished in 1969, between 1829 and 1877 this was the chapel used by the Gardner family's Calvinistic Baptist Congregation. After Banbury's streets were first numbered in the 1850s it was known as 17½ West Bar.

the Newport Pagnell Evangelical Institute. He remained at Banbury till he took up the pastorate of New Broad Street Church in London in 1832, and was followed by the Revd. Thomas Whitta, from Chalford, who moved to Banbury in March 1833. He remained until 1844, enjoying the longest pastorate in the history of the church.<sup>38</sup>

By the time of Harry's ordination, the Calvinistic Baptists seem to have withdrawn from the New Chapel, either to Bodicote or to Austin's meeting in South Bar. There remained in the congregation several 'Particular Baptists'. In the early eighteenth century 'Particular' was an adjective applied to the strict Calvinists among the Baptists, but later as the views of ministers like Andrew Fuller of Kettering gained wider currency, the term lost its meaning. The most rigid Calvinists were normally called 'strict' or 'Calvinistic' Baptists, and those of more liberal views were, ironically, called 'Particular Baptists'.

The creation of a separate congregation of Particular Baptists in Banbury was largely due to Caleb Clarke, son of Richard Clarke the Baptist minister at Weston by Weedon, at whose ordination in 1809 Andrew Fuller had taken part. Clarke set up as a hosier in Banbury in 1831. He had been apprenticed in Northampton, and married the daughter of his master Robert Bartram. He was a member of the College Street Chapel in Northampton, which had a long tradition of missioning in the countryside. Soon after he arrived in Banbury he began to hold meetings in his own house, and he seems never to have associated with the New Chapel. He was a preacher with extraordinary skills, much in demand at revivalistic meetings in the countryside, and with a gift for healing. In 1838 a branch of the Baptist Missionary Society was formed in Banbury, and on 18 August 1840 a Particular Baptist church was formally constituted, following the registration the previous May of Clarke's house as a place of worship. The erection of a chapel followed, and on 26-27 October 1841 the classically styled building in Bridge Street was formally dedicated.<sup>39</sup> During the late 1830s several families who became leading members of the Bridge Street church were recorded as leaving the New Chapel 'to join the Baptists', including Jabez Stutterd, an ironmonger and Richard Goffe, a tailor, who was five times mayor of Banbury, both of whom signed the certificate for the registration of Clarke's home in 1840. The New Chapel and Clarke's meeting were not the only sources of members for the Bridge Street congregation. According to Joseph Osborne in 1876 there was a secession of members from Austin's chapel in South Bar, and it also attracted some Baptists who had previously travelled to Middleton Cheney to worship. The roots of the congregation in the countryside are shown by the trustees of the new building. The Northampton influence was represented by the minister of College Street Chapel, and by Clarke's father in law and one-time master, but the presence of six trustees from the Chipping Norton area suggests that the influence of the Baptist church in that town, which dates from 1662, was also strong.<sup>40</sup>

It was generally accepted that Caleb Clarke was the founder of the church. His obituary said that it was built 'mainly through his exertions', and a subsequent minister described him as 'the projector, architect and builder of the church'. His portrait remained in the church vestry as long as the building was open. He did not, as he may have hoped, become the first regular minister of the chapel. In October 1843 the Revd. Thomas Furneaux Jordan accepted that position, after being invited three times. He died in 1849 after bitter disputes within the congregation, one of which, in 1845, led Clarke to re-register his house as a place of worship. His meetings became an accepted part of the pattern of religious observance in Banbury. His congregation was included in 1850 in a list of places of worship at which sermons for the Old Charitable Society were preached. He died in 1851 and the Banbury Guardian remarked in an obituary that 'in consequence of some differences, for the last few years he had not identified himself so closely with its (i.e. Bridge Street's) affairs as formerly, and had preaching meetings on both Sundays and weekdays in his own house where numbers flocked to hear him'. He was much in demand in the countryside as a preacher, and on occasions addressed huge open air assemblies in places where the chapels were too small to hold those who flocked to hear him. He was at the time of his death on the point of giving up his business to concentrate on the ministry of healing. It was claimed that over 12,000 people sought healing from him during 1850. He had also started to charge for his medical services, and was criticised by the medical profession in Banbury as a charlatan.<sup>41</sup>

The year 1839 saw the foundation of yet another Dissenting congregation in Banbury. The Disciples of Christ originated in the United States, the founder being a Baptist from Glasgow, Alexander Campbell (1788-1866) who had emigrated in 1809, and after whom the sect was named the Campbellites. He formed the Disciples of Christ in 1827. The main characteristics of the sect were a belief in an imminent second coming, the avoidance of all creeds, the acceptance of the scriptures as the exclusive basis of faith, and the necessity of baptism by total immersion. In 1830-32 the Disciples emerged as a distinct denomination in the United States, although one of Campbell's aims had been to prevent the proliferation of sects by abolishing creeds and granting liberty of belief in non-essentials. The Disciples' church in Banbury was established on 12 May 1839 with three members. In the following eight years 27 more members were admitted, the active membership in 1847 being 20. Members included several people who had been associated with the New Chapel and with other Baptist groups in the district, and a number who were involved with radical politics in Banbury. In July 1847 the founder of the Disciples, Alexander Campbell, visited Banbury and gave a series of lectures.<sup>42</sup> By the early 1850s the leaders of the congregation were the brothers John, Thomas and Ebenezer Wall, owners of a rope and sacking business established by their father in 1806.<sup>43</sup> Ebenezer Wall was one of the first

trustees of the Bridge Street Baptist Church and during the 1840s his mother and his first wife were buried in the graveyard attached to the church. Much of the available information about the family's involvement with the Disciples of Christ comes from a strange paranoiac autobiography, *The Banbury Female Martyr*, written by one Elizabeth Redford about 1863. She was a rope spinner who had moved to Banbury about 1851 in order to draw her husband away from his drinking companions. On her arrival, on a Sunday, she went to meet the Wall brothers, whom she had been recommended to approach, at the Infants School in Church Passage where they were accustomed to worship. The School was a Dissenting institution founded in 1835, and was situated in the rear of the White Horse yard. The Walls sent her to James Norton, an upholsterer, and an active member of the Disciples, to seek assistance with the furnishing of her house. At the time of the 1861 census the Redford family were living at No. 29 Broad Street, and the biographical details on the enumerator's return tally exactly with those in *The Banbury Female Martyr*. About 1860 there was a secession from the Disciples of Christ after some disagreement between Ebenezer and Thomas Wall. The latter, who had gone to live at No. 7 South Street in the new suburb of Grimsbury, built 'a very compact chapel' near to his house, where he himself acted as pastor and administered the sacraments. This was probably the Gothic building later used as a house which stood between No. 7 South Street and the Prince of Wales public house. For many years Baptists in Banbury maintained a tradition that it had once been a place of worship.<sup>44</sup> The separation between Ebenezer and Thomas Wall extended into their business affairs in 1864 when the former began to trade at No. 10 Butchers' Row and in Warwick Road, while the latter remained at the 'Good Old Shop' in Castle Street. It seems likely that the split was precipitated by libellous allegations made in letters suggesting that Thomas Wall had behaved improperly in his relationships with Elizabeth Redford, who for three years was a member of his congregation.<sup>45</sup>

