

Where was Banbury Cross?

By P. D. A. HARVEY

THERE is nothing for which Banbury is more famous than for its Cross, and it is strange that it should still be possible to question the conclusions of any of the town's historians as to where this Cross stood. But between them there is agreement only that the town's principal cross or crosses had been destroyed by its inhabitants' puritan zeal in the early 17th century, so that Richard Corbet, writing between 1618 and 1621, saw only their bases 'like old stumps of Trees'.¹ By the time historians tried to identify the site of the cross commemorated in one famous and several lesser nursery rhymes² all traces had vanished, so that written records formed the only evidence.

The first to attempt the task was Alfred Beesley, whose *History of Banbury* was completed in 1841.³ He placed 'the principal Cross at Banbury' unequivocally in the Horse Fair, but added that there were other crosses within the borough and mentions references to the 'Highe Crosse', the 'Market Cross', the 'Bread Cross' and 'the White Cross without Sugarford Bar'. In a footnote he identified the 17th-century Breadcross Street with the western part of High Street and suggested that the Bread Cross stood near its west end, concluding 'It is quite possible that this was the same with the "Banbury Cross" first mentioned'.⁴ One result of Beesley's argument was the location of the present cross, built in the Horse Fair in 1859.⁵ Another was an incident related by George Herbert in his reminiscences of Banbury: when trees were being planted in the Horse Fair in 1885 the street's oldest inhabitant asked to be allowed to plant the one at the corner (presumably of Horse Fair and High Street), explaining 'I have always thought that was where the original Cross stood'.⁶

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¹ R. Corbet, *Certain elegant poems* (1647), 16.

² W. Potts, *Banbury Cross and the rhyme* (1930), 17-21; I. and P. Opie, *The Oxford dictionary of nursery rhymes* (1955), 65-7.

³ The preface is dated 20 Dec. 1841. It was published both with undated title-page (e.g. Bodleian Library, G.A.Oxon. 8²⁵) and with title-page dated 1848 (e.g. the copy in the library of the Society of Antiquaries of London); the pagination and setting are the same for both issues.

⁴ A. Beesley, *The history of Banbury* [c. 1842], 159-60.

⁵ B. S. Trinder, *A history of Banbury Cross* (1964); cf. W. P. Johnson, *The history of Banbury and its neighbourhood* [c. 1862], frontispiece and 255-6.

⁶ G. Herbert, *Shoemaker's window* (1949), ed. C. S. Cheney, 120.

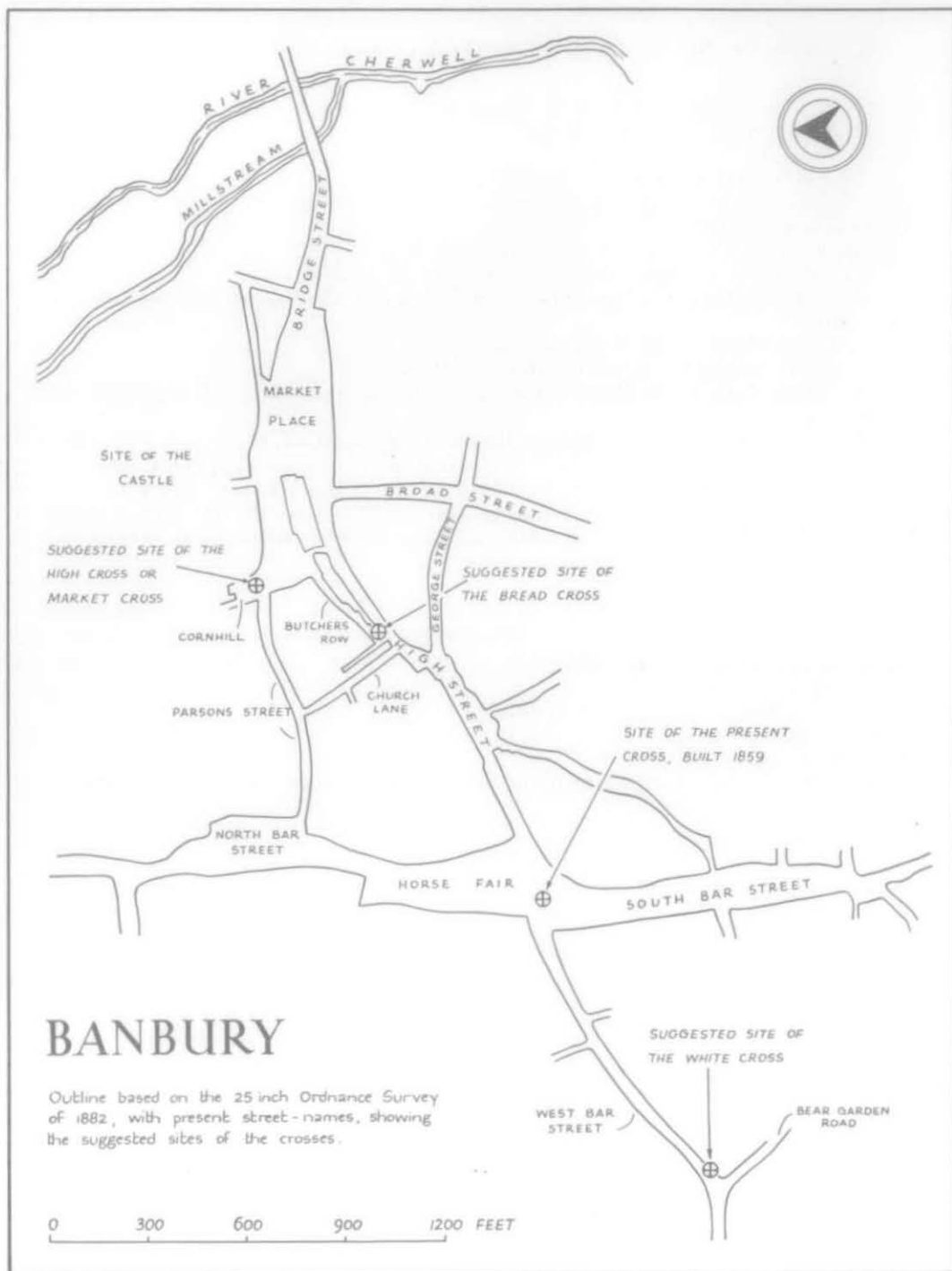


FIG. 10

P. D. A. HARVEY

There matters rested until 1930, when William Potts discussed the question at some length in his book *Banbury Cross and the rhyme*; subsequently he repeated the gist of his argument in his *History of Banbury*, which was published in 1958. Potts agreed with Beesley's suggestion that the Bread Cross and 'the Banbury Cross' were one and the same, but he rejected the Horse Fair as its site, and placed it 'somewhere in the upper part of the present High Street, the wide Guler Street of the Middle Ages'. This cross he identified with the High Cross mentioned in the 16th century, and he distinguished two other crosses within the borough: one standing in the Market Place and the other the White Cross 'which stood on the Borough boundary outside the Sugarford or West Bar'.⁷

Later writers have on the whole accepted Potts's conclusions, though they seem a little more reluctant to abandon the Horse Fair as the site of the town's principal cross. Thus Mr. E. R. C. Brinkworth, in his pamphlet *Old Banbury*, writes: 'There were three crosses: the High Cross, standing somewhat to the east of the present Cross . . .; the Market Cross, of unknown site in the Market Place; and the White Cross, standing some seven yards to the west of the junction of the present Bear Garden and Broughton Roads'.⁸ Mr. B. S. Trinder, in *A history of Banbury Cross*, concurs in this: '. . . in the Middle Ages there were three crosses in Banbury: a "White Cross" in West Bar, a "Market Cross" somewhere in the Market Place and a "High" or "Bread Cross" near the site of the present monument'.⁹

Over the site of the White Cross at least there is no dispute, and it requires little discussion. It is specifically mentioned only twice in known records. In the town's first charter, granted in 1554, the western limit of the borough is defined as *alba crux extra portam vocatam Sugarforde Yate*,¹⁰ and a perambulation of the borough boundaries in 1606 includes the passage:

'Item from the Sowth Barr downe along the Lane betwene the Closes and Cothropp field vnto the great Stone called the White Crosse on the Weste parte.

'And from the said Stone called the White Crosse over to the runnyng streme of Water by the North end of the Leyes called the Barridge Leyes . . .'¹¹

⁷ W. Potts, *op. cit.*, 3-13; *A history of Banbury* (1958), 117-20.

⁸ E. R. C. Brinkworth, *Old Banbury* (1958), 10; 'west' is presumably a misprint for 'east'.

⁹ B. S. Trinder, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ Public Record Office, C 66/873, m. 4; cf. *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1553-4*, 246, and Beesley, *op. cit.*, 220.

