

Daventry, Leamington' and 'Thomas H Deeley, Carrier to Banbury from Deddington & Clifton'.¹⁸ Dorothy Loveday recalled that John Mainwood of Wardington had 'an ordinary four-wheeled cart' but also a four-wheeled 'boxed-in' vehicle sufficiently elegant to be adapted to take gentry families to balls. Some carriers deployed additional vehicles, possibly those used at other times to deliver coal, to meet demand during Banbury's Michaelmas Fair.

Thomas Hardy described in *The Woodlanders* a carrier's 'old horse, whose hair was of the roughness and colour of heather, whose leg joints, shoulders and hoofs were distorted by harness and drudgery from colthood'. By repute horses grew to know their routes. Carriers usually walked beside their horses, and gave them nose bags while they rested at their urban bases. According to Blackmore, when the Beckley carrier's horse was in Oxford he was 'as happy as he can be with twenty five horses to talk to him'. The horse belonging to Richard French (1804-64), carrier of Deddington, was stolen in 1841 and was reckoned to be worth £12.¹⁹ A further and significant element of a carrier's capital was his goodwill. Some businesses in the Banbury region were certainly taken over by people unrelated to their predecessors, but there are no records of such transactions. Dickens related that the successor of C P Barkis paid well for his goodwill as well as his cart and horse.

Calling places.

Throughout England most of the calls made by country carriers in their destination towns were at public houses. As a Huntingdonshire directory of 1854 remarked of St Ives, 'The inns and public houses are very numerous, supplying entertainment and shelter to the dealers, farmers and others who resort to the town on the market day...' Most calling places were respectable old-established taverns, although six of the 28 carriers to St Ives in 1851 went to the beerhouse of John Ablett in Back Street. The yards of most hostelrys could not accommodate the numbers of carts they attracted, and the inns named in directories served as repositories where consignments for carriers could safely be left while carts were parked in nearby streets. W H Hudson observed carts in Salisbury, 'drawn up in rows on rows – carriers from little villages on the Bourne, the Avon, the Wylye, the Nadder, the Ebble, and from all over the Plain'. *White's*

¹⁸ M. Graham & L Waters, *Britain in Old Photographs: Banbury Past and Present*. (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), pp. 32, 30.020

¹⁹ G Smedley-Stevenson, ed, *Early Victorian Squarson*, p 100.