

Banbury). In 1851 the Cave family was living at 29 Parson's Street, and in the census returns Thomas, the father, was described as a cordwainer, employing five men (two of his employees presumably being his sons William and John – then aged 16 – who are also described as 'cordwainer'). A decade later William and his wife Hannah were living at Constitution Row in Neithrop, and he was described as a cordwainer, but in 1871 (living at the same address with their six children) he was a 'bootmaker'. However, *Rusher's Lists* do not include William under his own name until 1870, and it is clear that for the previous twenty years at least he had worked for his father Thomas. When the 1871 census was taken the only resident of 29 Parson's Street was Mary Ann Cave, 'formerly shoemaker's wife', aged 70, and it appears that Thomas himself had died only a short time before. In 1870 William, their son, is for the first time entered in *Rusher's Lists* as a boot and shoemaker, but his address is given as 29 Parson's Street. Since he actually lived in Neithrop this indicates that he did not work from home but from the premises where his mother still lived and which had been used for the shoemaking trade for several decades. The directory entries are unaltered from 1870 to 1876, at which point he disappears – though a W. Cave, boot and shoemaker, who may have been the same person, is recorded at Broughton Road (on which Constitution Row lies) in 1886-1891.⁵

The implication of this miscellany of evidence is that William Cave worked as an independent shoemaker, trading in his own name, only from 1870 to 1876. However, it is well-known that directories, even ones as local as *Rusher's*, have a certain amount of inertia, and we must be cautious about taking their evidence as infallible. Entries are repeated unchanged from year to year, and because the volumes went to press some time before their nominal current date they may include information which was obsolete by the time of publication. This appears to have been the case in the recording not only of William Cave, who in reality went out of business in the summer of 1875, but also of my great-grandfather, George Crosby (born 1849), who was practising as a solicitor in Banbury by that date but does not appear in the lists until 1877. I will refer to him hereafter as George Crosby III, to distinguish

⁵ Census returns and *Rusher's Lists* were checked at Centre for Banburyshire Studies (Banbury Library), and cross-referenced with the index of Banbury trades. As always, it is a pleasure to acknowledge with thanks the assistance given by the staff at Banbury Library.