¹¹ Beesley, *op. cit.*, 253-4, prints the perambulation from a copy in a book of accounts in the Town Clerk's custody. He gives a similar reference for many other items dating between the mid-16th and early 17th centuries, some of which he prints in full. Unfortunately the account book (or books) in question is no longer in the Corporation's possession. No such item appears on a list of the town's records drawn up in 1850, and it seems likely that it was lost soon after Beesley wrote. On the name *Barridge Leyes* see Beesley, *op. cit.*, 208n; it appears as *Burroughs Leyes* in the Neithrop Enclosure Award of 1760 (Oxfordshire County Record Office, F.17).

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

Beesley, who cites both documents, explains that 'The White Cross Stone stood at the west end of the present West Bar Street, probably about eight paces eastward from where a lane [i.e. the present Bear Garden Road] turns off southward into the Bloxham road'.¹² This was the westernmost limit of the borough in his own day; the boundary is shown thus on the Tithe Map of 1852, the earliest large-scale map to mark the borough bounds,¹³ though the Ordnance Survey 25-in. map of 1882 shows that it must soon after have been moved some 50 yds. farther east.¹⁴ There seems no evidence that the boundary had been moved earlier or that its western limit in 1852 was not the same as in 1554, and Beesley's location of the White Cross is evidently accepted by Potts, Mr. Brinkworth and Mr. Trinder.¹⁵ The cross may have been felled by the puritans between 1554 and 1606, but the wording of the perambulation does not suggest that its conversion to a 'great Stone' had been recent; more likely the stone was the remains of an ancient cross that had worn away through exposure, or even a stone on which a white cross had been painted.

The other known references in original records to Banbury's crosses are more numerous, but are still sufficiently few to be listed in full here. Those known to Beesley (and thus also to Potts) are marked *; those known to Potts alone are marked †; the remainder have come to light since Potts wrote.

1. † Early 13th century. A list of the bishop of Lincoln's properties in the borough of Banbury includes rents from two tenants *de incremento domus sue apud Crucem*. The Queen's College, Oxford, MS.366, f. 20v.
2. † 1441. A rental of the bishop of Lincoln's properties in the borough gives as the last two entries under the heading *Gulerstrete ex parte boreali* the rents first from two tenements held by William Wytney *super montem iuxta Crossepodell'*, then from two tenements held by John Vaus *super dictum montem iacentia iuxta dictam crucem*. Then, following the tenements in *Cokerowe cum Shoprowe* it gives two lists of *scamella* or stalls, one headed *Linea australis*, the other *Linea borealis*; the opening entry in the former is of *unum scamellum iuxta crucem*. Bodleian Library, MS. dep.b.7; British Museum, Lansdowne Roll 32, a contemporary copy, is imperfect and lacks this portion.
3. 1448. A deed leases to William Wytney a cottage *scituatum super montem vocatum Crosse podell'* bounded on the north by a tenement already his. Oxfordshire County Record Office, DIL VII/e/1.
4. 1478. William Saunders, a Banbury merchant, bequeaths 20s. *ad reparacionem crucis lapidie situate ante tenementum meum super Barkehyl'*. Hampshire Record Office, 43 M.48/54.

¹² Beesley, *op. cit.*, 254n.

¹³ Bodleian Library, Oxon. Tithe Maps 30.

¹⁴ Oxfordshire, sheet V.12.

¹⁵ Potts, *Hist. Ban.*, 120; Brinkworth, *op. cit.*, 10 (cf. note 8 above); Trinder, *op. cit.*

P. D. A. HARVEY

- 5.* Between 1535 and 1543. John Leland's account of Banbury includes the passage:
'The fayrest strete of the towne lyethe by west and easte downe to the river of Charwelle. And at the west parte of this streat is a large area invironed with meatlye good buildinge, havynge a goodly crosse withe many degrees about it. In this area is kept every Thursday a very celebrate market. There renithe a prile of freshe watar throwghe this area.
'There is another fayre strete from southe to northe; and at eche end of this strete is a stone-gate. There be also in the towne othar gates besydes thes. Yet is there nothere eny certayne token or lykelyhod, that ever the towne was dichid or waullyd.
'There is a castle on the northe syde of this area . . .'
The Itinerary of John Leland, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith, ii (1908), 38-9; cited by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 159, 205-6, from T. Hearne's edition of 1710-12.
- 6.* 1548. A volume of particulars of properties sold under a commission of April 1548 includes those of the lately dissolved Guild of St. Mary in Banbury; among these is a shop, leased to John Hartelet, described as *iacens versus le Highe Crosse*. Public Record Office, E 315/67, f.60; cf. Beesley, *op. cit.*, 212n.
7. 1549. A grant of properties of the former Guild includes a shop in 'le Fleshe Shambles' in the tenure of John Walsall described as *iuxta le Brede Crosse*. Public Record Office, C 66/821, m.9; *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, Edw. VI, iii, 10.
- 8.* 1550-51. An account of receipts from properties of the former Guild, 29 Sept. 1550-29 Sept. 1551, includes rent from a shop held by John Walsole *iuxta le Breadecrosse*. Public Record Office, S.C.6/Edw. VI/385; cf. Beesley, *op. cit.*, 213n.
- 9.† 1552. A survey of annual rents due to the crown in Banbury includes *gd.* from John Wyse for a tenement *iacens et existens iuxta le Brede Crosse*. Public Record Office, L.R.2/189, f.135v.
- 10.* 1558. Bye-laws order that on Ascension Day, Corpus Christi Day and every fair-day the aldermen and burgesses 'shall accompany the said Baylyff in the perambulacyon thorow the faire and markt in desent order and so after proclymation made at the market crosse to accompany the Bayly vnto his house . . .' Corporation account book, now lost,¹⁶ quoted by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 228.
- 11.* 1563. The Corporation accounts include the cost of repairing 'the brede crosse', which is bracketed with the court house, the town bushel, the stocks and other municipal properties. Corporation account book, now lost, quoted by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 230.
- 12.* 1564. Bye-laws order that 'ther shalbe . . . no fysher stalle nether stranger or townes man any nether the Crosse on the south syde than Will'm Longes housse and on the northe syde of the shope of Thomas Longe'. Corporation account book, now lost, quoted by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 233.
- 13.† 1601 or 1602. In a letter to a friend at Venice, Anthony Rivers, a Jesuit
- ¹⁶ On this lost book or books of accounts see note 11 above.

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

resident in London, wrote 'The inhabitants of Banbury being far gone in Puritanism, in a furious zeal tumultuously assailed the cross that stood in their market-place, and so defaced it that they scarcely left one stone upon another. The Bishop of Canterbury thereupon convented the chief actors before him, and by circumstances discovering their riotous proceedings, hath enjoined them to re-edify the same, and bound them over to receive condign punishment before the Lords in the Star Chamber'; the letter is dated 13 Jan. 1601, which its editor apparently takes to be by the New System; if, however, the date '44th Eliz.' (i.e. 17 Nov. 1601-16 Nov. 1602) in no. 19 below refers not to the destruction of the cross (which no. 14 below shows to have occurred in July 1600) but to the hearing before the archbishop, then the date of the present letter must be by the Old System and refer to 1602. H. Foley, *Records of the English province of the Society of Jesus*, i (1877), 8.

14. 1604. The records of the Court of the Star Chamber include a deposition by Matthew Knight, mercer, of Banbury, on behalf of the plaintiff in the case of George Blynco v. William Knight, John Gill, Richard Wheatley, Thomas Wheatley and Henry Shewell; no other record of the case survives. The case was concerned with the defendants' alleged mis-use of their position as aldermen in Banbury, and more than half of the deposition is a detailed account of the part they played in the destruction of two market crosses in Banbury: the High Cross on 26 July 1600 and the Bread Cross on the same day or a little earlier. The relevant portion of the deposition is printed as an appendix to this article; it gives invaluable evidence of the appearance and use of both crosses as well as of the circumstances of their destruction, but is disappointingly reticent over their exact location. However, it is stated that both crosses stood on the king's waste ground (i.e. in public places) 'in the cheef markett places' at Banbury; that the High Cross stood 'in the myddell or face of the Cheefe markett place', within sight of Matthew Knight's shop, and was the place where proclamations were usually made; and that the Bread Cross was frequented by butchers and bakers, its site being let out for butchers' stalls after it had been destroyed. Public Record Office, St. Ch. 8/82/23.
- 15.* 1612. The Corporation accounts include a note of a decision to reimburse the mayor, aldermen and others for, among other items, 'Charges about the suyt of the Crosse'. Corporation account book, now lost, quoted by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 265.
- 16.* 1616. A note of rents from properties appropriated to the repair of bridges and highways in the borough includes 20s. from 'A Tenement in Bredcrosse Streete or Bowlting Streete'. Corporation records, now lost,¹⁷ quoted by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 99n.
- 17.* 1616. A list of 'Towne Rentes' includes six properties in 'Persons lane Market place Bread Crosse'. Corporation account book, now lost, quoted by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 265.

