

fascinating items as Dr. William's Pink Pills for Pale People. One item the shop did not sell was 'gaddy' 'lastic that the older boys used for their catapults. On one occasion a boy trying to buy some was amazed to find the local policeman behind him in the shop and had to flee.

Celebrations took place at intervals throughout the year. May Day before the First World War was a holiday for the children who carried a sweet smelling May garland around the village. There were Christmas visits from the Mummers and on Club Day and its associated Whitsun Fair, entertainments brought out village folk in large numbers. In 1928 'swingboats were set up on the green opposite Berry Close, near the pub, and Little Bandy Leys, on the Banbury Road, was the rendezvous for a merry-go-round and sideshows'. Another annual high day was the Chacombe Flower Show

*Silver Street* is a must for anyone hoping to learn about the essential character of rural life between the Wars. Recently I was stopped in Banbury High Street by a gentleman who said that he had started reading it and could not put the book down. I can think of no better tribute to such a delightful, colourful and humorous miscellany of village memories.

Brian Little

### **Brailes History: Episodes from a forgotten past: 2.**

Alan and Philip Tennant (A5, 56pp). Published by A.J. Tennant, 49 Hawthorn Way, Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire CV36 4FD. 2004. £1.80 (incl. p&p).

*Note.* A notice of the first issue appeared in *C&CH*.16.1 (Autumn/Winter 1993).

The Tennant brothers use a format of separate and (mostly) unrelated essays, exploring particular themes or events, the 'episodes' of the title. They use a spotlight to illuminate specific scenes, without attempting to light up the whole village story.

An essay on 'The Plight of the Poor 1550 – 1710', is followed by '*In the Rebellion Time*': The Elizabethan Crisis of 1569', and a much shorter third and final item, 'The George Inn, 1558', which consists of a transcription of the 1558 inventory of the goods and chattels of the then landlord, together with a very short commentary on it. The transcription is in modern English: I would have preferred the original spellings and words, footnoted if necessary (interpretations can differ, and readers might like to make up their own minds). Given the thorough modernization of the text, it seems odd that Alan Tennant has left the money values in the original L.s.d, without explanation: to some readers shillings and pence will be as arcane as rods, poles and perches. Inventories provide the historian with all sorts of information, but I would have liked a bit more comparison here: can the 1558 hall, best chamber, parlour, kitchen and so on, be related to the rooms in the modern George Hotel? What does the arrangement of the furniture in the various rooms tell us about how they were used? Comparison with the inventory of another house (not an inn) would have told us more.