Thus by 1841 the Dissenting congregation established in 1772-73 when a few concerned people began to meet together, which had moved to the New Chapel in 1792, had given birth to an Independent (or Congregationalist) Church still assembling at the New Chapel, two Calvinistic Baptist congregations meeting in South Bar and West Bar, a Particular Baptist church meeting at the chapel in Bridge Street, and a congregation of the Disciples of Christ who gathered at the Infants School. It is not the purpose of this article to examine in detail the history of Dissent in Banbury in the second half of the nineteenth century, but a brief sketch of subsequent developments will enable the earlier period to be seen in context. The Independent Church enjoyed only moderate prosperity through the 1840s, but grew rapidly following the ordination of the young Joseph Parker as its pastor in 1853, at the start of a career in which he became minister of the City Temple. The chapel proved inadequate for the size of the congregation, and a new building in South Bar was opened in 1857, which is



**Austin House, South Bar, Banbury, built in 1834 and used as a Calvinistic Baptist Chapel until 1852.**

**The Ebenezer Baptist Chapel, Dashwood Road, Banbury, opened in 1877.**





still used by the Banbury United Reformed Church.<sup>46</sup> The Baptist Church in Bridge Street probably enjoyed its greatest prosperity during the ministry of the Revd. W. T. Henderson between 1851 and 1864, when it was quite the most influential Dissenting congregation in the town.<sup>47</sup> In the early 1970s the congregation moved to a new building constructed on the site of the former Unitarian chapel in the Horsefair. The Austin family's Calvinistic Baptist chapel in South Bar, as detailed above, closed in 1852. The Gardner family's chapel in West Bar seems to have had no regular minister after Robert Radford ceased to be its pastor about 1844. It pursued an uneventful existence until difficulties of access and the need for Sunday School accommodation led to the construction of the Ebenezer Chapel in Dashwood Road which was opened in June 1877.<sup>48</sup> The principal member of the congregation was Alderman Joseph Osborn, a wine merchant and former schoolmaster, the son of William Osborn the locksmith whose associations with Dissenting meetings can be traced back to 1813. The Disciples of Christ built a chapel in Gatteridge Street in 1866 at which Ebenezer Wall took the first service.<sup>49</sup> Throughout the next two decades two services were held at the chapel each Sunday, but by 1910 the Disciples were no longer listed in local directories. Ebenezer Wall died on 25 March 1910 at the age of 90, and had probably outlived the congregation he had patronised. The Plymouth Brethren, who began to meet in the Temperance Hall in Parsons Street in the mid-1850s, stem from the same roots as the Dissenting congregations described above. Among their first members were John and Elizabeth Poulton, who left the Independent church to join them, and when the Independents moved to South Bar, the Brethren moved in to the New Chapel, where they stayed until the 1880s when they began to use Banbury's second Temperance Hall in Bridge Street. From about 1911 they used the chapel built by the Disciples of Christ in Gatteridge Street, until they moved to a meeting place in the Leys after the First World War. In 1836 they opened Crouch Hall in Beargarden Road.<sup>50</sup>

The derivation of so many groups from the same original source reveals much about the history of Dissent in general. The 1851 census shows that the congregations described in this article totalled rather more than 500 people, only about two thirds of the number of Methodists recorded in Banbury on the same day. Yet the history of Methodism in the town is totally different from that of Old Dissent. There were traces of schism by supporters of the Methodist New Connexion about 1800, and by Wesleyan Reformers in the early 1850s, but they did little to impede the growth of the Wesleyan society, which, already by 1850, was the largest Dissenting congregation in the town. The Primitive Methodists came to Banbury in the late 1830s as an entirely separate denomination. The constant process of fission among the attenders at the New Chapel is evidence of the concern felt by many Dissenters to find a ministry tuned exactly to their emotional needs and theological outlooks. The same phenomenon can be observed in the relationship between Dissent in Banbury and that in the

surrounding countryside. Many Dissenters in the area were 'speckled birds', people who sought at great length for an ideal ministry, and who were willing to travel at great inconvenience to find it. The contrast with Methodism is again interesting. Wesleyan Methodism in the early nineteenth century was essentially something taken from the town to the countryside, journeying between Banbury and village chapels or cottage meetings being one of the most frequent topics of Wesleyan discussion and anecdote. Old Dissent, by contrast was nurtured in the villages, many of which had very old-established congregations, and migrants from the villages formed the nucleus of the Old Chapel society, and of the groups which sprang from it. There has been no space in this article to examine the cultural and political aspects of the growth of Dissent in Banbury in the early nineteenth century but the energy revealed by the constant creation of new groups is itself an indication of its importance in the town's history.

Barrie Trinder

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7. The thoroughfare leading eastwards from St. Mary's churchyard was known as Church Lane in the eighteenth century. To avoid confusion the modern name Church Passage has been used throughout this article. References to Church Lane relate to the thoroughfare between Parsons Street and High Street, the modern Church Lane.
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#### ABBREVIATIONS

BA	Banbury Advertiser
Bap. Mag.	Baptist Magazine
BG	Banbury Guardian
Bod. Lib.	Bodleian Library
C & CH	Cake and Cockhorse
Evan. Mag.	Evangelical Magazine
ORO	Oxfordshire Record Office
PRO	Public Record Office
VCH	Victoria County History

## THE MILCOMBE CHAPEL MARTYR

The history of English medieval wall-paintings in churches is a simple one; they flourished from at least as early as the 12th century to the time of the Reformation, after which they were, for the most part, obliterated with whitewash, in which condition they remained until the great wave of church restoration in Victorian times, whereupon they were either finally destroyed, or, what was often not much of an improvement, restored.

Like all generalisations the foregoing needs a good deal of qualification. Thus the earliest Christian wall-paintings in this country go back as far as the 4th century and were originally in the Roman villa at Lullingstone, in Kent;<sup>1</sup> their Christian nature is indubitable since one of them is the Chi-Rho symbol of Christ's own name. Moreover the finds from the excavations in the Close of Winchester Cathedral undertaken in the 1960s by Professor Martin Biddle include a painted stone which may well indicate that there were Saxon wall-paintings in the original cathedral, thus antedating the year 903.<sup>2</sup> These, however, are isolated examples. Nor must the Reformation be regarded as the sole reason for the disappearance of all wall-paintings save those confined to such safe subjects as the royal arms (to show who was now the head of the Church); or to non-controversial Biblical texts; or, as at Yanworth, in Gloucs., pictures of Death, who is presumably ecumenical. By the time the Reformation occurred the architectural techniques had so improved that the great expanses of load-bearing walls, plastered over inside and calling out for applied decoration, of the churches of the 12th century were no longer functionally necessary. The difference which this meant is, by a coincidence, well exemplified by the Milcombe Chapel at the church of St. Mary at Bloxham, with which this article deals. As a result, the focus for decoration passed from walls to windows - to "les prestiges du vitrail qui parvient à mêler couleur et lumière ...".<sup>3</sup> Nor will the frequently-expressed view that wall-paintings were needed to provide a *Biblia Pauperum* for the illiterate bear too much examination since the researches of John Harvey have demonstrated that universal illiteracy did not in fact obtain,<sup>4</sup> while the subjects of the wall-paintings, so far as can be judged by those which survive (a qualification which should be taken as read throughout the rest of this article) show very little disposition to illustrate the teachings of Christ. Paintings of His ministry are indeed confined to two Baptisms, one at Black Bourton, Oxon, and the other at Hardham, Sussex; His miracles have only two representations, one at Winchester Cathedral, the other at Copford, Essex; while there is only one painting of a parable, that of Dives and Lazarus, at Ulcombe, Kent. The majority of wall-paintings relating to Christ deal with nothing between the flight into Egypt and the entry into Jerusalem, as if the only doctrines of any importance were the Incarnation and the Atonement. For every fully worked-out scheme of paintings to instruct the congregation in the nature of the Christian life, and its antithesis, as at

