

I now return to South Bar Street, and will give you a few words about the Monument. In 1825 a Local Paving and Lighting Act was obtained and carried into effect by forty commissioners, chosen by the inhabitants. Many of the traces of "dirty Banbury" were removed, and in a year or two they laid out that long promenade of pavement from West Bar to the top of South Bar, now called "The Green." Near this spot was one of the old finger-posts, very shabby and much decayed. The Commissioners removed this and erected a stone monument, as you may see in the painting now shown. On three sides were given the towns and their distances north, west and south of Banbury. In those days there were a great many weavers in Banbury and neighbourhood, and many lived in South Bar. They, and others, held their after dinner Parliament, as it was called, round the Monument every day for half-an-hour, and all the topics of the day were warmly discussed. The man with a wooden leg, seen in the painting, was chairman of the meeting. His name was Clarke, he was a tailor. I knew him well and have often listened to his speeches on that spot. The cart going down the centre of the road in the picture was John Dipper's, one of the oldest Bloxham carriers. I find his name in "Rusher's List of Carriers" more than seventy years ago.

One of the most remarkable characters living in Banbury sixty years ago was a man named William Castle, who always went by the name of "Old Metal." He was a born comedian, full of oddities of speech and drollery. His name was a terror to children to whom he was known as "the Bogieman." He is best remembered as the fool of the King Sutton Morrice Dancers. This troupe always came to Banbury for a few days at Whitsuntide, when Old Metal, in a queer, fanciful dress, with his staff, bladder and calf's tail, would keep the crowd at a distance, whilst his ready wit, grimaces, and marvellous powers of contortion kept crowds of grown-up people in roars of laughter. He was fond of appearing in different characters, and the portrait is an excellent likeness of him as a clerical gentleman.

These reminiscences would not be complete without some account of the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, June 28th, 1838. I can only briefly describe it, for the festivities were on a larger scale than ever before, or since, known in the good old town. There was a grand procession of all the trades, friendly and other societies, schools, &c. Many bands of music, decorated cars, men in armour, and other subjects of interest far too numerous to mention. I was one of the boys selected as a woolcomber, our car was decorated with flowers and contained a group of shepherds and shepherdesses with crooks, a lamb, sheep,