

wife Margaret died in 1728, and “Mr Richard Rymill, senr., baker” was buried on 30 June 1739, with a will proved in PCC (this names family but provides no additional relevant information). His son Richard (b.1710) married Sarah Lambert in January 1741 and was buried, “Mr Richard Rymill, baker” in April 1751. She had died in March 1749.

Of the witnesses to this final deed, all three were AOL signatories. Mr **Thomas Goode**, grocer, died 1741/2, with a will proved in the Peculiar Court of Banbury [PCB]. **Joseph Austin**, baker, died 1726, with a PCB bond. The third was the ubiquitous Anthony Newlove: in 1698 did he travel to Leicestershire, Shrewsbury and Westcote to perform this task for the various signatories?

Conclusion

This is a run-of-the-mill collection of deeds for one unimportant property, at first glance over about 43 years. I hope this article has shown how very dull-seeming documents can yet help to build up a tiny story of changes in tenure, and thus life, in one medium-sized house; how those involved, even if merely as witnesses to signatures, interacted. No great original research has been necessary. Our Society over fifty years has published many of the vital records that help identify Banburians.

The recent publication of the Warwickshire Hearth Tax and a fortuitous discovery on a TNA internet website contributed two vital out-of-county sources. The incidence of Warwickshire places is a constant theme and a reminder of how close Banbury is to the county border.

People were then as now constantly on the move, both geographically and socially, even if they ended up where they were before. Deaths in the family could often result in such moves. Being described as gentry did not necessarily mean considerable wealth. William Wagstaffe could “put forth £700” but his cousin and namesake’s inventory was valued at only £18.17s.6d. (of which his three horses and other stable contents formed £8.1s. worth).²⁰

The owners of this property, or at least its chief lease, rarely lived there and only briefly. Initially there were John Perrin and his son Thomas from 1619. William, inheriting and needing cash, appears to have sold the lease to Anthony Jakeman but arranged to rent it back. This gave Jakeman a capital asset producing income to maintain his widow and young children. His son Josiah, ten at the time, thus inherited the lease of the house, but did not need to live there until much later, if ever, though the 1658 lease to Hibberdine implies he did at that time.

²⁰ Oxon. R.O. William Wagstaff, gent., inventory, 1716. Pec.55/3/50.