¹⁷ Although Beesley does not specify this, the note may have been entered in the missing book of accounts (see note 11 above); at any rate it is no longer among the Corporation's records.

P. D. A. HARVEY

- 18.* Between 1618 and 1621. Richard Corbet, later bishop first of Oxford then of Norwich, wrote of Banbury in his poem 'Iter boreale':
 'The Crosses also like old stumps of Trees,
 Or stooles for horsemen that have feeble knees,
 Carry no heads above Ground: those which tell,
 That Christ hath nere descended into Hell,
 But to the Grave, his Picture buried have
 In a farre deeper dungeon than a Grave'
- R. Corbet, *Certain elegant poems* (1647), 16; cited by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 160, from O. Gilchrist's edition of 1807, where (168, 170), the poem's date is discussed.
- 19.* 1632. In a trial at Salisbury William Noye, the Attorney-General, said 'In the queen's time, many went abroad, of their own heads, to break down crosses, images, and pictures of all sorts, in the 44th Eliz. At Banbury they pulled down the cross there.' *Cobbett's State Trials* (1809-26), iii, col. 539; cited by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 160, from the edition of 1730.
- 20.† 1648. By a deed enrolled on the Close Roll, George Whately mortgages 'all that messuage and tenement scituate lying and being in Banbury in Oxfordshire in a streete there called the sheepe markt streete over against the Breadcrosse now commonly called the leatherhall'. Public Record Office, C 54/3482, m.16; cited by Potts, *Banbury Cross*, 6, 9, from an abstract in the Bodleian Library, MS. Top. gen. b.41, f.209.

No doubt prolonged search would reveal further references, but those listed here suffice for a re-assessment of the evidence.

Of the references listed the most explicit evidence of the site of the town's principal cross is clearly that of Leland (no. 5), and it is the interpretation of this passage that led Beesley and Potts to adopt differing views on its location. Beesley took 'The fayrest strete of the towne', running from east to west, to be the modern High Street; as this opens at its west end into the spacious Horse Fair he identified this with the 'large area invironed with meatye good buildinge' where the cross stood.¹⁸ But the Horse Fair forms a part of the principal street in Banbury that runs north and south and which Leland must have intended when he wrote of 'another fayre strete from southe to northe'; he does not associate this with the 'large area' at the west end of the 'fayrest strete', and this is Potts's reason for looking elsewhere for the 'large area' and its cross: 'As he [i.e. Leland] proceeds to refer to the south to north street he would have placed the cross there had he there found it'. Potts identified the 'large area' with the western part of the High Street, which, he suggested, was considerably wider before its southern side was rebuilt after the Civil War. He was led to this conclusion by the reference in the 1441 rental (no. 2) to the cross in Guler Street (*Gulerstrete*);

¹⁸ Beesley, *op. cit.*, 159.

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

he demonstrated that one tenement listed under Guler Street lay at the western end of the present High Street and, interpreting *guler* as 'broad',¹⁹ he established 'The position of Guler Street as the spacious area at the west end of High Street'.²⁰

But neither of these interpretations is the one that would occur most readily to someone who, on reading the passage in Leland, turned to a map of Banbury. The street that he would first notice as corresponding to the description 'lyethe by west and easte downe to the river of Charwelle' is Bridge Street; and on seeing that at its west end this opens out into a wide Market Place he would have little doubt that Bridge Street was Leland's 'fayrest strete of the towne' and that the Market Place was the 'large area invironed with meatlye good buildinge, havynge a goodly crosse' in which, still following Leland's description, 'is kept every Thursday a very celebrate market' and on the north side of which stood the castle. Yet both Beesley, by implication, and Potts, quite explicitly, reject this most obvious interpretation. Why?

Beesley seems to have based his conclusion on the assumption that 'the fayrest strete of the towne' must be the present High Street. But there is no evidence that it merited this description in the 16th century. Certainly it was one of the town's chief thoroughfares and part of it had, as we shall see, for many years been the site of its sheep market. But despite its importance it cannot be shown that it was yet even called the High Street; it is in 1556 that the name is first indisputably applied to any part of it.²¹ The *alta strata* of the 1441 rental is probably, from its position in the list, not the modern High Street but the modern Horse Fair or South Bar Street, the same as the *alta strata Sancti Iohannis Baptiste* or *alta strata vocata Saynt Jones Strete* mentioned in deeds of 1528 and 1530.²² The annual rents given in the 1441 rental are a questionable guide to the actual condition or prosperity of the tenements at the time, for they had apparently been fixed long before and most of the houses were sublet by their tenants to occupiers whose actual rents may have been very different; even so it is worth noting that whereas the two highest valued tenements in the town (13s. 4d. and 6s. 8d. a year) apparently lay on the present High Street, the third highest valued (5s. a year) was in Bridge Street where the average rent from a simple tenement (9. 8d.) was appreciably

¹⁹ I can find no justification for this interpretation. The name is more likely connected with *goule* or *gole*: a ditch, a stream, a channel (A. H. Smith, *English place-name elements* (1956), 206). The only other record referring to Guler Street (*Gulstrete*, *Gulerstrete*) is the reeve's account of 1509-10 where the name is almost certainly copied from the 1441 rental (Lincoln Diocesan Record Office).

²⁰ Potts, *Hist. Ban.*, 117-18.

²¹ Bodleian Library, MS. Ch. Oxon. 3563.

²² Oxfordshire County Record Office, DIL vii/d/1, 2.

higher than the average for the whole town (8. 5*d.*). Certainly it need not be taken as axiomatic that the present High Street was 'the fayrest strete of the towne' in Leland's time.

Potts, unlike Beesley, considered carefully the possibility that the cross described by Leland stood in the Market Place, and appreciated the difficulty of reconciling with any other location Leland's description of the castle as lying to the north of the 'large area': 'we must not insist on too great an exactitude in the compass points in such a brief and general description of the town'.²³ He based his conclusion partly on his interpretation of the evidence of the 1441 rental (no. 2) which we shall consider later, but more particularly on the document of 1548 which refers to a shop as *iacens versus le Highe Crosse* (no. 6). This shop was part of the possessions of the dissolved Guild, and was leased to John Hartelet. From an order in the bye-laws of 1564 allowing sheep-pens to be set 'frome the est syde of Master Hartlett yate'²⁴ he argued that John Hartelet's shop—and thus the cross—lay in the sheep market which he identified with the western portion of the modern High Street. But in fact there is no reason why the shop of 1548 need be the property mentioned in the bye-law. It can be far more convincingly identified with one of the two shops and a messuage mentioned in letters patent of 1549; these, which formerly belonged to the Guild, were leased to John Hartlett and two other tenants and lay in the Market Place.²⁵ In short the document of 1548, far from pointing to a site in the High Street, strongly indicates the Market Place as the site of the High Cross.

If then Leland's 'large area' can be identified with the present Market Place there disappears one further difficulty in the way of placing it elsewhere: Leland's statement that 'In this area is kept every Thursday a very celebrate market'. Both Beesley and Potts met this difficulty by explaining, quite correctly, that as early as the 16th century the weekly market was not confined to the Market Place but had spread into other streets, some of which had come to be associated with particular produce.²⁶ Thus the Horse Fair was known as the Horse Market by 1525,²⁷ and part of the present High Street as the Sheep Market (*forum ovium*) by 1441;²⁸ thus, it is argued, Leland's 'large area' being the site of the weekly market would be no obstacle to locating it in one of these streets. Yet it seems indisputable that, wherever else the market may have spread, it was the Market Place that was in Leland's

²³ *Ban. Cross*, 3-8.

²⁴ Beesley, *op. cit.*, 231.

²⁵ Public Record Office, C 66/815, m. 29; cf. *Cal. Pat.*, Edw. VI, ii, 192.

²⁶ Beesley, *op. cit.*, 159n.

²⁷ Hampshire Record Office, 43 M.48/97, 98.

²⁸ Bodleian Library, MS. dep. b. 7; British Museum, Lansd. Roll 32.

