

Finding masters for apprentices

Some companies were more socially acceptable than others – apothecaries, for instance, were favoured by those with pretensions towards being gentry – and thus premiums varied. How were arrangements made with masters?

At least some were there through local contacts. Martin Wheatly, apprenticed to the Tallow Chandlers (1702), duly took on Thomas Greenall (1718), who himself in turn apprenticed Daniel Stepto (1726). Richard Kening or Canning was with the Turners (1668). William Bloxham (1713) was taken on as a Turner by Mary Kenning, surely Richard's widow or daughter.

Thomas Sutton (1671) went as an Apothecary to Francis Holbech. The possible local connection is underlined by the later apprenticeship of Charles son of William Holbech esquire of Farnborough to Edward Goodfellow of the Skinners (Farnborough, 1720).

Others might be through family contacts. John Clements was apprenticed to Richard Shewell of the Butchers Company (1607). He must have been at least kin to Richard Showell, a Banbury mercer, whose 1610 will left a legacy to John Tanner, 'Citizen and Grocer of London'. Joseph Sansbury (1733) was indentured to the Feltmakers. The wife of his uncle Thomas was aunt to Wyans Tidmarsh, apprenticed to a feltmaker in 1704 (information from Malcolm Pinhorn). Edward Stranke (1705) was another bound to a feltmaker, but then a Richard Strank had been master in this trade to Richard Borton, of Little Bourton, in 1681.

John son of Thomas Collins, a labourer, was indentured to the Blacksmiths Company (1690). It is surprising to find a labourer's son being so apprenticed, but then his father was evidently of some substance, signing the Association Oath Roll in 1695 and actually leaving a will. However, the interest is in his master: Ambrose Horsman. An Ambrose Horsman, second son of Ambrose, had been born in Banbury in 1665. His father, a maltster, had acquired his Freedom in Banbury in 1660 by paying ten pounds to the Corporation

I wish I could establish the Banbury connection of the exotically named Deodatus Pincheon of the Turners Company, who took on both George Crosby als Essex (1637) and Simon Taylor (1638). Frederick Bowler (1691) was apprenticed to Tobias Beale of the Butchers Company – any connection with Edward Beale, shoemaker, Mayor of Banbury 1649-50, who died in 1657? One suspects there were plenty more relationships and trade connections to provide Banbury boys with the right masters.