Trotton, in West Sussex, there were scores of wall-paintings of saints, headed by St. Christopher, and closely followed by St. Catherine of Alexandria, who, since Paschalis Mysterior<sup>5</sup>, have been removed from the Calendar. Almost equally frequent were paintings of the Last Judgement, with no explanation of what the souls had done to become either blessed or damned; as Lord Clark has put it, they represent salvation by fear.<sup>6</sup> At one time it was thought that these Doooms must have been interpreted in the medieval sermons, but G.G. Coulton doubted, "after reading a great many", whether the subject-matter of church art was much referred to in any of them.<sup>7</sup> Not even the Virgin was exempt from a mythological treatment, chiefly derived from the disarmingly-named "Golden Legend" of c. 1275, showing her performing miracles for which there is no canonical justification, as in the Chapel of Eton College, or the almost heartlessly uncanonical miracle of saving sinners at the Last Judgement, whatever their sins might have been, merely by placing her rosary on St. Michael's scales, as at Swalcliffe, Oxon.

Banburyshire is exceptionally rich in churches which have retained their medieval wall-paintings, as E.T. Long confirms.<sup>8</sup> In all but one of their paintings, the subject matter has been finally settled, although some perceptive detective-work was necessary by Dr. M.R. James to identify Thomas of Lancaster at South Newington,<sup>9</sup> and by Jane Ashby in explaining that the Doom at Hornton is exceptional in that it reveals why one of the souls is being damned, namely, for counterfeiting being a cripple so as to live the life of a beggar.<sup>10</sup>

The one subject remaining in which there is no agreement as to identification is that of the wall-painting in the Milcombe Chapel in the church at Bloxham.

Before dealing with this painting in detail, it would of course be satisfactory to be able to point to some special reason for its execution, or to be able to identify its donor, or even its painter, but this is almost never possible where English medieval wall-paintings are concerned. Among the few exceptions to this principle are the wall-paintings in Eton College Chapel, where the dating and the names of the painters are known simply because these facts were recorded in the contemporary College accounts, and these are still in existence,<sup>11</sup> while the identification of the donors of the 14th century paintings at South Newington was made possible by the inclusion in the paintings of the relevant heraldry.<sup>12</sup> Neither of these happy accidents occur at Bloxham, nor do they in the great majority of cases. Indeed, at Bloxham, the Milcombe Chapel itself, in which the painting is housed, "is a very grand addition to the church, but neither the patron nor the master-mason is known", as Jennifer Sherwood puts it, though she goes on to refer to the suggestion by John Harvey in his "English Medieval Architects" (1954) that the mason may have been Richard Winchcombe, "responsible for the Adderbury chancel in 1418 and the first part of the Divinity School, Oxford, in the 1430s".<sup>13</sup>

The wall-painting in the Milcombe Chapel is to be found on the narrow section of wall between the two windows on the south side. As to the date of the painting, all the authorities are agreed that it is a work of the 15th century,<sup>14</sup> with the exception of Jennifer Sherwood, who thinks it "probably early C16",<sup>15</sup> in which case it might well be one of the last wall-paintings to be carried out in a church before the Reformation.

Like most English wall-paintings, it was probably not executed by the true fresco method, which involves painting while the plaster has just been applied and is consequently still wet; as the drying-out takes place the chemical process results in a very durable picture, particularly in a climate like that of Italy. Had this method been used at Bloxham, there would still have been the tell-tale "fresco edges", which indicate the extent of each day's work. The probability is that the Bloxham painting would have been done by the "fresco secco" method after the plaster had dried off, but had subsequently been re-vivified, as far as possible, by the application of lime-water. While this would still have given a reasonable bond, provided lime-compatible colours were used, it would result in the picture having a shorter life than if the true fresco method had been used. There is, however, no reason to suppose that the medieval artists expected their work to last until the 20th century, judging by the frequency with which, even during the hey-day of the wall-paintings, they would, after the lapse of about a century, paint over an existing painting some new subject, or occasionally exactly the same subject, as in the case of the Deposition and Entombment in the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre at Winchester Cathedral. But there was a special reason in this case, as it was an Easter Chapel.

It should also be mentioned that there is one aspect of the conventions of painting in which the medieval world differed from ours, namely, that whereas we expect the subject-matter of any picture to be confined to one moment of time (it is realised that there are a few exceptions to this, as in some of the paintings of the Norwegian artist, Edvard Munch, 1863-1944), this convention did not exist in the middle ages, so that where it was desired to present a continuous flow of narrative, instead of our strip cartoons with each occurrence in its separate box, the same characters would be shown performing different stages of the story in different parts of the same picture. Thus in one of the 13th century paintings at Black Bourton the Magi are shown at once travelling to Bethlehem and worshipping the Christ-Child, having arrived there. Similarly, in the 14th century painting at Idsworth, in Hampshire, three phases, or "moments", as Professor Tristram called them,<sup>16</sup> of the story of the execution of St. John the Baptist are shown in the same painting. It will be evident that this method of dealing with the passage of time is used in the Milcombe Chapel painting.

An attempt has been made to copy the decipherable parts of this painting in the line-drawing which accompanies, but a description of the

painting also seems desirable, if only to record the factual basis from which the conclusions are drawn. It will be seen from the drawing that the whole action takes place against a chequered background of large squares, presumably floor tiles. They are green and white. It will also be apparent that the lower edge of the painting has at some time been curtailed, save at either end. Perhaps a wall-monument had been placed over the painting at a time when the latter was forgotten under its whitewash, and when the monument was removed, it took all the pigment away with it. Though most of the figures comprising the lowest of the "moments" have thus been truncated, it is quite clear that there are, starting from the extreme left and extending to the centre of the painting, five quite ordinary-looking people, plainly dressed in green, white, or red, hatless and clean-shaven, and all with their hands raised to shoulder height, perhaps in the "orante" attitude of prayer, or perhaps just in supplication. Like everyone else in the painting, their faces are (now, at any rate) white save for a red spot on each cheek. The linear element predominates; as we now see it, the paint is merely a flat wash filling in the outlines. But it is certainly, as the leaflet available in the church puts it, a "finely drawn mural".

At the head of these five persons, to their right, and at a slightly higher level, is a youthful, beardless saint – for he has a halo over his bare head – and similarly dressed, his garment being red. His hands are raised in the same way as theirs. He and his companions are all looking at a bearded king – for he is wearing a crown – seated on the extreme right. Only one arm of his throne can still be seen. He is holding a sword upright in his right hand, thus indicating that he is dispensing what at any rate he will consider to be justice.<sup>17</sup> His robe is green.