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

time the site *par excellence* of the weekly market. The name 'le Market Place' first occurs in 1549,²⁹ but the two lines of *scamella*, stalls, listed in the 1441 rental apparently lay between the modern Butchers Row and High Street, suggesting that the principal market lay thereabouts (they may already have been encroaching on the site in the Market Place). These *scamella* of 1441 correspond to the *scamella* listed in the survey of the early 13th century, where most of them are described as granted to their tenants *de dono beati Hugonis* (i.e. Hugh of Avalon, bishop of Lincoln 1186-1200),³⁰ and as nothing is known to the contrary it seems likely that references between 1169 and 1172 to losses of rent to the bishops of Lincoln from lands on the site of the town market (*forum eiusdem ville*) record the creation of the present Market Place.³¹ The weekly Thursday market is first recorded in a royal grant of 1155.³²

From this it follows that there is no reason why Leland's 'large area' should not be the present Market Place, which would thus be the site of his 'goodly crosse'; his 'prile of freshe watar' would be the Cuttle Brook which ran along its north side.³³ This has been argued at such length because once it is accepted that this is not only a possible but the most likely interpretation of the passage from the *Itinerary*, the other references to the crosses of Banbury immediately begin to form a new and intelligible pattern. In the first place we can admit that the High Cross destroyed by the puritans in 1600 stood literally in the Market Place. This is the most natural interpretation both of Matthew Knight's deposition of 1604 (no. 14) and of Anthony Rivers's letter of 1601 or 1602 (no. 13), and both confirm that this was the principal cross in the town—'the cross there' as William Noye put it in 1632 (no. 19). The Bread Cross may also have been destroyed but it was the destruction of the High Cross, the cross of Banbury, that attracted outsiders' comments. This High Cross, the normal place for proclamations (no. 14) was presumably the Market Cross where, according to the bye-law of 1558, the Bailiff accompanied by the aldermen and burgesses was to proclaim the fair-days (no. 10).

Whereabouts in the Market Place did the cross stand? No certain answer can be given, but one is suggested first by William Saunders's bequest in 1478 *ad reparacionem crucis lapidie situate ante tenementum meum super Barkehyll'* (no. 4). References to Barkhill or Barkhill Street occur from 1441 to 1647,³⁴

²⁹ *Cal. Pat.*, Edw. VI, ii, 192.

³⁰ The Queen's College, Oxford, MS. 366, ff. 20, 20v.

³¹ *Pipe R.* 1170 (P.R.S. xv), 152; *Pipe R.* 1172 (P.R.S. xviii), 96. Cf. the loss of rent *pro terra veteris burgi* in *Pipe R.* 1168 (P.R.S. xii), 78.

³² *Registrum antiquissimum*, i (Lincoln Rec. Soc. xxvii), 92.

³³ Beesley, *op. cit.*, 275.

³⁴ Bodleian Library, MSS. dep. b.7, Ch. Oxon. 3576-3578. The form *Park Hill* given by Potts, *Hist. Ban.*, 34, and Brinkworth, *op. cit.*, 8, must be a mis-reading of the rental of 1441, where the name in fact is given as *Barkhille*.

P. D. A. HARVEY

and Beesley shows that the name was given to the houses on the north side of the Market Place, possibly including Cornhill.³⁵ That it did so, and that there, in the modern Cornhill, was the site of the cross is suggested by the bye-law of 1564 ruling that 'no fysher stalle' should be placed nearer 'the Crosse' than William Longe's house to the south and Thomas Longe's shop to the north (no. 12); it is tempting to see these among the six properties that Matthew and Thomas Long held in Barkhill Street in 1606,³⁶ and if they are correctly so identified they must have stood in the present Cornhill, not the adjacent north side of the Market Place, as only there do the buildings run in a row from north to south. If the records of 1478 and 1564 can both be taken as referring to the High Cross and are correctly interpreted, it must have stood in Cornhill, probably at its southern entrance so that John Hartelet's shop in the Market Place could be described as 'lying towards' it. Some confirmation is provided by Matthew Knight's evidence that he saw the cross from his door, for the survey of 1606 shows that he too held property in Barkhill Street.³⁷

But if Matthew Knight's deposition (see Appendix) gives us only corroborative evidence of the High Cross's site, it gives us our fullest accounts of its form and of the circumstances of its destruction. It was built of stone, and at the base were eight 'grises or stepps', corresponding to Leland's description of it as 'a goodly crosse withe many degrees about it' (no. 5). These steps surrounded the cross on all four sides, and the lowest was 24 ft. long each way and 2 ft. broad. At the top of these steps was a block ('stocke of stone') which formed the base of a tall shaft ('a very large and long spier stone'), and at the top of this were 'certain pictures', i.e. carvings. These were of a crucifix on one side, with other carvings on either side of it, though as originally written the description reads as though it were four-sided, not three-sided, at the top and had a crucifix carved on both east and west sides. Knight's description in fact confirms Potts's reconstruction of the probable appearance of the town's principal cross, based solely on Leland and on the reference to the 'Picture' of Christ in Richard Corbet's poem (no. 18).³⁸ On the steps, Knight tells us, people used to sit and display their wares on market days, and it was here that royal proclamations and other announcements were made.

³⁵ Op. cit., 275n. Beesley's argument is supported by the description of *Lebarkehill* in deeds of 1640 and 1647 as being near the Market Place (Bodleian Library, MSS. Ch. Oxon. 2665, 3577, 3578).

³⁶ Public Record Office, L.R.2/196, ff. 178, 178v. The same rental of 1606 refers to a tenement of William Longe in *Birchleystreete* or *Brichleystreete* which also included part of Cornhill (Beesley, op. cit., 275n; Potts, *Hist. Ban.*, 120) and this may have been one of the two properties mentioned in 1564.

³⁷ Public Record Office, L.R. 2/196, f.178.

³⁸ *Hist. Ban.*, 119-20.

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

As originally written Matthew Knight's deposition ended with his explanation of why the High Cross and Bread Cross were destroyed: they had the objects of superstitious veneration by one John Traford of Grimsbury (now a part of Banbury), who had been used to take off his hat when he passed them. In 1590 Thomas Bracebridge, the puritan vicar of Banbury, had mentioned in a letter to Lord Burghley that 'many recusantes soiorne hard by y^e towne';³⁹ no doubt Traford was one of these. However, the passage referring to him has been crossed out on the deposition, possibly by Knight himself; this may have been because it was not strictly relevant to the questions asked. Nevertheless it does confirm the statements of Antony Rivers (no. 13) and William Noye (no. 19) that puritan zeal caused the destruction of the High Cross. The defendants in the case in the Star Chamber—William Knight, John Gill, Richard and Thomas Wheatley, and Henry Shewell—were probably among the chief of those who were making Banbury a by-word for puritanism;⁴⁰ indeed, Richard and Thomas Wheatley were probably relatives of William Whately, the puritan writer who was vicar of Banbury from 1610 to 1639.⁴¹ In his answers to the first four questions put to him (not included in the Appendix), Matthew Knight alleged that the five defendants, who were all related by blood or marriage, had formed a clique in the Corporation so that one or other of them had held the office either of Bailiff or of Justice of the Peace there for many years past. One of William Knight's alleged offences was that he 'hath byn a meanes that divers abuses and hard dealinges haue byn offered sundrie tymes to Countrie people cominge within the same Burrough to make merrye there', causing such controversies within the town and outside it that the people of the surrounding countryside were taking their trade elsewhere. This probably refers to the troubles of 1589-90, which began with a conflict between John Danvers of Calthorpe, then Sheriff of Oxfordshire, and Thomas Bracebridge, vicar of Banbury, who accused him of recusancy;⁴² it was probably in connexion with this that William Knight was himself summoned before the Privy Council in April 1589.⁴³ This was followed by a quarrel over the maypole at Banbury, which Danvers, supported by the Privy Council, refused to ban,⁴⁴ and the following year the anti-puritan party gained a notable victory in the deprivation of Bracebridge on the grounds of 'some matters of ceremonies'. Ninety-five of his

³⁹ British Museum, Lansd. MS. 64, f. 45; printed by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 243.

⁴⁰ Beesley, *op. cit.*, 238-45; Potts, *Hist. Ban.*, 133-8.

⁴¹ For Whately, see Beesley, *op. cit.*, 267-73; *Dictionary of National Biography*; and Potts, *Hist. Ban.*, 137-8. For William Knight, see Beesley, *op. cit.*, 494-5; and Potts, *op. cit.*, 114.

⁴² *Cal. S. P. Dom.*, 1581-90, 586.

⁴³ *Acts of P.C.*, 1589, 120.

⁴⁴ *Cal. S. P. Dom.*, 1581-90, 601, 602, 605; *Acts of P.C.*, 1589, 202.

