

years later sent a bath chair by carrier to his friend John Barber (1778-1854), lawyer of Adderbury.<sup>10</sup> Dickens's Mr Barkis was delayed in a journey to Yarmouth delivering a bedstead at a public house. The carrier might also collect stock for his or her other businesses, groceries or haberdashery for village shops, yeast and flour for bakeries, seeds for smallholdings, or wines and spirits for pubs. Flora Thompson recalled that while most customers at the pub at Lark Rise (Juniper Hill) slowly sipped half pints of beer, the local doctor sometimes demanded a hot brandy and water.<sup>11</sup> Audrey Taylor described the 'spread of the banking habit' around Banbury in the early nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup> Trustworthy carriers maintained contacts between farmers and landowners and their banks and Tyrrell recalled that William Cherry of Lower Boddington exchanged farmers' cheques for cash to be paid out as wages.

Carriers doubtless contributed to the operation of rural industries, although there is little solid evidence of the rôles they played. They probably took yarn for making plush from warehouses in Banbury to weavers in villages as far away as Brailes, and perhaps returned with completed pieces of cloth. Plushmaking was declining, and the domestic industries that flourished in parts of Banburyshire in the mid-nineteenth century had their hubs elsewhere, glove-making in Woodstock, Charlbury and Witney and lacemaking in Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire. Other rural craftsmen relied upon country carriers for the delivery of tools and raw materials, and for the conveyance of their products to markets, shops and national carriers in Banbury. There were shoemakers in almost every village, tailors in most and saddlers in some, all of whom depended on suppliers in Banbury for materials and sundries. In 1871 there were basket makers in Alkerton, Cropredy, Milcombe, Sibford, Upper Boddington, redware potters at Adderbury and Barford, a wood carver at Milton, a white leather dresser at Shutford, a clock maker at Sibford, a herbalist at Middle Barton, a mop manufacturer at Chadlington and two spinster hat manufacturesses at Shotteswell. Quarry masters at Hornton and Radway would have been

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<sup>10</sup> G Smedley-Stevenson, ed, *Early Victorian Squarson: The Diaries of William Cotton Risley, I, 1835-1848* (Banbury Historical Society, 2007), pp.116, 155.

<sup>11</sup> F Thompson, *Lark Rise to Candleford* (Oxford University Press, edn 1957); (57, 60)

<sup>12</sup> A Taylor, *Gillets: Bankers at Banbury and Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); (p 52).