All these personages, like everyone else in the painting, have the appearance of the utmost ingenuousness. Even the few wrinkles on the forehead of the royal judge seem to express surprise rather than wrath or even age; irreverent though it may be, his appearance is indeed reminiscent of one of the more benevolent of the court cards, so that in considering the idiom of the painting as a whole one cannot help recalling that playing cards, much as we know them in the standard designs of to-day, were an invention, and perpetuate the dress, of the late 15th century.<sup>18</sup> Not for this monarch is the sort of hideous face of the king sitting in judgement on St. Catherine in the 14th century wall-paintings at Little Missenden, Bucks, that Tristram thought so vicious that it must have been inspired by a mask from a Mystery Play.<sup>19</sup>

Another "moment" takes place higher up. The stage has, as it were, now been cleared, and the young saint now stands isolated at the centre of it, there being no sign of his five former companions. He can be seen from head to foot, and thus it can now be appreciated that his garment is a short tunic, and that he is wearing white hose. His hands are nearly joined together. Behind him, and some distance away, are two young men also in short tunics, one on either side of the saint. The one on

the left is clean-shaven, but the one on the right has a beard. They both wear grandly elaborate hats. The legs of only one of them can be seen; one is white and the other green. These young men are apparently just beginning to bind the saint's arms, but at the "moment" they have only got as far as passing a long rope over his elbows and behind his back, while they themselves hold either end of it. They too have supremely innocent, childlike faces, the one on the left having a particularly solicitous expression; not for them the bulbous noses and contorted features usually considered appropriate for men in their position.<sup>20</sup> On the extreme right, immediately above the king, stands a bearded man holding his right hand over his heart. He wears a long white robe, apparently sleeveless, so that the sleeves of a red shirt come through it, reaching to his wrists. He may possibly be the king, wearing a very elaborate headdress, which is red, instead of the crown. This however is not thought likely. Kings in medieval wall-paintings are never in practice parted from their crowns even when otherwise naked and being led off into Hell-mouth with other damned souls, as in the 15th century Doom at South Leigh, Oxon. It seems more likely that this man is senior to the two men binding the saint, and is in charge of the operation. To complete the description of this "moment", there are on the extreme left two onlookers, both young, one bearded and the other clean-shaven. To judge from their hats, green and red respectively, they are both members of the Establishment.

On the next higher level, the extreme right-hand side is now indecipherable, apart from a leg visible only from the knee downwards, but at the middle on the left two more "moments" seem to be taking place alongside each other. In the central one the young saint is no longer wearing a short tunic but is dressed in a long-sleeved white garment which reaches the ground. Over it he wears a shorter red garment partially split up the side. At the top it covers his shoulders and upper arms rather like a cape. His hands are held together. The line of the folds in the skirts of the long white garment may be intended to show that he is kneeling, but if this were so his head would be much lower than in fact it is. On either side of him is a young man with a long stave carried at the slope on the right shoulder and held by the right hand. The guard on the right holds up his left hand in the gesture commonly associated with surprise or even incredulity, while the one on the left must have something substantial to lean against, as his left leg is completely crossed over the right. One leg is in green and the other in red, but apart from this and the left guard's red hat, colour cannot be ascribed to either of them with any certainty. The saint and the two others are half-turned towards the indecipherable portion on the extreme right.

Not all the "moment" on the left of this scene still remains, but it clearly comprises three people, pressed closely together, the man in the middle wearing a loin-cloth but being otherwise naked. To identify him, it should first be pointed out that a peculiarity of the saint's halo, especially



noticeable in the first two "moments" described above, is that it has shading-lines radiating from the head towards, but not quite reaching, the halo's outer edge. These can also be discerned in the case of the nearly-naked man, which, coupled with the fact that the saint is the only person standing between two other men in the second and third "moments", makes it reasonably certain that the nearly-naked man is the saint. Not all of the rest of his head is still to be seen, but the eyebrows and forehead, together with, as mentioned, some of the hair and halo, are still visible. His hands are clasped over his chest. On the right a young man wearing the usual sort of hat and a very short green tunic, with one white and one red leg, pulls the saint close to him, so that his chin rests on the saint's bare shoulder and his left hand is pressed against the saint's bare arm. With his right shoe he treads on the saint's bare left foot. Of the figure to the left of the saint, only the skirts of a long green robe remain, but he, too, must have been very close to the saint.

Above the tier just described, the whole of the painting becomes so indecipherable as not to be capable of even a conjectural interpretation, though, from the considerable amount of colour remaining, a painting of some sort, though not necessarily of the same subject, must have continued to the top of the wall.

In describing the painting I have sought to be as objective as possible, but fully realise that it may be unconsciously tendencious to have "read" the painting from bottom to top, and to have regarded the right-hand "moment" on the third tier as coming before the left, rather than vice versa.

Most of the authorities have not sought to identify the saint who forms the subject of the painting; thus the Bristol and Gloucs. Archaeological Society<sup>14</sup> and the Victoria County History<sup>14</sup> regard it as the story of a "youthful martyr", or, in the case of Jennifer Sherwood, of an "unknown" one.<sup>15</sup> Nor does the leaflet available in the church deal with the question. It is encouraging to have the support of E. T. Long in starting from the bottom. He describes it as a trial scene and the row of five people at the foot of the painting as "suppliant figures".<sup>14</sup>

Though E. T. Long does not identify the saint, he does commit himself to the extent of saying that "at the top is a large seated figure, probably Christ in Majesty".<sup>14</sup> In this he is following C. E. Keyser,<sup>22</sup> and it is still possible, once the suggestion has been made, to fancy something can be seen at the top of the painting which might indeed be the vestiges of a Majesty, Who would presumably have been receiving the soul of the martyr to whom the other authorities refer. C. E. Keyser, however, also suggests who the saint was, namely, "perhaps St. Catherine"; the saint could not possibly be taken for a woman nowadays, and as Keyser was published in 1896 it can only be assumed that the painting was less legible then than it is now.

A quite different identification is put forward by A. Caiger-Smith,<sup>14</sup>

who describes it as an "elaborate trial scene, perhaps representing Christ before Pilate". It seems unlikely, however, that a 15th century artist would have portrayed Christ in the short tunic of the too youthful saint in the present painting, nor have the five "suppliant figures" any part in the accounts of Christ's trials, a characteristic of which was that He was deserted by everyone, even Peter. At the same time, the final "moment" described above does have certain affinities with, for example, "The Crowning with Thorns" by Hieronymus Bosch (c.1450-1516), in the National Gallery.