P. D. A. HARVEY

parishioners signed a petition to Lord Burghley on his behalf, and it is noteworthy that the signatories included not only all five of the defendants in the Star Chamber case of 1604, but also Matthew Knight and three of the four others whom he specifically mentions as opposed to the destruction of the cross (William Alsopp, Thomas Longe and William Halhead);⁴⁵ the fourth (William Bentley) is not included, but it is clear that those who opposed the cross's destruction were not an anti-puritan party. They may have been less extreme in their zeal, or they may simply have formed a group opposed to William Knight and his associates on grounds of local interests and politics. The position of George Blynco, the plaintiff in the action, is more obscure; he was presumably one of the Blencowe family of Marston St. Lawrence, 5 miles west of Banbury, and he does not appear in contemporary records as an inhabitant of Banbury though John Blincoe, presumably a relative, was one of the 30 Assistants of the Corporation nominated in the borough charter of 1608.⁴⁶

Matthew Knight's account of the destruction of the High Cross is detailed but straightforward; it is given in full in the Appendix. Standing at the door of his shop soon after dawn on 26 July 1600 he saw two masons start to cut away the block at the foot of the cross's shaft. He told them 'not to intermeddell any more to deface so auncient A monument as that is Alledginge vnto them that it served for many good purposes'. They accordingly stopped work and went off, leaving their tools which William Alsopp and some others thereupon flung away. Matthew Knight went to three other senior aldermen of the town—Thomas Longe, William Bentley and William Halhead—to tell them what was happening and to get their support in preventing the cross's destruction, but when he returned to the cross he found the two masons levering up the base of the shaft with iron bars, being actively aided and encouraged by William Knight. Around the cross stood Richard and Thomas Wheatley, Henry Shewell, some borough officers with staves, and at least 100 (altered from 150) other people, of whom not all approved of what was going on. As Matthew Knight came up the spire fell, whereupon Shewell 'Cried out with a loude voyce and in a reioycinge manner saied god be thancked there god dagon is fallen downe to the ground'.⁴⁷ He then proceeded to smash the images from the cross into small pieces. Matthew Knight, fearing public disorders, urged those bystanders who opposed the cross's destruction to take no action but to return to their homes, and thereupon the crowd broke up. No record is known to survive of the hearing before the archbishop of

⁴⁵ British Museum, Lansd. MS. 64, ff. 43-44v, 45-46v; printed by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 242-4.

⁴⁶ Beesley, *op. cit.*, 255.

⁴⁷ Dagon was the god of the Philistines (Judges, 16. 23).

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

Canterbury mentioned by Antony Rivers (see no. 13);⁴⁸ there is no evidence that his order to rebuild the cross was carried out, so it seems that from that day until 1859, when the present cross was built a quarter of a mile away, there was no Banbury Cross.

Thus, of the 20 references to Banbury's crosses listed above, nos. 5, 6, 10, 13, 14 and 19 certainly, and nos. 4 and 12 possibly, refer to the cross in the Market Place. What other cross or crosses are referred to? Matthew Knight's deposition (no. 14) is quite explicit that the second cross destroyed in 1600 was the Bread Cross, and of the remaining references to Banbury's crosses seven speak of the Bread Cross or of Breadcross Street (nos. 7, 8, 9, 11, 16, 17 and 20). Of these one, in 1616, identifies Breadcross Street with Bowlting Street (no. 16) while another, in 1648, speaks of the Bread Cross as though it stood in Sheep Market Street (no. 20); the apparent contradiction is resolved by a description of property in 1603 as standing 'on the Northside of the Streate there called the Sheepstreate or Bowltinge Streate'.⁴⁹ Where Sheep Street was, there Bowlting Street and Breadcross Street and, thus, the Bread Cross were also. This was Beesley's reason for locating the Bread Cross in the western portion of the present High Street for, as he wrote in 1841, 'this was recently known as Sheep Street; but the Paving Commissioners, when they put up the names of the streets in 1835, included it as a part of High Street'.⁵⁰ He is corroborated by George Herbert's reminiscences of the Banbury of his youth (he was born in 1814): '. . . what is now called High Street, from the corner of the Horse Fair to about *The White Lion*, was called Sheep Street and from here to Broad Street was the High Street, and then came the Cow Fair'.⁵¹ But if in the early 19th century the name Sheep Street was applied to the western portion of the present High Street, it need not follow that it had the same meaning 200 years earlier. In the 15th century the name Sheep Market was demonstrably applied to a portion of the street farther east than the Sheep Street of Herbert's youth, for a deed of 1469 describes property *in foro ovino* as lying *ex opposito le Postis modo vocat' Pubbullane*;⁵² *Pubbullane* or Pibble Lane was the present Church Lane, as Beesley shows

⁴⁸ I am grateful to Mr. E. G. W. Bill, of Lambeth Palace Library, for his assistance on this point.

⁴⁹ Public Record Office, C 93/1/24, cited by Beesley, *op. cit.*, 160n. The names Sheep Street and Sheep Market seem to have been used interchangeably in this period. In 1549 three tenements formerly belonging to the Gild were described as lying in the Sheep Market (*Cal. Pat.*, Edw. VI, iii, 10); in a document of 1586 two of these three were described as in Sheep Street, the third again as in the Sheep Market (Public Record Office, E 178/1845). It is also worth noting, though it is not strictly relevant to the argument, that a deed of 1656 refers to property in 'the high streete or boulting streete' (Bodleian Library, MS. Ch. Oxon. 3579).

⁵⁰ *Op. cit.*, 160n, 274.

⁵¹ Herbert, *op. cit.*, 119-20.

⁵² Hampshire Record Office, 43 M.48/18.

P. D. A. HARVEY

from the deeds of the Star Inn which stood at the corner.⁵³ That the sheep market lay, at least in part, in the eastern portion of the modern High Street should cause no surprise, for after the cattle market it was the earliest specialized market-site in Banbury to occur as a street-name,⁵⁴ and one would expect it to lie close to the original Market Place. Now when the name High Street was first used of any part of the present High Street it was to the eastern portion that it was applied; the earliest reference, in 1556, is to property apparently at the turn by George Street, as the adjacent properties lie to the south and east,⁵⁵ while the next earliest reference traced, in 1603, is to 'the High streete at Pibble lane end'.⁵⁶ This might mean that by the 17th century the sheep market had moved to the farther end of the street, and that it was the western end of the present High Street that had now acquired the sheep market and with it the name of Sheep Street. But in fact there are indications to the contrary. A survey in 1653 of former crown property in Banbury lists houses in Sheep Street which not only fronted northwards or southwards onto the street, but also westwards,⁵⁷ a description which can only apply to the houses lying immediately north of the entrance to George Street. In 1656 the Corporation ordered that the sheep market be moved from the site where it was then held; the householders there had the right to set up the sheep pens and charge for their use, and it was thought both that the charges were more than would be necessary on the new proposed site, and that where the pens were set up on the old site the carriageway remaining in the street was inconveniently narrow. The householders, defying the order, continued to set up pens on the old site, and ultimately cases arising from this were heard first at Oxford Assizes, then at the Exchequer. Witnesses' depositions for the latter survive; they refer to the old site both as the Sheep Market and as Sheep Street, but nowhere state explicitly where either the old or the new site of the market lay. However, the measurements given of the width of the carriageway once the pens had been set up (17 ft. in the broadest place, 12 ft. in the narrowest according to one witness; at least 18 ft. throughout according to another) seem at least as likely to refer to the eastern end of the present High Street as to its western end. One witness described the new site as 'a void and wast peice of grownd where vpon there is little or noe vsuall passage and is a greate distance from any persons howse and farr more spacious then the other';⁵⁸ this may well have been the

⁵³ Beesley, *op. cit.*, 276.

⁵⁴ In the rental of 1441.

⁵⁵ Bodleian Library, MS. Ch. Oxon. 3563.

⁵⁶ Beesley, *op. cit.*, 251n.

⁵⁷ Public Record Office, E 317/Oxfordshire 8, ff. 3-6.

⁵⁸ Public Record Office, E 134/1657-8/H. 23.

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

site in the Horse Fair which the sheep market occupied in the late 19th century. In this case the early 19th-century Sheep Street may have been so called either because the name was once given to the whole of the modern High Street from the sheep market held in its eastern portion, or else because it led to the sheep market's new site.

It is argued, then, that certainly in the 15th century and possibly until 1656 Banbury's sheep market was held in the part of the present High Street east of its junction with George Street, and that the name Sheep Street was applied to this part of the street, whether or not it was also applied to the western end of the street, the Sheep Street of the early 19th century. Bearing this in mind, the evidence of the rental of 1441 can now be examined.

