

The records series has been backed up by the Society's journal *Cake and Cockhorse* [C&CH], of which approaching 150 issues have appeared to date, now available on CD-ROM (see pages 89-90).

## **Histories of Banbury**

The town and area have been fortunate too in published histories. Still the outstanding work is Alfred Beesley's *History of Banbury*, which appeared in 1841-2. This is a monumental volume in true antiquarian tradition, with masses of transcripts of documents and lists of names, all well-indexed. Beesley's achievement – as son of a humble Quaker tradesman and with no academic qualifications, when many of his sources were still in private and difficult-of-access locations – never ceases to amaze me. I have occasionally had opportunity to check his sources, and have always found his transcription accurate – but it can be misleading, as he may omit phrases he considered unimportant (but which nevertheless, for instance in the case of deeds, might mention previous householders) with no indication of the omission.

Then there is Volume Ten of the Oxfordshire *Victoria County History*, published in 1972. In Oxfordshire we have been fortunate in that only the two introductory volumes of the *V.C.H* were published before 1950. By the time the splendid series of hundredal volumes started to appear, full recognition that history did not stop in 1485 (or, as a concession, in 1603) had occurred. Thus we have good coverage up to the twentieth century, and this is particularly so for the Banbury Hundred volume (and for Volume Nine, of the neighbouring hundred of Bloxham). Its major contributors included Barrie Trinder, Nicholas Cooper and Michael Laithwaite, all of whom have been closely associated with the Banbury Historical Society as well.

Several other histories of varying importance have been published. William Potts, the third generation of the family which founded and edited the leading local newspaper the *Banbury Guardian*, was a keen amateur historian, and his *History of Banbury* was published posthumously in 1958, edited by his successor, Ted Clark. A second edition appeared in 1978 with which I was closely involved. Several chapters, particularly for the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, were completely rewritten, taking into account research of the past thirty years, and, unlike the first edition, it has a very comprehensive index.

Another, *The Book of Banbury*, in the now ubiquitous popular series, by Christine Bloxham (published 1975), does in fact, despite its format,