The theory which I would like to put forward about the identity of the saint in the Milcombe Chapel wall-painting (and I am indebted to Fr. Wilfrid Kelly for having guided me to it) is that he is St. Lawrence the martyr. It is known that he was one of the deacons of Rome, who was martyred there in 258, four days after Pope St. Sixtus II had been martyred under the persecution by the Emperor Valerian. When Lawrence was



THE MILCOMBE CHAPEL, ST. MARY'S CHURCH, BLOXHAM.  
The decipherable remains of the 15th century wall-painting.

ordered by Decius, the prefect of Rome, to hand over the Church's valuables, there were none left, as Lawrence had already distributed them to the poor, on the Pope's instructions. Lawrence therefore gathered the poor together, and, presenting them to the prefect, said "Here are the treasures of the Church". Enraged, Decius ordered him to be put to death, after preliminary tortures, by being roasted on a gridiron; historians now think this mode of execution was probably invented by his Spanish compatriots and that he was more probably beheaded, as St. Sixtus had been.<sup>23</sup> The typical way of representing St. Lawrence in religious art is "as a young deacon, beardless and bare-headed in a dalmatic".<sup>24</sup>

Applying this to the Milcombe Chapel wall-painting, the lowest of the "moments" shows Lawrence presenting the poor (or at any rate five of them - there may have been many more where I have conjectured that the wall-monument was placed) to the prefect, whom the 15th century artist would no doubt equate with a king. Lawrence is certainly shown as young, beardless, and bare-headed, but it is a difficulty that he is wearing a very simple lay costume in the first two "moments". He is however certainly wearing vestments in the third "moment" which exactly correspond with those of a deacon, namely, the alb, and over it, the dalmatic, which also happens to be one of St. Lawrence's attributes.<sup>25</sup> Thus in the third "moment" he is dressed as he is shown, for example, in the painting of him by Memling in the National Gallery.<sup>26</sup> It is thought that these vestments, coupled with the presence of the poor, make it unlikely that any other saint can be intended. It is appreciated that St. Thomas of India (the Apostle Thomas) was also responsible for distributing wealth to the poor, though in his case it had been intended for building a palace for an Indian king. It is not, however, likely that someone who had been an Apostle, and consequently an ex officio saint before he even got to India, (if indeed he ever did, his time there having been<sup>27</sup> described as "a story from the 'Thousand and One Nights', a gnostic romance, which had been rejected at an early date by St. Augustine") would be portrayed dressed as simply in either lay or clerical garb as the saint in the Milcombe Chapel, while the presentation of the poor to the ruler forms no part of the St. Thomas story. Finally, although St. Thomas was himself eventually martyred, it was not for having diverted wealth to the poor. While therefore the case for St. Thomas justifies consideration, it is not thought that it is strong enough to displace that of St. Lawrence. If this is accepted, then, the presentation of the poor having been shown in the first "moment", the second represents the arrest of the saint, the third his sentencing, and the fourth the saint stripped for execution, which would presumably have been depicted in the now indecipherable space above, together with the preliminary tortures, in all their gruesome details.

St. Lawrence is not commonly found among the surviving English medieval wall-painting subjects, and when this does occur he is usually shown as a single figure, after canonisation, holding his emblem, the

gridiron, and dressed as a deacon, as at Chalgrove, Oxon, or Little Kimble, Bucks; the wall-painting at Widford, Oxon, thought to show the actual martyrdom on the gridiron, is exceptional. Full-length narrative pictures of a saint's trial and execution are not uncommon in the cases of St. Catherine of Alexandria, as at Pickering, North Yorkshire, and St. Margaret of Antioch, as at Charlwood, Surrey; they are rare in English medieval wall-painting in relation to other saints. If indeed the wall-painting in the Milcombe Chapel represents the full story of St. Lawrence, it would, it is believed, be unique.

John Edwards

### Footnotes

1. What you now see at Lullingstone are copies; the originals are in the Romano-British section of the British Museum. As to the Roman villa at Lullingstone in general, see G.W. Meates "Official Guide to Lullingstone Villa", HMSO (1972 reprint).
2. "Current Archaeology" Vol. I, (1967-68), page 38. The stone is on exhibition in the City Museum, The Square, Winchester.
3. Y. Bonnefoy, "Peintures Murales de la France Gothique", Hartman, Paris, (1954), page 5.
4. See, for example, his "Medieval Craftsmen", Batsford, (1975), pages 43 to 45.
5. A decree of the Roman Church which came into operation on 1st January, 1970, and applied the criterion of whether there was historical evidence for a saint's existence. Apart from those saints completely removed, there were others, including St. George, whose veneration, formerly obligatory and universal, was reduced to optional and local.
6. In "Civilisation", BBC and John Murray, (1969), page 238.
7. G.G. Coulton, "Art and the Reformation", Blackwell, (1928), page 317.
8. "... splendid series of wall-paintings surviving in North Oxfordshire. Few districts, if any, are richer in work of this sort". - E. T. Long, Burlington Magazine, Vol. XXVI, (1940), page 162.
9. E.W. Tristram, Burlington Magazine, Vol. LXII, (1933), page 123.
10. Jane Ashby, "Medieval Doom Paintings in Oxfordshire Churches", "Oxford Art Journal", October, 1979, page 58.
11. Dr. M.R. James, "The Wall-Paintings in Eton College Chapel", Walpole Society, Vol. 17, (1928-9), pages 3 and 4.
12. E.W. Tristram, op. cit.
13. Jennifer Sherwood and Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, "Oxfordshire", Penguin Books (1974), page 479. See also page 358 of the Introduction to the County Section of this work.
14. Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, Vol. 52, (1930), page 44;  
A. Caiger-Smith, "English Medieval Mural Paintings", Clarendon Press, (1963), page 165;  
Victoria County History of Oxfordshire, (1969), Vol. 9, page 77;

- E.T. Long, "Medieval Wall Paintings in Oxfordshire Churches", "Oxoniensia", (1972), Vol. XXXVII, page 92.
15. Sherwood and Pevsner, op. cit., page 479.
  16. E.W. Tristram, "English Medieval Wall-Paintings : the 14th Century", Routledge and Kegan Paul, (1954), page 185.
  17. J.L. André in an article on Battle Church, "Sussex Archaeological Collections", Vol. XLII (1899), page 226 – but he is describing a wall-painting of Pilate!
  18. G.M. Trevelyan, "English Social History", Longmans Green, (3rd imp. 1945), page 88.
  19. E.W. Tristram, "English Medieval Wall-Paintings : the 13th Century", O.U.P., (1950), page 341.
  20. E. Clive Rouse, dealing with the conventional portrayal of soldiers, torturers, and executioners in the wall-paintings at Peakirk, Northants., in the "Archaeological Journal", Vol. 110 (1953), pages 139 and 144.
  21. E.T. Long, op. cit., footnote (14), above.
  22. C.E. Keyser, "Archaeological Journal", Vol. 53, (1896), page 178.
  23. L. Reau, "Iconographie de l'art chrétien", Presses Universitaires de France, (1958), Vol. III; 2, page 787;  
D. Attwater, "Penguin Dictionary of Saints", Penguin Books, (1965), page 214;  
D.H. Farmer, "Oxford Dictionary of Saints", Clarendon Press, (1978).
  24. My rough translation from "Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie", edited by W. Braunfels, Herder. (1974), Vol. 7, page 374.
  25. G. Ferguson, "Signs and Symbols in Christian Art", O.U.P., (1972), page 157.
  26. The attribution is taken from page 227 of the "National Gallery's Illustrations, Continental Schools (excluding Italian)", (1937), but it is thought that nowadays it would just be "Dutch School".
  27. My rough translation from L. Reau, op.cit., Vol. III; 3, page 1266.

**Northamptonshire Record Office.** Report on the Work of the Archives Service for the year ended 31st March 1981.

The report shows once again an active year by this most energetic of record offices. Many interesting papers and records have been deposited during the year. A copy of the report may be obtained from the Chief Archivist at Delapre Abbey, Northampton (tel:- Northampton 62129). The Record Office is a pleasant, friendly and helpful place in which to work, with plenty of raw material of interest to Cake and Cockhorse if any member wishes subjects on which to research.