Basically the rental of 1441 lists, street by street, the tenements in the borough from which rents were due to the bishop of Lincoln. The bishop owned much, but not all, of the property in the town; thus Parsons Street is wholly omitted presumably because all the houses there belonged to the manor of the prebendary of Banbury who possibly also owned properties scattered in other parts of the town.⁵⁹ It follows that the tenements listed by the rental under each street are not necessarily a complete list of the houses there; moreover the properties held of the bishop throughout the town (*in diversis stratis*) by the Prior of Chacombe and the Hospital of St. John (39 tenements in all) are given single entries, not listed under the streets where they lay. With this exception the rental lists the properties in an orderly perambulation of the town. It starts at the west end of Bridge Street on the north side, proceeds to the bridge over the Cherwell, back along the south side of Bridge Street to *Newlond'* and *Colbar'* (which together probably formed the present Broad Street), then along *Froggelane* (almost certainly the present George Street) to *forum ovium*. Under this heading it lists five tenements which presumably lay in the part of the present High Street east of its junction with George Street and probably (it is suggested) all on the south side of the street. It continues along *Gulerstrete*—that is its south side, as its north side specifically occurs later—which must have been the present High Street west of George Street, then covers *Sowthebarr'* (South Bar Street), *Shokersford'* (West Bar Street), where it distinguishes the gardens and crofts outside the gate from the garden and three tenements within, *alta strata* (the present Horse Fair, as we have seen) and *North'barr' Strete* (North Bar Street), first the west side, then the east. It then lists properties in *Barkhille* (Cornhill and the north side of the Market Place, as we have seen) and *Pybyllane* (Church Lane), before concluding the perambulation with *Gulerstrete ex parte boreali*

⁵⁹ Beesley, *op. cit.*, 216n, 275n.

P. D. A. HARVEY

(the north side of the present High Street), *Cokerowe cum Shoprowe* (probably the west end of the Market Place and the north side of Butchers Row) and the two rows of *scamella*, the *linea australis* (the north side of the present High Street west of its junction with Butchers Row) and the *linea borialis* (the south side of the Market Place and of Butchers Row).

Now the last two entries in the rental under the heading *Gulerstrete ex parte boreali* are of two tenements *super montem iuxta Crossepodell'* and of two others *super dictum montem iacentia iuxta dictam crucem* (no. 2). If it has been correctly assumed that the tenements under this heading have been listed from west to east, and that those listed earlier under *forum ovium* lay all on the south side of the street so that nothing need intervene between *Gulerstrete* and *Cokerowe cum Shoprowe* on the north side, it follows that the most likely site for *Crossepodell'* and its cross would be somewhere around the west end of Butchers Row and its junction with the present High Street. At a guess—it is no more—the tenements *super montem iuxta Crossepodell'* might have fronted onto the alley that runs north-west from this point; the deed of 1448 (no. 3) shows that they formed a row from north to south, and though the slope of this alley might scarcely justify the description *mons* it is at least as much of a hill as the modern Cornhill. That this was the site of the cross is corroborated by the rental's description of the first *scamellum* in the *linea australis* as *iuxta crucem* (no. 2); clearly it was so described in the rental so as to make it clear, after the diversion into *Cokerow cum Shoprowe*, at which end of the line of stalls the list began. But could it not be argued that the opposite end of the line of stalls was intended, and that the High Cross stood in that part of the Market Place and not, as suggested above, in Cornhill? This possibility is ruled out by the description in 1549 of a shop in the Flesh Shambles as *iuxta le Bredde Crosse* (no. 7). The Flesh Shambles were the *scamella* of 1441, which were demonstrably butchers' stalls,⁶⁰ and the shop in question must have been either the same as was described as *iuxta crucem* in 1441 or else its neighbour to the north. That the Bread Cross itself did not stand in the Market Place is shown by the name Breadcross Street and, even more certainly, by its location in the Sheepmarket Street of 1648 (no. 20). In fact the use of the phrase *iuxta crucem* in the rental of 1441, showing that there was a cross at one end of the line of *scamella* but not at the other, confirms that the High Cross stood in some other part of the Market Place.

The Bread Cross, then, stood at the junction of the present High Street with Butchers Row, in a part of the street that at different times from the

⁶⁰ Thus Hampshire Record Office, 43 M.48/14, a deed of 1438, refers to *unum scamellum carnificis situatum in linea australi scamellorum carnificum de Bannebury*.

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

15th to the 17th century was variously known as the Sheep Market (or Sheep Street), Guler Street, Breadcross Street, Bowling Street and High Street. This conclusion is corroborated by Matthew Knight's evidence that after the cross's destruction its site was let out for butchers' stalls (no. 14). It is to this cross that the references listed as nos. 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 16, 17 and 20 all relate. Beesley, considering that the Bread Cross stood at the west end of the High Street, associated the name with a distribution of bread to the poor which took place in South Bar Street on Good Friday.⁶¹ In fact Matthew Knight's statement that bakers as well as butchers used to have stalls at the Bread Cross (no. 14) leaves little doubt that it was so called because bread was sold there. He tells us less of its form than he does of the High Cross, but we learn that it was built of stone and covered with slate, so that market people with stalls there were kept dry from the rain. Evidently it was a large covered market cross, as at Chichester or Salisbury, while its association with the *Crossepodell* in 1441 must mean that then, at least, there was a well or small pool nearby. Of its destruction he tells us only that it occurred before the High Cross was destroyed—presumably on a previous day, as his narrative of the destruction of the High Cross opens 'nere vppon the sunne risinge', and possibly the previous Lent, if a deleted passage has been correctly read—and that at least one of the defendants in the case sold some of the stone for his own profit. However, his evidence means that we can read literally Richard Corbet's description of seeing broken crosses (in the plural) at Banbury (no. 18). The description of a tenement 'over against the Breadcrosse' in the deed of 1648 (no. 20) need not mean that the cross had been rebuilt, for such descriptions of property were often copied verbatim from much earlier deeds.

There remains only one reference to Banbury's crosses that has not been explained or discussed. That is no. 1 in the list, the references in the rental of the early 13th century to the rents from two tenants *de incremento domus sue apud Crucem*. It is worth noting that of the 281 properties in the borough listed in the rental these are the only ones described as *domus* (the vast majority are *burgagia*) and that they occur in a group of miscellaneous entries at the end of the list. Potts's reference, in translating the entries, to 'market house'⁶² is evidently due to a mis-reading of *incremento* and there is nothing to show that it is the cross in the Market Place that is referred to. In fact the entries may not refer to a cross at all, but to Crouch Hill, which lies in Banbury parish about a mile south-west of the town. That there were dwellings there

⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, 160n.

⁶² *Hist. Ban.*, 120.

P. D. A. HARVEY

in the 14th century, or that its name was given to some neighbouring hamlet (perhaps Wykham) is shown by its being named (as *le Cruche*) as one of Banbury's neighbouring vills in a coroner's inquisition of 1347.⁶³ The name does not otherwise appear as *Cruce*, but this would be an obvious latinized form. This interpretation accords with the use of *apud* (rather than *iuxta* or *prope* or *ante*) as the preposition, and with the position of the entries near the end of the list; of the three succeeding entries two relate to land (*terra*) possibly outside the borough and the third (the final entry) to rent from property in the hamlet of Neithrop lying (like Crouch Hill) outside the borough, which was probably collected by the borough reeve for some reason of administrative history or convenience.

The arguments in this article have been necessarily long and detailed, but its conclusions can be summarized briefly. There are records of three crosses in Banbury. The principal one, known as the High Cross or the Market Cross, stood in the Market Place, probably in its north-west extension called Cornhill; the earliest indisputable reference to it is Leland's description between 1535 and 1543, but it is probably this cross that is mentioned in 1478. It was in the form of a single shaft with a crucifix and other images carved at the top, and a flight of steps around its base. The second cross, known from at least 1549 as the Bread Cross, stood at the corner of the present High Street and Butchers Row; it is first recorded in 1441. In form it was a covered market cross. The third, the White Cross, marked the western limit of the borough on the Broughton road in 1554, but in 1606 was referred to simply as a 'great Stone'. The High Cross and the Bread Cross were destroyed in 1600 by orders of the ruling clique on the Corporation, probably because they considered that local Catholics were according them superstitious veneration. The White Cross may have suffered the same fate. There is no evidence of rebuilding, and the last documentary reference to any of the crosses is in 1648. If any of us wishes to ride his hobby horse to Banbury Cross it is not in the Horse Fair, nor yet in the High Street, that he should look for his fine lady, but in the Market Place.

⁶³ Public Record Office, J.I.2/130, m.1. *Cal. Pat.*, 1330-4, 499, refers to men who, the bishop of Lincoln claimed, 'assaulted his servants, and have at divers times imprisoned at Cruche by Bannebury merchants coming with their wares to his fair and market at Bannebury', and this might be taken as further evidence of a building or hamlet called Cruche. However, the original roll (Public Record Office, C 66/182, m.23d) suggests that the assault only, not the imprisonment, occurred at Cruche: 'necnon diuersos mercatores versus feriam et mercatum ipsius Episcopi in villa predicta cum bonis et mercandis suis venientes pro mercandis suis ibidem exiterendis apud Cruche iuxta Bannebury per diuersas vices ceperunt et imprisonauerunt'.

