

to a country carrier. 'Carters' and 'waggoners', grouped with carriers in aggregated occupational totals, were usually farm workers or the employees of millers or quarry owners.

Dorian Gerhold has shown that by the 1680s 'carriers' regularly took waggon to London from most parts of England.⁶ John Jordan of the *Hollybush*, Banbury, travelling weekly to London in 1681, died in 1689 leaving 'horses, wagons and other things as belongs to a carrier' to the value of £40. Long-distance carriers operated from the Banbury area until their trade was taken by the railways in the 1850s. Thomas Golby's Banbury wagons were remembered by Thomas Ward Boss. They were about 18 ft long and 12 ft high, had broad wheels and were drawn by eight horses. A punt was suspended between the axles to accommodate live sheep, pigs and poultry, stout mohair curtains secured the back, bags with food for the horses hung at the front, and a light ladder to reach the top of the load was tied to the side. These were formidable vehicles. A traveller who rode in one from Uxbridge to Leighton Buzzard about 1840 was impressed by 'its Norman roof of tarpaulin'.⁷ Long-distance wagons and vans operated from urban bases, and some owners developed extensive networks, but few country carriers worked more than one vehicle. One Jessop, of the Horsefair, travelled to Culworth and Thorpe Mandeville once or twice weekly between 1800 and 1820, but almost all the carriers serving Banbury in subsequent decades were country dwellers.

A few boats competed with country carriers. In the 1790s Couling's market boat travelled along the canal from Oxford to Banbury on Wednesdays, delivering produce for the Thursday market, and returning southwards at noon on Thursdays. Between 1802 and 1805 Beach & Co began to work a boat from Coventry arriving at Banbury on Thursday mornings and returning the same day. In 1821 Joseph Astell and Robert Wagstaff worked market boats to Oxford every Thursday. There were similar services on the rivers Severn, Trent, and Great Ouse and on the

⁶ D Gerhold, *Carriers & Coachmasters: Trade and Travel before the Turnpikes* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2005); see also J S W Gibson, 'The Immediate Route from the Metropolis to all parts...', *C&CH*, vol 12 (1991), pp.10-24; P Renold, 'William Judd and Banbury Corporation', *C&CH*, vol. 12 (1992), pp.41-44.

⁷ T W Boss, *Reminiscences of old Banbury* (Banbury: privately published, 1903, rep *C&CH*, vol 16, 2004), p.54; J Buckmaster, *A Village Politician: the Life Story of John Buckmaster* (Horsham: Caliban, 1982), p.74.