

infancy was passed in the care of his aunt, wife of the rector of Elsfield near Oxford, less than two miles from Beckley where the novel is set. It is a credible and informative account of carrying on the fringe of Banbury's hinterland. Sydney Tyrrell (1879-1976) in *A Countryman's Tale* (1973) describes the foibles of the carriers who served his native Eydon, and carriers are recalled in several memoirs in *Cake & Cockhorse*, as well as in *Lark Rise to Candleford* and *Joseph Ashby of Tysoe*.⁴

Year	Number of individual carriers	Journeys per week	Women carriers	Farmers, sons of farmers	Agricultural Labourers in households	Shop Keepers	Publicans
1796	16	34	-	-	-	-	-
1800	39	61	-	-	-	-	-
1805	65	97	-	-	-	-	-
1815	94	157	-	-	-	-	-
1821	133	227	7	-	-	-	-
1831	173	353	7	-	-	-	-
1841	187	379	6	-	15	5	1
1851	189	427	5	13	17	10	3
1861	187	387	5	8	35	11	15
1871	167	396	7	10	23	15	19
1881	168	400	5	8	18	8	8
1891	166	410	5	24	15	10	13
1901	162	385	10	11	14	15	11
1906	145	365	-	-	-	-	-
1907*	123	356	-	-	-	-	-
1911*	121	305	-	-	-	-	-
1939*	21	305	-	-	-	-	-
1950*	16	33	-	-	-	-	-

Table One: *Banbury carriers from Rusher's Lists, census returns and sundry directories. * = Kelly's Directory (1907-1950)*

Sources and Methodology.

William Rusher (1759?-1849), master of the Banbury Bluecoat School in the 1780s, resigned from the school in 1792 in order to concentrate on

⁴ S J Tyrrell, *A Countryman's Tale* (London: Constable, 1973); F Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford* (Oxford University Press, edn 1957); M K Ashby, *Joseph Ashby of Tysoe 1859-1919: A Study of English Village Life* (Cambridge University Press, 1961); D Loveday, 'Wardington: Memories and Hearsay', *Cake & Cockhorse (C&CH)* vol 3 (1966), pp. 46-60; W H Clark, 'Adderbury 1895-1905', *C&CH*, vol 2 (1965), pp 212-16; J L Langley, 'Memories of Late Victorian Banbury' *C&CH* vol 2 pp 51-55.