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

APPENDIX

THE DEPOSITION OF MATTHEW KNIGHT, 1604: PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, ST. CH. 8/82/23

This document is the only surviving record of the case of George Blynco v. William Knight, John Gill, Richard Wheatley, Thomas Wheatley and Henry Shewell, brought in the Court of Star Chamber. On f. 9, a parchment membrane, are the questions put to Matthew Knight; on ff. 1-8, a single gathering of paper leaves of which the last two are blank, are his answers. The questions, which give no information not included in the answers, are omitted from the transcript given below, as also are the answers to questions 1-4, which do not relate directly to the history of Banbury's crosses.

Apart from the Latin notes at the top of f. 1, the deposition is written in one hand throughout, but alterations are of two sorts:

1. Corrections in the original hand, mostly of slips of the pen, which are not significant in this context. The text given here includes these corrections without specially noting them and excludes words deleted by the original writer.
2. Alterations in a second hand, in a style and ink very like those of the signature 'Mathew Knyght' which appears at the foot of every page of the deposition and thus possibly made by the deponent himself. These include some material changes to the text, and they have been fully noted in the transcript below: words deleted are given in parentheses (), and words inserted have been put between quotation marks ' '.

Abbreviated words have been expanded, *ma^r*, *dep^t*, *ex^t* and *interr^t*, which do not occur written out in full, to *majeste*, *deponent*, *examinant* and *interrogatorie* respectively. Illegible passages are represented by three dots.

[f. 1]

Cap. 30 Ja: Anno primo Ja: R.

Test^r ex parte Geo: Blinco gen quer

(The examynacion of) Mathewe Knight of Banburie in the Countie of Oxon' Mercer of the age of lx yeares or thereaboutes (vpon certen Articles exhibited by George Blynco pl' against William Knight and others defendentes) 'sworne and examined'

.

[f. 2v.]

5 (Item to) 'To' the fyveth 'Interrogatorie' he saieth that he dyd knowe the two faire large markt Crosses of Stone in this Interrogatorie mencioned and dyd knowe them for the space of fyftie and fyve yeares ' ' vntill of late tyme that they were both pulled downe to the grounde and that the one was called the

[f. 3]

heigh Crosse and thother the bread Crosse and that they were at the tyme of their pullinge downe in very good repaire and would have stood for many yeares without any Charge of reparacions yf the same had not byn pulled downe And that the same are now both pulled downe to the grounde, and that the same two markt

P. D. A. HARVEY

Crosses stood vpon the Kinges majestes wast groundes there within Banbury. And in the cheef markett places And that the said William Knight Richard Wheatley Thomas Wheatley Henry Shewell and other their confederates were (the parties that pulled the same downe or were) the Cheefe cawfers of pullinge the same downe And 'the same was donne' without any manner of warraunt (so for to doe; as farr as this examinant could ever here) 'or auctorytye as this deponent verely thincketh'

6 (Item to) 'To' the sixth 'Interrogatorie' he saieth that the said heigh Crosse that was in banburie was a very faire and large markett Crosse with fayre large and broade stone Steppes or gryses every waie about the same beinge fower square and on eche side the lower steppe or grise beinge in length some xxiiij foote or there aboutes and two foote broade and a very great multitude of people might sitt thereon, (havinge an) 'having' eight grises or stepps vpwardes and that the same was every markett daie for the most parte furnyshed with markett people with sundrie sortes of victuall and provision, and was a very faire ornament and dyd much beautifie the markett place beinge furnished with markett people (and) ⁶. And 'saieth that the same was very fytt necessarie and conveynient for the same markett people to (sytt) 'sett' out and to sett on their provision in their baskettes And saieth also that all the tyme of this (examinantes) 'deponentes' remembraunce all the publique proclamacions of our late soueraigne Ladie Quene Elizabeth and of her (most) noble progenitors that were directed thither to be proclaymed were alwaies made and proclaymed vpon the steppes or grises of

[f. 3v.]

the same heigh Crosse and not ells where within the same towne and that the same 'crosse' was also very fytt and Conveynient for that purpose standinge in the myddell or face of the Cheefe markett place and that a verie great number of people might well here the partie that made any such proclamacions there and thrice as many more people might see the parties that stode vpp there to make the same proclamacions which dyd presentlie cawse great enquire to be made what those matters should be when they should see the Crier or partie that proclaymed the same to stand vp there, whereby the Countries thereaboutes would haue had present intelligence of those affaires and busines which were there proclaymed, And 'further he' saieth that A great (parte) 'nomber' of the Inhabitauntes in Banburie and the most parte of the Country people rounde thereaboutes were and are at this very daie much greeved and discontented at the pullinge downe of the same heigh Crosse and daylie still kepe A murmeringe for want of those their necessarie seates which they vsually satt on before it was pulled downe for the vtteringe of their victuall and provision 'which' they brought thither to be sold, And this (examinant) 'deponent' hath hard many and sundrie of those Countrie markett people saie dyvers tymes that they would Carrie their victuall and provision (xx) 'tenne' myles to another markett rather then bringe it to the markett in Banbury againe 'bycawse that the said Crosse was defaced and pulled downe' And this (examinant) 'deponent' knoweth this to be true for that this (examinantes) 'deponentes' howse and shoppe is nere vnto, and openinge vpon the place where the said heigh Crosse stode and many a hundred of markett people on the markett daies and other daies repayre'd' vnto this 'deponentes' (examinantes) shope to buy

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

wares there and there this 'deponent' (examinant hath) hard them vse and vtter the foresaid speeches and wordes before mencioned and dyvers other like wordes and speeches to shewe their discontented myndes (for) 'abowt' the pulling downe of the said heigh Crosse

[f. 4]

7 (Item) 'To' the seaventh 'Interrogatorie' he saieth that vpon the xxvjth daie of Iuly 1600 he 'this deponent' standinge at his shopp doore nere vpon the sunne risinge of the same daie he dyd see Thomas Colinge and Iames West masons goe vp the steppes of the said heigh Crosse with their stone Axes and tooles and when they were at the toppe thereof they began to hewe at the stocke of stone where in a very large and longe spier stone stode in the myddest of the same steppes of the said markt Cross which dyd beare and had certen pictures on the toppe thereof; (and) 'And' this 'deponent' (examinant) perceyvinge that their entent was to pull downe the same ' ; he this (examinant) 'deponent' presentlie ranne vnto the said Colinge and West and Charged them in the Quenes majestes name in the presence of William Alsopp Raphe Tompson and divers others to geve over their (further) proceedinge in that worke; and saied also to the same workemen here before these people I doe dischargd you therof and not to intermeddell any more to deface so auncient A monument as that (was) 'is', Alledginge (these reasons) vnto them (' first') that it served for many good purposes as ferst yt was a Conveynt place for the publishinge or proclayming(es) of the Quenes majestes proclamacions and very fytt and Conveynt for markt people to sytt on, on the markt daies, and that it was likewise abuttalls to divers mens Inheritaunces nere therevnto adioynninge as by their evidences appereth And this 'deponent' (examinant) desired of them to knowe by 'what' warraunt or auctoritie they did enterprise the same ' ; who answered this 'deponent' (examinant) that they were hired to doe yt; And saieth that presentlie vpon these speeches and dischargd by this (examinant) 'deponent' the said workemen gaue over their said worke there, and went awaie and vpon some feare of trobles vpon this dischargd ' ; left some of their tooles lyinge vpon the steppes of the same heigh Crosse behind them; but to what place or to what persons they went this (examinant) 'deponent' cannot certenlie depose but verelie beleeveth in his Conscience that they went vnto the foresaid Thomas Wheatley then Baylief there to acquaynt him therewith for (so hath) the said Colinge told this (examinant) 'deponent' that he went to him the said Thomas Wheatley and acquaynted him therewith who sent (the said Colinge) for the said William Knight and others (and sent West for certen others)

[f. 4v.]

to come presentlie vnto the said Thomas Wheatley but what the seuerall names of those are that were sent vnto this (examinant) 'deponent' doth not now certenlie remember And 'further' saieth that after the said workemen were gone awaie William Alsopp and certen others went vp the said Crosse and flange awaie certen of their tooles from the said Crosse in the view of this 'deponent' (examinant) And this (examinant) 'deponent further' saieth that the said workemen Colinge and West left of their said worke and were awaie from thence for some three quarters of an hower or better before they came backe againe to the said heigh Crosse And