### **Organs and Organists**

The organ at Drayton Church was built by A. Church, Banbury, in 1853 or 1858.

## SCHOOLING VILLAGE CHILDREN IN EDWARDIAN ENGLAND

'Children always are difficult, till you make them understand what you mean them to be, and when they have to obey . . .'<sup>1</sup> These words, put into Prince Albert's mouth by Laurence Houseman, still had general application in the Edwardian period. This article is concerned with the various modes adopted by adults in order to exert control over children, during the early years of this century, and derives from work on certain aspects of the history of Victorian and Edwardian Adderbury, undertaken in connection with a study of the Blunt manuscript collection of songs from the village.<sup>2</sup> I shall confine my attention here to two complementary modes of control: direct control through punishment and reward, and indirect control through secondary socialization procedures and the systematic advancement of particular values.

The locus for establishing control over working class children in the village during this period - for developing an understanding of their place in society and of those to whom they should defer - was the school. As is well known, there were formerly three schools in Adderbury.<sup>3</sup> The infants school was opened in 1854 for seventy children and was mixed. Pupils remained there until the age of seven, when they changed to one of the other two schools according to their sex. The infants school building in Water Lane was the last of the three schools to be erected, and is ecclesiastical in design, like a little chapel with its gothic porch and lancet windows. The resemblance was not fortuitous. In Adderbury the vicar was deeply involved in both the starting of the infants school and the supervision of its building.<sup>4</sup> Children sat on benches, with no desk space; some of the seats were tiered; restricting movement but enabling the mistress to keep an eye on fidgety pupils. Classroom furniture included a black-board on an easel, an abacus, and cupboards for books and equipment. The walls were painted brick, with a dado up to about four feet from the floor, and on them were hung various pictures, prayers and verses. An oil lamp provided lighting when needed. It was a typical school interior of its time.<sup>5</sup>

The girls school was situated near Moorey House and the old Rectory. The boys school, near to the parish institute, was originally a grammar school endowed by Christopher Rawlins, vicar of Adderbury, in 1589.<sup>6</sup> All three National schools in the village were governed by a board of managers who, as was the convention in all small Oxfordshire villages, were drawn from the local farmers, clergy and gentry. Ex-military men such as General Blunt, having retired to the village in the early 1890s, joined them almost as a matter of course.<sup>7</sup> With all policy-making decisions in their hands, they monopolised local control of the schools, and while many were diligent in the exercise of their duties, the effect of gentry management was ultimately one of preserving the status quo. The activities of the clergy contributed further to maintaining and fostering

acceptance of the existing social order. Besides holding Sunday schools, evening classes and cottage lectures, the Adderbury vicar and his curate gave hourlong scripture lessons in the day schools, commencing at 9 a.m.<sup>8</sup> Great stress was laid on the Catechism (in Cottisford and Tysoe the clause 'To order myself lowly and reverently before my betters' was given particular emphasis.<sup>9</sup>) The necessity of 'knowing one's place' was emphasised in most religious instruction: children of the 'lower orders' were destined to become manual workers or domestic servants, and as such had to be instructed not to 'act above their station'. Mabel Ashby tells of a local vicar '... who sent for a lad and scolded him severely for lifting his hat to the vicar's daughter (like an equal) instead of touching it (as an inferior), and of '... a vicar's lady who held that the village schoolgirls should have only a comb for their hair, a brush being above their station'.<sup>10</sup> Church schools remained predominant in rural areas, and the influence of the church over the Adderbury schools and scholars continued to be strongly felt during the Edwardian period, the vicar coming in daily to sign the teacher's register and give religious instruction. One old lady in Adderbury described to me the effect of the clergy's overbearing influence in her early life:

You couldn't do a thing at school or anywhere official unless you had a prayer before, a prayer during and a prayer after: you couldn't do anything without going through all that rigmarole... I think I had so much of Sunday school, church, prayer and hymns, I was glad when I didn't have to go no more. You had to till you'd grown up though, you didn't dare stay away. But I had so much it was coming out of my ears! That finished me with it all.

The deference expected of children as 'inferiors' was recollected by my informants as particularly exemplifying the society in which they grew up. Mr and Mrs Brown of Adderbury East told me of their experiences of Nelson Bilborough, a parvenu who had been projected into the ranks of the gentry through a fortune made in the breweries, and who had purchased Adderbury Grange in order to indulge his social pretensions. He lived in the village from the early 1890s until just after the First World War. Some of the children from whom he demanded servility seemed intuitively to recognise a streak of insecurity in his self-importance which their defiance could at times turn into his Achilles' heel, but for the most part they remained intimidated by his presence. Mr Brown:

When I was a kid, I remember Mr. Bilborough once called me over as I was passing in the street. 'You, young man! Come here!' 'Yes Sir?' (touching my cap). 'I want you to take this note up to Mr. Oliver Walton's'. He lived in Chapel Lane. Then Bilborough said: 'Do you think you'll be able to manage that?' 'Oh yes Sir!'

(touching my cap). It was only just up the road, up Chapel Lane. He watched me do it, stood at the bottom all the time, and when I came back he said: 'Did you deliver that note?' 'Oh yes Sir!' I said (touching my cap). 'Very good. Now tell me, are you the boy who is in the choir?' 'Yes Sir'. (Touching my cap again, you see ... I was expecting at least a ha'penny for all this.) 'Well, DON'T FIDGIT!!' he shouted, and stalked off ... You've never had to do that, have you?

Reg Brown recalled another humiliating confrontation with Bilborough:

Later, when I'd left school, he saw me doing a job once on a hot day in summer, it was near his house, he came up and said: 'I expect you'd like a cool drink, wouldn't you?' Course I fell for it. 'Oh yes Sir, I would. Thank you'. 'Well, I'll get you one then', he said. He went up to the nearest pump and filled a cup up - with water!! ... He was always terrible to anyone who worked for him ... Another time I was just walking along and his dog bit the seat out of my trousers. Course you couldn't get no compensation or anything like that, he'd just have laughed.

Mrs Brown told me:

It used to be terrible with the gentry sometimes, all the bowing and scraping you had to do. Mr. Bilborough, he used to delight in humiliating children. He'd stand us in a line and say 'Good morning' to each of us in turn. If you were a boy you had to say 'Good morning' and bow; if you were a girl you curtsied. One day three of us refused to speak to him. He got furious! 'I said GOOD MORNING to you! And you! And you!' ... He had to say it three times. But then we burst out laughing ... We had it over him that time.

Like the priest, the farmer and the police, the village school-master was a crucial agent of the class society. Harry Austin remembers how he used to instil subservience into his pupils:

It was terrible here, past distinction ... The school-master used to drum it into us, I think, a lot ... to look up to the gentry. If there was any gentry come into the school you know, they used to rise up all at once, just as if it was an organ coming out of a pit. They used to rise up all at once, like that. 'Good morning, Sir!' - all the lot, all in one chord you know, nothing out at all.

This regimented behaviour was, to a great extent, produced by the strap



and the cane. Corporal punishment was institutionalized in Edwardian schools, and among teachers belief in that barbaric proverb of Solomon's ran deep. Just as capital punishment was seen as beneficial for the nation, so corporal punishment was seen as beneficial for the individual: it rooted out the evil. While the girls were punished with detention and extra lessons, bodily punishment was regularly inflicted on the boys. Sometimes the merest aberration - a cough, or an incorrect answer - would be met with slashes from the cane across the hand. Hair was pulled, ears were twisted, cheeks slapped, arms bent back, books thrown. And hours of standing in a corner as miscreant or dunce was common for both sexes.

