

In the year 1838, Mr. Richard Heydon, banker, died. The house where he resided for many years was the one now occupied by Mr. A. Stockton, on The Green. It had a very long frontage, more than half its length being covered with a thick ivy foliage. The property was soon after sold to many persons in lots, and in 1839 Crouch Street was formed and the British Schools were built and many private residences erected. In the year 1835, at the time the Mechanics' Institute was being established, Thomas Moon Talfourd, Esq., M.P., of the Inner Temple, Serjeant-at-Law, was the Deputy Recorder for the Borough of Banbury. He took a deep interest in the formation of the Institute, assisting the committee in various ways, occasionally sending a donation of books, some of which are still on the shelves. He became a very great lawyer, and was made one of Her Majesty's Judges. At the Staffordshire Assizes there was a prisoner being tried for highway robbery; whilst commenting strongly on the folly of persons exhibiting their wealth among strangers in public houses, he was seen to hang down his head, and in a few minutes he was carried a corpse from the judgment seat.

In the town of Stratford-on-Avon in the year 1552, John Shakspere, the father of the poet, and other inhabitants of Henley Street were fined for making a dung heap in the road. The warning did not have any effect on other towns in the neighbourhood, or sanitary reform travelled very slowly in those days. In the year 1833 a great dung heap was made in Monument Street, not more than 50 yards from the centre of the Oxford Road, and close beneath the windows of some cottages in the street. Some bushels of lime were thrown on the great heap of night soil, and loose straw on the top of that to hide its ugliness, but not its danger, where it lay for several weeks. Typhus fever of a very virulent character broke out in the immediate locality. Within two months twelve persons had died from the visitation, and fifty persons were lying seriously ill at one time. I myself was one of the victims, and lay for more than four months in a very feeble and helpless state.

There were other heaps of contaminating matter in our streets in those days besides the one I have just referred to, one of which was in the Cow Fair near where the Town Hall now stands. The present building called the Town Hall Tavern is built upon a piece of land where stood an old hostelry called The Bull's Head. On the site of the present Police Station stood a large farrier's shop. Between the shoeing forge and the Bull's Head was a yard enclosed within brick walls, the entrance to which was where the drinking trough at the north-east corner now stands. This enclosure was the common ash pit for the district.