P. D. A. HARVEY

(this) ('deponent saying that') (examinant knoweth it to be true for that) after he 'this deponent' had discharged the same workemen and that they were gone from their said attempted worke and 'after that this deponent had' likewise (had) requested the said William Alsopp and others for to staie there vntill he this (examinant) 'deponent' might goe to some of the Auncientest Aldermen of the same Burrough to know whether they had geuen their Consent for pullinge downe thereof or had any sufficient and lawfull warraunt so (for) to doe 'or not' (And this examinant saith that then) he 'this deponent then' went first to the foresaid Thomas Longe one of the then auncientest Aldermen that then were of the Company and acquaynted him what he this (examinant) 'deponent' had saied to the 'said' workemen that attempted to pull downe the said heigh Crosse and what inconveynience it might be to pull downe the same Crosse; who then promised to this 'deponent' (examinant) that he would goe and staye the workemen and others that they should not procede to pull downe the same Crosse vntill this 'deponent' (examinant) had acquaynted some other Aldermen therewith. And from the said Longe 'he' this (examinant) 'deponent' went vnto one William Bentley another auncient Alderman and acquaynted him in like manner therewith who saied he would presentlie send word vnto the said workemen to wishe them to staie the pullinge downe thereof; And then from the said Bentley 'he' this (examinant) 'deponent' went to one William Halhead likewise then an auncient alderman there who then was blind and had lost his sight for divers yeares before; and acquaynted him with the Inconveynience that might divers waies ensue vpon the pullinge downe the same heigh Crosse; whoe by reason of want of his sight wished this 'deponent' (examinant) as from him to will the said workemen and all others to staie the pullinge downe 'of' the same heigh Crosse

[f. 5]

vntill he might speake with the magistrates and other Aldermen of the same Burrough at that tyme, (which) 'And' this 'deponent' (examinant) saith 'it' could not be so litle as three quarters of an hower whilest that he 'this deponent' was absent and Conferringe with the foresaid three aldermen about the same matter of staie for pullinge 'downe' the same heigh Crosse

8 (Item to) 'To' the viijth Interrogatorie he saith that after this (examinant) 'deponent' came backe from his said conference with the foresaid three Aldermen Longe, Bentley and Halhead towards the said heigh Crosse which was Imediatlie vpon the said Colinge and West their cominge backe to the said Crosse; and when this 'deponent' (examinant) came within the view of the same Crosse he this 'deponent' (examinant) dyd see a great multitude of people standing on a Rucke together about the same Crosse 'and also sawe' the longe spier with the pictures on the same 'crosse' yet then standinge (vpright) and not 'fully' fallen downe, And this (examinant) 'deponent' Cominge some what nearer vnto the said Crosse dyd very well perceive and see standinge and beinge rounde about the said Crosse Richard Wheatley Thomas Wheatley and Henry Shewell and a great company of people more to the number of (150) '100' at the least and that there was a very great noyse amongst them there assembled in manner of a Tumult or Mutany 'saying what shall wee doe against those persons that be defacing of the Crosse' And vpon the steppes of the said heigh Crosse at the bottome of the longe spier stone

WHERE WAS BANBURY CROSS?

of the same Crosse he this (examinant) 'deponent' dyd then see likewise the said William Knight Thomas Colinge and James West ' (and that he then sawe the said Colinge) Colewaying or lifting' (Colewayinge and lyftinge) with certen Iron barres at the 'stocke and' spier of the same Crosse, and that he this (examinant) 'deponent' dyd then heare aboute all the rest the said William Knight with a loud voyce for to encourage and anymate the said workemen in that worke and in reioycing manner saied vnto them come lett vs downe with yt and downe with it quiklie, and presentlie the spier of the same heigh Crosse fell to the grownde 'to the great discontentment of many that were then present' And this (examinant) 'deponent' Cominge a litle nerer towards the same assemblie and great presse of people he hard divers people amongst them therevpon the fall of the said spier Crie out with loud voyces and saied what shall wee doe against these people for this matter And this 'deponent' (examinant) consideringe 'that' (of) the said William Knight 'had formerly incouraged' (his former encouragement to) the said workemen 'to pull the said crosse downe' and likewise perceivinge 'that' the said William Knight Richard Wheatley Thomas Wheatley and Henry Shewell 'had then' (havinge) certen (Constables) ' (offycers) officers' there attendinge them (with their black staves) with

[f. 5v.]

A great number more of their Confederates then and there assembled 'and sawe that they' (had byn and) were fully resolved and determyned to pull downe the same heigh Crosse to the ground, (and this examinant) 'he this deponent' fearinge least great mischeef thereon might ensue in strivinge against them therein; (he this examinant) 'ownly' willed and required all those people on the Contrarie parte that Cried out against them for pullinge downe the same Crosse to kepe the Quenes majestes peace in any Case, and to departe every man to his owne dwellinge And so presentlie they dyd, And this 'deponent' (examinant) is fullie perswaded that the said workmen would never haue attempted that worke againe yf (that) they had not byn 'therevnto' greatlie encouraged comforted and abetted by the said William Knight Richard Wheatley Thomas Wheatley Henry Shewell and other their Complices (in this matter and had not they) 'who' also came backe againe with the said workemen to the said Crosse to thend and purpose to anymate encourage and mayntayne them therein for so hath the said Colinge one of the same workemen divers tymes since the pullinge downe thereof reported vnto this (examinant) 'deponent' beinge in this (examinantes) 'deponentes' worke and the same workeman hath likewise reported to this (examinant) 'deponent' that he hath susteyned much losse and hinderaunce since he pulled downe the same high Crosse and much yll will of divers persons 'by reason (they) of the pullinge downe of the said high crosse'

9 (Item to) 'To' the ixth 'Interrogatorie' he saith that when the longe spier stone of the said heigh Crosse which had and dyd beare the foresaid pictures on the toppe thereof first fell to the grounde the foresaid Henry Shewell Cried out with a loude voyce and in a reioycinge manner saied god be thancked their god dagon is fallen downe to the ground', and presently 'thervpon' the said Shewell tooke a stone Axe and hewed the pictures into smale peeces And this (examinant) 'deponent' saith that to his now remembraunce (that) there was

P. D. A. HARVEY

on the 'one syde' (east side and west side) of the vpper parte of the same longe spier stone the picture of a Crucifix in the 'myddest' (middeth) thereof (on both those sides) and certen other pictures on both sides of the same Crucifix

[At the foot of f. 5v. an illegible note has been struck out]

[f. 6]

10 (Item to) 'To' the tenth 'interrogatorie' saieth that the 'A'foresaid Crosse called the bread Crosse before yt was pulled downe well Covered with slate and had verie Conveynt seates and places for markt people to sytt and stande drie vnder for to sell such provision of victuall 'as' they brought thither then to be sold And that the Bakers and Butchers had a free recourse to Come and take their seates and standings there then vnder the same Covered Crosse and paied litle or nothings at all for their places or Stawles there And this (examinant) 'deponent' saieth that Sithence the same bread Crosse was pulled downe all the Bakers that vsuallie repayre(d) thither are putt and thrust out from their vsuall places there And all the places and Stawles erected in the place where the said bread Crosse stode are lett out to Butchers, And that the Butchers are now enforced every one that will haue any standinge or Stawle there for to paye xiiij^s a yeare for one stawle there, Or ells must not come thither And this (examinant) 'deponent' saieth that 'that' place is now converted into 'vj' or 'viij' stawles or standings and every one is enforced to paie nowe accordinge to that rate of xiiij^s a standinge or Stawle And that the whole proffitt of the same as this (examinant) 'deponent' hath byn very credible informed 'is turned and' cometh whollie to the private vse 'and benefitt' of the said Thomas Wheatley 'and the rest of this company' And this (examinant) 'deponent' saieth also that he hath hard sundrie Butchers dyvers tymes make great and pittifull complaint of such their Cruell exaccions and payementes wrested from them now for their said standings or Stawles there in the places which formerlie was in manner free vnto them to Come thither to sell their flesh there And this (examinant) 'deponent' saieth that divers of the large stones of the same bread Crosse were sold to sundrie persons as namelie one stone thereof was sold to Michaell Cartwright for iij^s iiij^d and that Henry Shewell received the money for the same And what all the residue of the same stones were sold for (and) 'or' to whom and who were present at the pullinge downe the same bread Crosse and the manner thereof this (examinant cannot) 'deponent cannott . . . etly' depose (of certentie) but saieth that the said bread Crosse was pull'ed' downe (the lent[?]) before the foresaid heigh Crosse 'was pulled downe' And that the said William Knight Richard Wheatley Thomas Wheatley and Henric Shewell

[f. 6v.]

were the Cheefe and principall Cawlers of the pullinge downe of (this) 'the said' bread Crosse; and so proceeded to the pullinge downe of the foresaid Heigh Crosse (And these Crosses were both pulled downe as yt hath byn dyvers tymes 'sithence' given out in banbury Sithence because there should a man in 'and of' Grymesburie within the parishe of Banburie 'as it was' called John Trafford which when he came by the Crosse would leave it on his right hand and putt of his hatt . . . when he came by their[?] 'to haue putt of his . . . hatt when he came by the Crosse on A markt daye') 'And more he deposeth not to thinterrogatories'