

## **WHO WERE THE ‘YOUNGER SONS’? BANBURY FAMILIES WHO APPRENTICED SONS TO LONDON LIVERY COMPANY MASTERS**

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In our last issue Deborah Hayter’s article accompanying Cliff Webb’s list of Banburyshire boys apprenticed to London livery companies asked ‘What happened to younger sons?’ An attempt is made here at least to provide the family background from which came the fifty-plus from Banbury itself.

Such a number spread over more than two centuries is not an impressive sample from which to draw conclusions, but at least it is far more than for any of the villages around. In fact only two apprenticeships were pre-1600, and the last was in 1734 – though the villages around have a wider range.

The alphabetical list has been re-arranged chronologically, by apprenticeship indenture, and references to individuals are quoted by these dates: see the table on pages 32-35. This includes livery companies but omits the names of masters (given in the earlier list) except when relevant.

What is immediately evident is that the preponderance of apprenticeships were entered into after the Restoration. Between 1607 and 1638 there were just twelve. From 1662 to 1675 there were fifteen, sixteen for 1676-99, and eighteen for 1700-34. This last figure includes three in Oxford and Warwickshire (from local publications) and earlier there were four for London companies in addition to those already listed. This does not necessarily mean that earlier there were fewer apprenticeships – just that the records from which the information is drawn may be sparser, less complete or missing entirely. Much must have been lost in the Great Fire of London. Although forty-odd companies have so far been published these are only a selection out of a total of about seventy.

Banbury apprentices seem to have been restricted to relatively few companies: Apothecaries (3), Blacksmiths (13), Butchers (8), Chandlers (Tallow) (9), Feltmakers (2), Masons (1), Skinners (8), Turners (15). From other sources there were two Stationers, a Cook and an Armourer.