

BANBURY WILLS AND INVENTORIES, 1660-1723

Barrie Trinder

More than twenty years ago the Society was given, by the Bodleian, a set of photocopies of Banbury Wills and Inventories for the period 1660-1723. These, like the earlier published volumes (1590-1650, BHS 13 and 14), were all from the records of the Banbury Peculiar Court. The copies had been made for an American scholar, Dr Richard Vann, for work he was doing on Quakerism, although they cannot have been much use for that purpose.

The collection has been in my possession for a long time. I had done some work on it, using some transcripts for teaching purposes, and publishing some, including the splendid Upton inventory for what was then *The Three Tuns* and now the *Whateley*, in *C&CH* 8.1 (Autumn 1979). I have at last completed transcriptions of the inventories and summaries of the wills, all now in digital form. Before long I hope to have it all on CD.

I have now passed the photocopies to the Centre for Banburyshire Studies

Lecture Reports

Brian Little

Thursday 14th September 2006

***The History of Banbury's Boatyard and Canal* – Matthew Armitage**

(report held over so it could relate to Paul Hayter's article, pages 48-55)

Matthew Armitage began with an interesting explanation of how he became involved with the former Tooley Yard. His family embraced seven generations of watermen but he himself reoriented from an early interest in archaeology to become a boat master at Oxford where *Rosamund the Fayre* was based before being moored at Banbury.

There followed a potted history of the Oxford Canal and its development and especially details about the origins and evolution of the dry dock. Matthew recalled the especially difficult days of the 1920's when Tooley faced severe railway competition, hardly surprising as a journey by boat from Banbury to Oxford took fourteen hours.

Matthew was at great pains to explain that the Tooley enterprise was really a complex of inter-related workshops, which included a forge and carpenter's store. The role of a blacksmith was paramount.

He stressed that the present set-up is a working boatyard with associated chandlery and not a museum. At the centre of activities has been commissioned work but they also organise all sorts of courses, some of which attract schools.

Today life at the yard is hectic, especially as many people are intent on buying boats as a stepping-stone to the creation of floating homes on a canal thronged at times with leisure traffic.