Thomas Samuel Walker (originally from Wrexham) and his wife Dunstan taught in Adderbury throughout this period, as did Miss Maud Coward, the infants schoolmistress.<sup>11</sup> Tommy Walker's aptitude for teaching (though he was unqualified) and his readiness to inflict corporal punishment, made him an exemplary exponent of the schoolchildren's couplet:

Reading, 'riting, 'rithmetic,  
And don't forget to give the stick.

Naturally vivacious and emotionally volatile, sometimes the slightest thing could set him aflame. It is for his truculence that he is remembered in the village. Harry Austin told me:

He lost his temper quickly. He was a great billiard player, and he used to take the old cues in and we used to get beaten with these ... If he thought you were being inattentive, or a bit stupid, then he'd lash into you with the billiard cue ... If he set on anyone, that was it. He used to have a stick you know, and if you didn't get away quick enough after he'd used it, he used to put it across your shoulders you know. Terrific! And if he came in there, in a morning, when he'd had his moustache trimmed up, you had to look out. Yes, you'd got to be prepared ... It used to make him in a bad temper I think.

The following incident illustrates the energy he put into his lashes:

There was a chap they called 'Grib' Brown, they named him 'Grib' because Walker'd got his head down between his legs and 'Grib' bit him.<sup>12</sup>

This kind of punishment was inflicted willy-nilly on boys from the age of seven to that of twelve or thirteen, the age when they left school.<sup>13</sup> The standards set were absurdly high: orderly marching in and out of the classroom, silent attention while there, punctual arrival, long passages to confine to memory, the dull rehearsal of facts upon facts. Disobedience, incompetence and high spirits led inevitably to humiliation and pain. Wilf Walton said of Walker: 'Oh, he was a terror if you upset him ... he was very strict you know ... We used to act the fool, course you were for it:

Out! Get the cane, or box you ears'.

The teaching arrangement in the boys school was hardly conducive to concentration. 'It was a very rough place', according to one person. 'Just one big room, and two classes held at the same time ... There was no partition: you sat on one side or the other, according to your age'. Wilf Walton had a painful recollection of this:

Missus was giving an English lesson ... and that was one of the things I detested. Now Walker you see, the school boss, was giving the Napoleonic Wars, and history I'd always been interested in. So instead of paying attention to her you see - there were four or five classes all in one room you see, which is bad I know, because if you were inclined to one thing ... you'd follow that. And I was listening to the history and he told me to come out. I had it twice on each hand.

'Mr Walker didn't have a good name, especially by his pupils', is the opinion of another old villager. Others in retrospect believe the beatings were, as one person put it, 'a lot to the good of the boys'. It is important to remember the disadvantages suffered by many rural teachers before the First World War: social isolation, poor amenities, cramped accommodation, low financial reward, local hostility to education, lack of social recognition of their work. The brutal punishments should be understood in the context of these difficulties, and the basic educational aims of the schools (for all their manifold limitations) given a fair measure of approbation. According to one of his ex-pupils, Walker was concerned, above all, to teach his pupils how 'to live in a mechanised age and turn their hands to it'. His strictness he believed to be justified by this concern. (The emphasis on 'hands' rather than 'brains' is rather telling.) Yet alongside recognition of these points, a fiery temper must be seen as the primary cause of Walker's daily ill-treatment of his charges. His method of violence 'for getting the best out of his pupils' (as one villager described it) sometimes caused a father's protective instinct to flare into demands for reprisals. Harry Austin:

Course he used to get into trouble you know. He had a lot of men went down there. My father's nickname was 'Old Forty' Austin. He was a good man in every way, but he did have one failing: he was a heavy drinker ... Well, one day he came home after drinking and he asked where my younger brother was you see, and my mother told him upstairs in bed. Up the stairs he went, and found my brother crying ... Course he soon found them weals on his backside from Walker's cane. That did it. Ooh, came down raging he did ... Walker was playing in a cricket match at the time, my father knew this and went down there, walked right out on the pitch you know, took

off his jacket and rolled up his sleeves and strode right up to Walker . . . Walker wouldn't accept his challenge . . . My mother didn't like it a bit you know. She said: 'Just think, the shame of it!'

Parents generally accepted the school's regime of corporal punishment, and when the master's beating caused anger or resentment it was more out of a feeling that he had overstepped the bounds of duty rather than because of any opposition to the principle of the rod in itself. The authority of the father in the home was rarely challenged, but when it was, or when some gross offence had been committed by the child, it would usually be punished in a way similar to the teacher's, with backhanders and tannings.

The beneficial effect of elementary education on growing minds was generally small. The basic skills of literacy were gained, the girls learnt to sew beautifully and everyone became well versed in biblical history and the catechism, but school offered little hint of why and how the jumble of facts, quotations, arithmetical rules and rhetorical definitions which passed for knowledge, might actually be significant or attain coherence. Subjects taught (apart from religious knowledge) were the three R's, history, geography, English literature, gardening (for boys) and needlework (for girls).<sup>14</sup> Morris dancing was also taught in the schools by Janet Blunt, lady of the manor in the west.<sup>15</sup> Slates were retained until the First World War and the books used to teach reading were usually dull, tedious, sombre and moralistic. In some respects Walker's teaching was quite advanced for village schools - as for instance in teaching the rudiments of algebra to the nine year olds - but on the whole school tended to deaden the brain rather than enliven it. Attendance was always a problem, for various reasons: illness and epidemics, weather conditions, inadequate clothing, helping mother, minding baby, Banbury Fair, May Day, St Valentine's Day, weddings, funerals, working in the fields, even watching soldiers.<sup>15</sup> Attendance was encouraged by the stimulus of reward (as was performance in individual subjects). Prizes were awarded for regularity. If pupils had not been late or absent for a year they were given a bronze medal, and if they managed to attend throughout their school career, a silver watch would be given. One old lady recalled bitterly how she had barely missed becoming eligible for this prize:

I was late just the once, and it wasn't really my fault.

The mistress knew it, but she marked me down for it and for that I lost a silver watch. The only time in all my schooldays, and I lost my watch because of it.

