

Aldermen' on 18 August 1730. The purpose of the meeting was to elect a Sergeant-at-Mace to succeed William Saunders, deceased. Five candidates were considered: Benjamin Falkerd, Robert Re[y]nolds, Jeremiah Palmer, Joseph Bloxham and his younger brother, William. The inclusion of Benjamin Falkerd is particularly surprising, as he had been dismissed as Sergeant-at-Mace at a Hall held on 17 July 1729 'for a misbehaviour to the Corporation' (the nature of his 'misbehaviour' is not given) [62b], and William Saunders had replaced him on 23 July 1729 [63]. Falkerd was rejected – 'he don't stand' – as were Renolds and Palmer. Joseph Bloxham was chosen by 8-2 votes to stand against his brother, but William, who had been only narrowly selected to stand – by 6-5 votes – was finally elected by the same margin [70b, 71]. With hindsight, it might have been better had Joseph been elected, as on 20 January 1740/1 it was agreed to remove William from office 'on account of misbehaviour and insufficiency.' Joseph Wise was elected in his place [142b] and the Wise family was to hold this office until the death of Joseph's great-grandson in May 1851.⁶

It is not possible, from the Journal, to establish what, for all Council meetings, was considered to be a quorum; the word itself is not used in the Journal, and the phrase '[so many] attended and were not a required majority', which is used, is not quantified to serve as a guide for all occasions [71b]. Consider, for example, the matter of the election of a Deputy Recorder on 10 February 1752: Alderman William Greenall was ill at home, so the Hall – that is, all six of the Councillors who had earlier gathered at the Town Hall – adjourned to his house to ask his approbation for the appointment of William Deacle as Deputy Recorder, 'he having been nominated by John Miller, Recorder'; by 7-0 votes Deacle was elected 'and immediately the Hall adjourned back to the Town Hall'; as far as the Journal was concerned, that closed the business of the day [214]. Are we to assume, therefore, that seven Councillors out of a possible twelve Aldermen and six Burgesses, or just seven out of twelve Aldermen was, to them, an acceptable quorum where six out of just twelve Aldermen was not?

At a Hall held on 21 May 1753 it was agreed that 'no one hereafter was to be chosen Capital Burgess without first taking up and being admitted Freeman of the Corporation for such money as the Corporation votes' [220b]. The Journal records the names of 107 Banbury citizens –

⁶ P. Renold, *Banbury Gaol Records*, B.H.S. 21, 210.