# A BANBURY PRINTER

## Tony Newman

*Being a personal history of the printing revolution of the sixties and seventies and the part played by firms in the Banbury area in the changeover from hot metal typesetting and letterpress printing to computerised phototypesetting and web offset machines, and the consequences for the printing trade leading up to the present day.*

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The history of printing and publishing in Banbury goes back to the latter half of the eighteenth century, when John Cheney and later William Rusher started printing and publishing chapbooks together with the general stock in trade of printing. Their activities have been well documented and I for one do not intend to add another volume to the descriptions of the early years.

Shortly after this in 1838 the *Banbury Guardian* was first published and became the main source of news in the local area, a position it still holds to this day. One of the editors, William Potts, became a well-respected authority on local history and wrote and published his *History of Banbury*.

However history is not just about events and happenings of hundreds of years in the past, it is also a living thing and I shall attempt to bring the story of printing and publishing in the Banbury area more up to date; after all, things which happened yesterday could be said to be history the day after. If this should appear to be a very personal account I make no apologies for the fact as I was there at the time and involved in many of the events as they happened.

It should be understood from the outset that even as late as the second half of the twentieth century Banbury had a thriving and innovative printing industry. I have had personal experience of the technological changes which took place in the trade during this period of flux with movement from hot metal typesetting and letterpress printing to the very latest computerised phototypesetting and web offset machines capable of high volume colour-print runs.