There were allotment-type gardens, as in most other towns, but they can only be traced on this map where the holders had built huts. Similarly the map reveals little information about the brickyards on the edges of the town. Studying the map in conjunction with George Herbert's perambulation of Banbury in *Shoemaker's Window* brings it to life, particularly in the suburbs.

The map has been expertly copied and is reproduced in sections with generous areas of overlap. It has been supplemented in some parts of the town where it is scarcely legible, with copies from the map drawn up for the Revd. William Wilson in 1850-51 (described in B. Trinder, 'Banbury's Poor in 1850', *Cake & Cockhorse*, vol.3, 1966), and by some railway deposited plans. One of the latter provides details of the houses in the little-known community of Waterloo at the Northamptonshire foot of Banbury Bridge. The original map lacks some captions, but some streets have been identified on the published version, which is helpful, although on p.34 the mill stream is labelled as the Oxford Canal. While the scale (3 chains to one inch) is mentioned in the introduction, it would have been helpful to have scale bars on each sheet.

The principal deficiency in this publication is the complete lack of any archival history of the document. When was it accessioned in the Oxfordshire Record Office? Of what collection does it form part? Has the Record Office previously drawn attention to its existence in a catalogue or other publication? Many questions remain unanswered, but this is nevertheless an important addition to the documentation available for Victorian Banbury.

Barrie Trinder

Portrait of a River – The River Swere in Oxfordshire, by Walter Meagher and Peter Sheasby. Published by English Landscapes, 2005. Paperback, 176 pp. From Peter Sheasby, 71 Courtington Lane, Bloxham, Oxon OX15 4HS at £10.95 plus £4.94 p&p. Cheques to: River Swere Project.

As the blurb on the back of this book says 'England is a treasury of small rivers' and Portrait of a River is quite one of the most mouth-watering books I have held in my hand for many a long year; is the story of just one of them.

It is a lavish production with well over two hundred exquisite photographs (most of them taken by Peter Sheasby) of the river, the trees, plants, animals and insects that can be found in and around this little river. There are many maps and diagrams all of which aid the telling of the story of this charming little river. It starts a couple of miles south and west of Swerford then flows due east; on the way it delinates the boundaries between several parishes including that of Deddington and Adderbury - finally joining the River Cherwell just east of Stilgoe's Adderbury Grounds Farm.

The River Swere's story starts 10,000 years ago when the glaciers covering much of Oxfordshire started to retreat (we call it global warming now!) on the way scouring out the land in such a way that in due course they became the courses of the little rivers that criss cross Oxfordshire today.