'What you mean them to be . . . ' The idea of what village working class children should become, upon leaving school, was quite tightly defined. The majority of them were expected to work with their hands, preferably at a skilled craft. My informants in Adderbury entered into full-time employment in such fields as domestic service, blacksmithing, building, cobbling, factory work, farmwork and shopkeeping. Their

schooling prepared them for little else, and confined their expectations to manual labour of one kind or another. Children were also socialized into acceptance of the existing structure of social relationships and of a moral order which legitimated the social, political and material subordination of their own class. Though some children did learn to question what they were told, and to develop a more properly enquiring spirit, school certainly did not encourage the growing mind. Generally it served to enervate and benumb. Its aims were narrow and in some ways profoundly anti-intellectual. The horizons of a child's consciousness were also kept confined by parochial and self-interested narrow-mindedness. Even forty years or so after the introduction of compulsory education, prejudice against the idea of education for rural working class children continued to run deep, and the education which was provided was often considered to have been responsible for what was seen as a feeling of restlessness in the new generation, and for having made them easy prey to fancy ideas, political agitation, and general discontent.<sup>17</sup> Education was wasted on those destined only to wield a tool: that was a prevalent view. As one Edwardian Oxfordshire schoolmaster put it, this 'glib talk of over-educating the rural children comes largely from ignorant or biased people'.<sup>18</sup> Yet these notions were not confined to farmers, clergy and gentry. Prejudice against intellectual skills and knowledge was also common among working class parents in the village. The idea that cleverness was a brand rather than an asset was deeply rooted. For them it was partly bred of necessity. Low wages demanded the transfer of children, at the earliest legal opportunity, from school to gainful employment: every shilling helped the family. There was also the feeling that if the children's prospects could not feasibly rise much above manual labour (skilled or otherwise), then the acquisition of knowledge not relating to a particular trade or craft was irrelevant and might only spoil the youth. Best to keep within what you knew would follow rather than develop attitudes and ideas that'd set you at odds with your allotted place in the world. 'Charley' Coleman's father prevailed on his son to follow him in his craft (he was the West Adderbury blacksmith) and refused to allow his son to accept a scholarship to a grammar school. He considered that learning would complicate the burden of life rather than lighten it, and asserted: 'I've seen education make fools of so many people, and I don't want you being one of them'.<sup>19</sup> This sentiment may seem to have manifested a sort of pragmatic wisdom or pertinent social comment. It was in fact nothing more than the ruling ideology reduced to the level of common sense.

Michael Pickering

#### NOTES

1. L. Houseman, *Victoria Regina*, London, 1937, p.241.
2. Janet Heatley Blunt (1859-1950) collected material from the Adderbury song tradition in the 1900s and 1910s. A study based on her collection is now available: see M. Pickering, *Village Song and Culture*, London

(Croom Helm), January 1982.

3. The three schools were merged in 1962 and housed in new premises off the Banbury–Oxford road. Average attendance figures for the period 1903–1911 were 64 : boys; 70 : girls; and 62 : infants. Total capacity of the three schools was 200 pupils, though in previous decades intake had sometimes exceeded this, e.g., 260 in 1886. (**Kelly's Directory**, 1891, 1903, 1911; **Victoria County History**, Oxon, IX, p.42; **Parish Magazine**, September 1866.)
4. **Victoria County History**, Oxon, IX, p.41–2.
5. For a photographic representation of the interior of the infants school, with a class in progress, presided over by the mistress, Miss Maud Coward, see P. Horn, **The Victorian Country Child**, Kineton, 1974, plate 2, p.17.
6. **Victoria County History**, Oxon, I, pp.458–9.
7. Minute Books of the Church of England Schools in Adderbury, 1874–1914.
8. Children of dissenting parents were excused attendance by the famous Cowper–Temple clause of the 1870 Education Act, and during the Edwardian period at least, this proviso seems to have been honoured in Adderbury. It should be noted though, that even in 1925, according to Robertson Scott, 'the existence of the clause is unknown to most country people, and it is rare in a hamlet to find country children withdrawn or, as is legal, non–church teaching demanded'. (J.W. Robertson Scott, **England's Green and Pleasant Land**, Harmon-dsworth, 1947 edn., p.72.)
9. F. Thompson, **Larkrise to Candleford**, London, 1971 edn., p.191; M.K. Ashby **Joseph Ashby of Tysoe, 1859–1919**, London, 1974 edn., p.23. As Mabel Ashby adds, the word 'betters' meant 'the Vicar himself and the man who paid your father's wage'.
10. M.K. Ashby, **The Country School**, London, 1929, p.79. Cf. A. Cossons, 'The Villagers Remember', **Thoroton Society Transactions**, LXVI, 1962, p.75. For a masterly study of rural deference, see H. Newby, **The Deferential Worker**, London, 1977.
11. Each of the three schools during this period had both a teacher and assistant teacher. (J.C. Coleman, 'My Personal Memories', an essay written in 1965 and deposited with the Local History Committee of the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council.) 'Charley' Coleman was born in 1895.
12. Grib: a sharp bite with the teeth.
13. Children started school at the age of three and spent four years at the infants before moving to one of the other two schools. The minimum school leaving was raised to twelve in 1899, and to fourteen in 1918.
14. J.C. Coleman, 1965. For detail of the local curriculum in the late Victorian period, see **Parish Magazine**, November 1877, February 1889, and June 1892.

15. M. Pickering, 1982, p.8 and see pp.30-32. See also K. Chandler, 'Morris Dancing in the Banbury Region', **Cake and Cockhorse**, vol.8, no.5, Spring 1981, pp.146-50.
16. For detail of children's activities on St Valentine's Day and May Day, see M. Pickering, 1982, pp.37-8 and 40-43.
17. More pertinent reasons for this restlessness included the low rural wage, the lack of local opportunities, emigration propaganda and the continuing depression in agriculture.
18. E.N. Bennett, **Problems of Village Life**, London, 1914, pp.103-4.
19. The struggle against this kind of outlook was also noted elsewhere. See for instance, A.W. Ashby and P. Byles, **Rural Education**, Oxford, 1923, p.67, and E. N. Bennett, pp.95-97. ('Charley' Coleman suffered badly during his retirement in the late sixties and early seventies from Parkinson's Disease, a progressive affliction of insidious onset caused in all likelihood by his blacksmithing activities.)



Adderbury schoolchildren, c.1910. Mrs Brown (née Pinchin) is standing with her hands clasped in front of her in the third row up, second from the left; Harry Austin is in the third row, far right, wearing a peaked cap.

# BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society was founded in 1957 to encourage interest in the history of the town of Banbury and neighbouring parts of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.

The Magazine **Cake & Cockhorse** is issued to members three times a year. This includes illustrated articles based on original local historical research, as well as recording the Society's activities. Publications include **Old Banbury - a short popular history** by E.R.C. Brinkworth (2nd edition), **New Light on Banbury's Crosses, Roman Banburyshire, Banbury's Poor in 1850, Banbury Castle - a summary of excavations in 1972, The Building and Furnishing of St Mary's Church, Banbury, and Sanderson Miller of Radway and his work at Wroxton**, and a pamphlet **History of Banbury Cross**.

The Society has also published fifteen records volumes to date. These have included **Banbury Parish Registers** (in six parts: Marriages 1558-1837, Baptisms 1558-1812, Burials 1558-1723); **Banbury Corporation Records: Tudor and Stuart; Banbury Wills and Inventories 1621-1650; A Victorian M.P. and his Constituents: The Correspondence of H.W. Tancred 1841-1860; South Newington Churchwardens' Accounts 1553-1684; Wigginton Constables' Books 1691-1836; and Bodicote Parish Accounts 1700-1822**. Volumes in preparation include **Banbury Wills and Inventories 1591-1620 and 1661-1723; Banbury Burial Register 1723-1812 and Baptisms and Burials 1812-1837**; and an edition of letters to the 1st Earl of Guilford (of Wroxton, father of Lord North the Prime Minister).

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

Membership of the society is open to all, no proposer or seconder being needed. The annual subscription is £4.50 including any records volumes published, or £3.00 if these are excluded.

Application forms can be obtained from the Hon. Membership Secretary.

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