



A photograph taken by Thomas Blinkhorn outside his shop in South Bar.

A 1912 photograph shows scouts collecting for the Titanic disaster fund. The 1914-18 War saw reports of scouts and 'war work', from collecting waste paper to searching for escaped POW's.

Mr Parry identifies two 'golden eras' in Banbury scouting. The first was when Geoffrey Fiennes, later to succeed his father as Lord Saye and Sele, was an enthusiastic and generous District Commissioner from 1928-48. In 1937 there were twelve Groups, with 1st Bloxham the largest with 77 members. Large group photos, accounts of boxing tournaments, the making of a film, and a *Guardian* account of a record breaking crossing of the Alps by sixteen Banbury scouts with kit and the 'Braggins' trek cart – are highlighted from this time.

The post-war years saw ebb and flow of groups, the purchase of a District camp site, the establishment of a 24-hour walking competition, and, in 1967 the reform of the movement – new titles and new hats, long sleeved shirts and trousers ! The author's second 'golden era' ran from 1970 to 1985, seeing more HQ's acquired, a local scout shop established, the camp site developed, a band formed and successful participation in national competitions. In 1986 there were eighteen groups and a thousand members.

At the end there is a sad note that scouting nationally and locally has declined. Effective adult leadership, of which Terry Parkes is surely a prime example, is the key to sustaining scouting. He is not without hope that it will emerge from scouts that remain. He has written an account which reflects his zeal for scout training, pinpoints the key elements in scouting's origins, and, for Banbury people, especially those with a scouting background, he presents an authentic and lively slice of local history with an array of names, and of faces in the group photographs, which many will recognise.

John Duncan