

Oxfordshire much longer than in industrialised counties and one which was unpopular in many quarters due to the apparent conflict between being an ambassador for the poor as well as a deliverer of punishment.

Mid-Victorian Squarson was not a diary of conscience, devotional, or one of extensive soul-searching, and he rarely reveals emotion. His diary keeping may have been an escape, or he may simply have followed fashion, but egotism appears to have played a large part. The diary is centred on himself, and his observations on other people are about **his** interaction, **his** views, and what **he** did to resolve issues. That said, there is enormous potential for the diary to be used beyond those with a general interest in the locality. Many local history themes of the period appear in the diary and how Risley addressed them as a local elite. Old customs, such as 'skimmington' (also known as 'rough music') that were initially tolerated were later suppressed (page 454), and his period as magistrate coincided with increased use of the Petty Session courts for the enforcement of a variety of new offences as well as the administration of traditional justice, and the development of a professional police service. The expansion of leisure pursuits and associational forms such as friendly societies can all be traced through Risley's meticulous records.

Many diary editors fall into a trap of becoming too close to the diarist, and being an admiring editor. In this case the excellent editing does not reflect that and it is left to readers to determine their own views on whether Risley was a champion or suppressor of the poor. *Mid-Victorian Squarson* should be seen as a diary that has extensive local interest, with wider Oxfordshire and national importance that casts an eye on mid-nineteenth century life and adds to the genre of such writing. Another excellent publication from Banbury Historical Society.

Shaun Morley

Broughton Castle. Cover + 32pp. Colour illustrations throughout. 2012. £3.50 + p&p from Broughton Castle shop, Banbury OX15 5EB.

This lavishly and beautifully illustrated new Guide deserves to be added to the bookshelves of all our members. Particularly welcome are contributions from the latest generations of the Fiennes family: design, portraits and quotations.

My only regret is the yet again perpetuation of nonsense that the rhyme had 'originally' referred to a 'Fiennes' lady, and, by juxtaposition, to the diarist. Celia Fiennes (1662-1741) never lived at Broughton. The first printed version of the rhyme, in 1783, had 'an *old* lady', and the diarist was little known until a version of her journal was published a century later still, in 1888. **J.G.**